

Connections

LINKING RHEMA GRADUATES AROUND THE WORLD

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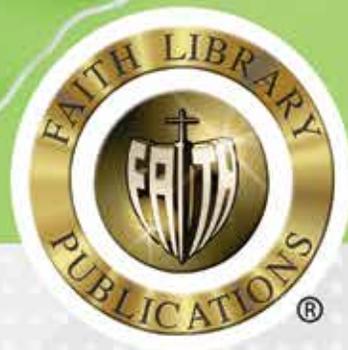
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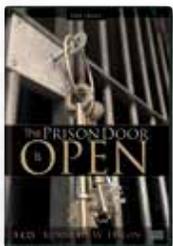
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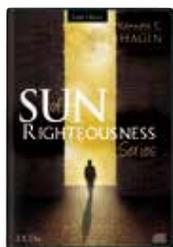


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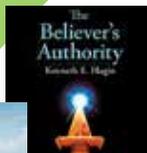
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The Bottom Line

TONY MCKINNON | ASSISTANT TO THE NATIONAL DIRECTOR

A GENERATIONAL RELAY

Throughout the Bible, the generational heartbeat of God is evident. He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The last day's promise of Joel is to sons and daughters, young men and old men. John writes to fathers, young men, and little children.

Psalm 145:4 (NKJV) says, "One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare Your mighty acts." We're great at praising God's works to our own generation, but He expects more.

For God's purposes to prevail, there must be an unbroken generational stream. Hebrews 12 illustrates this as a race—not one in which we're competing against each other, but a generational relay race of faith against time, the world, the flesh, and the devil.

Running *together* and handing the baton smoothly to each generation isn't automatic. It requires great intentionality. Anytime there is a generational disconnect, the baton gets dropped. **No matter how well we run, if the baton isn't passed well, the whole team loses.**

RUNNING THE RACE*

The first runner in a relay race begins in the starting blocks. The next three runners receive the baton via exchanges.

1. Exchange zones are 20 meters long preceded by a 10-meter acceleration zone. The receiver begins running in the acceleration zone, but the baton can only be passed within the exchange zone. We may have to catch somebody who is already running, which means they had to have permission to run. The receiver also runs without the baton for a season.
2. It's the position of the baton, not either runner's feet, that determines whether their pass is legal. Runners don't switch their carrying hand and each runner uses half of the lane during an exchange.

This is a picture of teamwork: a person whose life and gifts are properly submitted—aligned, defined, refined, and finally assigned. The pattern in Scripture is always the same: order, function, and then blessing.

3. A strong team will have interchangeable parts. One runner is trained to take over any spot in the relay. For two runners, one is trained to receive the baton in the right hand; the second runner receives it in the left. If a starting runner is injured, a substitute can fill that spot immediately.

"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them" (Rom. 12:6 NKJV). "But now indeed there are many members, yet one body" (1 Cor. 12:20 NKJV).

4. The baton receiver must always face forward. It's up to the passer to put the baton in the receiver's hand. The only time a receiver looks back is in an emergency.

There is a difference between honor and homage. Each generation must extend honor while keeping their eyes fixed on Jesus.

5. If the baton is dropped, as long as it didn't leave the exchange zone, the receiver can pick it up and continue. If in doubt, runners should pick up the baton and run! The officials will let you know if you're disqualified.

We don't get to decide who's disqualified or when to quit. There's a lot of mercy and grace extended from Heaven in the exchange zone. Make sure we extend the same to each other and don't quit!

6. Runners and receivers should run as hard as possible. The passer's mind-set should be to blow past the receiver and never slow down. He should run hard for at least 10 meters after passing the baton to insure that he doesn't slow down too soon. Likewise, the receiver's mind-set should be to run so hard that the passer won't catch him.

7. It's interesting that the combined length of the acceleration, exchange, and deceleration zones is 40 meters. Forty years constitutes a generation as we understand it. Both runners have their hands on the baton for a season. This is where synergy happens, requiring patience and partnership. It's a picture of generations laboring together for years!

8. At the right time, the passer must release the baton. If not, the next runner (or the next generation) can't run their leg of the race.

9. The receiver takes the baton *only* when it's been released. If it's grabbed too soon, the receiver doesn't have the weight of character to carry it, or it can be dropped, and the team is disqualified. As someone said, "The gift *on* you will destroy you if what's *in* you can't sustain you."

10. If the baton doesn't cross the finish line, the entire team loses. Those who ran before us are counting on us to run well in our generation.

