

The Generation Gap - Part 1

by Denny Kenaston

Denny Kenaston's sermon addresses the critical issue of the Generation Gap within the church, emphasizing the need for communication and understanding between generations to maintain faith and unity.

Duration: 1:40:34

Scripture: Jeremiah 6:13, Jeremiah 6:15-16, Titus 2:1

Topics: "Generation Gap"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of passing on a godly vision to future generations. He laments the loss of vision in families, leading to divorce and remarriage. The speaker encourages the audience to not slow down in their pursuit of the Lord and to be inspired, challenged, and taught in their faith. He also addresses the need for open communication and guidance from parents to help young people navigate worldly temptations. The sermon concludes with a reminder to approach these teachings with love and a broken heart, encouraging youth to surpass their parents in their faith journey.

Transcript

Hello, this is Brother Denny. Welcome to Charity Ministries. Our desire is that your life would be blessed and changed by this message.

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I also rejoice in the reports that we are able to hear and the opportunities that God gives us. And also, you know, as I was listening, I was just thinking again and I think the thought many, many times that we get involved. You know, it's not just one person going away and coming back and sharing, but we get involved.

We go. We have the opportunities to go. And we take time out of life and go here or go there with a group, with a team.

Work together and see what God does. Rejoice together over the things that God does while we're there. It's such a joy.

What a way to train and prepare for future ministry. Get busy. Getting yourself involved now.

It's beautiful. And I praise God for it. I also rejoice just to be home.

We've been away for three weekends, so you don't know what it's like to be away for three weekends and be back home here. To be in a prayer meeting where brothers and sisters pour their hearts out before the Lord. To be in a song service where we don't sing, but we worship.

Praise the Lord for this place that God has given to us. It is a gift, by the way, that you get to be in a church. I hope we'll all be responsible for what he's given to us.

All right, let's bow for a word of prayer before we get into the message this morning. Father in heaven, we come to you again in Jesus' name. We come to you for bread.

We need bread this morning, Lord. Lord, I think of some of the prayers that I heard pouring out of the hearts of brothers in the prayer meeting this morning. Would you answer those prayers, God, today? We need direction for our lives.

We want to hear what you are saying to the church. We acknowledge, Lord, that we lose our way quickly and we need your direction. And I pray, God, this morning that you will give direction to us as a church.

Father, I pray that you'll help me this morning to be true to the things that you've laid upon my heart. Take away the fear that is in my heart, Lord. For God has not given us the spirit, but of love and of power and of a sound mind.

God, I trust this message to you, God, that you'll help me to give it in Jesus' name. Amen. I have a more difficult sermon to give this morning.

You know, I don't believe a congregation can go forward in soundness, in stability, without a proper balance of food. Sometimes we need to be inspired, stirred, like our brother Kenny has inspired us this morning. Sometimes we need to be challenged to go on to greater heights.

Sometimes we just need good, practical teaching. Sometimes we need to have our toes stepped on. When we come to church, we need all of those.

Otherwise, it won't come out right in the end. So, this morning I have a bit more of a difficult message to give. And, you know, in the natural, I'd just as soon bow out of this message.

But, we don't get to do what we want to do, do we, brothers and sisters? Not if we're truly a disciple of the Lord. We don't get to do what we want to do. So, I have a bit of a hard message to give this morning.

Because it will be very personal and practical, that makes it a bit more difficult. The title of my message this morning is this. And I have a title and a subtitle, if I can do that.

The Generation Gap. The Generation Gap. Or, Generational Drift in the Church.

I thought about the title, The Generation Gap. You know, it's a bit of a modern term. I checked in the old Webster's 1828 dictionary to see if I could find it in there.

It's not in there. Not that they didn't have the problem. I know they had the problem.

You'll find it all the way back in the Old Testament. But the term is a bit of a new one. The Generation Gap.

Generational Drift in the Church. That is, the drifting of the next generation away from the principles and the practices of their fathers and mothers. Maybe that would be the third subtitle, but that's too long for a title.

Amen? Secular society's view of this word is a view in a positive light. You know, it's kind of a good thing, not a bad thing. But in the Christian context, it is a word that raises warning flags among God's people.

Or it should raise warning flags among God's people. I did look it up in a modern dictionary. It was very insightful.

Listen to this definition in a modern dictionary. The Generation Gap. The lack of communication and understanding between young people and their parents brought about by differences of tastes, values and outlook.

The lack of communication and understanding between young people and their parents. It is brought about by differences in tastes, values and their overall outlook of life. That's quite a definition, isn't it? Especially when you look at it in the Christian context.

Probably every parent in this room trembles as they listen to that definition. Maybe some more than others, depending on where you fall on that graph, a line graph, of how much that communication and misunderstanding and that gap is in your own. But that's the modern dictionary's definition of the Generation Gap.

In the Christian context, these differences break down communication. Different tastes, different values, different outlook. I see it different than you.

That breaks down communications. I don't feel so free to communicate. Then that breakdown of communication brings misunderstanding.

We don't understand each other. And as we don't understand each other, that makes the gap in our tastes and our values and our outlook get a little bit bigger. And with the gap getting a little bit bigger, that breaks down more communication and thus the cycle goes on and on and on.

And if you want to travel down that cycle long enough, you'll find a church full of old people with no young people in it. Ever been in a church like that? Let me see your hands. Have you been in a church like that? Wow! More hands than I expected to see.

This gap is one of the most practical challenges of us first and even second generation Christians. And I studied a bit down through the church list as I was meditating upon this. And as near as I can figure, there's about two-thirds of us in this room are first generation Christians.

Some may have had some Christian background, but I went down through there and looked at the ones who've been born again, older in their lives. Two-thirds of us are first generation Christians. And the second generation and the third generation is what my burden is for this morning.

