



One Generation to Another

Matt McCauley – November 23, 2014

Good morning. How are you? Good to see everybody this morning. Welcome to The Village Church. My name is Matt McCauley, and I have the joy of serving on staff here as our Children's and Middle School Minister. It's my favorite thing in the world to do. I've been doing it for about nine years now. I have the joy and the honor of walking us through the Scriptures this morning. Welcome to Family Worship Weekend, kids. I'm so glad you are in here with us. We can't be more excited about seeing you next to your moms and dads.

Really quickly, I'm married. My wife Ashley and I have been married for about three and a half years, and we have a son. His name is Wyatt. Wyatt is almost a year old, and he is such a joy. We had all intentions of taking a family picture so I could throw it up on the screen and brag about my family, but as we loaded everybody up into the car on Friday and were headed to the spot we were going to take the picture, we had a blowout. By blowout I don't mean a tire went bad. We had another blowout.

So the picture didn't happen, but that's my family, Ashley and little Wyatt, and we're praying and hoping for many more kids to come. So welcome to Family Worship Weekend. This is something The Village does twice a year. We shut down our children's ministry, and all the kiddos, first through fifth grade, are welcomed in to worship alongside their families.

Why do we do that? Why do we take two times out of the year to make sure kids are in here with their parents and the rest of the congregation? Well, instead of me answering that question, I want to let David, the psalmist, answer that question. I'm going to read a verse out of Psalm 34, and I want you to hear David's plea and cry for the generations to worship together. He says, "**Oh, magnify [praise] the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together!**"

At the very end of the message, I'm going to come back to this verse, and I'm going to show you why I think that when David used the word *together*, he had in mind the generations, from the oldest to

the very youngest, in the same place, in the same room, worshiping and magnifying the Lord. We'll come back to that at the end. As we start, I want to be really transparent with you and just kind of put my cards out on the table. As I have prepared for this message and spent some time praying for myself and then praying for you, this has been my prayer.

This is my hope for our time together: that as we read the Scriptures, as we look at God's heart for the generations to worship together, he would impress upon you, parents, future parents, the necessity, the importance, of your children being with you in the congregation as we worship together. If that's something you haven't yet considered or don't make somewhat of a regular practice, that after this message, you would consider making family togetherness, worship, happen on a regular basis.

So let's get everybody on the same page, because we have a lot of different people in the room. If you're an adult who does not have a child in the room with you, first, I just want to say thank you so much for being here. You can already tell just by the flavor of worship that this service is going to feel a little bit different than it typically does, because we want to accommodate the younger kids who are with us.

Here is what I would ask of you and myself, that as we worship this morning, what we have come to do, we would receive these little ones with the same spirit and in the same heart we see Jesus himself receiving children in the New Testament. In the Gospels, there's a story about Jesus and his disciples going about their ministry, and these little kids keep running up to Christ, keep running to Jesus. They want to see him. They want to meet him. They want to touch him. They want to hear from him.

The disciples see this as a distraction. They see these little kids as getting in the way of what Jesus had come to do, and Jesus rebukes them. He rebukes the disciples and says, "Don't hinder these little ones from coming to me. Don't prevent them from coming to me." So this morning, as we welcome in some little ones, let us not hinder them from coming to Jesus but welcome them in and pave the path and point to the Jesus we so desperately desire them to run to.

If you're an adult and you have a little one, a child sitting next to you... Maybe this is something you haven't done before. This is a first time for you. First, I just want to invite you all, parents, to breathe for a second. It's going to be okay. I promise they're not going to be a distraction. They are not going to be a disturbance. It is good and right that they are here with you sitting next to Mom, sitting next

to Dad, sitting next to Grandmother, next to Grandfather. We have invited them in this morning. So if you have your "Mom Pincher" already ready to snip the back of the arm, just disarm that. It'll be okay, I promise.

I've spent the last 10 years teaching and speaking to middle school students, so 11- to 14-year-olds, and I promise I have seen it all from the stage, and nothing is going to faze me. I once had a middle school kid during a sermon get up out of his chair and lie down in the aisle and proceed to take a nap because he was tired. So I've seen it all. Trust me. They're not going to be a bother this morning. Just enjoy the fact that they are here with you. We're excited that you did bring them in.

