

Equipping The Saints

"...For the equipping of the saints for the work of service..." ~ Ephesians 4:12

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1.43

Another Generation Arose

(By Roger Shouse)

"And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers; and there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord, nor yet the work which He had done for Israel" (Judges 2:10).

Solomon said, **"A generation goes and a generation comes"** (Ecclesiastes 1:4). Modern times have put labels on each generation. There are baby boomers, and Millennials, Generation X, and Generation Y. My dad's generation is considered "The greatest generation." Each generation is different. Each generation faces unique challenges and trials. There have been wars and depressions. There have been terrorist attacks and men walking on the moon. There have been floods and earthquakes. Some generations have witnessed many changes. Some have gone from no electricity to cell phones. Each generation has had stars and heroes. Each generation has seen changes from the previous generation. My grandma had hobos. I had hippies.

Our passage today reflects the passing of one generation and the coming of the next generation. The handing of the keys wasn't smooth nor good. Joshua was the link to Moses. He knew Moses. He knew the 10 Commandments. He saw the plagues. He saw the Red Sea open up. There was Moses and then there was Joshua. But now it was time for Moses to go. There arose another generation. This generation was moving a different direction. They did not know the Lord. What follows is sad:

- Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord (vs. 11).
- They forsook the Lord (vs. 12).
- They followed other gods (vs. 12).
- They bowed themselves down to the other gods (vs. 12).
- They served Baal (vs. 13).

These verses concern every parent and every concerned Christian. As we hand the keys over to the next generation, what will happen? Will the next generation love what we have loved? Will they cherish the things of the Lord? Will they be faithful and obedient to the Lord? Will they continue on with the Lord?

Three lessons from this:

1. Each generation owes it to the next generation to teach them the word of God. Simple lessons must be repeated over and over and over. The younger ones must know. They must understand what the Scriptures teach. They must know what the Bible says. They must understand the difference between traditions and Bible. It is our duty to show them, teach them and instruct them. They need to know what God says.

For some reason Joshua's generation didn't teach the next generation. The passage says, **"They did not know the Lord."** Why? Why did they not know? Was there no teaching? Was there no examples? Was there no guidance? Was there no answering questions? They didn't know. Some how the ball was dropped. And that would affect future generations.

There must be some patience from those of us who know. We must remember that others do not know. So, lessons that we have heard before, must be taught again and again. Simple lessons. The same lessons.

2. Once error starts, it continues. Crack the door just a bit here, and those that follow will open it wide. What one

generation allowed, the next will take farther. This is especially true if there is no Bible teaching. We see this with the history of Israel's kings. We see this in our times. Look the other way, when it comes to living together. Look the other way when it comes to divorce for any reason. The next step is looking the other way for homosexual relationships. Now, it's same sex marriages. The door is still being opened. What follows will be one person with multiple mates, polygamy. It won't stop there. After that, marriage to pets. Wait, it won't stop there. Then parents will be marrying their own kids. Farther and farther and farther away from God. We see this with the entertainment driven churches. They keep trying to please the crowds. More food. More shows. More fun. More laughter. Less Bible. No doctrine. No talk about sin. No righteous stuff. No rules. No accountability. Shallow. Hollow. Superficial. Empty. Nothing. Cheap talk. Nice words. No changing. No walking like Christ.

The slippery road down the slope of error is slow and gradual. It is often not even noticed. A step here and a step there and before long, after a few generations, they are so far from where it all started. Look at religious history-this is the story. Where the modern church is today is so far from where their founders started. Yet, they started by stepping away from the Bible. Once that happened, it's hard to say what is going on today is wrong.

3. Once the door is opened, it cannot be closed. There is no going back. The days of Mayberry are over. It will never happen again. We have gone too far down the road. This is the danger of error. It takes people to places they never intended to be but once the door was opened, they could not close it. Shameful words spoken on TV was never allowed just a generation ago. What is 'PG' today, would have been 'R' a generation ago. The door is opened and there is no closing it.

What then can we do? Are we destined for these things? Is there any hope? Yes. The hope is in Jesus. Not as a nation, and not as a society, or even a generation, but as individuals, one by one, we can become righteous, holy and pure in the eyes of the Lord. God's will can become our will.

All of this happens through teaching of God's word. A generation arose that did not know the Lord. More specifically, a family arose, kids arose, that did not know the Lord. Do you see how important it is to stand for the Lord and to teach His ways.

Wouldn't it have been so wonderful to read, *"and another generation arose, and it followed the Lord completely."* That can be your family story. That can happen. It won't just happen, but with teaching and love, it is happening today. [This article was originally published at jumpstartdaily.com under the title "Jump Start #1586." More insightful and practical articles can be found there.]

Notes:

AM Lesson:

"Bring The Book"

PM Lesson:

Now That I'm A Christian

"Go therefore and make disciples..." (Matthew 28:19-20)