So for us first and second generation Christians, this gap is a very practical challenge to us for the next generation. The danger of this gap requires much careful meditation on your part. Because I don't believe it's the heart of God at all.

I can't find any room for it anywhere in the scripture that there would be a gap, an ever widening gap. In the convictions of fathers and mothers and the convictions of the children and the children's children. I can't see it.

Moses recognized this danger, this generation gap. He recognized it all the way back in Deuteronomy in chapter 32 in verse 7. At the end of his life, he was admonishing and instructing the children of Israel just before they went into the promised land and just before he passed off the scene. He's a wise old man, 120 years old now.

And he has some powerful words to share with the children of Israel before he passes off the scene. And God inspires him to write a song and instruct the children of Israel to sing this song. Over and over and over in the midst of the song, he gives them this admonition in Deuteronomy chapter 32 in verse 7. Remember the days of old and consider the years of many generations.

Ask thy father and he will show thee thy elders and they will tell thee. I think that's a good admonition for us also this morning. Good days and pleasant circumstances and wonderful blessings have a tendency to bring complacency on the next generation and the ones following that.

Good days, brothers and sisters, pleasant circumstances and overwhelming blessings have a tendency to bring complacency in the next generations. Moses knew that and therefore he warned them that they would have that tendency and gave them instructions. But in this song we find these prophetic words of what happened of the response of the children of Israel to the good days and the pleasant circumstances and all the blessings that were upon them.

It says of Israel, Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked. Can anybody tell me what that kick was? It was a kick against God and God's ways. That's what happens.

Joshua also saw this problem and addressed it at the end of his life. If you want to turn over there, there's a few more verses we can read them together. In Joshua chapter 24 in the midst of those famous verses that all of us know very well and probably can quote, Joshua saw this same problem.

He's 110 years old now and he's ready to pass off the scene. In Joshua chapter 24 and verse 14, Hear his heart. Now therefore, fear the Lord and serve Him in sincerity and in truth, good counsel, Joshua, and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood and in Egypt, and serve ye the Lord.

And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord. And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord to serve other gods.

Right response, at least in word, right response. Probably every one of us here in this room would say the same thing, wouldn't we? Let's drop down now to verse 20. If ye forsake the Lord and serve strange gods, then He will turn and do you hurt and consume you.

After that, He hath done you good. And the people said unto Joshua, Nay, but we will serve the Lord. And I want us to read these verses in the context of the fact that we know what they did.

And don't get too tough on them. We're pretty bold with our words too. Nay, but we will serve the Lord.

And Joshua said unto the people, Ye are witnesses against yourselves that ye have chosen you, the Lord, to serve Him. And they said, We are witnesses. Now therefore, put away, said he, the strange gods which are among you, and incline your ear unto the Lord God of Israel.

And the people said unto Joshua, The Lord our God we will serve, and His voice we will obey. There are three generations that I'd like to look at here. If you just give me a little opportunity to give you some insight into the scene here.

There's three generations that are sitting here in this scene. The first generation is Joshua. I'm not sure if there's anybody else alive.

I studied a little bit, but I couldn't find it. I'm not sure if Caleb is dead at this point, or if he's still alive. But if you remember, Joshua and Caleb were the two men who at about 40 years old were allowed to live while the rest of their generation died in the wilderness over a 40 year period.

They finally entered into the land of Canaan. Joshua and Caleb both being 80 years old, 60 years old. But a whole generation of people died.

Then there is another second generation here. And that is the generation of people who wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. They saw God's works for 40 years.

They saw the judgments of God for 40 years. They saw the provisions of God for 40 years. They are also here in this scene.

And then there's another generation in this scene. And that's the generation that was born and grew up in the land of Canaan. Or the generation that was born in the wilderness, but maybe they were just 10 years old when they entered into the land of Canaan.

And they've come to adulthood now. They're 30 years old. They're 40 years old.

There's fathers. There's mothers. There's children.

There's a whole thing there. These three generations. It's very interesting when you consider what happened to these people.

And we will look at the words over in Judges chapter 2 and verse 7 to see the results of these people as they entered into the land of Canaan and found rest and good days and blessings. In Judges chapter 2 verse 7, And the people served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua. Those are the ones who lived through the wilderness, who had seen the great works of the Lord that He did for Israel.

And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died being 110 years old. And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnath-Hershei in the mount of Ephraim on the north side of the hill Gaash. And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers and there arose another generation after them which knew not the Lord nor yet the works which He had done for Israel.

Three generations here. Some time ago, coming back home a bit on this generation gap, this generational drift in the church. Some years ago, I was in an airport in, I believe it was Memphis, Tennessee.

You know, just sitting there waiting to get on a plane and I noticed these people. I mean, everywhere I went there were these people. They were a plain and a simple people.

They were a conservative people. You could tell by the way they looked that they were a conservative people. You could tell by the spirit that was in them and on their faces that they were a conservative and a humble and a simple people.

And the men were modest. The ladies were modest. The women wore veillings.

And I thought, my, what is this? You know, I'm going to go find out who these people are. And I walked up to a few of them and started talking to them, a couple of the older men and their wives. And they started sharing with me, I believe if I remember right, they were Plymouth Brethren, which if you've ever met Plymouth Brethren, many of them are a conservative people.

But they were Plymouth Brethren and it was a whole plane full of people. They chartered a plane from New Zealand and came to the United States to one of their conferences. So I'm sitting there visiting with these older men and their wives.

And while I'm visiting, you know, I'm observing. And I saw with my eyes three generations all there in the airport together. Three generations.

