



# NEVER TOO OLD TO Testify

*Despite my age, I realized that I still have a purpose in life.*

**I**n the Church we often speak about “enduring to the end” as though it were always painful and difficult. Enduring is not necessarily painful—enduring well can be joyful and beneficial, and it can bring us closer to Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ.

I learned this important lesson as I visit taught a friend, now deceased, whom I loved. She was in her mid-90s and often said she was ready to be called home. She had fulfilled many callings during her life, often involving music. She was very talented and had a lovely voice, but she felt she could

do no more at her age. I felt to tell her often that she was not useless and that she still had purpose in this life, as we all do. But I knew how she felt. Though I was many years younger than my friend, my health was not good, and I also felt useless and ready to be called home.

Not long after one visit with her, I went to the hospital in an ambulance. My daughter called the missionaries, and they came to the hospital to give me a blessing. I felt comfort as the elders laid their hands on my head, but I don't remember much after that. I do remember being miserable and expecting that I would not live much longer. I felt comfortable with that.

But I began to improve after a few days. As I pondered, I felt the peaceful presence of the Holy Ghost. I realized that it was not my time to die and that I still had purpose in life. I also felt that I had a specific errand: I needed to tell my friend something.

I had realized that a necessary part of enduring well to the end is bearing testimony to our posterity and others around us. They need to know that our testimonies are still intact and that we feel joy in knowing that we can access the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

That realization helped me decide what to do.

Though I was still shaky when I left the hospital, I wanted to see my friend and tell her what I had learned. On trembling legs, I walked to her apartment, trusting that the Lord would sustain me in my efforts. Seated in a chair and wrapped in a blanket, she welcomed me to her home. I threw my arms around her and said, "We *are* enduring to the end, but we have something important we still need to do. We need to bear our testimonies to our posterity and others."

Her eyes lit up and we both cried; we knew that the prompting came from the Lord and that we both needed to heed it. I stayed only a few minutes. Somehow I knew it would be our last earthly visit, but I saw joy in her eyes.

Less than two days later, my sweet friend was called home, and I feel that she had done what the Lord had wanted her to do.

We all have purpose, and I am grateful to know that our purpose is not limited by our age. As we endure to the end of this life, we can continue to strengthen each other, our posterity, and all of God's children by bearing testimony. ■



## THE GOLDEN YEARS

"We are old now, and in due time, we will be summoned beyond the veil. We do not resist that.

We try to teach the practical things we have learned over the years to those who are younger—to our family and to others.

"We cannot *do* what we once did, but we have become more than ever we were before. . . .

"In your golden years there is so much to *do* and so much to *be*. Do not withdraw into a retirement from life, into amusement. That, for some, would be useless, even selfish. You may have served a mission and been released and consider yourself as having completed your service in the Church, but you are never released from being active in the *gospel*. . . .

"You may at last, when old and feeble, learn that the greatest mission of all is to strengthen your own family and the families of others, to seal the generations. . . .

"Keep the fire of your testimony of the restored gospel and your witness of our Redeemer burning so brightly that our children can warm their hands by the fire of your faith."

President Boyd K. Packer, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, "The Golden Years," *Ensign*, May 2003, 84.