

## **WHY SEEK GOD IN YOUR YOUTH?**

Is there an advantage in seeking God in your youth? Why not wait until you're older, after you've had your fun? Isn't life more FUN without the restrictions of God's laws?

I have lived in this world and experienced much in my short life. By age 15 I already lived on my own. I explored this nation from California to Florida with my friends – not my parents. We lived on the road and slept wherever we happened to park. By the age of 16, I had already done a lot of “playing”, this worlds style. There was never a dull moment. Fun? Yeah, some of it. Painful? YOU BET – VERY PAINFUL! My life was going nowhere fast – until I turned to God. I “enjoyed the freedom” for a few years – often homeless – but I came to realize by the age of 17 my life was hanging in the balance. I was physically fatherless, but when God became my Father, my life really began to change. Then my life became RICH and filled with REAL MEANING, REAL EXCITEMENT, and REAL FUN. I was now filled with purpose and HOPE! I went from despair to LIFE! Anyone who says this world has more fun to offer than a life with God has no idea what they are talking about! My young friends; answer God's calling when you are yet young, and leave the pain and scars for those less fortunate.

Daniel was a man who turned to God in his youth, as were the three young men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego. You don't need to wait until you are older. The sooner you begin to walk with God the smarter you will be as an adult! Seeking God is SMART, and it is awesome! How old do you suppose Daniel was when he refused the kings dainty unclean meats? How old were his three friends when they were thrown into the fiery furnace?

Dan.1:4-9 Daniel was about 10 years of age, when he was taken captive as a slave. God called Daniel and his three friends, “young men”. The word “young” here in Hebrew refers to children through the age of adolescence. Daniel was a teenager of about 15 years old, when he refused to eat the pagan kings unclean meat – in order to obey his God! What effect did obedience to God have on Daniel?

Dan.1:17-20 The king and his wise men found young Daniel and his teenage friends 10 TIMES WISER than the wise men in the kings realm. Why do you suppose they were so wise?

David tells us: “You, through Your commandments, make me wiser than my enemies; for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers, for Your testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Your precepts.” (Ps 119:98-105) Because David kept and studied God's Statutes and Commandments, God gave him exceeding wisdom.

This was also the source of wisdom for Daniel and his 3 friends. God's ways are very cool indeed! They make you SMARTER than your enemies and SMARTER than the godless teachers of this world. Daniel and his teenage friends became the friends of God. God loved Daniel and his three friends and protected them from the machinations of their enemies, throughout their long lives. Daniel served and outlived several kings. In his 80's, Daniel's life was still RICH, because he continued to walk with God. God always protected and blessed Daniel, while those around him continued to live like slaves.

Have you come to realize that real life, real joy, real accomplishment, real love, the most meaningful relationships and best friends, the most exciting life is a walk with God? Or do you think you know a better way? Do you need to wait until you are older to begin your walk with God? Did you know David was a teenager between 16 and 18 when he slew Goliath? Before that, God empowered David to kill a bear and a lion with his hands. (1 Sam.17:34-37) How old was he then? 13? 15?

How old will you be before you see that what this world has to offer PALES in significance to what God can do with your life? How much pain and wasted time will it take for you to realize that the fun and excitement – yes the SMART thing to do is turn to God in your youth?

Ps 111:10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: a good understanding have all they that do his commandments: his praise endureth for ever. (KJV)

Be smart, and turn to God while you are young, like Timothy did. (1 Tim.4:12 & 2 Tim.3:15) Remember, Esau rejected God and then thought he could repent at his convenience. But God rejected him for treating his heritage and opportunity as a small thing, and called him a profane. (Heb.12:15-17) Esau's repentance was too late. The damage was done! Don't gamble with your calling and think you can come to God at your leisure without loss! Don't treat your precious calling as a small thing. What God is offering you youth is incredibly awesome. My life, since being baptized at age 17, has been filled with more joy, more meaning, more life, more success, better friendships better hope and a richer understanding. Why? Not because I'm good, but because of God's mercy, and laws in my life. My life improved immensely, when God became my Father! He is there to be your Father too. Will you be smart and seek God in your youth, or will you gamble and hope you can repent later like Esau? Be smart!