There were the older men and women with a testimony, a plain and simple testimony and a spirit of humility about them. Their testimony was clear and it was without question. Then there was another group, which was the middle-aged group, which would have probably been the sons and daughters of these older ones.

They were there also and there was a bit of difference in them. There was a difference in their spirits. There was a difference in their attire.

There was a difference in their appearance. The dresses were a little bit shorter. And all those things that go along with it, all those things were different.

Then there was the next generation, which would have been the grandchildren of these old men and these old ladies that I was talking to. And they were the youth. There wasn't any little ones.

These were youth, you know, 17, 18 years old. Shorter dresses, smaller coverings, tighter clothes, and a different spirit about them than what the fathers and the mothers had and what the children of the fathers and the mothers had. A different spirit about them.

Well, I didn't forget that little visit that I saw there, but that's a good example of the burden of my heart this morning. I saw in that airport there, many years back now, a generation gap. And a generation gap gets very practical when it gets lived out of the hearts and into the lives of the people.

You can see the generation gap. It's easy to spot. What are some of the danger signs of this generation gap? Let me just share a few of them with you this morning.

Number one, a tendency to ignore what mom and dad think. A tendency to just kind of turn off mom and dad. You know, mom and dad, you know, I mean, God bless mom and dad.

You know, they're mom and dad and they've taken good care of us, but, you know, just kind of a tendency to, you know, slot them over there a bit, off to the side in your mind. And by the way, this message is not just to the youth that are in this room. You know, some of us older ones can do the same thing.

Number two, a tendency to ignore what the elders and the older brothers and sisters in the church think. You know, you just kind of slot them over here. Well, you know, the elders, the elders of the elders, and you know how elders are, and you know how they are.

You know how they kind of get, you know, they kind of go too far, and you know, they're kind of strong, and they're big. Elders, we'll put them over there. And you know, the older brothers and sisters, well, you know, they're older.

Well, they're just older, you know. We'll put them over there too. A tendency to ignore what the elders and the older brothers and sisters think.

Number three, you begin to see, you know, you see them, you watch them, you hear them. You know, you can't get away from them, because God put all of us together. He did that by design, by the way.

So you can't get away from them. You see them. You watch them.

You hear them. But you just kind of slot them, you know, old-fashioned, you know. Well, they're just kind of old-fashioned, you know.

Or maybe you have thoughts like this. This is a good one for Lancaster County. In your mind, you slot them as being traditional.

They're just kind of traditional, you know. You know, we're against tradition. Praise God, praise God.

We're against tradition. And they're kind of traditional. So, we'll leave them over there in their traditional slot.

And we'll find our own way. Number five. You catch your thoughts thinking like this.

They just don't understand our day and our age. Mom, Dad, the elders, the older ones in the congregation. They just don't understand our day and our age.

And, you know, this thing goes, you know. You may not say it out loud, but it's there, you know. It's there.

You know, we're right. We think we're more right. And we're seeing it more clearly.

And, you know, we'll put up with these elders over here. You know, but we see more clearly. These are some of the danger signs I'm giving.

See, I think we know better. And someday, I'll get a chance to show that I do know better. And lastly, this generation gap, you can spot it with this tendency.

You tend to make decisions based on what your peers think. Rather than what the older ones think. You tend to make your decisions based on what your peers think.

And you converse about your decisions with your peers. In 1 Kings, 1 Kings chapter 12. I want to read verse 1 through 10.

It's a very sobering account of this generation gap. See, it's not a modern thing. We just have a modern name for it.

And I chose the modern name so we can relate to the people who live in this world we live in. But it's not a modern thing, this generation gap. In 1 Kings chapter 12, Solomon has died.

And now his son Rehoboam has taken the place of king over Israel. And Rehoboam went to Shechem. For all Israel were come to Shechem to make him king.

And it came to pass when Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who was yet in Egypt, heard of it. For he was fled from the presence of king Solomon. And Jeroboam dwelt in Egypt.

That they sent and called him. And Jeroboam and all the congregation of Israel came and spake unto Rehoboam saying, Thy father made our yoke grievous. Now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father and his heavy yoke, which he put upon us lighter, and we will serve thee.

And he said unto them, Depart ye yet. Depart yet for three days. Then come again to me.

And the people departed. And king Rehoboam consulted with the old men that stood before Solomon, his father, while yet lived, and said, How do ye advise that I may answer this people? And they spake unto him saying, If thou wilt be a servant unto this people this day, and wilt serve them, and answer them, and speak good words to them, then they will be thy servants forever. But he forsook the counsel of the old men which they had given him, and consulted with the young men that were grown up with him, and which stood before him now.

And he said unto them, What counsel give ye that we may answer this people who have spoken to me saying, Make the yoke which thy father did put upon us lighter. And the young men that were grown up with him spake unto him saying, Thus shalt thou speak unto this people that spake unto thee saying, Thy father made our yoke heavy, but make thou it lighter unto us. Thus shalt thou say unto them, My little finger shall be thicker than my father's loins.

And that's far enough for us to read here this morning. We can see what has happened here. We all know the history, the devastating results of what took place here.

And we can see here, this is a classic example of this generation gap and the destruction that can come from it. Rehoboam submitted himself to peer pressure. The boys that he grew up with, his friends, his buddies, all through those years growing up, he submitted himself to what they thought, and refused the counsel of the wise old men who sat in the court with Solomon his father.

I want us to note here that this plague had already broken out before the time to make a choice. It wasn't just all of a sudden there. But Rehoboam knew.

He knew already. He already had it set in his mind. Yes, he went and asked the old men, but he already had it set in his mind where he was going to go, what he was going to do.

He was already in his mind, the old men. What do they know? He was also already in the minds of his peers, the old men. What do they know? So he did what so many do.

