# GENERATIONAL Siscipleship



#### GENERATIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Touching Lives with Dr. James Merritt

#### Series Summary

Over the course of four weeks, we are going to embark on an effort called "Generational Discipleship." God is for all generations. There is no generation gap with God. He is faithful to every generation, but He also wants every generation to be faithful to Him, to know Him, love Him, serve Him, and worship Him. He wants every generation to always be sharing with the next generation the truth of the God of all generations. So what does that look like for us? That's what we're going to discuss in this series.

## **It All Begins Here**

 $Generational\ Discipleship \mid Week\ 1 \mid Psalm\ 78:1-8$ 

INTRODUCTION	NOTES
The psalmist who wrote today's key passage of Scripture is encouraging the people not to let history repeat itself, to learn from the mistakes of the past, and to defeat them in the present. In these eight verses, we are going to learn three things that we must do to make disciples of every generation. Simply put, we must always touch the next generation by teaching them and reaching them with biblical truth.	
KEY POINTS	
1. We Are To Teach The Mind To Learn Biblical Truth According to the author of Psalm 78, we are to look at history as one gigantic parable. It is a story of individuals, groups, and nations in the past. We are to use this history as a tool to help us glean how not to make the same mistakes twice. The way not to repeat a mistake that somebody made in the past is to know what mistake they made in the past to begin with, which is why history is so important. These things have to be taught and learned, which is where we come in.  I also want you to notice that the psalmist is not making a request of parents or grandparents or even of the present generation. He is making a declaration. We are not going to hide biblical truth from the next generation. We will tell the next generation who God is, what God has done for us, who we are, and what we should do. That applies to anyone who is reading the psalm, regardless of their age or their generation.	
2. We Must Turn The Will To Love Biblical Truth.  You know something with your mind, but you trust something with your will. God wants a spiritual chain reaction when it comes to what you know spilling out into what you do. He wants the truth that gets into your head to come out through your hands, your feet, and your mouth. With that He wants it to affect what you say, what you do, and where you go, and it begins with teaching the next generation to put their trust in God. When they put their trust in God, they will begin to love biblical truth.	

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3. We Must Touch The Heart To Love God's Truth.  Now why is it so important that the next generation learn God's	NOTES
truth and live God's truth? Well, if they don't, verse 8 tells us what will happen. "They would not be like their ancestors—a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him" (Psalm 78:8).	
The generation described in this verse fell out of love with God, His word, and His truth. It is not coincidental that Jesus let every generation know that the first, the greatest, the most important, the foundational commandment of all commandments is to "Love the Lord, your God, with all of your heart, all of your soul, all of your mind, and all of your strength" (Mark 12:30).	
At the end of the day when it comes to generational discipleship, the heart of the matter will always be the matter of the heart. When the head learns the truth and the heart loves the truth the hands will live the truth. It always is and always will be the number one job of every generation. If we do not direct the next generation to learn, live, and love God's truth, they will drift from doing those very things.	

## **It All Begins Here**

 $Generational\ Discipleship\ |\ Week\ 1\ |\ Psalm\ 78:1-8$ 

#### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1.	Which generation are you a part of? What are your thoughts on the other
	generations?

2.	Are you current	ly involved	l in any i	torm of	generat	tional	discipl	eship?	If no	١t,
	what is keeping	you from	doing so	?						

3.	What is one practical step you can take this week to take part in generational discipleship and encourage another generation to love and live God's truth?

## **Role Model**

Generational Discipleship | Week 2 | 1 Timothy 4:11-16

INTRODUCTION	NOTES
There's a letter in the New Testament called First Timothy. It was written by the Apostle Paul to his young protégé who was going to take over pastoring the church in Ephesus. Timothy was young, barely 30 years old, and quite inexperienced. But Paul lets him know that though you may be lacking in education or experience, the one thing you can always be is a role model. The main lesson I want us to take away from this message is our role for the next generation is to be a role model. We can do that in four ways, and we're going to discuss each of those in detail.	
KEY POINTS	
1. We Should Model A Lifestyle For God. Paul specifically gives young Timothy five areas where he should set the example and where we should all set the example. He said that we should be an example - "in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, and in purity " (I Timothy 4:12).	
Paul covers all of his bases with this statement as he includes these five areas in which to be a role model. When we strive to set an example for others by the way we speak, the way we act, the way we love, the way we exercise our faith, and the way we pursue purity, people are going to notice. And we'll be able to point others to Jesus because we're exemplifying the kind of life we're called to live according to Scripture.	
2. We Should Magnify The Word Of God.  I want to ask you a question and encourage you to answer it honestly. Do you read your Bible? Do you apply it? Do you use it? Are you leading your family, your kids, and everyone you have influence over to know that the supreme authority for the way we ought to live and what we ought to believe is the Word of God?	
I firmly believe the two worst things you can do with the Bible are not to burn it or throw it in the garbage, but rather to leave it unopened and leave it unused. Every chance we get, we should be teaching and preaching God's Word to others. When we magnify the Word of God to others, we're choosing to be the kind of role model that God is calling us to be.	

