

Rev'd Up

The Hunger of the Younger

March 5, 2023

Today we're revving up to run our race by catching up with the most motivating group on the planet; the **youth!** Because regardless of the *route* – they set the *pace* we *need* to get to the *place* we *want*. And if we bump up our tempo to match these maniacs, we'll get guaranteed insight into this question: **How young is your heart?** And its condition is critical cuz physically *or* spiritually, one way or *another*, the number one cause of death is heart failure! And the number one cause of heart failure is age! So, if we want to keep death at bay, we need to stay young at heart – which means pressing pause on our old ways to jump in and play the way the kids do things these days.



And if you disagree, I would politely point you to Asbury University in Wilmore, Kentucky and ask why it took a group of *students* to start something that every Christian claims to be working on 'round the clock?! I mean, I'm pumped when we get online *clicks* and in-house *congregations* in the *hundreds* – but when a small group of college kids in a town of 6000 can motivate a movement with 50,000 visitors and nearly 100 million viewers – you gotta ask, **"What's their secret?!"**

Well, I think I got it – **the secret power of the youth, is that they're young!** They're still new to this place and everyday they're eager and excited to understand the things that amaze and astound them. So they can't sit still – which is great, because life is lived by moving and engaging. And it's only after a couple decades that finding answers becomes tiring enough that we consider trading truth for comfort.

And then, a lot of adults begin to give in to exhaustion and accept imperfection, so we justify easing up by projecting our pessimism onto others with phrases like *"good enough"* or *"it is what it is"*. And in the process, **we all get trained to contain our frustration and accept imperfection!** *How awful!* And it's that sort of surrender that really fires up the writer of Hebrews:

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to make it clear to you because you no longer try to understand. In fact, *though* by this time you *ought* to be teachers, you need someone to teach *you* the *elementary* truths of God's Word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! **[Cuz we gotta want truth more than we don't want to work!]** – Hebrews 5:11-12 NIV

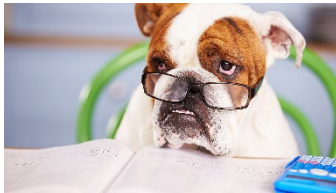
We are supposed to grow *up* as we know *more* – *but*, if we stop seeking truth with the hunger of the younger – we *need* to turn back the clock! Don't think getting older *equals* getting wiser – **we can look past life lessons as easily as we learn from them!** Like Job's friends who Elihu rips into:

I am *young* in years, and you are *old*; that is why I was fearful, not daring to tell you what I know. I thought, 'Age should speak; advanced years should teach wisdom.' But it is the *Spirit* in a person, the breath of the *Almighty*, that gives them understanding. It is *not* only the old who are wise, *not* only the aged who understand what is right. – Job 32:6-9 NIV

Look, we're *all* chasing after answers and we *all* start strong; but when we slow the pace, we lengthen the race and our wisdom can be tainted by how tired we are! Cuz **the later in life we learn a lesson, the less likely we are to put it into practice.** Y'know, old dogs and new tricks...

[So] Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, *before* the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, "I find no pleasure in them" – Ecclesiastes 12:1 NIV

Wisdom does come with age, but so does apathy! But because the youth have spent the LEAST amount of time being beat down by this world – they're still fired up to figure things out as fast as possible. They urgently want to *deal* with the issue we all *feel*: **we don't belong here!** While older adults tend to slow the pace of our race due to the frustration of failed attempts.



So **we need the youth to remind us that if we've gotten comfortable with the ways of this world, then we're not pushing for the perfection we were promised.** And we need to see that **our job is to fan their flame not persuade them to smolder!** Because it's *their* fire that's *our* reminder of the way we were before this world started smothering us with worthless work and false fear. And it shouldn't take an "Asbury" across the country to affect us over here on our corner because our kids are already all around us with the same reminder of what it takes break the bonds of this broken world! And honestly, after being out of youth for a few years, it's started slipping *my* mind – so when my wife asked me to come and speak at the recent youth retreat – once again, I caught what they got and it put some pep back in my step. **Watch.**

Remember living like that? **Nothing will reveal how old you got like seeing how young you're not!** And we had the audacity to call the retreat REV to encourage them to up their energy! And I preached three messages I wrote for *them* – that turned out to be aimed directly at *me*. So here's what I learned: We must become more active and energetic to chase down the answers that can change our mind, change our heart, and ultimately change our life.

Or rather, **we've got to REV up if we want REVELATION, REVIVAL, and REVOLUTION.** So why do we rev for *revelation*? Well, do you know what it means? *Apocalypse*. Same word. Remember that next time you're doomsday prepping or talking 'four horsemen' – cuz *both* words just mean *uncovering*. It is literally taking a veil back to *reveal* something. And if you didn't know that – *you* just had a revelation. It's that simple. And life is *full* of them! In fact, Jesus promises:

There is *nothing* hidden which will not be revealed – Mark 4:22 NKJ

And that makes sense, because **having a revelation is also called learning!** And it happens whenever we answer a question. Which means **revelations are all about changing our mind.** They take the confusion or chaos of the things we've experienced – and they make it make *sense*. Revelations are the moments when something just clicks!