He went to those who would tell him what he wanted to hear. And thus, they all made their decision, and charted the course of the testimony of God's kingdom upon the earth. Wow! What an awesome thing they did that day.

So flippantly they made their choices. Thus the road of reasoning that leads downward was there. Other kings and people reasoned the same way.

High places, you can have high places and still serve Jehovah. You can have groves and worship God in creation. It doesn't hurt to put up an image.

We can still believe in Jehovah while we put up an image. Imagine their reasonings this morning. Oh, how they must have thought their way through these things, one reasoning step at a time.

Times have changed. We have quite a population growth, you know. The temple is crowded certain times of the year.

The people are busy. It's hard for them to travel and get to Jerusalem. Let's make a grove.

One over here, one over there. We can offer sacrifices in other places around the kingdom. Green groves are beautiful places to worship God.

We'll put an altar there. And we can also offer sacrifices. And thus they reasoned and they reasoned.

And oh, it sounded so good. All their reasonings sounded so good. And little by little by little, the gap got wider and wider.

Each generation thus reasons and waters down what previous generations had. And that, dear brothers and sisters, is the thing that we do not want. We do not want the next generation to water down the things which we have.

We do not want to water down the things which we got from our parents that is right and holy and good and just. We do not want to lose those things. But thus their reasonings.

And I know there comes a time when things are dead and departed, when it is right to start all over. But may I encourage you this morning, you are not in that place where everything is dead and there is no spirituality. You are not in that place.

Twice in the book of Judges, it gives this testimony of this third generation that we looked at there in Joshua. It gives this testimony of that third generation. After the elders who outlived Joshua passed away, then, this is what it says, the people, every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

He reasoned and reasoned and reasoned. And little by little they departed further and further and further. We do not want to do that, do we? I know we do not want to do that.

I know you do not want to do that. I know you young people do not want to do that. I know you do not want that for your little children, young married couples that are here.

I know that. I know if we were to go around and ask each one of you in a personal interview, you would give us words just like they gave to Joshua. Bold words, strong words, words of determination and commitment.

You would give them. I know that. Can you not hear them reasoning? I do not think I will sacrifice this time.

What do you think? Well, the fathers were pretty strict, you know, in all their demands. You know, Moses was really a fanatical kind of a guy. Yeah, you are right.

And you know, besides that, it is the heart that matters. I still love God and all this outward stuff. I just think I will skip the sacrifices this year.

Yeah, I think I will too. I think you are right. And thus they consoled each other as they slowly moved further and further away from all the beautiful things that God gave them.

Wow. I wonder, are we falling into this trap? This pit of human reasonings? Are your elder brothers and sisters helping you make decisions? Or is that only your peers that hear the choices you are looking at, the decisions you need to make? Who is helping you make your decisions? Oh, the danger of being young. And now I am on my own.

And now I am big. And now I can make my own decisions. Let's see, what will I do? Who is helping you make your decisions? Is it only your peers? Oh, you talk to your peers, no problem there.

But who is helping you make your decisions? You know, the everyday ones that we make. How is it in your own heart? You know, is it like this? I know what dad thinks. I know what the elders think.

I don't need to go ask them. But they just don't understand. Danger, my friend.

If you know what your elders think, if you know what their heart is, if you know what their vision is and their burden is, and you don't even go to ask them, if you are making your own choices in light of that and going a different way, you are in a dangerous place. God has placed protective principles in the Bible to eliminate, to limit this generation gap that we are speaking about this morning. Hear the words of 1 Peter.

Beautiful words, as I meditated upon them, fresh and new. Beautiful words, 1 Peter 5, verses 5 and 6. There is no gap in these words. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder.

And that word elder there is not meaning elders. But it's just meaning the older ones. Us gray hairs.

You know, the ones that aren't walking quite as fast anymore. We're not running like we used to run. Listen to them.

Peter says, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another and be clothed with humility, for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace unto the humble. Humble yourselves, therefore, unto the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.

And I want you to see the context of those two verses. They are connected together. See, you might think, submit to the elders, submit to the older ones, yield my heart to how they see and how they feel about the church and the vision of the church and all.

Yea, that's called humility, young man. Dear sister, that's called humility. Oh, but you say, I know better.

Yea, well, you may. You may. But let's give it some time.

Don't jump too fast. Titus is another place. You can just turn there, Titus.

Chapter 2, verse 1. No generation gap in these verses. None. Chapter 2, verse 2. That the aged men, there's the old men, be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, sound in charity, sound in patience.

The aged women likewise, that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things. Who are they going to teach? That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, why? That the Word of God be not blasphemed. Tell the young men likewise, exhort to be sober minded in all things, showing thyself a pattern of good works, in doctrine, showing uncorruptness, in gravity and sincerity.

Let them be sound in speech, speech that cannot be condemned. Why? That he that is of a contrary part may be ashamed having no evil thing to say unto you, young man. No evil thing.

When I look at those verses in light of the subject that we're looking at here this morning, I see God so wisely blending all of these together. Old men, old women, with young men, young women. Those young men and young women get married.

They pass on what they got from the old men and the old women to their children. And one generation after the next generation after the next generation just keeps on going for God. God has put us together.

He is no dummy, may I say that, without being sacrilegious this morning. He knows what He's doing when He put us all together in a church. Blessed is that church that has men and women with grey hair that are full of the fire of God and love the Word of God with all their hearts.

Blessed is that place. And blessed are the young people and the young married couples who are in such a place as that. You are sitting in a gold mine.

And then the last one, and there are others, but this is enough to get the point here. Honor your father and your mother. The Scriptures say.

