

BEAUTIFUL THINGS

Title: Part 6 – “The Secret to Feeling Young Again”

Date: September 21, 2025

As we continue in this moment of worship let's all stay standing for the reading of God's Word. For six weeks now we have camped out in just one passage of Scripture from Psalm 103. My hope and prayer has been that after reading this for six weeks in a row we might actually have this memorized. Not because you have to, but because this is too good to forget!

So, here we go, it will be on the screens if you need a little help, but Psalm 103, verses 1 through 5:

¹ Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. ² Praise the Lord, my soul, and **forget not** all his **BENEFITS**—³ who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, ⁴ who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, ⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

Give yourself some love! As we have been learning, David is directing his soul to remember what we are so prone to forget, that there are some things that can only come from the hand of God. Then in verse 5 there is this dramatic conclusion. He says remember all these things so that your youth is renewed like the eagles!

How many of you have ever looked at a 5-year-old and wished you could bottle up some of their youthful energy so you could pour a little shot into your coffee each morning? Anyone in the house know what I am talking about?

Today I want to preach a message I'm calling:

The Secret to Feeling Young Again

I can't wait to jump into this so let's pray and invite God to not just speak to us, but renew us today. Pray with me.

[PRAYER TIME]

Hey before you grab a seat take a :30 seconds and say “Hi” to some people around you. While everyone here in the house is saying “Hi” to each other I want to say “Hi” if you are joining us online or on our app, thank you for spending some time with us! We think you are a

part of our church family so let us know how we can pray for you or serve you—we'd love to walk alongside you in any way that we can.

Well, if you are just jumping in with us today it is going to feel a little bit like walking into the last 15 minutes of a movie. Did you ever do that as a kid? Your movie—the one that you told your parents you were seeing—ends but then you speak over to the other movie that still had a few minutes to go? Today's gonna feel like that BUT instead of worrying about the usher coming by and escorting you out, all you have to do is go back on our app or website and you can get caught up on anything you missed.

Over the past five weeks, we've discovered six beautiful things that God provides—not just nice religious concepts—but things we literally cannot live without. Things like complete **FORGIVENESS** that transforms broken things into beautiful things. Comprehensive **HEALING** that restores you to your original design. **REDEMPTION** that rescues you from whatever pit you've fallen into. A **CROWN** of love and compassion that establishes your new identity. And then last week, **SATISFACTION** of our desires with good things that no store can deliver.

TODAY we're talking about the sixth and final beautiful thing, and it addresses something that every single person in this room is desperate for: the ability to start fresh, to feel young again, to have energy for life, to experience renewal that goes deeper than any spa treatment or self-care routine.

AND to get us rolling I've got a question for you: When was the last time you felt truly refreshed? Not just after a good night's sleep or a vacation, but genuinely renewed from the inside out. When was the last time you felt like you had the energy, enthusiasm, and vitality you had when you were younger?

If you're like most people, it's been a while. Amen? We live in the most exhausted generation in human history even though we have all these devices and technology that are supposed to save us time and energy. I found some fascinating statistics on this:

- 73 percent of Americans report feeling burned out at work.
- 68 percent say they feel emotionally drained most days. *[AND]*
- 59 percent say they feel older than their chronological age.

We're running on empty, **AND** we're all looking for ways to feel young again.

That's why the wellness industry is worth \$1.8 trillion globally. Let me say that again. The wellness industry is worth 1.8 trillion—with a T—1.8 trillion dollars! We're spending enormous amounts of money on supplements that promise energy, treatments that promise renewal, routines that promise to turn back the clock.

There's was even this whole trend on social media a while back about being "very demure, very mindful"—which basically means living with intention, being thoughtful about your choices, approaching life with grace and awareness. And I actually love that! The desire to live with intention, to be mindful of what really matters, to approach life with grace—these are beautiful things.

But here's what I've discovered: you can be as demure and mindful as you want, but if you're trying to generate renewal through your own effort, you're going to burn out! You can meditate, you can do yoga, you can eat organic, you can get enough sleep, you can practice gratitude—and all of those things are good—but they can't provide the kind of deep, lasting renewal your soul is crying out for.

That's BECAUSE the exhaustion you're feeling isn't just physical. It's spiritual! We are a mind, body and soul. You can work on your mind and body all you want—and we should—but spiritual exhaustion requires spiritual renewal. Are you with me? You can't compartmentalize your life and expect to have wholeness.

That's what David discovered when he said God, look at it again from Psalm 103, God satisfies your desires with good things: (v5)

...so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

That sounds so poetic, and it is, but when you understand what David is actually referring to here, it will open the door to understanding how renewal really works.