## **Role Model**

 $Generational\ Discipleship\ |\ Week\ 2\ |\ 1\ Timothy\ 4:11\text{-}16$ 

3. We Should Minister The Gift Of God. One of the greatest things that one generation can pass on to the next generation is a servant spirit. The church thrives when every member discovers what their spiritual gifts are and puts them to use in the body of Christ.	NOTES
God equips every believer with spiritual gifts. God enables every believer to recognize those gifts. God expects every believer to use those gifts in service to the church and to the world. If we model this well and teach other generations how to use their spiritual gifts, the church as a whole will be so much more impactful for the kingdom.	
4. We Should Motivate The People Of God.  Every generation needs to show the next generation that no generation can ever quit. We cannot quit growing in the Lord, and we cannot quit going for the Lord. There's no such thing as being stagnant when it comes to being a Christian. You're either progressing in the Christian life or you are digressing. You are either going forward or you're going backwards. You are doing more for God this year than you ever have or you are doing less.  Simply put, our generation needs to continuously show the next generation that we're always striving, because we're never arriving. Good things, holy things, will happen if we can motivate the next generation to keep persevering and never give up.	

#### **Role Model**

 $Generational\ Discipleship\ |\ Week\ 2\ |\ 1\ Timothy\ 4:11\text{-}16$ 

#### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1.	How are you currently modeling a godly lifestyle? In what areas do you need
	to improve on setting a good example of a godly lifestyle?

2. How often are you reading your Bible? What can you apply that you've read recently?

3.	What is one way you can use your spiritual gifts to set a positive example for the next generation?

## **Heart To Heart**

 $Generational\ Discipleship\ |\ Week\ 3\ |\ Deuteronomy\ 6:4-9$ 

INTRODUCTION	NOTES
In today's key passage, God tells Moses to do something very important. In a nutshell, He says, "Make sure that your children and your grandchildren love God with all their heart." The fact was that at that time in history, people didn't associate love and God. All of their experiences with gods had been about making sacrifices and focusing on works. But the God of Israel changed all of that. And the truth is, seeing God as loving and also choosing to love God are truths we want each and every generation to embrace. We need to teach the next generation to know the truth of God's Word so that they will know the God of that truth. So in this message, we're going to look at the four ways we are to do just that in our homes.	
KEY POINTS	
We are to be teaching the next generation that there's only one God. God demands above all else that we love Him supremely with all of our soul, heart, and strength. But then He goes on to say it's not enough that we just believe that truth in our head; we should take hold of that truth in our hearts.  There is a difference between a head knowledge of the commandments of God and a heart knowledge of the God of the commandments. If you don't hold God's Word in your heart, you'll never be able to teach those truthfully to the next generation. You've got to have a heart that is right with God, a heart that is filled with God, and a heart fully devoted to God.  2. Teach God's Truth Vigilantly  Deuteronomy 6:7 says to "impress" the truth on your children. The word "impress" is from the root Hebrew word shanan which means, "to sharpen" or "to engrave." It was used by an engraver of a monument who would take a hammer and a chisel and etch a text into the face of a solid slab of granite work. Once he was	
finished, that message was there to stay.	