11. Once you've run your leg of the race, you begin preparing for another race or becoming a coach. There's always more to do, and Heaven is counting on you. You don't go to the grandstands until you die!

In the following pages, voices from five generations of Rhema alumni will lend themselves to this conversation on "Generational Synergy." My prayer is that as you read, you will be encouraged, empowered, and equipped to partner well and run well. We really are stronger together.

Tony McKinnon

Assistant to the National Director

*Points on how to run a relay race are taken from "Strategies for the 4 x 400 Relay Race" by Mike Rosenbaum, ThoughtCo.com.

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GENERATIONAL SYNERGY

generational synergy \ je-nə-'rā-shən-əl
'si-nər-jē \ *n* : the increased effectiveness
that results when two or more generations
work together



Jen Tringale ('96, '97) is a full time itinerant minister based in Ft. Worth, Texas. She helps people discover their God-given purpose through their vocational calling. Jen often teaches on *Generational Synergy*. jentringale.com

LAYING THE GROUNDWORK FOR LEGACY



Sociologists tell us that, for the first time in history, there are six generations living simultaneously in America. How can we all work together to further God's kingdom?

"Leaders need to start thinking *synergy* instead of *segregation*—or even instead of *succession*," says Jen Tringale. "If we stay in a mindset of succession, we're sealing the deal on a one- or two-generation term of ministry. But if we'll think *synergy*, we can lay the ground work for legacy."

Jen believes that when God describes the last days in His Word, He's painting a picture of generational synergy. Acts 2:17 says, "*I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh . . . [and when I do] your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.*" He's saying that every generation will be simultaneously inspired to declare the Word of God *together!* There isn't any segregation there. Every generation has a voice and a part."

What does that look like today? "Segregating the generations creates frustration and stagnation for the younger and isolation and eventually displacement for the older," says Jen. "That makes both generations of leaders drastically less effective. To bridge the gap between leaders of different generations, each leader has to bring a measure of understanding and shared appreciation and respect, so that the vision can merge between the different generations for maximum impact."

STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Each generation has strengths. "The younger generations are very creative and innovative," says Jen. "They bring a lot of vitality, energy, and fresh life. When they envision a big event, they want to dream it, plan it, and put it together differently than it's been done before. They are full of new ideas and that's a strength the older generations need."

"The older generations' strengths are their wisdom and expertise—their ability to look at the long haul," she says. "Older leaders see the big picture and ask, 'If we do this, where will that put us? How can we sustain that?' They bring experience and stability."

But there are weaknesses too. "The older generations often convey to the younger, 'Look, I've spent my entire life getting here. This is *my turf*, not yours. Sit on the bench and wait your turn (which won't come until I keel over).' All too often the older generations haven't made plans for this day, and they're afraid of being displaced by the younger generation."

JEN'S KEYS FOR GENERATIONAL SYNERGY

Inclusion. Generational synergy begins by having multiple generations at the decision-making table. This includes all ages and both men and women.

Respect. At that table, we can't just put up with each other, or wink at someone in 'our group' while someone else is talking. We must have mutual respect for each other's contributions. On both sides we must convey the attitude, "I'm going to treat what you say as valid. I want to hear your opinion."

Understanding. Take time to research all six generations. What are their values? Why do they think the way they do? Learn to understand the period they grew up in. If ministers are speaking to five or six generations at every service, they should understand the different perspectives they're talking to. If they only minister from their generational perspective, they're only hitting one-sixth of the audience!

Many times younger people are put to work but are not valued or mentored. “We stick them in the café or some other department. But no one stops and listens to them,” says Jen. “They feel used and leave.”

Sometimes—full of vision and a calling—they launch out and start their own thing. “They start out with a big flash,” says Jen, “but they fade away, because they don’t have the security of wisdom and counsel around them. Because they were frustrated, they didn’t wait for the right timing. As a result, they can leave a wake of ministry casualties behind them.”

There is a cure. “If older, wiser leaders would start making room for the younger generation by grooming and mentoring them, there wouldn’t be these casualties. Leaders have to be secure to do that.”

Jen is not necessarily talking about passing the baton from older to younger leaders. “Succession is the world’s way; it’s not the Bible way,” she says. “For example, long before Moses died, he had Joshua leading. The two men led in very different ways, but Joshua and Moses completely honored and respected each other. I think that’s the biblical picture and example for generational synergy in leadership.