See when David says your youth is renewed "like the eagle's," most people picture a majestic bald eagle soaring through the sky, right? AND if you have ever read some motivational or even well-meaning Christian books you might have even bumped into this urban legend that:

- Eagles live 70+ years.
- Around age of 40, eagles face a crisis where their beaks become too curved, their talons are too long, and their feathers are too heavy.

- So, they must fly to a mountaintop and go through a painful 150-day renewal process where...
- They beat their beaks against rocks until they break off and grow back.
- They pull out their talons and wait for new ones to grow.
- They pluck out all their old, heavy feathers and wait for new plumage. BUT:
- After this agonizing process, they have 30 more years of renewed life.

And come on... the idea of painful renewal at midlife leading to new life resonates! And eagles are Biblical symbols, so this seems so spiritual. It is perfect for "you have to go through pain to grow" messages. There is only one problem. None of that is true! I won't go point by point, you can look it up, but to start with Eagles only live about 20-30 years.

BUT that's not what David is talking about anyway! The Hebrew word here is {Neh-sheh} nesher (נֶשֶׁר) and while it can refer to eagles in Scripture, most likely in this context David is actually referring to the **GRIFFON VULTURE**—a scavenger bird that has an incredible natural renewal process.

Here's what happens: as griffon vultures feed, their feathers get soaked with blood and oils and fat and become heavy, matted, and burdensome. But when they engage in their natural behavior—soaring high, catching thermal currents, spending time in the heights—those heavy, oil-soaked feathers naturally shed away, revealing fresh, clean plumage underneath.

The renewal doesn't happen through some dramatic, painful process. It happens through the bird simply doing what it was designed to do—soaring in the heights, catching the wind, living in its natural element.

SO, do you see the spiritual parallel and why this is what David was actually talking about? As we go through life, we accumulate spiritual "muck"—the stress, the disappointments, the hurts, the fears, the anxieties, the guilt, the shame. All of this stuff weighs us down and makes us feel heavy, tired, old. BUT when we engage in what we were designed to do—worship God, spend time in His presence, focus on His benefits—that accumulated muck naturally falls away, and we discover fresh spiritual vitality underneath.

In other words, renewal doesn't happen through striving. It happens through soaring! It doesn't come through effort. It comes through worship! It doesn't require you to work harder. It invites you to worship higher!

That's the first takeaway I have today, write this down:

Renewal is natural when you worship.

The renewal process of the griffon vultures—shedding heavy feathers naturally through soaring—is actually a better metaphor than the made-up bald eagle legend because it shows real renewal happens through engaging in what you were designed to do (worship), not through some kind of self-punishment.

Look back at the text. Notice how this Psalm 103 begins and ends. It starts with:

¹ Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. ² Praise the Lord, my soul...
[AND then notice how it ends] so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

The beginning and the end are connected. Worship is both the starting point and the destination.

See David isn't just listing God's benefits to inform you. He's listing them to invite you into worship. AND when you worship—when you focus on God's goodness, remember His benefits, declare His faithfulness—something supernatural happens. The heavy stuff that's been weighing you down starts to fall away.

This is why worship is so powerful! It's not just an activity you do at church. It's the mechanism God designed for spiritual renewal!

When you worship:

- You remember who God is and who you are.
- You gain perspective on your problems.
- You connect to the source of all energy and life.

When you worship:

- You trade your weakness for His strength.
- You trade your weariness for His rest.
- You trade your heaviness for His joy.

Come on, how many of you can testify to the truth of this? Worship is the mechanism God designed for spiritual renewal.

The prophet Isaiah says: (40:31)

But those who **HOPE** in the Lord will **renew** their strength. They will soar on wings like *eagles*; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

The Hebrew word for "hope" here means "to wait with expectation, to look to, to trust in." When you look to God with expectation, when you trust in His character, when you wait on His timing—that's when renewal happens.

You don't generate renewal through your own effort. You receive it through worship.

You don't create energy through willpower. You connect to it through worship.

You don't manufacture vitality through self-care routines. You access it through authentic worship.

BUT what does that look like practically? How can you apply this on a daily basis? How do we make this a natural response and not just a thing we do for an hour on Sundays? I broke this up into three categories in my notes: morning practices, throughout-the day practices, and evening practices. First...

Morning Practices:

- Start with gratitude: Before checking your phone in the morning, name three specific things God has done for you recently. Easy, right? You can also...
- Declare His character: Choose one attribute of God each day (faithful, loving, powerful) and speak it over your day: "God, you are faithful, so I trust you with today's challenges..."
- Sing in the shower: you could also put on some worship music while getting ready and sing along.

Are you with me? This doesn't have to be complicated. Simple things like these...

Throughout-the-Day Practices:

- Take a "Reset Moment": When you feel overwhelmed, take 60 seconds to remember who God is: "God, you're bigger than this problem, you love me, you have a plan." Or you could start a...

