

## Dementia – Week 2 – Oct 23

### People with dementia have value in God's eyes

1. Made in God's image
  - “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them (Gen 1:27).”
  - a) Full persons
  - b) Valued not for intellect or accomplishments

### Needing to respect dignity in dementia

1. The best way to improve quality of life of those with dementia is to respect their dignity.  
Now how? General principles
2. Speak to them directly maintaining eye contact even if what you are saying is intended for another
3. If in a group do not talk about them, keep them in the conversation to the extent they are able
4. Respect their autonomy and their current ability to direct their own lives but limit their autonomy when it could endanger others-Protect their reputation.
5. Don't ask questions they can't answer,
6. Respect their dignity by meeting their needs
  - a) Physical needs often communicated not by words but by behavior
    - i) Physical activity
    - ii) Appearance
  - b) Emotional
    - i) Help them enjoy their memories of the past
    - ii) Reality orientation
    - iii) Validation
  - c) Meaning
  - d) Social
    - i) Spend time even if it will not be remembered.
    - ii) Avoid large noisy groups
  - e) Spiritual
    - i) Repeatedly talking about Jesus, his love, and Heaven
    - ii) God can still work in their spirits
      - “What am I to do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will pray with my mind also; I will sing praise with my spirit, but I will sing with my mind also. (1 Corinthians 14:15)”
    - iii) Opportunities to practice their faith at a level consistent with their abilities
    - iv) Communion
7. Enter their worlds-incarnational

## Caregiving

1. Consider this as your calling from God recognizing it can be draining and exhausting
2. It will allow you to grow in your walk with the Lord look for it-several specific ways
  - a. Prayer-
  - b. Trust
  - c. Love
  - d. Fruit of the spirit
3. Recognize the importance of having your own needs met right from the outset
4. Do not be too independent yourself get help early before exhaustion and bitterness set in.

## Managing specific situations

1. Visits
  - a) Approach from front so as not to startle
  - b) Introduce yourself and usually give a connection
  - c) Have them talk about familiar things that they remember from the past-Drew with Clinton
2. Deciding on residential care
  - a) One of the most difficult decisions-feels like abandonment
  - b) When caregiving becomes a burden
  - c) This will be delayed if you have taken small steps earlier
    - i) Adult day care
    - ii) In home help
  - d) When the sacrifices are no longer appreciated by the patient
  - e) May be forced by sudden change, fall, stroke, hospitalization etc.
  - f) Still requires a major commitment to be present
  - g) Unique situation when patient has given specific instructions, or you have made promises
    - i) Recognize those are not made knowing present context
    - ii) Must assume what the request would be if they knew their current situation
    - iii) Do not make those promises
3. Driving
  - a) Often problem is getting lost and dealing with problems not the mechanics of driving
  - b) Family may be overly cautious not sensitive to the huge blow that not being able to drive is
  - c) So often it is a link to independence
  - d) May lead to isolation and loneliness
  - e) Often best if family not make decision esp. for men
    - i) Driving schools
    - ii) OT departments

## Come back to finding God's purpose

1. For patient
  - a) Pride

“On behalf of this man I will boast, but on my own behalf I will not boast, except of my weaknesses— though if I should wish to boast, I would not be a fool, for I would be speaking the truth; but I refrain from it, so that no one may think more of me than he sees in me or hears from me. So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the

surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited (2 Corinthians 12:5-7).”

- b) Independence
- 2. For caregiver
  - a) Unselfish love
  - b) Dependence on God
- 3. For church
  - a) Learning to value what God values
  - b) Becoming a serving community
  - c) Loving those who are different or disabled
  - d) Working together as a community
- 4. For community
  - a) Demonstrating what Christian love looks like

- 1 God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform:  
He plants His footsteps in the sea,  
And rides upon the storm.
  - 2 Deep in unfathomable mines  
Of never-failing skill,  
He treasures up His bright designs,  
And works His sovereign will.
  - 3 Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take;  
The clouds ye so much dread  
Are big with mercy, and shall break  
In blessings on your head.
  - 4 Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,  
But trust Him for His grace;  
Behind a frowning providence  
He hides a smiling face.
  - 5 His purposes will ripen fast,  
Unfolding every hour:  
The bud may have a bitter taste,  
But sweet will be the flower.
  - 6 Blind unbelief is sure to err,  
And scan His work in vain;  
God is His own Interpreter,  
And He will make it plain.
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