



*The Freshness
of Youth*

A Teaching Outline

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The Freshness of Youth

Psalm 92:10

But you have made me as strong as a wild bull.

How refreshed I am by your power!

Palm trees are known for their long life. To flourish like palm trees means to stand tall and to live long. The cedars of Lebanon grew to 120 feet in height and up to 30 feet in circumference; thus, they were solid, strong, and immovable. The writer saw believers as upright, strong, and unmoved by the winds of circumstance. Those who place their faith firmly in God can have this strength and vitality.

Honoring God is not restricted to young people who seem to have unlimited strength and energy. Even in old age, devout believers can produce spiritual fruit. There are many faithful older people who continue to have a fresh outlook and can teach us from a lifetime of experience of serving God. Seek out an elderly friend or relative who can tell you about his or her experiences with the Lord and challenge you to new heights of spiritual growth.

Psalm 110:3

In that day of battle,

Your people will serve you willingly.

Arrayed in holy garments,

Your vigor will be renewed each day like the morning dew.

This is one of the most-quoted psalms in the New Testament because of its clear references to the Messiah. In Matthew 22:41-45, Jesus recited the words of this verse and applied them to himself.

Many people have a vague belief in God but refuse to accept Jesus as anything more than a great human teacher. But the Bible does not allow that option. Both the Old and New Testaments proclaim the deity of the one who came to save and to reign. Jesus explained that this psalm spoke of the Messiah as greater than David, Israel's greatest king (Mark 12:35-37).

Peter used this psalm to show that Jesus, the Messiah, sits at God's right hand and is Lord over all (Acts 2:32-35). You can't straddle the fence, calling Jesus "just a good teacher," because the Bible clearly calls him Lord.

Job 33:25

Then his body will become as healthy as a child's, firm and youthful again.

Elihu's point was that God had spoken again and again. He spoke in dreams and visions (33:15-18), through suffering (33:19-22), and by mediating angels (33:23, 24).

Psalm 103:1-5

**Praise the Lord, I tell myself;
With my whole heart, I will praise his holy name.
[2] Praise the Lord, I tell myself,
And never forget the good things he does for me.
[3] He forgives all my sins
And heals all my diseases.
[4] He ransoms me from death
And surrounds me with love and tender mercies.
[5] He fills my life with good things.
My youth is renewed like the eagles!**

David's praise focused on the good things God was doing for him. It is easy to complain about life, but David's list gives us plenty for which to praise God:

He forgives our sins, heals our diseases, redeems us from death, crowns us with love and compassion, satisfies our desires, and gives righteousness and justice. We receive all of these without deserving any of them. No matter how difficult your life's journey, you can always count your blessings—past, present, and future. When you feel as though you have nothing for which to praise God, read David's list.

Eccles. 11:9

Young man, it's wonderful to be young! Enjoy every minute of it. Do everything you want to do; take it all in. But remember that you must give an account to God for everything you do.

Approach your decisions with God's perspective—consider their impact 10 years from now and into eternity. Live with the attitude that although our life is short, we will live with God forever.

People often say, "It doesn't matter." But many of a person's choices will be irreversible—they will affect that person for a lifetime. What you do when you're young *does* matter. Enjoy life now, but don't do anything physically, morally, or spiritually that will prevent you from enjoying life when you are old.

John 21:18

The truth is, when you were young, you were able to do as you liked and go wherever you wanted to. But when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and others will direct you and take you where you don't want to go."

This was a prediction of Peter's death by crucifixion. Tradition indicates that Peter was crucified for his faith—upside down because he did not feel worthy of dying as his Lord did. Despite what Peter's future held, Jesus told him to follow him. We may be uncertain and fearful about our future. But if

we know God is in control, we can confidently follow Christ.

Deut. 34:7

Moses was 120 years old when he died, yet his eyesight was clear, and he was as strong as ever.

No matter how good we are or how much we've done for God, we sometimes disobey him. The result of our disobedience is that we will be disciplined. God disciplined Moses severely but still called him his friend. When you experience the sting of God's discipline, respond as Moses did. Don't turn away in anger, embarrassment, or resentment. Instead, turn toward God with love, openness, and a desire to do better.