“We must move away from this idea of *young* or *old*” says Jen, “and embrace our greatest strength in the Body of Christ, which is every part giving their contribution and being respected and valued. It’s really the picture of a family, which is the first institution God put in the earth. That’s why it works. The whole unit is working together.”

Mark Brady ('02, '03) and his wife, Ashley, have been the pastors at Anchor Faith Church in Valdosta, Georgia, since October 2011. anchorfaithvaldosta.com

ONE IMPORTANT QUESTION



According to Mark Brady, generational synergy in church isn’t about what songs to sing, what to wear, how to decorate, and what to add or subtract.

He believes there is only one important question to ask to bridge the generation gap: Do you want what I want, for the same reason I want it?

“Jesus said that He came not to do His own will, but the will of the Father,” says Mark. “The thing Jesus guarded above everything else was *purpose*. He wanted what His Father wanted, for the same reason God wanted it. Jesus poured His life into the disciples. Eventually they went on

to carry on His purpose because they wanted what Jesus wanted, for the same reason He wanted it.”

Purpose should be the driving force in any ministry. “What is the purpose of this church in this city? What are we trying to accomplish? Who are we trying to reach? When someone comes to my church, if they want what I want for our city, for the same reason I want it, then it doesn’t matter the color of their skin, their background, their financial status, their education, or their age. We can work together.

“Purpose doesn’t discriminate,” says Mark. “It removes all barriers. I’m not here to cater to any specific group or demographic. God’s not raising up one church to reach people 18–30 and raising up another church to reach people 40 and over. If we try to reach a certain generation, we may end up aligning with people whose agendas don’t align with our purpose. So it’s vital to know *why* we’re doing what we’re doing.”

Mark says knowing *why* is more important than knowing *what*. “We go to conferences, read leadership blogs, and listen to podcasts. We see a bunch of ‘what’ churches are doing,” he says. “But I have to ask myself, ‘How does that align with our purpose and vision? *Why* would we implement it?’ Purpose answers that question, and it helps us stay with our strengths.”

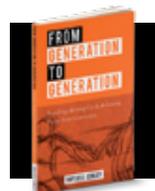
HOW TO COMMUNICATE YOUR PURPOSE

1) Make it visible. “Our purpose is on our wall. It’s the first thing you see when you come in the church. It’s concise, easy to communicate, and easy to remember. We also have seven core values (what I call the “how”) on the wall in the hallway. People shouldn’t have to hunt to discover why you’re doing what you’re doing.”

2) Do it. “Sometimes churches develop core values and purpose based on what they want to do, but they aren’t implementing anything. We’re actually putting our core values into practice. In our monthly leadership meetings (about 12 people), I ask, ‘How did you see our core values in action this month?’ That helps everybody constantly identify the core values. Plus if leaders don’t see them happening in their department, they can say to their team, ‘Hey, we’re getting sidetracked. Let’s operate with purpose.’”

3) Talk about it. “I’m always communicating the core values to our people, whether it’s in a message or highlighting an event. Last summer we partnered with five outreach organizations. Afterwards as we shared about the event in church, I said, ‘This is what we did, and this is one of our core values in action.’”

“



If we don’t successfully build bridges connecting the generations, the world will capture many of our sons and daughters!”

—Bayless Conley, *From Generation to Generation*

Bruce “Buck” Schafer (’91, ’92) and his wife, Amy (Allen ’94, ’95), pastor Gracelife Church in Monroeville, Pennsylvania (a suburb of Pittsburgh). They minister successfully to multiple generations in their church. gracelifechurch.tv

Patrick Norris (’84, ’85) and his wife, Christene, pioneered LifePointe Church in Olathe, Kansas, in 2001. mylifepointe.com

REACHING THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS

TRANSITION AS A MINDSET

One component of a healthy, sustainable church is the capacity for transition and reaching multiple generations. “To do it well,” says Pastor Buck Schafer, “our mindset has to be ‘we are always in transition,’ not only to reach the next generation, but also to be ready for the one after that.”



Buck points out that healthy transition and change is not an event to be managed but a value to be built into a church’s culture. It must impact the methods used and, most importantly, it must impact the senior leaders.

“In these busy times, only about 45 percent of your congregation attends service weekly, trending down from 60 percent in prior decades,” says Buck. “With the pressure of less frequent attendance and ‘preaching to a parade’ each service, interaction, and message must become more effective and strategic.”

That means understanding the audience’s style, language, cultural values, and how they connect. “We have to be flexible and open minded, and foster regular open communication with other generational points of view. I wish older people would embrace the loud music, lights, and funny videos and that the younger people would embrace the true anointing, powerful prayer, and the Word.”