- Benefit journal: Keep a running list in your phone of God's daily provisions, answered prayers, or moments of grace. You could also do some...
- Breath prayers: Simple phrases like "Jesus, you are enough" or "God, I trust you" that you can repeat during stressful moments.

Again, this isn't about generating renewal through your own effort. That's not the point of these. These are things you can do to receive renewal through worship. Like these...

Evening Renewal Practices:

- Review the day with God: Instead of scrolling before bed, spend 5 minutes talking to God about the day—thanking Him, confessing struggles, declaring His goodness.
- Read Psalm 103: Since you've memorized it, recite it as a bedtime prayer, personalizing each benefit.

Bottom line. Renewal is natural when you worship. AND the key is to make worship a response to life, not just a church activity. Number 2:

Focus on God, not just yourself.

There's a lot of talk these days about mindfulness—being present in the moment, paying attention to your thoughts and feelings, practicing awareness. And again, I think there's tremendous value in that. But I want to suggest something better: God-fullness.

Mindfulness says, "Pay attention to what's happening inside you."

God-fullness says, "Pay attention to what God is doing around you *and* through you."

Mindfulness says, "Be present to your experience."

God-fullness says, "Be present to God's presence."

Mindfulness says, "Focus on your breathing."

God-fullness says, "Focus on the God who gave you breath."

- Mindfulness can help you manage your stress, but God-fullness can remove the source of your stress.
- Mindfulness can help you cope with your anxiety, but God-fullness can replace your anxiety with peace.

- Mindfulness can help you endure your circumstances, but God-fullness can transform your circumstances.

AND that's exactly what we find David doing in Psalm 103. When David says, "Praise the Lord, my soul," he's practicing the ultimate mindfulness. David is literally talking to himself, giving his inner self a command. The Hebrew word for "soul" is {NEH-fesh} nephesh (נֶפֶשׁ) and encompasses his mind, emotions, and will. He's essentially saying, "Hey, inner self—I'm directing you to focus on God right now."

Instead of letting his mind spiral on problems, David deliberately turns his attention to God's character and actions. Rather than ruminating on worries or negative thoughts, he's consciously filling his mental space with God's goodness. Instead of being emotionally hijacked by his circumstances, he's choosing to let God's love and faithfulness capture his affections.

In other words, regular mindfulness helps you observe your mental state. David's approach helps you transform your mental state!

AND this is a deliberate choice. David isn't waiting to feel like praising God. He's not checking his emotions first. He's making a conscious decision to direct his soul toward worship regardless of how he feels. This is incredibly powerful because:

- It doesn't depend on circumstances.
- It doesn't require you to feel motivated first.
- It actively changes your emotional state rather than just observing it. *[AND]*
- It ultimately leads to spiritual renewal.

David understands that whatever captures your attention shapes your reality. If you focus on your problems, they seem bigger. If you focus on God's goodness, His reality becomes more present to you than your problems.

SO, try it this week. Have a conversation with yourself, say: "Soul, I know you're worried about that meeting tomorrow, but right now we're going to focus on how faithful God has been. Soul, I know you're feeling lonely, but right now we're going to remember how much God loves us." Right?

It's mindfulness BUT with a divine object of focus, which makes it infinitely more powerful than just self-awareness.

Renewal is natural when you worship. Focus on God, not just yourself. Number 3:

Renewal is a process, not a one-time event.

Here's what's beautiful about God's renewal system: it's not a one-time event. It's a cycle. Just like the griffon vulture doesn't get renewed once and stays renewed forever, spiritual renewal is an ongoing process.

I've been a follower of Jesus for nearly 40 years now—my dad baptized me when I was 7—and I can testify that in those 40 years I have never graduated from needing renewal. If anything, I need it more and more as my physical body gets older and older. You just don't reach a place where you never get heavy or tired or weighed down again. Life keeps happening. Stress keeps accumulating. The spiritual muck keeps building up. Amen?

But the good news is that renewal is always available. Every time you worship, every time you remember God's benefits, every time you focus on His goodness, every time you soar in His presence—renewal happens again!

The Apostle Paul reminds us in the New Testament: (Romans 12:2)

² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

The word "renewing" there is in the present continuous tense—it's something that keeps happening, not something that happens once.

Your mind needs to be renewed regularly. Your perspective needs to be refreshed consistently. Your spiritual vitality needs to be restored repeatedly. AND the way that happens is through consistent engagement with the God who "renews your youth like the eagle's."

One more today:

This renewal affects everything.

But here's what I want you to understand: when God renews your youth, it's not just spiritual. It affects every area of your life.

