



## **THE IMPORTANCE OF STARTING EARLY: Life Lesson For Youths - By Adegboyega Adejobi**

Youthful years are generally from age 13 to 30.

One major secret of success in life is to start early whatever you intend to do or venture into in life. That way, you will gain advantage over your mates or peers who may wake up later.

So, you want to go to school, start early; you want to learn a trade or vocation, start early; you want to start a career, business or go into politics, start early; you want to marry, start early; you want to have children, start early; you want to even serve God, start early!

Starting early is the message of the Bible. This can be confirmed all over the Bible itself. Please, consider the following scriptures:

"O God, thou art my God; **EARLY WILL I SEEK THEE**: my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." - Psalm 63: 1 (Emphasis mine)

"Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord:  
and the fruit of the womb is his reward.  
As arrows are in the hand of a mighty man;

so are CHILDREN OF THE YOUTH." - Psalm 127: 3-4 (Emphasis mine)

"Remember now thy Creator in the DAYS OF THY YOUTH, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." - Ecclesiastes 12: 1 (Emphasis mine)

God's emphasis on starting early can be clearly seen in the ages of the kings of Israel and Judah at coronation.

Consider the following list of the kings of Israel and Judah when they were crowned as kings

1. Jehoash - 7 years - 2 Kg. 11:21.
2. Josiah - 8 years - 2Kg.22:1.
3. Manasseh - 12 years - 2Kg.21:1; 2Chron.33:1.
4. Azariah - 16 years - 2Kg.14:21; 2Kg.15:1-2.
5. Uzziah - 16 years - 2Chron.26:1 & 3.
6. Jehoiachin - 18 years - 2Kg.24:8.
7. Ahaz - 20 years - 2Kg.16:2; 2Chron.28:1.
8. Zedekiah - 20 years - 2Kg.24:18; Jer.52:1.
9. Ahaziah - 22 years - 2Kg.8:26.
10. Amon - 22 years 2Kg.21:19.
11. Jehoahaz - 23 years - 2Kg.23:31; 2Chron.36:2.
12. Amaziah - 25 years - 2Kg.14:2; 2Chron.25:1.
13. Hezekiah - 25 years - 2Kg.18:1-2.
14. Jehoiakim - 25 years - 2Kg.23:36; 2Chron.36:5.
15. Jotham - 25 years - 2Kg.15:33; 2Chron.27:1 & 8.
16. Saul - 30 years - 1Sam.13:1.
17. David - 30 years - 2Sam.5:4.
18. Solomon - 30 years or younger - Not Specified
19. Jehoram - 32 years - 2Kg.8:17.
20. Jehoshaphat - 35 years - 1Kg.22:42; 2Chron.20:31.
21. Rehoboam - 41 years 1Kg.14:21.

Please, observe that, of all these kings, only three of them (Jehoram, Jehoshaphat and Rehoboam) were above 30 years of age and only one in particular, that is, Rehoboam was over 40 years old when he was crowned as king. Rehoboam, the only son of wealthy King Solomon could be described as a spoilt child who was over-pampered by his parents.

Surprisingly, he behaved foolishly and the kingdom split into two under him. No wonder it is said that, "A fool at forty is a fool forever!"

We should learn from the Lord Jesus Christ, the ideal man and our perfect example also. He started learning and engaging religious teachers and leaders in the Temple in scholarly reasoning from age twelve. He learnt carpentry as an apprentice under Joseph his father from that early age also.

Eventually, Jesus Christ commenced his earthly ministry at the age of 30 and finished all the work within three and a half years. The impact of those three and a half years are still here till now for the whole world to see and feel.

Nobody in the entire Bible emphasized the importance of our youthful years better and put the message of starting early so succinctly like Christ Himself. He said...

"I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." - John 9: 4

If we want to succeed like Christ then, we will work like Him.

Life is precious and must not be wasted. Youths must not forget the old childhood rhyme - "Tick says the clock - tick, tick... What you have to do, do quick." That old childhood rhyme again confirms that the major secret of success in life is starting early and on time - whatever you want to do or hope to achieve in life.