

Students on Mission

Youth Weekend

Psalm 78:1-7

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Tell the Coming Generation A Maskil of Asaph.

This last Christmas was extra special for me. It was the day after Christmas, and my kids were over at our house for dinner and to play board games. Now, the way I remember, I was totally dominating at the game we were playing... I'm not sure how that detail is pertinent, or if it is correct, but it's my story, so let's just go with it! So, here we are, I'm dominating at this game, when my son Gabe and his wife Sayde slid a gift in front of me. Christmas was yesterday... We had already opened gifts, so I was a little confused... but as I opened the gift, I jumped up and began shouting with joy.... I even took a lap around the entire house cheering and celebrating. I made my way back to the kitchen table and my wife was looking at me with confusion plastered across her face. She hadn't seen the gift, before I grabbed it

and took off on my victory lap around the house. I showed her the gift as I proudly announced... “I'm gonna be a grandpa”!

You see, I shared with my son and his wife a couple years ago that I wasn't gonna be that Dad that pestered them about when they were gonna have kids... but I also told them, that when they were ready to be parents.... I was totally ready to be a grandpa. I even took this conversation to the point where I shared that I had already picked out my grandpa name... I told them I was gonna go by Pop Pop... I was like... it says I'm fun, and here to have a great time with my grandkids, but it also says I'm serious, and here to disciple my grandkids and point them to Jesus. What I am just revealing now to them is that I did a little research and found that Pop Pop is one of the easiest words to say... so I'm banking on my future grandchild's first words to be my name. LOL

(display coffee cup) So, the gift I opened was a coffee mug with my grandpa name for me to proudly display. There is something about this mug that makes coffee taste sweeter. I was sharing this story

with a buddy a few weeks back and he asked if that meant I was going to go by Pastor Pop Pop now. Hey, it's got a nice ring to it!

Anyway, that night as I lay in bed, the weight of my new role began to rest upon me. It seemed like just yesterday that I was learning my role as a dad, that God had placed on me. BUT what does God say my role is Biblically as a grandpa? I knew one of my biggest roles was to pray for the little life that was being formed in the womb. So, that night I lay in bed, praying for God's hand to rest heavy upon that little life... That that new life would see their need for Jesus at a young age, that my son and his wife would be parents that would be intentional in their parenting and would take small moments to show that little baby the majesty of God. I prayed that God would equip Jamie and I along with Sayde's parents, Gary and Dayna Mitchell, to partner with Gabe and Sayde in discipling, and I prayed that more than safety and success for my new grandchild, that they would grow and be willing to live a bold life, pointing a broken world to the hope of Jesus. We sure can't expect that little baby to live on mission

for God, if we aren't being intentional to train them up in the ways of the Lord.

I recently reread part of the Edgewood constitution. I love how beautifully written it is. It says this about church members. “We covenant to maintain family and private devotion; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred acquaintances.”

What does this mean to religiously educate our children? One pastor said, “The goal of Biblical Christian education is not merely to fill a kid’s head with facts but to get his heart changed so that it’s full of Hope in God.” So, Christian education is intentionally teaching our kid’s a Biblical worldview. Helping our kids, to see the majesty and splendor of God, to see that God is the center of the story.

Scripture shows us that:

- First the primary role of educating our kids on who God is, the primary role of helping our kids and students to have a Biblical worldview, to point our kids to Jesus, primarily rests on

parents. We just had parents that were doing this! They are being intentional to speak a blessing over their graduating seniors.

- Second, Biblically what we will see is that grandparents also play an integral part. Culture tells us that grandparents' role is to spoil their grandkids, fill them full of sugar and send them home. Scripture tells us much different.

Scripture shows us that the role of grandparents is to support the parents, to love their grandkids and to point them all back to Jesus as they make tiny disciples.

