

The Best is Yet to Come

As adults dealing with the inevitable and eternal generational conflict that defines human life on Earth, we should decide whether we want to be right, or whether we want to have influence with the next generation. And influence is not a result of simply having correct opinions, but instead a byproduct of sincere displays of empathy, and an openness to wade through the messy, universal struggles of life alongside those younger than us.

Start Talking

1. When you had to list your most important priorities in life during today's service, what made the initial cut? What made the final cut? Why did you cut what you chose to cut?
2. How do you think the process of growing up has changed since you were young? How has it remained the same?
3. What do you hope young people remember about you after you are gone?

Looking Back

1. If you are a parent, teacher, or mentor, what steps did you take this past week to resist your temptation to make things easy for emerging generations, allowing them the empowering independence to take the risks necessary to achieve and discover?
2. Where did you intentionally do scary, unscripted things in your own life? How did you encourage the younger people around you to dive into the unscripted parts of life that might scare them?
3. Where did you introduce the young people in your charge to experiences, perspectives, and ways of being that are different than what they are used to?
4. How did you encourage the attitude that failure is necessary and instructive, rather than a horrible catastrophe to be avoided?

What About You?

1. What did you wish adults knew about your feelings and experiences when you were growing up?
2. How did you want adults to respond to you when you were young? What did they not seem to get?
3. What difficulties do you remember from your teenage years? What made you feel isolated or alone?
4. What issues would you never have discussed with an adult when you were growing up? How can you signal an openness to discuss these things with the teenagers in your life?



5. What do you find most difficult about dealing with emerging generations? Where do you feel helpless or clueless?

Look It Up

Read the Following Passages: Ephesians 5:15 – 17.

1. Why do you think Paul directs readers of Ephesians back to their *own* conduct, rather than fixating upon the chaos of his surrounding culture?
2. What do you think Paul means when he asks us to, “focus on what the Lord wants us to do?” How do we undertake this process?
3. Based upon these passages, what do you think Love requires of us when it comes to emerging generations?
4. What is at stake in our decision to be unconditionally loving and accepting of the young people around us who are struggling?

Putting It All Together

5. Would you be willing to take an honest inventory of your relationship with the young people around you? How safe do they feel honestly revealing their struggles to you?
6. What can you do to create a safer, more honest environment with your kids, young family members, or students? How can you honor their willingness to be vulnerable in the event that they choose to share their struggles with you?
7. Where can you forfeit your desire to be right in your interactions with young people, and choose instead to be present and self-sacrificing?
8. How can you radiate the full expression of God’s love to those around you? What are three tangible ways you can start doing this this week?