Buck says that healthy transition can only happen when leadership embraces and has a direct line with upcoming generations. That happens most effectively when there is diverse staff and leadership. “Are we giving the younger generation a voice and letting them make decisions?” he asks. “Do annual budgets support next generation needs? These are key.”

He says that healthy churches also develop long-term succession plans for transitioning lead pastoral positions. Effective plans identify and mentor future leaders and pastors with at least 10 years of church vision and DNA under their belt, prior to transitioning the baton of ministry.

“One plants, another waters, but God gives the increase,” says Buck. “When we all work together to set the next generation up for success, we’ll go further than we ever thought. Empowering and training up the next generation needs to start today. Jesus poured His life into 12 disciples for three and a half years. After He left them, they turned the world upside down. Our goal is to set up the next generations to take our churches to another level.”

It’s the responsibility of older generations to coach, lead, and guide younger generations without making them feel like they must fit into a cookie cutter.



“We have a tendency to suffocate what God is doing in the younger generations because it doesn’t fit the template we grew up with,” says Pastor Patrick Norris. “I’m not talking about doctrine but about style and culture—what tends to light up the brains and hearts of young people. We need to watch the trends and culture of where God is moving and what resonates with the younger demographic.”

Here are Patrick’s three keys:

1 CHECK THEIR PERSPECTIVE. Look for how God is moving in their hearts, and don’t try to fit what they’re experiencing into your own box. Find out what God is saying and doing in them. Then try to come beside it and guide it.

Younger generations tend to love great preaching with interesting stories and big emotional impact—something they can actually experience. But that being said, they’re not necessarily literate. They often don’t know a lot about redemption, spiritual authority, or the Holy Spirit. They know some things about these topics. But if they get challenged about something in a classroom or at a Starbucks, they don’t know the basics of why they believe what they believe. They need teaching.

We need young people. They’re very passionate, with tremendous vision and excitement, and they have more time than older people. They usually have a greater capacity for creativity, especially with technology. Where the older generations want everything to be *right*, the younger want everything to be an experience. You don’t have to give one up for the other, you just have to be aware.

2 DON’T MAKE THEM WAIT. Because older generations hold the governing power in the Body of Christ, it’s up to us to empower the younger and that means letting them influence outcome right now.

We can’t let them sit in the wings until they’re ‘ready.’ In fact, nowhere in scripture does God wait for people to get ready. Jesus didn’t wait for His disciples to get ready. They were a bunch of crazy young people. He threw them into the deep end and said, ‘I’ll swim with you; it’ll be good.’ Then three and a half years later, He turned over the entire Kingdom of God to a bunch of millennials.

3 GIVE THEM ROLES. Integrate young people into your leadership. Give them roles that make them grow and that give them significance in the church.

“In our church,” says Patrick, “our hosts are all millennials. They transition people into the service by coming up to pray or doing the welcome. They tell everyone what will be happening, or they do the announcements at the end. We want them to own it. Our college minister is a freshman in college. The leader of our creative team is a college senior.”

“Truthfully, as a pastor it’s a little non-assuring, because you don’t know what they’re going to do. Are they going to execute? Will they get this done? But they will never grow if we don’t let them roll.”

WHAT TO TEACH MILLENNIALS

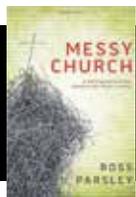
“I think this is the big challenge in Christianity in the western world today,” says Patrick Norris. “We have to figure out how to teach young people doctrine without suffocating them. In our church we use these topics as resources to simply empower them to ‘win the day’ or make a difference in their lives. We’re not looking to make them theologians. We’re giving them tools to be a hero, a disciple of Christ in their everyday lives.”

One—Redemption. If a person understands redemption (which includes the sovereignty of God, free will of man, and what God accomplished in Christ), they can understand why bad things happen to good people, why there’s suffering in the world, and so forth.

Two—Spiritual Authority. A basic understanding that we are free moral agents. We have to speak to the mountain, and we have to deal with the devil. If we aren’t using our authority, then God’s plan isn’t going to get done.

Three—Holy Spirit. More than just speaking in tongues, we must understand the gifts of the Holy Spirit, how to be led by the Spirit, and how to live in communion with the Holy Spirit. If we understand these three basic categories, we understand about 90 percent of what we need to know to interpret the meaning of any situation that happens in life.

