

Learning from an Older Generation

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Introduction: How can we teach and guide the next generation?

A. It must begin with a personal, living faith that understands the character of God!

(1 Jn 2:12-14)

1. When one lives a life with the knowledge of God, he will have an influence.

2. This is a real challenge. Some are more focused on human tradition and actually have a shallow knowledge. This also has an influence. (Mt 15:8-9)

B. When we are daily transformed by God's word, we will be very different from our own generation! **(Rom 12:1-2; Ps 71:17-19)**

1. The next generation needs to hear of the "war stories" of how one resisted the world and had an abundant life while being looked down on!

2. When one gets to know us, they will see what really drives us.

I. Characteristics of Generations

A. The age of a generation should bless it with wisdom based on faith and experience. **(Prov 20:29)**

1. This is not always true! Consider the generation that came out of Egypt and the one that took the promised land. **(Heb 3:16-19; Job 32:9)**

2. The next generation was led by Joshua and was greatly blessed.

B. The experience of a generation can be a blessing or a curse.

1. Consider the generation that followed Joshua. **(Judges 2:7-10)**

2. Some generations have to fight for their faith and gladly paid a price.

3. Consider the early church and then the church a few generations later. **(Acts 8:3-4; 2 Tim 4:2-4)**

C. We naturally associate and listen to the generation we belong to.

1. My sports illustrations often need updating for a younger generation!

2. Consider the phases of life and the shared experiences of others. Ponder the differences between a college student and a couple with children?

3. Look at the reaction of two generations to one event. **(Ezra 3:11-13)**

II. The power of Godly parents

A. The family should be the most powerful relationship to teach the next generation.

1. This responsibility was mentioned repeatedly in the OT.

(Lev 10:11; Deut 4:9-10; 6:7)

2. It has to be more than an impersonal reading of the scriptures. You can make it live and show what it really means to you.

3. There is especially a great value in telling your children of the hand of God in your life. They will remember this! **(Ps 78:3-9)**

B. A child's concept of God comes from how his parents think and act towards him.

1. What is God like?

2. What kind of time and interest does God have in me?

3. How does God teach and then heal when overcome by sin?
4. We know that we will be imperfect, but this should draw us even closer to God!

III. Consider three sets of godly parents and what their children became.

A. The tragic end of the sons of Eli.

1. Eli was a godly man that knew God. Consider how he responded to the coming judgement of God. **(1 Sam 3:11-14; 17-18)**
2. How can this happen? There are many possibilities.
3. Some men are cowards and will not take a stand.
4. Some think they love their children more than God does!
5. Some can be too busy and simply become aloof from their children.

B. Solomon and the instructions of David.

1. David was a man after God's own heart. He also made tragic mistakes.
2. How did Solomon view David?
3. Consider David's pleas to Solomon as he neared death.
(1 Chron 22:11-12; 28:20)
4. Consider his public worship to God and his open expression of what he wanted Solomon to be. **(1 Chron 29:18-20)**
5. What was in Solomon's heart when he became king? **(2 Chron 1:7-10)**

C. The mother and grandmother of Timothy. **(2 Tim 1:5)**

1. One can instill faith in their children even when they have to act alone.
2. God will honor and provide for the humble parent that seeks to instill faith in their children.

IV. How local churches can bring the generations together

A. Respect is taught in the home and in our assemblies. **(Lev 19:32; Prov 20:29)**

1. My Dad taught me to respect authority and those in position of authority.
2. My generation had this drilled into our heads! This reflects the wisdom of God. **(Rom 13:1-2, 7; 1 Peter 2:13-15)**
3. This respect extends to those who are older. **(Lev 19:32)**
4. You will find a corresponding respect in those that first respect the completeness of scripture! **(1 Cor 14:37)**

B. Men of faith can become "heroes" to our children. Consider the men God places as a "cloud of witnesses" before us! **(Heb 12:1; 11:32-35)**

1. Every generation has its challenges and an ungodly culture to overcome.
2. Where do we find our personal heroes? It begins with men and women that have taken a personal interest in us and have built us up. **(1 Tim 1:5-7)**
3. Who did Timothy look up to? **(2 Tim 3:10, 14-15)**
4. Did others look up to Timothy? **(Phil 2:19-22)**

Conclusion: What will our children think of us at the judgement?