

Everyone Matters- Vision Sunday

We are a multi-generational church where every age group is embraced and celebrated. You have a voice, a place, and a part in making Jesus famous through LGC.

Our Vision: *LifeGate Church exists to make Jesus famous in our home, our community, and the world*

Ephesians 3:20-21 (VOICE)

Now to the God who can do so many awe-inspiring things, immeasurable things, things greater than we ever could ask or imagine through the power at work in us, ²¹ to Him be all glory in the church and in Jesus the Anointed from this generation to the next, forever and ever. Amen.

- There is a connection between the power of the church and generations aligning
- *Generation* in the bible includes everyone living on earth at one time, not just one age group
- Because we naturally gravitate towards those like us, it creates division or generational gaps and tension
- The reason we struggle with other age groups isn't because they are the problem but because we don't understand each other
- We have a huge opportunity before us where God has set the stage for His work in the earth
- Due to an increase in life expectancy and increased birth rate, we now have 5 generations living at the same time

Exodus 17: 8-15 (NIV)

⁸The Amalekites came and attacked the Israelites at Rephidim. ⁹Moses said to Joshua, "Choose some of our men and go out to fight the Amalekites. Tomorrow I will stand on top of the hill with the staff of God in my hands."

¹⁰So Joshua fought the Amalekites as Moses had ordered, and Moses, Aaron and Hur went to the top of the hill. ¹¹As long as Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but whenever he lowered his hands, the Amalekites were winning. ¹²When Moses' hands grew tired, they took a stone and put it under him and he sat on it. Aaron and Hur held his hands up—one on one side, one on the other—so that his hands remained steady till sunset. ¹³So Joshua overcame the Amalekite army with the sword.

¹⁴ Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it, because I will completely blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven."

¹⁵ Moses built an altar and called it The Lord is my Banner. ¹⁶ He said, "Because hands were lifted up against the throne of the Lord, the Lord will be at war against the Amalekites from generation to generation."

Deuteronomy 25:17-19 (NIV)

¹⁷ Remember what the Amalekites did to you along the way when you came out of Egypt. ¹⁸ When you were weary and worn out, they met you on your journey and attacked all who were lagging behind; they had no fear of God. ¹⁹ When the Lord your God gives you rest from all the enemies around you in the land he is giving you to possess as an inheritance, you shall blot out the name of Amalek from under heaven. Do not forget!

Context:

- This is where we first meet Joshua who will be Israel's future leader
- It gives us important insight into the relationship between Moses and Joshua
- The Amalekites were descendants of Esau, which was Isaac's son who traded his birthright to Jacob for a bowl of stew
- The Amalekites attempted to plunder Israel's wealth that they acquired when they left Egypt

Details:

- As long as Moses kept his hands outstretched, Joshua was victorious
- Moses grew weary and when his hands dropped the battle shifted so Aaron and Hur rallied around Moses and help up his arms.
- Joshua's victory was completely dependent on Moses being positioned with the rod of God
 - o The rod in bible represents authority, power, and leadership
 - o The sword is used to administer the work of the Lord.
- As strong and well trained Joshua and his men were, the deciding factor in the battle wasn't Joshua's skill but Moses position.
- When Moses fell out of position, even though Joshua and his men were fighting with the same proficiency and intensity, they began to be defeated.

2 Catalyst for Generational Alignment:

- Joshua and Moses were victories because they were properly aligned.
- The covering of the older leader was essential to the young leader's success in fulfilling the task at hand.

1. Submission to authority

- All people, in every generation, are called to be under authority; in fact, we cannot walk in authority without being submitted under authority. (Matt 8 Jesus and the Centurion, Paul and Barnabas, Paul commissioned by James)
- Submission to authority is to be ongoing throughout our lives, no matter how long we have held a role of authority. When I became a father, I didn't stop being a son.
- submitting to authority is different from honoring our elders— because there isn't a special age where the Lord entrusts someone with a rod.
- God will give a young person authority to serve older people but in many cases those that are older are in position of authority simply because they have experienced enough life where they have learned to carry the rod of God

2. Culture of Honor:

- The principle of honoring our elders, particularly our fathers and mothers, is clearly taught in Scripture. *"Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you" (Exodus 20: 12)*
- Life flows through honor. There is a current of life— a continuity of power and blessing— that only comes to us when we actively honor our parents— natural and spiritual alike.
- There was a combined release of authority and blessing when Joshua and Moses joined. Likewise, it is imperative that the older and younger parts of our generation properly join
- The rod is in the hands of the "Moses generation"— the older generation— and it must be partnered with the sword, which is in the hands of the "Joshua generation."
- Joshua needed Moses to reach the Promise Land but Moses need Joshua to see his dreams fulfilled.