Now, I don't believe if you're here today and you're married, God has blessed you and given you a husband or given you a wife, that you have to do everything your father says, everything your mother says. No. God has established a new authority and all those things are in their place.

But you are not exempt from honoring your father and your mother. What does it mean to honor your father and your mother? It means you look up to them. You are concerned about what they think.

You know, there are men in my life that I honor and respect. I want to know what they think. I go ask them.

Even when I know already what they think. And it's different than what I think. I still go ask them.

It's that way when you honor. It means to look up to. It means to esteem.

Weigh their counsel very heavily. How do we eliminate this generation gap? Let's go back to the Bible. The Bible principles are real clear.

Let's go back to our parents. God has placed them in front of us as guides and counselors and teachers. Let's go back to the parents.

It's our responsibility to guide our own children, our young people. It's our responsibility to provide an example and give them direction. And let's go back to our elders.

God has placed them in our midst as an example and a voice to guide our lives. You know, think about that a minute. You think about your elders and you think, Yeah, well, you know, they're kind of... Oh, really? Paul said in the book of Hebrews, Whose faith follow? You think that's just some theoretical floating faith up here? Whose faith follow? We have many good examples to follow.

If we are all endeavoring to follow the Bible principles and not traditions, and I'm not plugging traditions here this morning. I'm for Bible principles. But we're very foolish if we claim to believe in Bible principles and just keep slowly sliding further and further and further away from clear expressions of Bible principles.

I'm for Bible principles. I personally believe if that gap is there, it's there because our teaching is weak. Whether it be Father and Mother's teaching or whether it be us elders teaching, our teaching is weak.

And therefore, the principle is not being grasped. If we go the way of Bible principles, then there should not be a large gap or a big difference in our expressions of the Christian faith. I don't think there should be a gap.

I don't think it should be different. What's wrong with Mom's dress? What's wrong with her covering? Is she old-fashioned? Is that how you look at it? Clothes, coverings, cars, radios. You know, I'm just guessing, but I'm a pretty good guesser after 25 years of being a pastor.

But my guess is there are many, many young people in this room and young marrieds who listen to that radio all the time, you know, when Mom and Dad never touched it. Now, come, let us reason together. Are you more spiritual? Are you stronger? Can you handle it? Or did Mom and Dad just look at something that was harmless and say that's a dangerous thing? How do you look at that in your mind? See, clothes, coverings, cars, radios, videos, music, what we buy, amusements.

Well, the list can go on and on and on. You know, well, you know Mom. You know Dad, he just... Sunday afternoon.

Well, you know Dad, he just, you know, he was like this and, you know, miniature golf, you know, he just didn't allow those things. But, you know, there's nothing wrong with that. And here we go.

One step at a time. Further, further, further away. And my encouragement is that us fathers and mothers, we need to help our young people in these things.

We need to guide them. We need to talk. We need to communicate.

You say, we can't communicate. Danger, danger. That's the gap we're talking about.

It's the sign that the gap is there. We can't communicate. And by the way, if we're ever gonna eliminate that gap, there's gonna have to be a willingness to communicate on both sides.

Gotta do that. We must help our young people in these things. And young people, you need to yield to the guiding counsel of the older brothers and sisters in this fellowship.

You need to yield. You don't know as much as you think you do. Parents, we need to guide them.

Youth, we need to be guideable. How is it with you? Why does your covering get thinner and more transparent and smaller and further back? You know, why is that? Are we missing something? What is wrong with mom's dress? Why must it be tighter, brighter, the shortest sleeves you can get with all the fancy extras on it? What's wrong with mom's dress? Has she lost her way and you have all a tremendous spiritual insight that mom doesn't have? Do you really think that's the truth? What's wrong with mom and dad's simple shoes? You know, what's wrong with their shoes? Why must yours be so stylish? Higher heels, pointed toes, and on and on the list shall go. You know, cowboy boots and you know, big tennis shoes with tongues hanging out over them.

What's wrong with dad's shoes? I saw a picture years ago. It was my first viewing. I've seen many since then.

A family picture. A generational family picture. Have you ever seen one of those? Where you look at it.

Takes you a little bit to take it in, you know, because there's about 50 or 60 people in the picture. Finally, your eyes zero in and there's this old man and this old woman sitting there in the center. So sweet.

So simple. So modest. Then you move out from there and you see the sons and the daughters.

And then you move out from there and you see all the grandchildren. And when you look at it a little bit, you realize, whoa, something is changing here. It's called the generation gap.

The generational drift in the church. Do we want that? Do we want that? We are getting some. Do we want it? Young people, do you want it? And I'm not just talking about the clothes that I saw in those pictures.

No. That's just one little issue. We're talking about a heart attitude.

See, the heart attitude is all those other things that we talked about a little earlier. And those kind of attitudes, yeah, well, you know, you know, dad, and you know. Those attitudes are the things that, they're the root attitudes that grow all these other fruits that you see all the way around you.

Think about it, young people. Allow me, like Paul, for a moment to be foolish in the flesh. You'll understand me.

Wouldn't you be disappointed if I showed up for church here next Sunday morning on a Suzuki motorcycle with my shades on and walked in here with my tight blue jeans and a tight short-sleeved polo shirt, you know, and big white tennis shoes with the tongues hanging out over them and about a one-eighth inch sign beard on my chin? Wouldn't you be disappointed in me if I stepped up here next Sunday morning that way to preach to you the Word of God? I think most of you would be disappointed in me if I did that. You say, well, that's just not proper for the preacher to get up and do that. Oh, really? You mean there's a difference between the sacred and the secular for the Christian? There is not.

There is not. See? What's wrong with Dad's shirt? Boys, what's wrong with Dad's shirt? Why does it have to be a T-shirt, huh? You know? Get them old muscles out there walking around picking up those things. Cover those muscles up, boy.

