

Don's Swan Song

**Reflections of God's goodness & grace
in over thirty-eight years of pastoral
ministry— Philippians 3:8ff**

Rejected Texts & the Reasons for Doing So:

- Moses in Deuteronomy 34:1ff– bittersweet reminders of his failures as a leader & Moses died by “God’s kiss of death”
- Joshua in Joshua 23:1ff– He reminded Israel of their failures & then he died
- Samuel in 1 Sam. 12 & 25:1– Samuel declared his integrity, fussed at Israel for wanting a king & “Samuel died.”

Reflect With Me on the Fruit of Choices Made— vv.8-12

- 38 Years ago I settled “the Lordship” issue with no apologies & no regrets— v.8;**
- 38 Years ago I determined His way was better than mine & I have experienced His peace & grace ever since— v.9;**
- 38 Years ago I began an adventure that has not lessened in intensity nor diminished in its glory: “to know Him”— v.10**

Reflect With Me on Some of the Realities I've Experienced—vv12-14

- In spite of my obvious flaws, I am graced with a passion to pursue Christ—v.12;**
- In spite of my failures, by God's grace, I am not a failure. I keep "stretching" forward on my divine journey— v.13;**
- In spite of my weaknesses, I am assured of a successful completion of my earthly task— v.14.**

Reflect with Me on My Parting Prayer for You:

- That you would demonstrate the “mind of Christ” in all your decisions— v.15a;
- That you would be patient with those who have not yet experienced “. . . Christ”— 15b
- That you would establish a *"no-back-sliding-allowed"* rule in your life— v.16a;
- That you would encourage one another by your obvious devotion to Christ & unity of faith— v.16b.