2 Challenges to Alignment:

1. Spirit of Independence

- The younger generation doesn't want the older generations help and the older generation gets frustrated with the younger generation
- This pertains to style, not sin. Sin debilitates every generation but style can be embraced

- As time progresses, it gets more difficult for the older generation to relate the younger, widening the gap. The result is that the Church operating as one generation is never fully realized
- Joshua's absence of a spirit of independence allowed him to be properly aligned in relationship with Moses. The Bible says, "Joshua did as Moses said to him" (Exodus 17: 10). Joshua was not out there looking to do his own thing. His obedience positioned him under the covering of Moses and declared that he understood the significance of covering. Moses, on the other hand, accepted the importance of empowering the generation coming after him and trusted Joshua as he released him to battle.
- Ultimately, independence is dangerous because it is grounded in pride.

1 Peter 5:5 (NLT)

⁵In the same way, you who are younger must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you, dress yourselves in humility as you relate to one another, for "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

2. Wrong Emphasis

- God doesn't move only through the young or the old. He moves through both when they are joined together
- The enemy has a divisive strategy that says the older generation is done and can't be used by God and the young generation is incompetent so God can't use them
- Older people are not done and younger people don't have to wait

Ex. In a relay, the race is either won or lost in the passing of the baton. Unlike in a relay, when we pass the baton we don't quit running. It could even be considered "passing out batons." When the older generation passes something to the younger generation, they stop. We continue to run as a team, perhaps positioned differently, but still running together, running farther than we could ever run on our own.

- God has set up an order for relationship between the generations, and we cannot bypass it. Ex. Moses and Joshua, Mordecai and Esther, and between Elijah and Elisha
- They do not empower by stepping aside but by running together. In order to run together, there must be genuine honor in their hearts for one another
- Notice from this verse the order of God's plan. The father's hearts initiate the union

Malachi 4:6 (NASB)

⁶He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse."

Power of Alignment Produces...

- **Courage**

- Billy Graham said, "Courage is contagious. When a brave man takes a stand, the spines of others are stiffened."
- Young people all over the world need courage
- To see cities shaken, campuses rocked, and lives transformed takes a lot of courage
- God set Esther apart to do something special in her day so He connected her with Mordecai (Esther 4)

- **Wisdom**

- Through relationship, you can have access to the discernment and foresight of men and women who are years ahead of you

Deuteronomy 34:9 (NIV)

⁹ Now Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom because Moses had laid his hands on him. So the Israelites listened to him and did what the Lord had commanded Moses.

- Joshua received wisdom because of his joining to Moses. Esther likewise received from Mordecai wisdom that made her successful.
- Learn from the mistakes and successes of fathers and mothers "I can tell you what not to do and what doesn't work."
- Proverbs is filled with wisdom that a father was passing to his son
- Why would you try all the things that someone older has tried only to arrive at the same the same conclusion that it doesn't work?

- **Protection**

- The spirit of independence separates us from covering and community
- Protection says "this is an 'us' thing not a 'me' or 'you' thing"

- **Identity**

- Names don't mean too much in our society, but in biblical times what one called a child was a big deal. It was a declaration over his or her life. It helped to define and give him/her identity.
- Many young people lack identity because their spiritual fathers and mothers have never named them

- There is something powerful that happens when you align yourself under a Moses, or an Elijah, or a Mordecai, and they begin to call out the greatness in your life.
- When you know who you are it establishes confidence in your life. We can give the younger generation confidence in a world fluctuating with self- doubt, peer pressure, and the unknown.

1 Corinthians 4:15 (MSG)

There are a lot of people around who can't wait to tell you what you've done wrong, but there aren't many fathers willing to take the time and effort to help you grow up. It was as Jesus helped me proclaim God's Message to you that I became your father. I'm not, you know, asking you to do anything I'm not already doing myself.

Live it:

Be PRAYERFUL: Pray for other age groups at LGC, asking God to transform your heart to celebrate their differences

Be PRESENT: Let's close the gap by intentionally rubbing shoulders with those younger and older. CONNECT: invite, include, and embrace those of a different age group to connect relationally, Spiritual sons and daughters connecting with spiritual fathers and mothers. SERVE: Imagine the power of all 5 generations serving together inside and outside of the local church.

Be a LIFEGATER: No matter your age, the power of the local church depends on us joining and engaging with others to accomplish God's work in our homes, our city, and the world. This isn't just about our generation, it is about leaving a legacy for the generations to come.

God [will] do so many awe-inspiring things, immeasurable things, things greater than we ever could ask or imagine through the power at work in us, ²¹ to Him be all glory in the church and in Jesus the Anointed from this generation to the next, forever and ever. Amen.