- Third, the church plays an important role in disciple making of the kids and students of the church. When I say the church's role, I am not referring to the pastor's job, but collectively the church... US. So, today, as I talk about parents and grandparents... Church, don't tune out! You're a necessary part of this too! God has given you a role in raising up the next generation also. Church, we GET to help raise up the next generation, we GET to point the next generation to Jesus, we GET to play a part in God's plan of redemption. This isn't a HAVE to... this is a GET to! So, we are all in this together! We are

all working together to raise up a generation of kids that live on mission, that will become students that continue to live on mission, that will live bold lives taking the hope of the gospel to the end of the earth.

My main point today is if we want to have students that live on mission, we must be families and a church that sees our kids and students as part of OUR mission.

Psalm 78 charges us with this mission of raising up a generation that will stand against the world and live lives boldly for God.

Psalm 78

Give ear, O my people, to my teaching;
incline your ears to the words of my mouth!

2 I will open my mouth in a parable;

I will utter dark sayings from of old,

3 things that we have heard and known,
that our fathers have told us.

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.

5 He established a testimony in Jacob
and appointed a law in Israel,
which he commanded our fathers
to teach to their children,

6 that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,

and arise and tell them to their children,

7 so that they should set their hope in God
and not forget the works of God,

First, we find out that this was written by Asaph. Asaph was a prominent Levite, musician, and leader of a guild of temple singers during the time of King David and Solomon. His intended audience was for Israel, and specifically for future generations of Israel. This Psalm was intended to be repeated often, with the purpose that the Israelites would continue to be reminded.

We live in a culture where parents often place their kids in the center of their world, Asaph begins by reminding us that God is in the center of it all!

God is the center of it all

Asaph says he will open his mouth and tell a story, a true story, that will cause us to wonder and to contemplate and to gain a deeper understanding of God. If we look further down in this Psalm, we see the story he tells. He tells a story that all of Israel would all be familiar with.

40 How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the desert!

41 They tested God again and again and provoked the Holy One of Israel.

42 They did not remember his power or the day when he redeemed them from the foe,

Asaph tells of the time the Israelites were wandering in the desert after escaping from Egypt. The Israelites had just seen these mighty signs of the Nile turning to blood, frogs, gnats, pestilence, boils, hail, locusts, darkness, and the parting of the Red Sea...and how even though God had freed them from slavery, even though God was providing everything they needed, they continued to rebel against Him. In the wilderness, God was providing manna every morning for them, yet they rebelled. God provided quail for meat, yet they rebelled, God

provided water from a rock, yet they rebelled. Over and over and over. We begin to contemplate, why... Why would they do that? Asaph doesn't answer this question... he instead just leaves us hanging. He leaves us pondering. Why? Why couldn't the Israelites see how good God was? If God was providing for them and all their needs, why wouldn't they trust God? Why did they continue to rebel?

Asaph leaves us with a second unanswered question
Verse 38

38

Yet he (God), being compassionate,
atoned for their iniquity
and did not destroy them;
he restrained his anger **often**
and did not stir up all his wrath.

This really tells us the condition of the Israelites, if God had to restrain his anger **OFTEN**. As much as we question why the Israelites would continue to rebel against a God that was so good to them, a God who was providing for their every need... that was faithful... we wonder why did God do it? Why is

God so patient with them, why is God so compassionate, and forgiving?

Then, as parables always tend to do... they turn the questions to us. They make us look at our lives.

Why am I like the Israelites? Why do I continue to rebel? Why do I continue to sin? BUT it gives us hope, if God was patient with the Israelites, if He showed them so much compassion, then we can rest, knowing that God will be patient with us also.

Asaph is reminding them that God is the center of the story. He is reminding them of the character of God. He is helping them to ponder the goodness of God, the patience of God, the mercy and grace of God. The Israelites have seen and heard how good God is. This is the God they were being commissioned to tell the next generation about. This is the God that WE are commissioned to tell the next generation about!

Asaph turns this now to help them have confidence in this God

If we move now to verses 6-7, we see that we are to share with the next generation.