Joshua 14:11

I am as strong now as I was when Moses sent me on that journey, and I can still travel and fight as well as I could then.

When Joshua gave Caleb his portion, it fulfilled a promise God had made to Caleb 45 years earlier. We expect such integrity and reliability from God, but do we expect the same from his followers? How about you? Is your word this reliable? Would you honor a 45-year-old promise? God would—and does. Even today he is honoring promises he made *thousands* of years ago. In fact, some of his greatest promises are yet to be fulfilled. This gives us much to look forward to. Let your faith grow as you realize that God keeps his word.

Job 29:20

New honors are constantly bestowed on me, and my strength is continually renewed.'

Job was walking a fine line between bragging about past accomplishments and recalling good deeds in order to answer the charges against him. Job's one weakness throughout his conversations is that he came dangerously

close to pride. Pride is especially deceptive when we are doing right. But it separates us from God by making us think we're better than we really are.

Then comes the tendency to trust our own opinions, which leads to other kinds of sin. While it is not wrong to recount past deeds, it is far better to recount God's blessings to us. This will help keep us from inadvertently falling into pride.

Because of this description of Job's work, many commentators believe that Job was a judge. In Job's day, a judge served as both a city councilman and a magistrate, helping to manage the community and settle disputes. In most cases, this was not a full-time position but a part-time post held on the basis of one's respect and standing in the area.

Isaiah 55:6

Seek the Lord while you can find him. Call on him now while he is near.

Food costs money, lasts only a short time, and meets only physical needs. But God offers us free nourishment that feeds our soul. How do we get it? We are to come (55:1), listen (55:2), seek, and call on God (55:6). God's salvation is freely offered, but to nourish our souls we must eagerly receive it. We will starve spiritually without this food as surely as we will starve physically without our daily bread.

Joel 2:25

The Lord says, "I will give you back what you lost to the stripping locusts, the cutting locusts, the swarming locusts, and the hopping locusts. It was I who sent this great destroying army against you."

Joel contrasts the fear of God's judgment (2:1) with the joy of God's intervention (2:21). On the day of the Lord, sin will bring judgment, and only God's forgiveness will bring rejoicing. Unless you repent, your sin will result in punishment. Let God intervene in your life. Then you will be able to rejoice in that day because you will have nothing to fear. Before, there were

fasting, plagues, and funeral dirges; then, there will be feasting, harvesting, and songs of praise. When God rules, his restoration will be complete. In the meantime, we must remember that God does not promise that all his followers will be prosperous now. When God pardons, he restores our relationship with him, but this does not guarantee individual wealth. Instead, God promises to meet the deepest needs of those who love him by loving us, forgiving us, giving us purpose in life, and giving us a caring Christian community.

If the Jews would never again experience a disaster like this locust plague ("never again will my people be disgraced"), how do we explain the captivity in Babylon, the Jews' slavery under the Greeks and Romans, and their persecution under Hitler? It is important not to take these verses out of context. This is still part of the "blessings" section of Joel's prophecy. Only if the people truly repented would they avoid a disaster like the one Joel had described.

God's blessings are promised only to those who sincerely and consistently follow him. God does promise that after the final Day of Judgment, his people will never again experience this kind of disaster (Zechariah 14:9-11; Revelation 21).

Peter quoted this passage (see Acts 2:16-21); the outpouring of the Spirit predicted by Joel occurred on Pentecost. While in the past God's Spirit seemed available to kings, prophets, and judges, Joel envisioned a time when the Spirit would be available to every believer. Ezekiel also spoke of an outpouring of the Spirit (Ezekiel 39:28, 29).

God's Spirit is available today to anyone who calls on the Lord for salvation (2:32).

Spurgeon Prayed:

“Come Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove

With All the Power of Life”.

An invitation is given to open your heart's door to Jesus

Rev. 3:20

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.

To ask Jesus to come into your heart please pray this Prayer:

Dear Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. I ask you to forgive me of my sins and coming into my heart. I accept you as savior and will follow you as Lord. Amen.

References

Holy Bible: Living Bible Translation

Additional comments and charts are taken from: *Life Application Study Bible*. Illinois: Tyndale House 2007. Print

<http://bible.knowing-jesus.com/John/21/18>