

Theme: New You?!

Isaiah 40:27-31 (NKJV)

²⁷ Why do you say, O Jacob, And speak, O Israel: "My way is hidden from the LORD, And my just claim is passed over by my God"? ²⁸ Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. ²⁹ He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength. ³⁰ Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall, ³¹ But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint.

Well, we're into the first week of February. Time to check and see how those New Year's Resolutions are coming along. Did you make one this New Year? Have you already broken it? Don't beat yourself up too badly, most people have not kept theirs by this point either. Depending on the poll that you read, somewhere between only 8-9% of people keep their resolutions for a whole year. One poll I read said that only 8% keep their resolution for even one month! February can be a sobering reminder that those good intentions, those hopes we had for improvements in certain areas of our lives just one month ago don't always come to fruition. It can be a reminder that a change in calendar years doesn't magically guarantee us a "fresh start," or renewed health, or better eating and exercising habits, or a "new you."

On that "cheerful" note, let me remind you one month into this New Year, that whether you've made or kept your resolutions or not, we still have the sure and certain promises of God, just like we've had in all the days, months and years past. In Him, and because of Him, you are a **New You!**

Now, it may not always be in the ways we want to be made new—new diet, new health, new body—but God guarantees that He has and does renew us in the only way that really counts: spiritually. These verses from our text will always hold a special place in my heart because **v. 31** was the passage my high school class chose as our graduation verse.

Those of you who are older, do you remember what it was like to be a senior in high school? To be 18 again? To have seemingly limitless energy, enthusiasm, and strength? As many of us also know very well, youth is no guarantee of good health. Physical strength is no guarantee of true strength, and earthly power is no guarantee of endurance or longevity. Our text says, **"Even the youths shall faint and be weary, And the young men shall utterly fall" (v. 30).**

But, as our text also reminds us when our power source and strength is the LORD, Jehovah, the one true God, our strength is true; it is unlimited, and untiring! **"He [the LORD] gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength...those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, They shall run and not be weary, They shall walk and not faint" (v. 29, 31).**

How do we get such strength from the LORD? When we **"wait on the LORD" (v. 31)**. That word can also be translated **"hope in the LORD."** Faith and trust in the LORD; that's what brings true strength! Trust in ourselves, in our feelings, or our own intelligence or strength will only bring eventual failure and frustration. Trust in other people, or in the strength or intelligence of people will also eventually cause us to stumble. But trusting in the LORD will never fail, even when it seems very difficult to **"wait"** or **"hope"** in the LORD we know that He is giving us what we need at the right time.

Think about it: when life gets toughest, when you've felt like you were about to break, what got you through it? Was it the fact that you put in a little extra time at the gym that week or ran a few extra miles? Did you try and convince yourself that you were a smart enough person to endure your personal difficulty or tragedy in a reasonable way?

No! When we are face-down without strength or might of our own because of what this sinful world has thrown our way, or because of our own foolishness or sinful actions, we cry out to the LORD for help. In our text He promises us, **He gives power to the weak, And to those who have no might He increases strength (v. 29).** He has never broken a promise. He will never fail us or leave us. He loves us and He wants us to trust His love.

Often—far too often—we forget this. The people of Isaiah's day were also guilty at times of forgetting this. The LORD knew that when the Israelites were carried away into the Babylonian captivity for 70 long years they would be tempted to lose hope and forget that God loved them and was still with them. He would remind His people through this prophecy of Isaiah of the truth that He was still their all-powerful creator God whose ways and reasons are far above their own. He says in **v. 28, “Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, The Creator of the ends of the earth, Neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable” (Isaiah 40:28).**

When we forget God's power and love He needs to turn us back to the “proof” that He is not only capable of helping us and giving us His strength, but also that He truly loves us more than we can imagine and wants to give us this strength. That ultimate proof is found in His Son, Jesus. God gave us the ultimate, “I love you!” by sending Jesus as a gift of His love to be one of us. He showed us His power and compassion through the incredible miracles and words Jesus spoke on this earth to comfort and to heal. He showed the ultimate proof of His undying commitment and devotion to us and our salvation by sacrificing that only Son of His on the cross of Calvary. Then, just to leave nothing in doubt, He proved His promises to us by raising Jesus from the dead.

Once again today, God reminds us of His promises and His love and He asks us, **“Have you not known? Have you not heard?” (Isaiah 40:28).** We do know, and we have heard, we just don't always remember or take it to heart. But what I want us all to realize this morning is that God doesn't just promise to make you a **“New You,”** He has promised us many times that through Jesus, through faith in His Son He has made us a **“New You!”** He has renewed you! In His Word He promises us that

- ✦ **“In Christ...”** we are **“a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).**
- ✦ **“In Christ...”** God tells us, we **“can do all things” (Philippians 4:13).**
- ✦ God also promises us in His Word that **“In Christ...”** His **“mercies”** are **“new every morning” (Lamentations 3:23).**

“In Christ...” every day is a day of renewal and newness. **“In Christ...”** every day God is bringing about a **“New You”**—a renewed you! We don't have to wait until next New Year's day! His promises and His strength are waiting for us every day, right here in His Word. Never forget that!

In these Words and promises of God, that is where we find true strength! Not because they are some feel-good, religious wishful thinking positive statements to help get us thinking optimistically about the future. No, these words and promises are powerful and give us true strength because they are true—In Christ! I encourage you as the days go on in this New Year, now more than a month old: Remind yourself of these promises of God and He will renew your strength—your spiritual strength. Read these promises for yourself in His Word and remind yourself of all that God has done for you—of the **“New You”** He has made **“In Christ.”** There are thousands of promises from God in there. Write each one down as you come across them and keep that list somewhere where you can review it often.

Whether you have had the will power to keep your New Year's Resolutions or not, we pray that God would give us His untiring strength in our bodies, in our minds, and most importantly, in our souls. We pray that He would remind us and instill in us faithfulness and trust in His Words and promises. Above all we pray that He would give our hearts true comfort and peace through the forgiveness won by the death of His Son Jesus. The peace that surpasses our understanding, that unburdens our heavy consciences from the weight of our sin and guilt and allows us to truly and freely **“mount up with wings like eagles” (v. 31)** and soar each day in Christ's newness toward our heavenly home! Amen!