## **Heart To Heart**

 $\textit{Generational Discipleship} \mid \textit{Week 3} \mid \textit{Deuteronomy 6:4-9}$ 

So when Scripture says to impress the truth on your children, one way to paraphrase that verse would be, "Drill God's Word into the hearts of your children." Literally engrave the truth of God's Word onto their hearts. The Hebrew word for "impress" also means, "to repeat." That is, you do it over, and over, and over, and over. It is not something you do every once in a while. So every day, this generation is to be pointing the next generation to God.	NOTES
3. Teach God's Truth Verbally We carry on conversations with people every day of our lives. We can have spiritual conversations just as easily as we can have casual conversations or financial conversations. One of the biggest problems we're facing in the church today is just nobody's talking about God. This reality has to change if we're going to impact the next generation for Christ.	
4. Teach God's Truth Visually It's so important that we use visuals to teach and remind the next generation of God's truth and God's Word. I believe that every Christian home should have framed Christian Scriptures throughout the house. This is a great way not only to keep Scripture in front of our family but also to show those who come into our homes what we believe to be true. We also have at our disposal iPads and cellphones where we can visually show Bible stories to our kids. There are a number of ways that we can visually display and demonstrate God's truth and God's principles for living. We just need to be diligent in doing so.	
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## **Heart To Heart**

 $\textit{Generational Discipleship} \mid \textit{Week 3} \mid \textit{Deuteronomy 6:4-9}$ 

#### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1.	What is the difference between head knowledge and heart knowledge of God's truth?
2.	When was the last time you had a spiritual conversation with someone? How did it go?
3.	What is one thing you can do to teach God's truth to the next generation this week?

## A Line In The Sand

 $Generational\ Discipleship\ |\ Week\ 4\ |\ Joshua\ 24:14-15$ 

INTRODUCTION	NOTES
As we read today's key passage, we see Joshua is the commander-in-chief and leader of the nation of Israel. He has led the people into the Promised Land that God has promised them, but he wants to make sure they keep that land and prosper in that land. He wants them to live happily ever after. But on this day, he is not talking as the commander-in-chief or as a political leader; he is talking as a dad who has a family. He makes this momentous statement: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (v.15). In effect, he drew a line in the sand. He said, "Even if no one else comes to stand on this side of the line, my family and I will." He chose to lead his family to do three things that I am going to ask you to do as well.	
KEY POINTS	
1. Commit To Lead Your Family To Revere The One God We need to teach our children about the fear of God. We are to be in such awe of who He is that our reverence and respect is the default attitude we always have toward Him. We should have so much love for what He has done for us. And when we have such love for what He knows about us, and we have such reliance on what He can do in us, we will want to do everything in our power that we can to please Him.  It doesn't matter how much your children know if they don't know the kind of God that deserves reverence and respect. Fearing God is the foundation of truly knowing God. Your children need to know by the way you pray, by the way you live your life, and by the way you are committed to the house of God that you are a reverent, respectful follower of the living God who fears Him in	
2. Commit To Lead Your Family To Reject Other Gods One of the reasons why the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness for forty years is because they respected false gods and rejected the one true God. For as far back as almost as time began there has never been a shortage of two things: false gods and false religions.	

## A Line In The Sand

Generational Discipleship | Week 4 | Joshua 24:14-15

The reality is that everybody serves some god, and everybody is going to believe in some type of religion. It may be the god of self, sex, or success. Or it may be a religion where your business is the church and you are the high priest. Either way, there is a line in the sand, and you've got to be on one side or the other. Your goal as a follower of Jesus is to be on the right side of that line and to teach the next generation to stand with you as you reject the false Gods and choose to worship the one true God.	NOTES
3. Commit To Lead Your Family To Rely On The Only God  Now, the question before us is this: "What God are you and your family going to serve? What God is our generation going to commit to lead the next generation to serve?" You have to choose. You can claim to be agnostic, open-minded, or indifferent and say you really haven't made a choice, but you have. At the end of the day, a choice must be made on who you're going to follow and who you're going to serve.	
I believe more than ever before that if you are truly going to follow Jesus and stand for the truth of God's Word, you are going to have to stand alone and you are going to have to prepare your children to do the same. But even though that might be a lonely place to be, it's the right place to be and the best place to be. And that truth is one of the greatest things you can teach the next generation.	

#### A Line In The Sand

Generational Discipleship | Week 4 | Joshua 24:14-15

#### **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

	1.	How wou	ld	you	define	the:	fear	of	God	l?
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- 2. What is another god you used to serve, or one that you even still struggle with serving now?
- 3. When was a time you had to stand alone for the sake of standing strong in what you believe? How did that situation turn out? What did you learn?