Those are for your wife. What's wrong with Dad's shirt? I realize that I could be very misunderstood this morning. I realize that.

Let me give you some positive encouragement in closing. We want you to pass us up. We do.

That's the longing of every father and every mother's heart in this room. We want you to pass us up. We want you to be more spiritual than we are.

We want your fervor to be more fiery than ours is. We want your testimony to be clearer than ours is. We want you to go further in every Bible principle than we do.

We want you to wax strong in the Lord. We want you to raise up a generation way beyond what we are or what we raise. That's what we want for you.

Go for that. That will take care of the generation gap. Because you know what? You take off like that and you live like that.

Guess what? We will be running to catch up with you. We will. But this other gap.

Oh, we cannot. Away with it. We cannot go that way.

Young people, let no man, no woman despise thy youth. I looked up that word despise. When we think of despise, we think of somebody looking down with scorn.

That's not what that word means. It means, let no man count thy youth as not. Oh, they're nothing.

Don't let it ever be said of you. They're nothing. Parents, in closing here.

Parents, we owe our children a vibrant life that we can pass on to them principle teaching day by day in our homes with applications and oversight to those applications. And number three, we owe them an example. We owe them that.

Children, young people, follow your examples. Seek a vibrant life and follow your examples. The other does not come out right.

I promise you. It does not come out right. My encouragement in closing is this.

A good long family talk about this subject. That's my encouragement. A good long heart to heart broken hearted open family talk about this subject.

Mom, Dad, I'm giving you the platform. I just encourage you to lead out in it. In conversation.

And open up the lines of communication again. In Jesus name. Let's pray.

Oh Lord, no fun Lord. No fun. I thank you Father for allowing me to share my heart this morning.

Not pleasant Father. God, I just commit this message to you Lord. And pray that you will fill in the gaps God.

Of my feeble attempt to give a little direction here God. Fill in the gaps God. I pray in Jesus Christ name.

Amen. Thank you. Thank you Brother Denny for sharing your heart with us.

Very much needed practical lesson for all of us. I find myself very needy this morning. I look at my own life, family, the needs in my heart, my home.

But I want to say that I believe what we heard this morning is right. I believe it is good. And I believe that we need to take it to heart.

We need to face it. We need to look at it. And so I thank God for the message.

I guess looking back over the years of being here. These are the kind of messages that I know that they are good for us. And I know that they help us as families with our children.

I know they do that. These directional kind of messages like this. They help us as fathers.

And they help us as mothers. Because you know we just we need to be encouraged and strengthened in our inner man in these areas. So I want to open up here for some thoughts or confessions as the Lord leads you this morning.

All for a testimony of Godliness in every generation. In the back. Yeah, I wanted to bless Brother Denny.

I feel like I didn't misunderstand him. I heard his heart. I caught his burden there.

And I wanted to bless him for that. And bless each one of our ministry here. Aaron, Emmanuel, Denny.

I just want to publicly acknowledge you and place myself underneath you. And I see the importance of being under your authority. And I do I do honor you.

I do respect you. Each one of you has many valuable truths and lessons for me to learn in my own life. I just thank you, Denny.

Thank you, brother. I appreciate hearing that from a young man. I too want to bless Brother Denny this morning for his very clear message.

A message that I believe was directly from God through his heart. As well, I want to bless the ministry and thank them for being wise counselors. It was about this time a year ago that our family was at a crossroads.

And we were pursuing a I was pursuing a business opportunity. But not being a businessman or trained in that area. I felt strongly impressed to the Lord to seek wise counsel from my elders.

And yet there was some trepidation with that being a new family at this church. I found myself in the midst of a situation and felt some guilt for asking the elders while I was already in the situation. But God humbled me and I I asked the elders and the ministry to come and I was amazed I was amazed at the wisdom but I think I was even more amazed at the love.

In the midst of their busy schedule these men gave the better part of the day to counsel me in a decision that I am still reaping the blessings of. And I would not have been able to make such a clear decision without that counsel. I was not equipped.

And I just bless God for men in my life who are not only ministers but wise in business. They are faithful with unrighteous mammon. And I want to thank you publicly brothers for your counsel at a crucial time in my life.

The denominational background I come from is seeing some difficult days right now. Their pioneer, their founding father had a vision for hippies. And as those men were saved he disciplined them, I suppose, from

the pulpit.

But never really had the time for them. As a result, those men grew up and formed churches that have outdone this original founder. Many of these churches are 6, 7, 8, 10,000 members.

This founding leader now is recovering from his son, getting divorced and remarried. And many of the second generation now, their children are divorcing and remarrying. And a curious thing, the third generation, I guess a little bit younger than me, they are pierced and immodest and they're outward... It's almost like they're not the hippies that their father was, but they're sort of different.

And the one thing I see missing in all of this that I've come from, that I left behind. I was there for almost 12 years serving in that denomination. The one thing I see missing that I think defines the generation gap is time.

It seems that these men were ambitious and they didn't give their families time. I ended my affiliation with that denomination because I saw that to continue and to succeed in it I was falling into the same trap. I was denying my family time and love.

Well, I've had a lot of time with my family for this one year now. But it's time that I wouldn't have had and I wouldn't have enjoyed and made the most of had my elders not stepped in at a very crucial time. So, Emmanuel, Brother Danny, Brother Aaron, Brother Malin, you men who've been involved in speaking into my life for this last year, I can't thank you enough for giving me time and advice and love.

It's a very crucial time. Thank you. God bless you.

Thank you for sharing. It's our joy to see what God is doing in your heart and life. It's part of our rewards.