“



Transitional seasons are unavoidable in an organic, growing, and life-giving church. But massive cultural change that embraces a multigenerational mind-set requires intentional teaching and training, as well as relational connectivity.”

—Ross Parsley, *Messy Church*

Terry Cadwallader ('08, '09, '10) and his wife, Toni, are youth leaders at Inspiration Bible Church in Tacoma, Washington, which is pastored by Greg and Starlene Martin (both '96, '97). inspirationbiblechurch.com

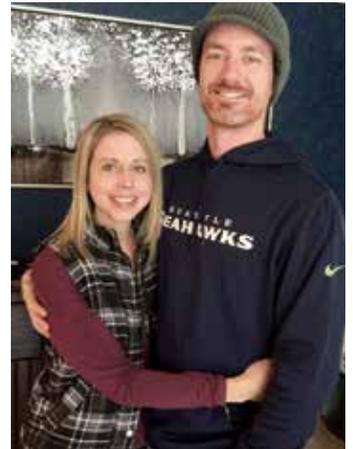
A YOUTH PASTOR'S PERSPECTIVE

If no man is an island, neither is any generation. Each generation needs the others. “We should all appreciate and have respect for the generations before and after us,” says youth pastor Terry Cadwallader. “We all need to be humble and teachable.”

“In seven years of youth ministry, I’m amazed at how much I’ve learned from young people. Their energy and vibrant spirit have revived me and have added years to my life. They’ve kept me young and relevant. God used young people in the Bible, and He’s using them mightily today. Young people help keep the church more on the cutting edge of our culture. They give energy and atmosphere to worship, while still maintaining a reverence and fear of God.”

But on the flip side, Terry says that there is no substitution for life experience. “Looking to those who have gone before us for wisdom and spiritual insight is precious,” he says. “There’s a lot to be said from those who have been there and done that. Their words are weighty and can add value to our life if we take heed. They keep us majoring on the majors and the timeless teachings in Scripture. They keep us rooted and grounded in God’s Word, never compromising our message of faith.”

Terry concludes, “When we have synergy between generations, we can be firm and consistent in our message while evolving and changing our methods to reach everyday people in a very relevant way.”



Gary Toney ('96, '97) and his wife, Tracy, pastor Victory Life Church in Georgetown and Lexington, Kentucky. victorylifeonline.com

BOUNDARIES AND FREEDOM



The younger generations should not be driving church culture today. “As elders in the Body of Christ, we have to be the ones who are driving,” says Pastor Gary Toney. “We set the boundaries for the next generation to work in. That being said, we have to give young people the creative freedom to express their culture and encourage them to bring their ideas to the table.”

He agrees that change is the tricky part. “We have to be open

to implementing necessary changes the younger generations see that the older generations may not,” he says.

“That includes highlighting what they do publicly. Next generation leaders will bring fresh new ideas to the table. It’s our responsibility to stay open to their ideas and make sure the older generation doesn’t drift to an inward-thinking congregation that has lost sight of why we’re a local church in our community.”

Gary believes that having generations work together is vital to church growth. “As the older generation, it’s our responsibility to meet younger generations where they are. If we ignore the culture of the next generation, not only does it hinder our influence with them, but it also hinders the growth of the church.”



A generational church is where Abraham resources Isaac, Isaac releases Jacob, and Jacob reveres Abraham.”

—Mal Fletcher

GETTING YOUNGER PEOPLE INTO CHURCH

Gary’s church has tapped into a key element of drawing the younger generations. “The most successful way of getting young people in the door is for their friends to invite them,” he says. “We started asking our young people, ‘Are you comfortable inviting your friends here?’ If our younger generation doesn’t enjoy our Sunday services, neither will the unchurched of our community. In both cases, we have to acknowledge their culture and make every effort to meet them where they’re at.”

He says that the younger generations are looking for community, but the traditional church model isn’t what they’re comfortable with. “We came to realize that a big part of their view of church stops at our doorstep,” he says. “They’ve had no choice but to form their opinions solely on what we had shown them. So we have geared our facilities toward their generation—everything from media, music, signage, and decor. We’ve created an atmosphere that makes them feel welcome and comfortable the moment they come through the front doors. I believe you can have a constantly changing culture while maintaining an uncompromising message.”

GARY’S TIPS

- Today’s generation sees little importance in attending church regularly. It’s your job to create an easy, clear, and accessible path of engagement.
- Possibly one of the most successful tools for attracting and keeping the next generation is getting them involved right away. Create a safe environment for them to fail.
- Evaluate your leadership techniques through their eyes.
- Stop assuming the Holy Spirit can only work in your current setting.