Now, kiddos, first, thank you for coming. I'm so glad you are here. I want to make sure I can see all of you, because you don't quite come up as high as your parents do when you're sitting down. So if you're sitting on this bottom floor... The back seats are a little tricky, so I don't want you to get hurt, but if you're sitting on this bottom floor, I'm going to invite all of the kiddos to go ahead and stand up in your seat so I can see you. Go ahead. I'm giving you permission. Stand up in your seats. There you are. Great. Fantastic.

Have you ever done that before? Have you ever stood up in a chair at church before? No? Oh yeah, let's give them a round of applause. Stay standing. I want to talk to you for just a second. Now that I can see you, I want to make sure I can also hear you, so on the count of three, here's what I'm going to ask you to do. When I get to three, I want you to clap as loud as you can, and then when I say, "Stop," I want you to stop. Okay? Here we go. On the count of three, even in the back. One, two, three! And stop. That was pretty good, parents. Not bad.

Okay, now that I have your attention, kiddos, I want you to look up here at me and I want you to listen. What I'm going to ask you guys to do is for the next few minutes... Here's the deal, guys. I know you can do this. I know you can pay attention, because I've seen you with my own eyes sit in front of a screen, stare frozen (pun intended) for 109 minutes, and give your full undivided attention to what was on that screen.

Now this morning, I'm going to ask you to listen and pay attention to what's going on up here. I'm not going to break into any kind of song. This isn't going to be a musical, but if I get the sense that I'm losing you for just a second, I might just have to pull out a really horrible version of "Let It Go" from my back pocket, and you don't want that, I promise.

But if that's what I have to do, I'm going to do it. So give me your attention and worship the Lord this morning by listening and paying attention to his Word, to the Scriptures. Nod your heads if you think you can do that. Great. I believe you can. Now you guys can sit down.

As everybody settles in, I want to go ahead and invite you to grab your Bibles and open up to Judges, chapter 2. That's where we're going to be this morning. If you're a guest with us and you did not bring a Bible or don't own a Bible, there should be one in the seat back in front of you. We invite you to take that Bible, follow along as we read, and then as you leave this place, if you don't own a Bible, that is our gift to you. Take that Bible home. I encourage you to read it. It's a best seller. It has been for a long time, so it's definitely worth your time and attention to read.

Judges, chapter 2. As you're turning there, I want to give you some background, give you a little bit of context about what is happening in the book of Judges. If you spent any time in church as a child or growing up or in Sunday school, when we open up or say the word *Judges* and you think about that book, there are probably some names that are now running through your mind or some stories. You're probably thinking about Samson, or maybe you're thinking about Gideon or some of the other judges.

Those are great narratives from this book, but all of these stories about these great judges are just pieces to a part of the whole book. They are pieces to this puzzle that makes up the book of Judges. All of these stories take place in a really particular and peculiar period of time for the people of Israel. There's something really interesting happening in this time period as we open up the book of Judges. So I want to rewind a little bit and get us up to this point.

We know from Genesis that the descendants of Abraham were promised some land by God, but then after, they find themselves in Egypt enslaved by Pharaoh. Then the Lord raises up a deliverer, and we know his name is Moses. If you've seen *The Prince of Egypt* or if you've read the book of Exodus, you know the great stories about Moses leading the people of Israel, the descendants of Abraham, out of Egypt.

Then for 40 years, they wander in the desert, looking, searching for the Promised Land. As they get to the edge of the Promised Land, sadly, Moses, the great deliverer, and the older generation die. They don't make it into the Promised Land. Moses and the complainers (which is a great name for a band, by the way) don't step foot into the land God had promised them. But God raises up another great leader. God raises up Joshua to take the people into the Promised Land.

Beginning with the city of Jericho, they begin to follow the commands of God and conquer city after city and remove the pagan inhabitants out of the land. God had given them the command to make the Promised Land their own and to worship him there as Yahweh. After a few of these battles and as they begin to settle into the land, sadly, Joshua dies as well. There are two important things to note that did not happen after Joshua passed.

The first thing is that the 12 tribes of Israel did not complete the job the Lord had commanded. He had commanded them to clear the Promised Land of all of its pagan inhabitants, to tear down the altars to false gods and remove all of the false idols, but they don't complete it. They don't finish the job. Kiddos, it's kind of like when your parents tell you to clean your room and you kind of clean your room, but you don't really. You just take everything that was on the floor and shove it under the bed or hide it in the closet.

