

# How Firm a Foundation: A Tribute to the Seniors of Cofer's Chapel

For the past three years, it has been our privilege – and a real joy – to work with the senior adults at Cofer's Chapel. From the days when there was the "50+" group, until more recent times when all the seniors became one fellowship, we have observed this special group of people. When we first joined Cofer's in 1999, Bro. Eugene Waddell, a former senior pastor of the church, as well as Foreign Missions Director, worked with them. For as long as we have known this congregation, many senior adults have labored in the church, into their 70s, 80s, and even 90s. One of our seniors, now inactive, will celebrate her 100th birthday this month. Many have gone home to Heaven over the years.

As I thought about this group who love their Lord, their church, and each other, I'm reminded of the old hymn "How Firm a Foundation." How its truths comfort and assure us, taken as they are from Scripture. While one senior might walk every day, and seemingly have an inexhaustible supply of energy, another may be bent by age, chronic back pain, and have to walk with a cane or a walker. One may have a mind and memory as sharp as when he or she was 50, while another is retreating inexorably into the darkness of dementia. It's hard to understand. Yet, the Lord cares for each one and is at work in the life of every one of His children.

*How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word!  
What more can He say than to you He hath said—  
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?*

The foundation of the believer is the Word of God. He has

spoken, and His word is true, His promises are sure. We who have fled to Him for refuge (trusted Him for salvation) are resting on a sure foundation.

*Fear not, I am with thee, oh, be not dismayed,  
For I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;  
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,  
Upheld by My gracious, omnipotent hand.*

Based on Isaiah 41:10, we are admonished not to fear nor be dismayed. He is our God, and He will do all for us. We are held securely in His mighty hand.

*When through the deep waters I call thee to go,  
The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;  
For I will be with thee thy trouble to bless,  
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.*

Isaiah 43 says when we pass through deep waters, they will not overflow us, and when we go through the fire we will not be burned. Sustaining grace through all of life. Cofer's seniors exemplify that every day.

*When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,  
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;  
The flame shall not harm thee; I only design  
Thy dross to consume and thy gold to refine.*

This stanza pairs well with the previous one, with its reference to fiery trials. I love the line "my grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;"

*E'en down to old age all my people shall prove  
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love.  
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn  
Like lambs shall the still in my bosom be borne.*

This is the stanza that my heart bequeaths to our Cofer's seniors: Even in old age we prove His "sovereign, eternal,

unchangeable love." Even though the hairs of our head turn white, He will still carry us like lambs in his bosom! Wow! (Isaiah 46:1-4) Psalms 71 and 92 both reference the strength and presence of a God who will not forsake us in old age, and can still make us fruitful. Seniors can serve! Do not make the mistake of writing them off. I have noticed, as one who's recently entered that group, that retirees tend to not be included or invited to minister as before, and that's a mistake, in my opinion. Knowledge, wisdom, sound judgment, and discernment generally characterize my age group better than younger groups. Obviously, we have to make adjustments, and can't do as much as we used to, but we can still contribute!

*The soul that on Jesus doth lean for repose,  
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake.*

The hope and mighty assurance for all of us, regardless of age.