4 the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done.

6 that the next generation might know them,
the children yet unborn,
and arise and tell them to their children,
7 so that they should set their hope in God
and not forget the works of God,
but keep his commandments;

The first thing we learn is our aim, is to impart knowledge. That the next generation might KNOW God. The original root of the word “know” is to observe and reflect. So, it isn't just intellectual head knowledge, BUT, for that knowledge to be tested and found true. The intent would be for the knowledge to lead to a love FOR God. Both are necessary. It doesn't tell us to base our faith on a warm fuzzy emotional feeling. It isn't an emotion that leads us to a right understanding of God. It is a knowledge of God that leads to a love for God.

The second thing we aim for, is that the purpose of the next generation KNOWING God is that they “should set their hope in God.” The truth of what

we KNOW should change the heart and lead us to trust Him.

To live their life for God

The third aim for our kids and students is that because they KNOW Him, because they have hope IN Him, that they will keep His commandments.

Our students have spent the last year living the command to love others and being intentional about being students on mission. Last summer our jr. high students spent 3 days seeing the Quad Cities as their mission field. They served here at Edgewood, they served their community by preparing and serving Celebrate Recovery dinner. They spent an afternoon encouraging residents in a senior living facility, playing board games... Now... who would have thought those 90-year-old grandmas could be such a bad influence! I turned around and there was money on the table... as they were teaching our jr. high students how to gamble! I was like... woah... it's time to go!

Last year, our high school students went to Belize to lead a VBS. They spent a week loving the kids of

Belize, and ended the week with sharing the hope of Jesus with them. BUT it's not just these big moments where we have students living on mission. One of my high school students invited several of her friends, who then invited more friends... I have a jr. high student that invited her friend... who has since placed her faith in Christ and will be baptized this summer. The story gets better... She invited one of her friends who came... and SHE placed her faith in Christ! Because our students KNOW God, they love God and have hope in God... and they want others to know Him too.

In Psalm 78

There are multiple generations that are discussed
It says in verse 3- things WE have heard and known,
But then says our fathers have told us (generation 2)
And we will tell them to the coming generation
(generation 3)

This means that grandparents are intended to be influential in grandkids' lives. Grandparents' roles are not just to shower their grandkids with gifts, fill them full of sugar and send them home. This undermines the biblical authority of the parents to

their kids and undermines the God given influence of grandparents. Grandparents' role is to partner closely with parents, to encourage them, to equip and help parents to fulfill the goal of discipling the next generation.

Now, it is easy for us to look at this and only point to parents. Easy for us to be like, yeah parents, are you doing this! Are you teaching your kids to have a knowledge of God? Are you demonstrating a life to them that YOU know God, that YOU trust God, that you are living your life for God. But wait... verse 3 says “things (about God) that WE have heard and known, that OUR fathers have told US. verse four says... “WE will not hide them from their children...”. BUT tell them to the coming generation. Church, collectively, it is also our responsibility to share the hope WE have in Jesus. To partner with parents and tell the next generation about the glorious deeds of the Lord.

An illustration was shared with me that discipleship with our kids is like an airplane. One wing of the plane of discipleship is with the parents. The role of discipleship in the home, time of family devotion.

The second wing of the plane of discipleship is with the church family. Us encouraging and equipping them. Man, it sure would be scary to send off that plane with only one wing! We both must be doing our part in discipling the next generation. We ALL must be doing our part in discipling the next generation.

So, let's break this down just a bit more.

Deut 6:5-7

5 You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.
6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.
7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

So church, our first job is to love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your might. First and foremost, this is our responsibility. Our number one priority... needs to be to love the Lord. I have often shared with my kids... they are not first in my life. Now, I know

this sounds controversial... Our culture tells us that our kids are supposed to be the most important thing in our lives. The Lord is the most important thing, then it is my wife, then it is my kids. In a culture where a parent posts pictures of their kids with the quote "my everything"... God is supposed to be our everything. Because God is my everything, I want God to be my kids everything too.