Yes, I don't have a lot to say. I don't feel like I can add much to the message. I just want to say amen and just felt like it was right to say that I want to cast in my lot with the vision that was lifted up.

This subject was one that nearly stumbled me when I came to the Lord because the people that I was associated with at that time would point out this generational gap and generational drift. And I looked and it was true. They were unconverted but yet they could see that.

And it really caused me to search. And if it wouldn't have been for what God had done in my own heart and the vision that He somehow through His word laid on my own heart that it doesn't need to be that way, I don't know where I would be today. But I just want to follow after that vision that God put on my heart by His grace and encourage others to go the same way.

God bless you, brother. Amen. In the back over here.

Yeah, I'd just like to share just a little word of testimony. I don't at all mean to counteract anything at all, but I'd just like to say that for myself as a young man, it's not like I don't appreciate any reproof for any instruction. I have very much appreciated those that came from and just being here at the church, I've learned a lot and grown in that in many ways.

But the one thing that breaks me and sobers me more than anything is when somebody comes up to me and encourages me and just blesses me. And as I was looking at Scripture there, before Solomon became king, David just poured blessings all over him, prayed blessings and everything. And then Rehoboam comes in the picture and it seems like Solomon just, he was taken away with all his stuff, I guess.

I don't know what. He had all his wives and everything else and he just maybe didn't even have time to see Rehoboam and Harley. And Rehoboam just stuck with whoever he spent time with.

And so I just get it out from my perspective a little bit and I'm very thankful for each one here. Thank you, Mr. Hague. Thank you, Brother Denny, for being faithful to the Lord.

Thank you for preaching that message this morning. And I have to confess I stand in need. I see areas where I have failed.

But I do desire to press in, to go on. One of the things you mentioned was that this danger of this generation gap requires meditation, giving thought to it, to pray, to examine our hearts. And I encourage us to do that.

Another encouragement you gave us, Brother Denny, was to have a good long family talk. And I just want to encourage us as dads to do that, to take courage and to do that. I had to think of what Brother Kenny shared this morning, of the testimony of Kloss.

When he heard the Godly Home tapes, he got a hold of it with zeal. But there was a distance between him and his children because it was in rigidity and there was a lack of love. And I sense this could happen maybe in this type of a message, but I thank God for the message.

And I just want to encourage us that we don't do that. We don't approach it in a law or a rigidity without a broken heart and love. And so I encourage us, let us exhort one another, and let us encourage our youth to pass us up.

In Jesus' name. Thank you, Aaron. One up front here.

I just also as a young person want to stand and bless Brother Denny for that message and say amen and I embrace that. Thank you. Thank you, Jenny.

I believe there's many more of you younger sisters who could say that's your heart. I also would like to say this morning that I share that burden. I've had a lot of time to think and meditate in the last week, just the way God directed my schedule and everything.

And traveling back on the plane from Holland, my mind was going back to our forefathers, my forefathers, that they came across those same waters and looking at how when they came to America, they just kind of laid down, laid back, because of all the persecution, because of all the struggles. And they fell asleep because of materialism and having a good farm. And they took their eyes off Christ and His kingdom, began to focus on differences of opinions on practical things.

We see the splinters of those groups today yet. Families being divided. I just make a plea with all of us here today that the answer to this generation gap is to let God and His kingdom and the purposes of Jesus Christ to consume our hearts and to make that our focus and goal and allow Him to turn our hearts to the purpose and the reason why God has us here.

And I also would like to make a confession here this morning that I have sat on this bench in times past and remained silent. I'm sorry for that. And I want to say this morning that this church, you and I are going to weep and wail and wring our hands over this subject this morning.

The question is, are we going to do it now when there's hope? Or will we do it in 12 years from now when the larger percentage of the young families will be leaving this church? We have another one here. I just want to say amen, Brother Denny. Thank you for that.

I believe that's beating upon the heart of God for us as a church. And young people, we need this. We desperately need this, young people.

We're sitting in the place of Rehoboam. And it's about to be handed over to us. We've got to have a vision.

We've got to see straight. And we've got to pick up the things that they've handed to us and run. And we're sitting in the place of Rehoboam.

And it is up to us. What are we going to do in this next generation? Oh, may God take us on. Thank you, Brother.

Okay, down here. I'd like to say thank you too, Brother Denny, for sharing this morning. I'm not sure how to say what's on my heart, but I think all of us have seen the generational drift around us.

We've seen those who have come to this country because of persecution or whatever, just as was shared, and people with a zeal for the Lord, a desire to serve the Lord, and to have godly families. And then we see it go on three or four generations, and there's divorce and remarriage and you name it. And I think it's just that the vision's lost.

And so it's my desire to pass that vision on to my family and to encourage them in the ways of the Lord. Yes, thank you, Brother Denny, for that message. I really appreciate it.

And I just want to bless you elders for watching over me and watching over us as a church. Don't slow down. Keep on doing what you are doing.

Another thing I would like to share is, I know I could be misunderstood, but something, a spirit that I sometimes sense, and I fear that spirit. The spirit of, well, you know, driving a plain car don't make any more spiritual, or fasting, well, don't really make any more spiritual. I'd like to ask you, does it make you any less spiritual? And there's, I see that spirit, I sense that spirit here sometimes from people.

This or that don't make any more spiritual. It don't make any less spiritual either. Thank you, Brother.

We read these verses this morning earlier. It says, hold fast the form of sound words, which ye have heard of me in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

This is the form of sound words this morning. And I do one prayer too. My children are getting older, and I want to learn how to get in their hearts.

As young, as people instead of as children. And I need prayer in that area. I just wanted to share this morning, I was thankful for the message that Denny shared this morning, and was blessed by it.

