



Youth in the Sight of God

fr Tadros Malaty



YOUTH

IN THE SIGHT OF GOD

GOD HONORS YOUTH

God created man to live in this world forever using his or her complete energy, as if he or she is a youth. I do not believe that it was in the divine plan for man to grow old and die. We can say that He honors youthfulness. The Psalmist offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God, saying, ***“Who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.”*** (Ps. 103:5).

St. Paul advises his disciple, St. Timothy, the young bishop, to deal with the ***“younger men as brothers,”*** (1 Tim 5:1) and respect their personalities and thoughts.

GOD WANTS CHEERFUL YOUTH WHO CHALLENGE ALL CIRCUMSTANCES

Youth are gifted with vibrant energy. They almost hope to be successful in all aspects of life. St. John in his old age reveals to the youth their ability in the Victorious Lord, Jesus Christ. He wrote, ***“I have written to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God abides in you, and you have overcome the wicked one.”*** (I Jn. 2:14). They are called to challenge the wicked world, sin, Satan and even death. Nothing and no one can overcome them.

Solomon, the wise and experienced man, asked youth to be cheerful as a sign of their victory. He says,

“Rejoice, O young man, in your youth, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; walk in the ways of your heart, and in the sight of your eyes; but know that for all these God will bring you into judgment.” (Eccl. 11:9).

The young deacon, St. Stephen challenged the hatred of those who judged him. Through his open heart full with love, his face shone as an angel of God. St. Luke relates: ***“And all who sat in the council, looking steadfastly at him, saw his face as the face of an angel.”*** (Acts 6:1).

Through the spirit of victory, SS. Paul and Silas considered themselves in heaven while they were wounded and chained in the dark inner prison. ***“But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.”*** (Acts 16:2) This victorious spirit overcame the keeper of the prison who didn’t mind what he would say to the statesmen, but in braveness, ***“when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.”*** (Acts 16:34).

YOUTH AND CARING OF THEIR TIME

Solomon discovered the importance of every moment of youth. He advises us, ***“Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you say, I have no pleasure in them.”*** (Eccl. 12:1)

YOUTH’S ROLE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

In the Old Testament, God reveals the role of all members of the Church in the New Testament, especially youth. He said, ***“And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your***

daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.” (Joel 2:28)
This prophecy was fulfilled on the day of the Pentecost. St. Peter also referred to this prophecy (Acts 2:17).

PIETY AND KNOWLEDGE IN THE LIVES OF THE YOUTH

David, the King of Israel, presents his experience of success as a youth by meditating on the word of God, that guides him in the real way of piety. He says, “*How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.*” (Ps. 119:9) His son, King Solomon, states that God can satisfy the needs of youths to knowledge. “*To give prudence to the simple, to the young man knowledge and discretion.*” (Prov. 1:4)

LIVING YOUTH

Once a little lady said to me that a young person deceived her. She discovered that he deceived many others as well. When she blamed him, he said to her that for him it is the real life, and he used to repeat that he wouldn’t die at all. His words reveal his hidden fear of death that will prevent him from realizing his carnal lusts. The Lord Jesus Christ wants every youth to have the experience of the daily risen life. St. Luke says, “*Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, ‘Young man, I say to you, arise.’*” (Luke 7:14)

YOUTH AND LEADERSHIP

God created man so that he may live as a leader, having a great authority. Concerning the creation of the first man, who surely was young, “*God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and*

over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”
(Gen. 1:26).

Then, God blessed Adam and Eve, who were youth, and said to them, ***“Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”*** (Gen. 1:28).

St. Paul encouraged his young disciple, Timothy, saying, ***“Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”*** (1 Tim. 4:12)

Now, we hope that all believers become young through the constant renewal of their nature, by the work of the Holy Spirit. They should never suffer from insecurity, weakness or senility, but always enjoy fresh youthfulness.

The message of the Church can be summarized in creating the feeling of the spiritual youthfulness, that is to be always joyful in the Lord, challenges the wicked world, sin, Satan and even death. Every member has his own role in the kingdom of God on earth as ambassador of Christ. He or she should become a successful leader without being effected by others. A leader never complains of peer pressure, but guides others in the royal way. He is ambitious to be successful in all aspects of his life. He is always growing and progressing in his affairs. He enjoys life and attains new daily experiences and knowledge. Eventually, he shares the characteristics of His Savior as the Lover of all mankind and as the Source of joy to many.

Fr. Tadros Y. Malaty

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