Listen, I can't be a good dad, if I'm not being a good husband, and I can't be a good husband, if I'm not right with God. So, it all comes back to loving the Lord your God with all your heart and all your soul and with all your might.

Next Deut 6 tells us that from loving the Lord with everything we have, that we teach them diligently to our children... The original Hebrew phrase for "teach them diligently" means "to impress or admonish." It is used in its intensive form, which emphasizes a sharp and repeated action, suggesting a deliberate and consistent effort in teaching. So, it's not just teaching our kids once... but again and again. Repeatedly. Sharing with them the hope of Jesus.

If we want to have students that live on mission, we must be families and a church that sees our kids and students as part of OUR mission

Deut 6:6 And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. 7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

Loving the Lord with all your heart with all your soul with all your might, needs to be the words that are written on your heart. The thing you cherish the most, the thing you hold so closely that it is ON your heart. And then..... teach it to your kids. Don't overcomplicate family discipleship. Just start with telling them what God has done that has led you to love Him with all your heart.

Studies are showing that Millennial parents are continuing to outsource areas of parenting. LOL I'm not slamming on Millennials, cause we Gen X do the same. Every parent wants the very best for their kids... but this study shows that there is an

increasing trend in Millennial parents to find who they believe is the best qualified person to teach their student. They find the best batting coach, they find the best pitching coach, the best music teacher, the best tutors and teachers. What this study has concluded is that in this process, parents are actually stepping away from their responsibility as the primary disciplinarian of their kids, because they view the church as the experts on the subject.

1/168.... There are 168 hours in a week... And from this, the staff at Edgewood gets your kids or your students for about an hour a week. If the only time that is spent pointing your student to Jesus is the 1 hour in 168 hours of the week... how much influence do you really think we have? How important will they think Jesus is? The expert on your kids is you. You are the one that potty trained them, you are the one that read bedtime stories to them, you are the one that sat in the passenger seat, in that terrifying moment, while you taught them to drive. You are the one that helped them take their first steps. SO..... help them take their NEXT steps. I get to invest in your student around 1 hour a week... that leaves 167 hours. Now let's take away the average of 49 hours for sleeping and 35 hours

for school and it is estimated that they are on electronics for an average of 45 hours a week. Even this, leaves 39 hours a week that you have with your kids. I'm not saying there is the expectation that you are going to intentionally disciple your kids for 39 hours. But what are ways that you can take small moments to point your kids to Jesus, to share with your kids why you love Jesus with all your heart.

I remember as a parent getting overwhelmed when I thought of this..." Why would God place such a big responsibility on me?" What if I get this discipleship thing wrong?" I have even had new Student Ministry Leaders overwhelmed as they ask; "What if I say something wrong? What if I don't have all the answers?" The weight of the responsibility that we are called to make tiny disciples is heavy. I remember the day when we brought Gabe... our oldest home. I checked and rechecked the car seat to make sure it was installed correctly. I drove super cautious home. Carrying the car seat inside with Gabe still sleeping, I set the car seat on the couch... after staring at him for a moment... I looked at my wife and said, "What do

we do with him now?” I had never been a dad before, I had NO idea what I was doing!

Listen parents, take a breath. I remember those times as a parent, trying to figure it all out... overwhelmed, exhausted, frustrated, and then someone says... you're not doing enough. Please don't hear that from me today. Instead... know that before time existed... God knew you... God knew you! Today, God sees you. Parents, right now, as your mind is wandering to figure out if there are enough chicken nuggets to feed the kids lunch. Take a breath... Lean in for a second. God knows you... God knew the kids you would have. It doesn't matter if they are biological kids, or adoptive kids, foster kids, step kids, grandkids, or if you are mentoring them, if you are their AWANA leader or Youth Group leader. If God has placed you with them, then I trust that God will equip you to walk with them.

