
GENERATIONAL BLESSINGS

None of the promises of God that were given, can be worked out without intergenerational cooperation.

We tend to personalise the promises of God which takes us away from a powerful corporate blessing (Genesis 18:18-19). What God has for us will come in part through us, but will only be fully realised in the generations that are to come. For this to happen we need to honour our seniors and invest into our children and our children's children.

God's Plan for Every Generation

God is carrying out His purposes through the generations of the righteous. We each need to have a sense of destiny in our heart, and we must see ourselves as part of the unfolding plan of God throughout the ages of time, not as a separate entity without a past or a future. When you look at the Scriptures you see that each generation has certain responsibilities before God.

- + ***To Discern and Accomplish the Will of God for their Generation*** (Acts 13:36; Psalm 71:18)

Every generation is responsible to fulfil God's will for their time in history. We each have a race to run and a role to play in carrying out God's purposes. We must give ourselves to discovering and passionately pursuing our unique destiny.

- + ***To Rebuild or Build on the Foundations from Past Generations*** (Isaiah 58:12)

Every generation is also responsible to reach back and receive an inheritance from those who have gone before. We did not begin this race; we simply carry it on. We are to build on the truths and experiences of those who have gone before. Godly people have left us a legacy, which we are to build upon. We must discover and value our roots and our heritage.

- + ***To Pass on Truth and Authentic Spiritual Life to the next Generation and Guide them into a Personal Experience of God*** (Psalm 78:4)

Each generation is responsible to pass God's purposes on to and bless the next generation. God requires us to leave a heritage and an inheritance for those who follow after us.

There is a great cost to pay when we don't fulfil this third part of God's plan for every generation. Joshua was a fantastic leader and motivated his own generation to serve God all the days of his life, and the lives of the other leaders who outlived him. But Joshua failed to do one important task. He failed to pass the baton on to the next generation (Joshua 24:31; Judges 2:7-11).

There is no success without a successor, and wise older leaders are passing the baton on to the next generation, like Moses did to Joshua. We must reach out to and seek to raise up, the next generation to take ownership and leadership within the local church.

Healthy Families

Every person regardless of age needs to take up the responsibility to pass on truth and authentic spiritual lives to others, not just continue to be fed from the hand of others.

Great families need great mums, dads and terrific grandparents and this helps to produce fantastic children and grandchildren. We want our Riverlife Family to represent a healthy family where all members are honoured and respected for the role they have played and are currently playing.

Our goal must be to establish a sense of purpose and destiny in every generation. We desire that each new generation goes further than the one before, but this does not render the purpose of the previous generation useless. Strong families know their heritage; they learn and pass on their knowledge.

A critical strategic shift the church must make is an inter-generational shift where support, encouragement and wisdom from an older generation are given to the vigour and passion of a younger generation. And honour, respect and time are given to an older generation from a younger one. This is not an issue of age preference – it's a matter of intentionally building for the future.

The Younger Generation toward the Older Generation:

- + They need to honour and respect them.
- + They need to be open to learn from them.
- + They need to allow them to continue to contribute and serve.
- + They need to seek to reach out to the growing older population and win them for Christ.

The Older Generation to the Younger Generation:

- + They need to love and respect them.
- + They need to seek to be relevant to them.
- + They need to pray for them, encourage them and teach them God's ways.
- + They need to seek to reach out to those who don't know Christ.

Let's dwell together in a spirit of unity, understanding God's purposes for the generations.

I believe we must live with passion and watchfulness, as if Jesus may return today. We may be the last generation. However, we must also live with the wisdom and foresight that allows for the fact that we may not be the last generation and therefore, we must prepare the next generation to embrace the purposes of God.

Questions for Discussion

1. Share your thoughts on the concept of an intergenerational spiritual family in relation to the church.

2. Given that the church should and needs to minister across the generations, how can this happen with such wide differences between them?
3. How does our church seek to minister to the next generation in worship style, dress style, ministry style, and cultural relevance? How effective is it? How could it improve in these areas?
4. How can a greater culture of honour, respect and love be demonstrated from a younger generation to the older generation in our church?
5. What has God called you to accomplish for your generation? What is still left for you to do, or pass on?
6. Where is God asking you to build on the foundations of previous generations?
7. What would be the effect for our future if we made every effort to keep unity of the Spirit through peace?
8. What could you do to extend yourself towards an inter-generational connection in ministry?
9. Pray together for another generation either older or younger, for God's purposes to come to pass in love and unity.