You think you've completed the job, but you really haven't. You haven't finished what your parents told you to do, and that's what the Israelites do in the book of Judges. They don't complete what God had commanded and asked them to do. The second thing to note is that after Joshua passes, unlike what happened after Moses, no leader is raised up. No great national unifying figure is raised up after Joshua to unify the tribes of Israel.

Now God had a plan for this. His plan is that he, God, would be their unifier, he would be their King, and that as a testimony to other nations who had a king, the nation of Israel would say, "We have a King, and his name is Yahweh, and we serve him." So no king was appointed after Joshua died. They have a land, they have an identity, but they have no national figurehead. They have no leader to unify them, because they refuse to allow Yahweh to do that.

Now I like to think of myself as somewhat of a history buff. I particularly love early American history, so the founding of our nation, the Revolutionary War, the colonial periods. As I was reading about what's happening in Judges, I was reminded of a similar period of time the United States faced itself or saw itself in. So we're going to do a little American history quiz for everybody in the room. Let's see if you can remember these dates.

When did the 13 colonies declare their independence from the crown? It was 1776, the birth of our nation. That's what we mark it as. Then does anybody happen to know when the Revolutionary War

ended? When did the troops finally leave New York? It was a few years later. It was 1783. Then the very next year, in 1784, the Treaty of Paris was signed, so it was officially done.

Then when did we elect our first president of the United States, George Washington? Does anybody know that date? It was 1789. So in 1776 we declare our independence. We are not a part of Britain anymore. We are our own thing. The war ends in 1784, but we don't elect a president until 1789, almost 13 years without this national unifying figure. So who was in charge? George Washington was our commander in chief. He was in charge of the army, but who was in charge? Who was unifying these 13 colonies?

Well, we really had no one. There was a time period in the early development of our nation that we did not have a president. This is a similar situation the nation of Israel finds itself in in the book of Judges, but it was a lot longer of a time period. Instead of 13 years, it was almost 300 years after the death of Joshua before Saul was anointed king over Israel. Three hundred years of the 12 tribes of Israel without a king, and that's where we are in the book of Judges.

In chapter 1... I'm not going to read that, but I want to give you an idea of what's happening there. In chapter 1, it opens up with some stories of two of the tribes conquering some of the lands, doing what God had told them to do, but they don't complete the job. They don't finish. They stop, and they allow the pagan inhabitants of the land to remain there. They don't complete the command God had given them.

Then we open up to chapter 2, which we're going to read together. A fond memory I have of "big church" with my parents is that when the Word of God was read aloud, we would all, as we listened, stand. So I'm going to invite everybody to go ahead and stand up, and as I read the Word of God, let's all listen together. Judges, chapter 2, verses 6-12, says:

"When Joshua dismissed the people, the people of Israel went each to his inheritance to take possession of the land. And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the LORD had done for Israel.

And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of 110 years. And they buried him within the boundaries of his inheritance in Timnath-heres, in the hill country of Ephraim, north of the mountain of Gaash. And all that generation also were gathered to their

fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel.

And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and served the Baals. And they abandoned the LORD, the God of their fathers, who had brought them out of the land of Egypt. They went after other gods, from among the gods of the peoples who were around them, and bowed down to them. And they provoked the LORD to anger."

You guys can go ahead and be seated. In the book of Judges, I like to think of this chapter, what we just read, as the iceberg scene from the movie *Titanic*. Going into that movie, you know how it's going to end. There's no question about the outcome of that movie, but still, as you sit and watch, you're just waiting. You're anticipating that moment. When the iceberg hits the ship, the ice falls onto the deck, and you know the ship is doomed.

Well, in the book of Judges, what we just read is the tipping point for the nation of Israel. These passages tell us about the iceberg scene for the nation of Israel, and there are two particular verses I want us to look at that highlight that. The first one is verse 7. It says, **"And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders who outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great work that the LORD had done for Israel."**

Then we skip down to verse 10. **"And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD or the work that he had done for Israel."** Because the people of God failed to complete what he had commanded them to do, the people of God, this next generation, find themselves surrounded by other peoples who worship false gods, and their pure worship of Yahweh becomes infiltrated and mixed with the worship of these false gods, and they fail to know God or the work he has done with Israel.

Sadly, for the rest of the book of Judges, this is our theme. Some commentators call it the "Canaanization" of Israel. They forsake Yahweh, and they begin to worship foreign and false, untrue gods. This is where it started. This is the genesis of that cycle. It's a cycle. It's a rinse and repeat for the entire book of Judges.