When your soul is renewed, it shows up in your physical energy too! When your spirit is refreshed, it impacts your emotional resilience! When your heart is revitalized, it influences your relational capacity! When your mind is renewed, it affects your professional creativity!

You start approaching life with the enthusiasm of someone who's been refreshed from the inside out. You start tackling challenges with the energy of someone who's been renewed by the source of all life. You start facing difficulties with the optimism of someone who remembers God's benefits.

This is why some 70-year-olds seem younger than some 30-year-olds. It's not just about genetics or lifestyle. It's about whether they've learned the secret of spiritual renewal.

I think about people like Billy Graham, who preached with passion and energy well into his 80s. Or Elisabeth Elliot, who faced incredible tragedy but continued to speak with vitality and hope. Or Mother Teresa, who served with tireless dedication despite physical hardships.

What did they have in common? They had learned the secret of renewal through worship. They had discovered that when you stay connected to the source of life, you have access to supernatural vitality.

AND really we have now we come full circle. Because when your youth is renewed like the eagle's, you have energy to live out all the other beautiful things we've been talking about.

When you're renewed:

- You have the energy to walk in forgiveness instead of carrying grudges.
- When you're refreshed, you have the emotional capacity to pursue healing instead of staying stuck in brokenness.
- When you're revitalized, you have the strength to climb out of pits instead of setting up camp there.
- When you're renewed, you have the confidence to live like the royalty you are instead of settling for less than God's best. *[AND]*
- When you're refreshed, you have the wisdom to be satisfied with good things instead of chasing after empty pleasures.

God sent me to tell someone today that you have been trying to generate renewal through your own effort when He has been offering to renew you through His power! You've been working overtime at the gym to feel young again when God wants to restore your youth

through worship! You've been exhausting yourself trying to get refreshed when the source of all refreshment has been waiting for you to come to Him!

You don't need another energy drink—you need the living water!

You don't need another supplement—you need the bread of life!

You don't need another self-care routine—you need the God who cares for you!

You don't need to be “very demure and very mindful”—you need to be very worshipful and very grateful!

You don't need to practice just mindfulness—you need to practice God-fullness!

Maybe you came in here today feeling old, tired, worn out, used up. Maybe you feel like your best days are behind you. Maybe you think you've missed your chance for renewal. BUT I want you to know that God specializes in making old things new! He takes what's worn out and makes it fresh! He takes what's tired and makes it energetic! He takes what's heavy and makes it light!

The prophet Isaiah spoke of this day in Isaiah 43:19, God says:

¹⁹ "See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland."

God is doing a new thing in your life. Your renewal is not dependent on your age, your circumstances, or your past. Your renewal is dependent on your willingness to engage in worship, to remember His benefits, to soar in His presence.

As we close out this collection of messages, I hope this has been a blessing to you, BUT I want you to see the beautiful progression of these six benefits:

1. God forgives all your sins—so your past is settled.
2. God heals all your diseases—so your present is being restored.
3. God redeems your life from the pit—so your future is secure.
4. God crowns you with love and compassion—so your identity is established.
5. God satisfies your desires with good things—so your longings are fulfilled.
6. God renews your youth like the eagle's—so your vitality is sustained.

Past, present, future. Identity, satisfaction, vitality. Everything you need for a beautiful life is found in these six benefits. BUT here's the key: you have to remember them! You have to focus on them! You have to worship the God who provides them!

I love what Dallas Willard said on this, in fact I put this quote in my book:

"The key to spiritual life is not more spiritual activity. The key is the space between the activities."

The space where you remember. The space where you worship. The space where you allow God to renew your youth like the eagle's.

Some of you have never experienced even one of these beautiful things because you've never trusted Christ as your Savior. Today can be the day that changes. Today can be the day you receive complete forgiveness, comprehensive healing, redemption from the pit, a crown of love and compassion, satisfaction with good things, and renewal of your youth.

Others of you have been Christians for years, but you've forgotten these benefits. You've been living like spiritual paupers when you're actually heirs to these incredible promises. Today can be the day you start living in the fullness of what God has provided.

The way of Jesus is not just about going to heaven when you die. It's about bringing heaven to earth while you live. These six beautiful things are pieces of heaven available to you right now.

Eugene Peterson spent his life teaching people to live these truths. A.W. Tozer wrote passionately about the God who satisfies. John Eldredge has built his entire ministry on the premise that God wants to give us beautiful things. They all have understood what David discovered thousands of years ago: there are six beautiful things you can't live without, and God provides every single one of them.

SO, praise the Lord, your soul. Let all that is within you praise His holy name. Praise the Lord, your soul, and forget not all His benefits!

Because when you remember His benefits, when you worship His goodness, when you soar in His presence—that's when your youth is renewed like the eagle's. That's when broken things become beautiful things.

Let's pray together.