And if we want things in our *life* to start clicking in our *mind* – we have to do two things that take a lot of mental energy and perseverance: **reject comfortable answers when they're untrue**, and **accept true answers when they're uncomfortable**.

You ever see the movie *Men In Black*? In it, Tommy Lee Jones sits down with Will Smith to reveal that aliens are already living all over earth and we see the struggle to let a revelation change your mind because of how hard it is to let go of what you thought to make room for what's actually true! And to encourage him, Tommy says something that I've held on to ever since; he says, **"1500 years ago everybody knew the earth was the center of the universe. 500 years ago everybody knew the earth was flat. And 15 minutes ago you knew that people were alone on this planet. Just imagine what you'll know tomorrow."**



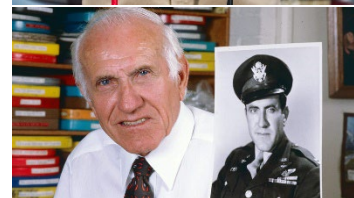
Just imagine what you'll know tomorrow! You don't know what you don't know; so you gotta believe that something could be revealed that changes your mind forever. And you gotta chase it full speed till it's found. Cuz that's the revelation that Jesus says He came to bring; fulfillment of the promise of Wisdom herself:



If you accept My words and store up My commands within you, turning your ear to wisdom and applying your heart to understanding— indeed, if you call out for insight and cry aloud for understanding, and if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. – Proverbs 2:1-5 NIV



Revelations come from constant curiosity; and it takes a young heart to keep questioning – when we *could* just take a break and accept imperfect answers. But then there'd be no chance of our next step; **REVIVAL**. Because revival just means living again, or bringing back to life. And **it only happens when things gain life**; which means working against the way of this world, where all things only lose life. **Revival means having a change of heart** and only revelations of real answers have the power to point our hearts in the right direction.



Ever hear of Louis Zamperini? Olympic runner who joined the Air Force in WW2 and after his plane went down, he fought off sharks, starvation, and dementia to set the world record for survival at sea; 47 days until he was finally rescued... by the Japanese! So he spent the next two years being physically and mentally tortured until the war ended and he came home. And although he was a national hero, things got worse! His anger and bitterness made his heart heavier and he became an alcoholic as life drained from him. Until he went to a Billy Graham rally where the Gospel turned him around and revived his heart. Instead of the pain in this place pulling him down, a higher purpose pulled him up! That's what it takes to beat death; real reasons that excite us to keep running. And in our heart, **the pursuit of truth turns survival into revival!**

[Which is why Paul encourages everyone] Let us not grow *weary* while doing good, for in due season we shall reap *if* we do not lose heart. – Galatians 6:9 NKJ



That's the key and yet losing heart is natural down here. This universe is ruled by entropy so death and decay is the expected end of all things. Which means we have to keep our eyes on the prize like with the eager energy of a kid at Christmas if we want to fight against the force of this dying world. But if we summon the strength keep up the fight, **our REVOLUTION has already begun!** Because revolution just means to roll back or roll again – describing how a circle or cycle moves forward but always comes back to the beginning.

And you know what's crazy about this world full of death and decay? Even though it's all in the process of falling apart, **EVERYTHING STARTED OFF BRAND NEW!** Your iPhone was once perfect before you cracked the screen and your skin was as soft as a baby's bottom – because you had a baby's bottom! But as time rolled on, we were drained and degraded as we all got further and further from that starting point. So we upgrade our phones, buy beauty products and try anything to roll back time! **It's the story of human life.** And Jesus sums it all up in the Prodigal Son. You know the story, impatient kid demands his inheritance, leaves the family, blows the money and ends up jealous of the pigs he's hired to feed. Well, remember what's *next*?

When he came to his senses, [sounds like he had a revelation] he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! [sounds like he wants a revival] I will set out and go back to my father [sounds like he's starting a revolution] and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.' – Luke 15:17-19 NIV

At a certain point, we all realize **we're doomed to death when we're on our own, and we were never more alive than when we were back at the beginning.** And we come to see that, like all racetracks, the finish line ends up being right where we started. And nobody is closer to the start than the young.

So even though they've got a long way to go around that track, **where they are right now is also where we want to end up.** And if we want to complete the course by changing our minds, hearts, and lives – we need to stay revved through our revelations, revivals, and revolutions. Because only the young at heart are close to the start, whether the race has just begun or is almost done. Because **we finish races the way we start them, eager and excited.** So if you've gotten tired because the finish line feels too far, spend some time with the kids at the start and remember that's what's waiting for you at the finish; an exciting, energetic, and brand new life!



And if you need help finding them, look around, **we can't escape them!** The youth are everywhere, they outnumber us, they're loud, you can smell them from a mile away – and they won't shut up! But just for good measure, we gave them a new name here at His Place. REV Youth. Because Ignition already happened, and our youth is ready to REV you up!

Father God, thank You for loving me in spite of my sin; forgive me and cleanse me by the sacrifice of Your Son, my Savior; and free me and lead me by Your Spirit and Word, as I seek to trust and follow Jesus Christ, as the Lord of my life. Amen.