Here's the pattern we see. If you continue reading, you're going to see this pattern play itself out over and over. The people do evil by serving other gods. Then Yahweh sends a nation to oppress them. Then the people cry out to Yahweh in their oppression. They look back to God. They look

back to Yahweh and cry out to him. Then Yahweh hears their cries and raises up a deliverer. This is our Gideon. This is our Sampson. These judges, these deliverers, who are raised up by God.

Because of them, the oppressor is defeated. Then for a season, the people have rest. But sadly, it's only a matter of time until they fall into the same patterns, and it's a repeat cycle over and over again for the rest of this book. Verse 10 is the genesis of it. It's where it starts. So as we look at this verse, we have to ask ourselves a question. Who or what is to blame when the next generation fails to value and hold dear what a previous generation once did? Who's at fault? Who's to blame? What happened? How was it missed?

I had this question running through my mind last summer. As a youth pastor, stereotypical guy, we do the mission trips. So last summer, I'm driving back with a van full of seventh- and eighth-grade boys, and during that van ride, this question came to mind. I made the mistake of giving those boys the rights to the radio. I let them DJ. Bad decision.

For the next 30 minutes, my ears were bleeding from the horrible music they were playing. It just wasn't good music. I kept thinking to myself, "Who has failed these boys? What adult or what parent failed to educate them between the good music and the bad music? That conversation must not have happened."

I could only take so much. I finally had to revoke their privileges, and for the rest of the drive home, my mission was to educate them on the difference between good music and bad music, the difference between music that will last and music that will fade and fizzle faster than you can say "One Direction," which is all they wanted to listen to.

So I started. I said, "Okay, guys. I have a question for you. I'm going to say the name of a band, and I want you to raise your hand if you have ever heard of that name or maybe one of their songs." They said, "Okay, okay." I said, "Okay, how many of you guys have ever heard of a band by the name of New Kids on the Block?" It was just blank stares. I mean, not a hand raised. None of the boys in the van had heard of that band.

So I told them. I said, "Guys, when I was your age, so my generation, New Kids on the Block were everywhere. You could not turn a corner without hearing 'Hangin' Tough' or 'You Got It (The Right Stuff).' I mean it was all over the place, everywhere. And you guys have never heard of them. It's like

they have been completely erased from the record of history." Last night I said that, and somebody in the back over there said, "Amen" to that, which I thought was appropriate.

Anyway, these kids had honestly never heard of that band. Then I said, "Okay, let's try another one." I said, "Raise your hand if you have ever heard of a band by the name of U2." A lot of the hands went up. I said, "Here's my point, guys. U2 has been around long before you were here, and they're going to be around long after you are gone. Their music is going to last. That's the difference between good music and not good music. It's going to last beyond your generation."

So I spent the rest of the drive home trying to give them some good samples, and I don't think it worked. I was hoping they would just erase all of the One Direction off their iPods, but I don't think they did. Anyway, the question still remains...*Who failed these kids?* Was it the older generation's fault for not introducing them, not educating them on good music, or was it the younger generation's fault for just not caring or not listening or not heeding the words of their parents when it came to this topic?

Well, Timothy Keller says it is always impossible to lay blame neatly when one generation fails to pass its faith on to the next one. Did the first generation fail to reach out, or did the second generation just harden their hearts? He's going to argue that the answer is usually a little bit of both. It's not one or the other, but it's a little bit of both.

I think this truth is evidenced in the wording of verse 10. So we're going to zoom in even tighter, and we're going to focus in on one particular word in verse 10. It's a word that the writer of Judges used to describe this next generation. This is what he says about them. "**And there arose another generation after them who did not know the LORD...**"

Now in the Hebrew, this word for *did not know* carries more weight and meaning than just the idea of a lack of knowledge. It wasn't for lack of information. It's more than that. It carries the idea that in a spiritual sense, there was a lack of belief rather than ignorance. *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* says it like this. I'm just going to read it.

"The new generation of Israelites that grew up after their faithful fathers died was distinguished by its faithlessness to the Lord. That they knew neither the Lord nor what he had done for Israel could imply a failure of the older generation to communicate God's acts to them. But the word 'knew' probably has the sense of 'acknowledge,' thus indicating unbelief rather than ignorance. They

rejected both the Lord's grace toward them and their responsibilities toward him. This led to the idolatrous practices cited in the verses that follow."