And I really appreciate the wisdom that was shared in all that, just in the generation gap. And my heart as a young person is to follow the teachings that have been taught to us as young people, by our parents and by those who understand the things of life and how it can lead us astray. And in all sincerity of heart, there's times where I felt like they just didn't understand me.

And one thing that one of our brothers said earlier was just the fact that sometimes just love, just encouragement, just a positive approach or encouragement given to us young people does really help as we sort through the issues in our lives and learn to follow that which has been taught. But also as I thought of the eunuch that was traveling and how Philip came up behind him and he said, how can I unless someone show me? In other words, how could he understand? And I think somewhat the same way with us young people. How can we understand unless somebody show us and at the same time, just that encouragement.

We do want to understand what you're trying to teach us. And we just pray that You would have the grace with us to lead us and direct us and guide us and whatever. And I wish the Lord's blessing on you elders as you endeavor to help us young people.

But I did find three verses in Proverbs that were an encouragement. And that was in Proverbs 17, verse 27. He says, He that hath knowledge spareth his words, and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit.

And then in chapter 19, verses 20 and 21, he says, Hear counsel and receive instruction that thou mayest be wise in the latter end. There are many devices in a man's heart. Nevertheless, the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.

And then in chapter 20, verse 5, it says, Counsel in the heart of old men is like deep water. It did say men, but I put old men there. It's like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.

And I think that's true. The elders that have gone on before us and the fathers that are a lot older have pioneered the way. And for us young people to challenge that is quite foolish according to Scripture because we haven't experienced all that life has yet to bring and we would do well to heed to the instruction.

Thank you to you fathers and you elders for your wisdom. May God bless you. Amen.

About seven years ago, before we moved here, we're still in California. Jennifer and I came out for Bible school and I had a talk with Denny. He had already been out to stay with us in California about four days.

And he said, Don't forget where you've come from. Being alone, you have an edge a little bit because that's all you have. But we forgot when you come here, you can be lazy.

You can let down your guard and then the gap gets bigger and bigger. I was one of those girls that didn't listen to her father and I got into a lot of trouble. And now it's my turn as being one of the moms.

Don't forget. God bless you, sister. Thank you for sharing.

When Brother Denny was reading in Deuteronomy 32.7 about remembering the days of old, consider the years of many generations. Ask thy father and he will show thy elders and they will tell thee. My personal study has been in Jeremiah and I've been absolutely marveling how it fits today's lifestyle or environment that's around us.

And in Jeremiah chapter 6, in verse 13 it says, For from the least of them even unto the greatest, every one of them is given to covetousness. And from the prophet even unto the priest, every one deals falsely. And it goes on, it says in verse 15, They were ashamed when they had committed abomination.

Nay, they were not all ashamed, neither would they blush. Therefore they shall fall among them that fall at the time that I visit them. They shall be cast down, saith the Lord.

And in verse 16, I've been meditating on this a lot. It says, Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways and see. Ask for the old paths.

Where is the good way? And walk therein. And ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, we will not walk therein.

The old paths, I took that word old. I thought I knew what it meant. But it means the everlasting, eternal paths.

Let us not say, we will not walk therein. Let us heed the counsel that we're hearing. Thank you.

Thank you Jeff. His words in the back. I just want to say thank you Brother Denny for the message this morning.

And all you elders for the time you spend preparing messages and sharing your burden with us as a church. And I just want to be honest that at times I struggle with these issues in my life and heeding counsel. But there have been many times where I've tasted and God has shown me many blessings of heeding to my parents' counsel.

And that's my heart to just go on with God. And follow the counsel of the older men. Thank you.

Sister Shed. I was very thankful for the message this morning. It's a subject definitely on my heart.

And my grandpa passed away this summer. And we pass around a circle letter. And he loved the Lord.

It would be a circle letter from some of his brothers and sisters and their children and his children and his grandchildren. And we've looked at these generations of his generations and asked why was not his plain faith passed on? His plain life, his love for Jesus has been in large part passed on. But two of the areas that we have looked at are the leadership, the male leadership.

He was not a leader able to pass along the vision of what the principles he stood for meant and why we should keep them. So his children still love the Lord and serve the Lord. And his grandchildren then, even one of his children, there was some departing.

And the other part was the lack of leadership again among the men standing up and giving the vision to their families. We could look how that was passed on and see a need and how desperately we need the men to stand up and lead in our homes and also from the children's side what a blessing it was in my life and some of my cousins, those that we honored our parents, came to them for counsel, heard their hearts and sought it. The honor gives a blessing that is uncountable in our lives.

And just the testimony to go to your elders and ask. Find out what's in their heart. Even if they're not good at communicating, we can be initiating the communication.

Why did we do this? Why does the Bible say this? Why don't we do this? And I think those are keys. And I praise the Lord for the message. Thank you for that picture.

Recently I was reading in 1st and 2nd Kings and the kings of Israel, their standard that is written about them is Jeroboam the son of Nebat which made Israel to sin. And that's mentioned many, many times about the kings of Israel after the kingdom was divided. And the standard in the kingdom of Judah was that either he served God as did David his father or he did not serve God as did David his father.

Very interesting. And so, each leader that rises up and comes out in the forefront each leader is casting his shadow. And what Sister Laura said about her grandfather who died.

That man cast his shadow. And that shadow overshadows his posterity. His children and children's children.

And it affects them. And every one of us as fathers it's like we're stepping up on the stage where there's a light shining and now we're casting our shadow of life out of our children. Every one of us is casting a shadow.

And so, it is very important how we cast and what shadow we cast upon our children and our children's children. Alright, I think we've heard each other's hearts this morning. I trust we have heard the heart of God for us today.

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