I remember one particularly crazy busy time when my kids were both in high school and we were running kids all over the Quad Cities. Instead of feeling guilty for the lack of dedicated time for

family devotion, I took Deut 6:7 at its word. If I am to talk of how amazing God is when I sit in my house and when I walk by the way... then I can have family devotion time in the car on the way to baseball practice. I remember kids in the back seat shoving down dinner as one of them would read our daily devotion and then we would spend the rest of the drive discussing the passage of Scripture. So parents... take these small moments to show your kids that you love the Lord with all your heart and you want them to know Him too.

Church... God has entrusted us with the kids and students of Edgewood. As we may get frustrated with kids running through the halls, or the loud voices echoing, the smelly jr. high guys that either haven't discovered deodorant yet, OR think that Ax body spray is a portable shower, it is easy to get frustrated. BUT, I'm confident that God knew what He was doing when He entrusted us with these kids, when He entrusted us with these students. From that, we trust that God will equip you, that God will equip us all, with the aim that **Psalm 78: 7 they should set their hope in God and not forget the**

works of God,

I love that our Student Ministry Leaders are partnering with parents to pour into our students. We have college-age students that are taking their role of being one of the wings of the plane of discipleship seriously. They are equipping our jr. high and high school students to live out their faith. One of my favorite Student Ministry Leaders was Nels Lindel. Nels was the grandpa of the Student Ministry at almost 80 years old, Nels chose to see the students as part of his mission field. Every night at youth group, you would find Nels standing in the hall, just outside the Student Center. Jr. high guys would give him a hug, as Nels would ask them about their week. Nels would sit with them in large group teaching, Bible open, leading the example for our jr. high guys. Nels would encourage the jr. high guys to memorize God's Word, as he would listen to them recite verses. Nels also took his role of being one of the wings of the plane of discipleship, seriously. Parents, I love that so many of you are being so intentional with your role of being the first wing of that plane. There are bigger things at stake here for your student than being a great athlete... or

academic achievements... if we have amazing kids and students, but we don't help them to see Jesus... passing our faith down to the next generation, then how have we handled the most precious gift, God has entrusted to us?

Church, we can't expect our kids and students to love the Lord with all their hearts, with all their soul and with all their might, if we don't live the example of a life where it is obvious that WE love the Lord.

Communion

As we saw in Psalm 78, Asaph spoke to the future generations of Israel and reminded them of how good God is, How God provided everything they needed for life, while they wandered in the wilderness. In John 6, Jesus helped connect the dots for the Jews as He taught in the synagogue of Capernaum, when He said:

48 I am the bread of life. **49** Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. **50** This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. **51** I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this

bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

Jesus continues in verse 53

53 So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

The Jews were instructed to repeatedly look back and see how good God had been to provide everything they needed. To be reminded how patient and compassionate God had been with them. They could look back and see that every time they took God out of the center of the story, and made it about themselves, was when they found themselves in rebellion against God. And then Psalm 78:7 says our goal is to place our hope in God, and to share this hope with the next generation.

At Edgewood we celebrate open communion. This means anyone that is a born-again believer is welcome to the table. As communion is being passed out, take one of the stacks of cups. One cup has the juice and the other the bread. Hold on to these and we will take communion together.

While the cups are being passed out, take a moment to reflect... to look back at how good God is and how He provided the one thing we desperately needed... Jesus. So that we can once again be in a right relationship with the Father. Spend a moment reflecting on where you are, and if you have continued to keep God in the center of the story, and then we look ahead, as we celebrate the hope we have in the new covenant.

Serve Communion

Just as Jesus reminded the Jews of how He provided everything they needed when they wandered in the desert, in Matthew 26 , Jesus reminded them again, sharing with the disciples in the upper room.

26 Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is my body.” **27** And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, “Drink of it, all of you,**28** for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.

Pray

Welcome New Member- Rachel Solis 1045 Service-
KYLE