Another commentator puts it something like this: "The meaning of 'did not know' is that the people deliberately refused to acknowledge God's authority." It is not simply that they were ignorant or didn't have the right information about God, but that they were in unbelief. It was a matter of faith. It was a matter of belief, not lack of information.

Now from the counsel of Scripture, we know that belief is a gift from God. It comes from him. Faith is not something parents can conjure up for themselves and give to their children. It comes from the Lord. Salvation belongs to the Lord. But I am convinced, and I think the Scriptures will tell us as well, that parenting and discipling your children and the next generation is about more than just getting the right information into their heads. It's about more than just getting correct theology into their minds. Our desire is that they would know the Lord, not just know about him.

So I'm going to take this word *yada*, *know*, and we're going to look at a few other places that it shows up in Scriptures, particularly speaking about children. If you go a couple of books over from Judges and read in the book of 1 Samuel, you're going to read about a man named Eli. Eli was a priest, a holy man of God, and Eli had two sons that the Scriptures mention. Their names were Hophni and Phinehas.

The Scriptures give us a description of Eli's two sons, and it's not good. This is what it says about them. 1 Samuel 2:12 says, "**Now the sons of Eli were worthless men.**" Other texts translate it as *scoundrels*. The sons of the high priest were scoundrels, worthless men. Then look at what it says about them. "**They did not know the LORD.**" It's that same word we see in Judges 2:10. They did not *yada* the Lord.

I guarantee you these two guys knew about the Lord. They were sons of the priest. You've heard of PKs before, pastor's kids? These weren't just pastor's kids. These were HPKs, high priest's kids. So if anyone should know correct theology, right information about God, it was these two men. They grew up alongside their father. They watched their father make sacrifices and follow the commands and the rules and the laws of God in terms of the ordinances and the sacrifices.

They saw this. They were Sunday school brats. They knew all of the right answers. But they were worthless men. They did not know the Lord. They had no regard for the holiness of God. We see

this, if you continue to read, play out in their lives by the actions they do. You're going to see them commit horrible atrocities before the Lord. Not only before the Lord, but in the house of the Lord they're going to do some awful things, and it's because they did not know the Lord. They knew *of* him, they knew *about* him, but they did not *yada* him. They did not know him.

I want to contrast these two boys with another young man we read about in the book of Samuel, and his name was Samuel. We know from 1 Samuel, chapter 1, that Samuel had a mother who was a pretty common woman. Her name was Hannah. But Hannah had an uncommon faith and fervor for the Lord. She loved and knew the Lord. In the first chapter of 1 Samuel, we read about her, and it tells us she was barren. It tells us she was childless, and she desperately longed for and wanted a child.

She would go to the house of the Lord, and she would pray and plead for Yahweh to give her a child. She was passionate about her prayers, so much so there's a story about Eli, who was the priest at the time, seeing this woman praying fervently for the Lord, and Eli honestly thought she was drunk. He thought this woman had showed up at church under the influence because of the passion with which she was praying.

The Scripture is going to say she was opening her mouth but no words were coming out. She was mouthing to the Lord, just passionately praying, and Eli is like, "Woman, you need to stop drinking." Her response is, "**No, my lord, I am a woman troubled in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before the LORD.**" We know the Lord hears her prayers, and he answers those prayers and gives her a child. His name is Samuel, and she raises him. In 1 Samuel 1:24-28, it says about Samuel:

"And when she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, [some] flour, and a skin of wine, and she brought him to the house of the LORD at Shiloh. And the child was young [probably about 3 or 4]. Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli [the priest].

And she said, 'Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord, I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the LORD. For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition that I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the LORD. As long as he lives, he is lent to the LORD.'"

Hannah handed her child back over to the Lord. From the age of about 3 or 4 on, Samuel would grow up in the house of the Lord under the training and instruction of the priest Eli, just like Eli's two sons, but Samuel's outcome is much, much different. We know that Samuel *would* come to know, to *yada* the Lord. First Samuel 3 says:

"And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the LORD. And the LORD appeared again at Shiloh, for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the LORD."

The priesthood was supposed to extend and move from Eli to his two sons, but God stopped that because they did not know him, and the priesthood was transferred over to Samuel, the son of Hannah. So what was different about these three boys, about Samuel and about Hophni and Phinehas? We know that a lot was similar. They both grew up in the house of the Lord, learning the correct things, the right things about God, getting the right theology and the right information in their heads.

