

In St. Petersburg, Florida, a Starbucks “pay it forward” chain had reached 457 people. Customer #458, blogger Peter Schorsch, chose to end it. He said the gesture had turned from spontaneous kindness into expectation. When no one keeps it going, it stops.

As disciples we have a personal responsibility to impart who God is and what God has done into the next generation

**Judges 2:7-12—7** 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. **8** And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the Lord, died at the age of 110 years. **9** 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. **10** 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. **11** And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals. **12** 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.

## I. DANGEROUS DEPARTURE

A. Reality living for God across generations - the next generation will not know God or what He has done.. Why?

1. The passing of Time

*Judges 2:7 So 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 works of the Lord which He had done for Israel.*

- a) One generation saw what God had done and the other generation did not - happens over time
- b) Impossible to expect the next generation to simply know what you know do what you do

2. Culture of Influence

- a) Live in a connected world - ideas and counter ideas to EVERYTHING / 10 reasons Why McDonald's is the best / 10 reasons why McDonald's is the worse.
- b) In the church - constant counter-ideas and false doctrine - the problem is that without a firm foundation rooted in Gods word - young people have no defense against that pull

**Judges 2:12-13** They **abandoned** the Lord, the God of their ancestors, who had brought them out of Egypt. They went after other gods, worshiping the gods of the people around them. And they angered the Lord. **13** They abandoned the Lord to serve Baal and the images of Ashtoreth.

(1) If we are not disciplining the next generation someone else will

3. Lost Discipleship

- a) Men today don't see the need to impart who we are into the next generation
  - (1) What was lost in our text was **discipleship** - the intentional desire to impart who you are and what you believe into the next generation
  - (2) V7 - one generation saw what God did / experienced it - but it stopped with them

B. Two problems we see in our text

- 1. The coming generation did not know what God had done
  - a) In many ways the older generation were the ones responsible for teaching the next generation
  - b) Problem we can assume - those coming behind us will just figure it out / automatically know what we know
- 2. They did not have a personal relationship with God / more than information
  - a) In salvation - relationship with God is not automatic because of who you know or the church you attend - only comes by repentance and faith in trust in Jesus - CONVERSION DISTINCTIVE

C. The Results of Discipleship stopping

- 1. Gods purposes are damaged when we depart from what God has given and shown us

**Every move of God is just one generation away from extinction**

- a) The only way we are going to reach the world for Jesus is through discipleship - the next generation catching a vision for what they can do for God and what God can do in their lives
- 2. God will always be replaced by something else - “nature abhors a vacuum”

**Judges 2:11** And the people of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord and served the Baals.

- a) Baals - means owner, lord & ruler - someone else is ruling their lives rather than God

3. Sin was not what caused this generation to not know God - it was the neglect of their parents & teachers before them

**1 Corinthians 10:11** *Now these things happened to them as an example, but they were written down for our instruction, on whom the end of the ages has come.*

- a) This shows us - we have a personal responsibility to impart who God is and what God has done into the next generation

## **II. MAKING GOD PERSONAL**

- A. Knowing what God has done for you personally

**Deuteronomy 4:9** *"Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children"*

1. This demands an **intentional focus**
  - a) Recounting / retelling the miracles/ salvations and great things God has done - for you and others
  - b) Write down what God has done / in prayer thank God for what He is doing
2. Knowing who God is
  - a) only possible when we surrender / seek a personal encounter with him / dig into His word for our lives
3. Disciples - Learners

**Hebrews 13:7** *Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith.*

- a) Learn by studying the word of God / Asking questions so you can grow / this is the only way this becomes settled in you
- B. Knowing what you've been birthed into
  1. Our fellowship is incredibly rare and unique in today's world
    - a) It's far more than just knowing history - It's knowing what we do / and why we do it
  2. An important reminder
    - a) Seeing the incredible opportunity and privilege you have in being birthed into our fellowship and into Prescott
- C. The call to discipleship
  1. Discipleship is the responsibility of every single man in this place - **not just being a disciple - but discipling others**

**2 Timothy 2:2** *and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.*

- a) Paul is showing Timothy - what you know **cannot stop with you - have to pass it on**
- b) Your ministry - are you actively teaching the next generation to do what you do / to know what you know
- c) In your Family - have to be intentional about teaching your children what you believe and why

**Psalms 78:4** *We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.*

(1) PM - discipleship is the sincere desire to see another man enter into his destiny

2. Discipleship is the only way we can continue to advance the Gospel to the world

**Matthew 28:19** *Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*

- a) If it all depended on one man - what happens when they die - But in discipleship you multiply yourself
  - (1) This has been the power of our fellowship for the past 55 years / Pr. Mitchell was able to inspire and instruct men / essentially replicating himself - see that in Pr. Greg - imparting his spirit into his men - and so on and so on - it continues

## **III. HOPE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION**

- A. The Blessing of Discipleship

1. Discipleship is First **protective**

**Philippians 4:9** *What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.*

- a) Protect what's been given to us — I don't want all that we have here to stop with me / I have a responsibility to know who God is and impart that to other people / same is true for you
2. Discipleship is **supernatural**
  - a) Imagine God could use your life to inspire and direct the next generation into their destiny
3. Discipleship is **inspirational**
  - a) Inspiring men through example-ship and faith
  - b) The next generation will see the power of God in their own lives because of you