

The Younger.

by Gareth Evans

The sermon teaches that being the younger means having a heart focused on the future, not the present, and trusting in God, not man.

Scripture: Hebrews 11:20

Topics: "Kingdom Living", "Faithfulness"

Description

Gareth Evans preaches on the significance of being like the 'younger' in the Bible, drawing parallels from the lives of Jacob, Esau, the prodigal son, and David. He emphasizes the importance of not being tied to the status quo of this world, but rather focusing on the kingdom of God and living as strangers here. The 'younger' is patient, trusting in God's faithfulness, and not engaging in worldly politics or self-centered pursuits.

Transcript

"And there was strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And He said unto them, 'The kings of the earth exercise Lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But you shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger..'"
Luke 22: 24-26

In the Jewish culture the 'younger' held no position of honour or power. The eldest brother was the one upon whom the honour of the family was laid; the youngest brother was the last of the hand-me-down line with little claim on any family honours or inheritance. However, it is seen that some found favor in the heart of God for, on two occasions, we read that both Isaac and Jacob pronounced blessings on younger sons. Isaac blessed Jacob above Esau; Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph, Ephraim above Manasseh. (Heb.11:20,21; Gen.48:14). In Hebrews 11:20,21 these actions are attributed to 'faith' - the directive prompting of God. Indeed God said "Jacob I have loved; Esau I have hated" (Malachi 1: 2 and Rom 9:13). Why? Paul teaches that it was to show God's mercy. God not treating us as we deserve! BUT I think there is something more significant we need to learn. Jacob was a rebel, it is true, but Esau lived for the "NOW" , despising his birthright - and that is what the Lord hates.

The lives of Jacob and Esau have many parallels in the story Jesus told about the prodigal son of Luke 15:11. Both Jacob and the prodigal were rebels; both left home only to return in remorse, having come to their senses. What can I learn from this younger son? There seems to be nothing to commend him - until I contrast him with the elder brother.

The Father loved both sons equally but it was the younger who brought him greatest joy - after repentance and return. In the younger son there was acknowledgment of his sin and unworthiness. He did not come home expecting the father's welcome but, rather, humbly as a servant. Again, it was the Father's mercy that caused the fatted calf to be killed.

Further, all that the Father owned belonged to the elder son; that was to be his inheritance. He would get the farm with all its fatted calves. The younger son had no such inheritance - he could carry all his 'worldly possessions' on his shoulders as he walked away. BUT I suggest that might give us the clue as to why the younger more readily expresses 'greatness' before the Lord.

He had no interest in the "status quo"! He had nothing to tie him to this world! He did not own the farm and the farm did not own him!! Of the younger it could truly be said "he loved not this world" (1 Jn 2:15-17). It is true that, before his conversion, he sought pleasures in its indulgences but he found they did not satisfy. His elder brother never learned that truth and, though his was not a lusting after the flesh, he was still a lover of this world, being tied in to its system with its promised inheritances and riches.

Where is my inheritance today ? Do I see it in this world or in another? In the kingdoms of men or the kingdom of God ?

Many believers still have their eyes on this world and its treasures. Like the elder brother, they are more concerned about the state of the farm and their position and possessions; Like the descendants of Reuben, the eldest son of Jacob, they would rather stay "this side of Jordan" in a land fit for cattle, than risk stepping out into the uncertainties of the promised land of God with its milk and honey, grapes of Eshcol - and giants to be overcome. (with Gad - Numbers 32)

They keep building castles and empires here instead of being like Abraham of whom it is recorded that he lived as an alien in this world seeking for a city whose architect and builder is God. (Heb.11:10)

The song of the younger brother is

"This world is not my home; I'm just a passing through".

or "I am a stranger here, within a foreign land; my home is far away, upon a distant strand,

Ambassador am I for realms beyond the sky, I'm here on business for my King."

The most prominent 'youngster' in the Bible was the shepherd boy, David. He was the youngest of 8 sons of Jesse. (1 Sam 16). Who could have foreseen such a future for him when the prophet Samuel had anointed him to be king over Israel ? The only experience he had had was tending sheep. But he had not been wasting his time! He had practiced with the sling doing his work faithfully., defending his father's sheep against a lion and a bear.

Though he was in the lowest of the "hand-me-down" line he never showed resentment but learned to accept his position and to wait his turn. The Lord choose him to become king because God knew his heart. To Samuel, God had said, "Man looketh on the outward appearance but I look at the heart". Where again is your heart focused? This world or the next ? "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" (Pure = unalloyed with the things of this world)

David had learned to trust in God - even when the circumstances seemed like giants before him. He never fastened his attention on the problems but kept his eyes on the Lord. His confidence was in the Lord, and in the sling he had proved, not in the untried armor which he had not proved. What have you proved? God's Word ? His name ?

Though David entered Saul's palace, he would not force God's timetable. He had learned to wait! Do not rush ahead of God; you will only walk in your own shadow! Though there were opportunities when it seemed that God was presenting the throne before him, David still would wait, saying "I will not lay my hand against the Lord's elect. There was to be no politicking with him! That is the way of this world, it is not the way of the Kingdom of Heaven. And God knew David's heart!

Let me summarize what we have learned about being the younger:

THE YOUNGER is not interested in the status quo - his eyes and heart are focused elsewhere. He is a stranger in this world, not tied to its systems and goals. He can wait his turn, not playing the politics of church, trusting in God who is faithful, not in the unproved confidences of others. He lives for the future, not for the self-centredness of Now.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/gareth-evans/the-younger/>

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