That was similar, but do you know what was different about Samuel and these two boys we see in Scripture? We know that Samuel had a mother who prayed her guts out for her child before he was born, and I guarantee you to the day she died she was praying for her son. Some of those prayers I'm sure were hidden and in secret, but we know that some of those prayers, some of those petitions to the Lord, were public, and I guarantee you Samuel grew up seeing his mother pray for and about him.

I don't know if that was the thing that made the difference, but it was a piece of it. So moms, I want to encourage you. Pray for your children. Grandmothers, pray for your grandchildren. I'm convinced that one of the most powerful means of grace in the life of a child is the prayers of his or her mother, so don't stop.

Continue pleading for them before the Lord, in secret and also in ways they can see and know it and have confidence that, "My mother knows the Lord. My mother *yadas* the Lord. She doesn't just know right things about him; she knows him, because I see her pray to him."

I want to keep moving, because we see this word come up again in the life of David and his son Solomon. We know a lot about David. David was the man after God's own heart. Most of our psalms

were written by this king over Israel, this king who, without a doubt, worshiped the Lord. I mean, he wrote songs, so there was no doubt this man sung to the Lord. There's this really cool exchange in 1 Chronicles 28 between David and his son Solomon.

We know from this passage that David was nearing the end of his life. He knew his time was coming, so he gathered a great assembly and had a charge to give to them. So he speaks to them. Then before he is finished, he pulls up his son, who will take the throne after he passes, and he gives this charge to Solomon in front of the entire congregation.

First Chronicles 28:9: "**And you, Solomon my son, know...**" It's the same word, *yada*. "**...know the God of your father and serve him with a whole heart and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and understands every plan and thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off forever.**"

In front of everyone, David says, "Solomon, know my God. As I have known him, know him. Don't just know *about* him; know *him*." I started thinking about the relationship between David and his son Solomon, about what we know and what we read in the Scriptures. I wonder if Solomon as a child ever witnessed or ever saw his dad, the king, worship.

Did Solomon ever witness his father in the assembly praise the God who he knew, who he loved, who he worshiped, who he wrote multiple songs about? I guarantee you he did. I guarantee you Solomon witnessed his father, the king, worship God. Not only that, but there's this really cool story about David that takes place before Solomon's birth. He wasn't there. He didn't see it. But I guarantee you he heard about this story about his father.

In 2 Samuel, chapter 6, there's this story about David returning the ark back to the city of David. It was a great moment for the nation of Israel. They are bringing the ark back. There's one particular instance where it says the caravan that was bringing it back stopped, and they began to praise and worship God. Then it says, "David danced with all of his might." In an act of worship, we see David, the king of Israel, dancing with all of his might.

Now my old man... I've never seen him dance. When I think about him dancing, it's not really a pretty sight. But when I add the word danced *mightily*, it gets even worse. But you know what? David didn't care. David knew God. He loved God, and he didn't care who saw. He didn't care who was around. He worshiped, and worshiped through dancing. He danced mightily before the Lord.

We go on to read that his dancing was so embarrassing that when he gets home... One of his wives sees him coming into the city. Literally it says he was dancing and prancing. So not only dancing. Now he's prancing. His wife sees this, and when he gets home, she has words with him. She is embarrassed. "You are the king of Israel. What are you doing making a fool out of yourself dancing like that?"

Listen to David's response. I love it. **"And David said to Michal, 'It was before the LORD, who chose me above your father and above all his house, to appoint me as prince over Israel, the people of the LORD—and I will celebrate before the LORD.'"** "I wasn't dancing for you. I wasn't dancing for anybody else. I was dancing for the Lord, and I don't care what you think about it. And I'm the king, so I'll just throw that in there too."

I love what he says. He continues. Basically, he goes, "You think that was bad?" **"I will make myself yet more contemptible than this, and I will be abased [humiliated] in your eyes."** Basically, that translates... He goes, "You think what you saw was embarrassing? You think that was bad? I will become even more undignified than that, because it's before the Lord. I know him, and I will worship him."

I guarantee you Solomon saw his dad worship the Lord with passion. So dads, here's what we're going to do. I'm going to ask you all to stand up, and then we're going to play some music... No, I'm kidding. We're not going to ask you to dance this morning. But I really do think this idea is why weekends like Family Worship Weekend are so important.

Parents, future parents, it is vital that your children witness and see you worship the Lord with passion. Not just know about him, not just have right information in your minds about him, but with passion, whatever that looks like. If that's raising your hands, if that's starting every morning at the table with the Word open, if that's bowing your heads when we're in the corporate assembly, your kids need to see that. They need to know it. They need to witness it.

I think that's why when David chose the wording of Psalm 145, which is one of my favorite psalms... In verse 4, he words it like this. He could have said, "One generation shall teach your words to another," but he doesn't. He doesn't say "teach." He says, **"One generation shall commend..."** That word *commend* can be translated *praise*. **"...your works to another..."**

So there's more to discipleship than just teaching right information. We are to commend, we are to praise the works of the Lord to the next generation. John Piper words it like this. Speaking of this idea, he says the transmission of knowledge, the works of God, through a certain mode... He calls it a mode of praise, of exaltation. This is where you get into the difference between what you teach your children and what you are passionate about in front of your children.

Here's the deal, parents, future parents, anyone who disciples or meets with children. They're not going to remember everything you teach them. I don't remember everything my parents taught me, and they taught me a lot. I remember some, but I don't remember all of it. But I remember, and your kids will remember everything they saw you getting passionate about. I'll give you an example from my own life.

I take a lot of pride in my lawn, in my yard. I want it green. I want it plush. I want it to be the best one on the street. Where did that come from? Well, when I was a child, my dad never sat me down, opened up a horticulture book, and gave me a step-by-step lesson in the history of lawn care and lawn maintenance. We didn't do that together. But do you know what I did see growing up? I saw my dad passionate about our yard. I saw him take care of it, and I was right alongside him with it. So it just spilled over onto me. It just happened, because he was passionate about it. He cared about it.

So moms, dads, what do your kids see you getting passionate about? Dads, our kids see us get passionate about a lot of things, about our favorite sports team or about our hobbies or about work. They see us get emotional about it and passionate about it. Do our kids see us get passionate about the Lord and knowing him?

Moms, our kids see us getting passionate about a lot of things, passionate about our hobbies, passionate about our appearance, but do our kids see us getting passionate about the worship of the Lord? Because they need to. They need to see that happen. And it's not just parents they need to witness and see. They need to see from the oldest to the youngest generation the praise and adoration of the Lord.

That's what did it in my life. This is what the Lord used to bring me to salvation. I grew up in church. I was a Sunday school brat. I knew all of the right answers, had all the right information about the Lord in my mind, but it took the Lord bringing me to a Bible study my senior year in high school, sitting in the back, and watching peers, people my age, worship the Lord with a passion I'd never

seen before, some with hands raised, some with heads bowed, but all worshipping a God they didn't just know about but that they *yada*-ed," a God they knew, that they believed in.

The Lord used that, allowed me to see that, and opened up my eyes to the beauty of the gospel, and I began to worship Jesus and love him. In an instant it happened for me. All of that kindling my parents had put around my heart was ignited for the Lord.

So I'll close, and I promised I'd come back to this Psalm 34 and show you why I think David had in mind the generations worshipping together. If we start from the beginning, verse 1 of Psalm 34, it says, **"I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad. Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together!"**

Then if you skip down a few verses, David says, **"Come, O children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD."** So it's good and right that our kids are in here with us this morning. Now I know that out in the foyer, out in the hall, we have the best preschool, the best children's ministry around. Week in and week out, the kids learn the deeper things about the Lord, and they come and know to worship him through those things, but in here every week we experience the Lord, and you guys know it for yourself. He meets with us as we worship him together and as we read his Word.

So let us not forsake one of those things for the other for our kids. Let them see both. As you go to check your children in to Little Village or Kids Village, I want to encourage you, parents, to check yourself in as well and serve with them, alongside them, so when that is over, you can come into this room together and together magnify the name of the Lord and worship him together, generation and generation.

The generation after Joshua fell away from God, not because they lacked right understanding or information about him, but they failed to know him, to *yada* him. My prayer is that would not be the case for the next generation that is in our midst this morning, that as they see us, as we commend, as we praise the works of God to them, they would come to know, to *yada* the Lord as well. Let me pray for us.

Father, I thank you for our time together this morning. I praise you that you aren't just the God of one generation but of all, so I thank you for everyone who's represented in this room this morning. I pray that as we have read and studied your Word, Holy Spirit, that you would teach us, that you

would enlighten our hearts to the wonderful things we have seen and read, and that we would not just be hearers of the Word this morning but that we would go and do. So bless each of us from the oldest to the youngest. We love you and we thank you. We ask all of this in Jesus' name, amen.

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