Chad Stewart ('07, '08) and his wife, Sarah (Hennenfent '05, '06, '07), became pastors of Word of Life Church in Sand Springs, Oklahoma, in 2012. mywordoflife.com

PEOPLE ARE WHAT MATTER

God is a “generational God.” In Exodus 3:6, He calls Himself the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

We also know that the Gospel is for *all* people, not just *some* people. If we are going to be effective at reaching every generation, then we need to be married to the message and not the method. Unfortunately, many churches are married to their methods and not the message of Jesus Christ.



We spend too much time and energy arguing over things that don’t matter—paint colors, song selection, carpet colors, and so forth. We forget that Jesus Christ didn’t die for a building. He died for people. People really matter to God, and they should matter the most to us.

Methods should and will change with every generation. It’s the message that stays the same.

The Apostle Paul says in First Corinthians 9:22–23 that he tried to find common ground with everyone so he could share the Gospel with them. Ultimately, he wanted them be saved.

We can learn a powerful truth from the Apostle Paul when it comes to working with other generations. Instead of focusing on differences and arguing over methods, what would happen if we focused on what we have in common—such as reaching the lost?

It says in Acts 13:36 (NIV) that David served the purpose of God in his generation. This should be the heart cry of every Christian.

Nate Sweeney ('96, '97) and his wife, Monica, pastor Catalyst Church in Bentonville, Arkansas. catalystnwa.com

IT'S ABOUT MENTORING

Young people don't need to be stirred up. They need fathers and mothers in the faith. "They need vision," says Pastor Nate Sweeney. "Someone to point their passion in the right direction."



When Nate graduated from Rhema at age 20, he returned to his home church with a passion and a call to ministry. "My pastor told me I wouldn't be usable at the church until I was at least 30 years old," says Nate. "I had been in Bible school for two years and did a lot of ministry during that time. Here I was told that I had to sit and do nothing for 10 years! As a result, I lost all passion for ministry."

That experience gave Nate a better idea. "Young people are passionate, and of course, there are a lot of things they don't know yet," he says. "But rather than having them sit on the sidelines, I want to mentor them, 'father' them, and bring them along. As they do ministry beside me every day, I can coach them, instead of telling them to sit over there and watch. Then as their gift develops and trust develops, we give them more and more responsibility."

Nate has a system of accountability for doing just that. "We have an established ministry here that we've spent years developing," he says. "We use that experience to equip young people. Yes, they went to Bible school and they learned a lot. But now we want to empower them under the vision of *this* church. If I can empower five young people, that expands everything we're doing. Then we're *all* encouraged!"



THE FIVE E'S

1. Establish. Many leaders see potential in a young person and say, "Go start this ministry. I give you free reign." The person passionately tries to do their best, but the leader comes back and says, 'I don't like this.' Instead, first establish the ministry with a seasoned leader. Then sit down with the new person and talk about your philosophy of ministry. Give them a syllabus or whatever guidelines that have already been set up. Then we've established something.

2. Equip. This stage can take months or even a year. We involve a person in an established ministry so they learn specific skills. Whether it's a smaller area of ministry or a large role, we give them a tool shed of equipment that speaks directly to that ministry.

3. Empower. After we put a person in a position, we don't release them in ministry and say, "See you next year." We empower them with continual follow up. A leader spends time with them and lets them know when they did something successfully or what corrections need to be made. This gives the person "guard rails." We don't have a problem with people making mistakes. When there is accountability, we don't have failure—we have growth opportunities. We also realize that people are going to add their own DNA to things. As long as they're getting 80 percent of the established philosophy right, we let them dream, grow, and use their gifts.

4. Expand. By training people for leadership, we duplicate ministry. It's a win-win situation. We focus on their capacity to grow.

5. Encourage. It would be weird if you saw a football coach running onto the field during a game, grabbing the ball, telling the quarterback to sit down, and running the plays. Unfortunately, this happens with leaders! We empower people, but when things go wrong, we want to take over, instead of encouraging them and bringing them back inside the guard rails to mature and make mistakes. Just as coaches aren't meant to be out on the field, as leaders, we're meant to be on the sidelines encouraging.

[Editor's Note: This information applies to established churches, not new church plants. It is aimed at mentoring the next generation.]

“

It's not about who's in power—it's about how we empower the next generation."

—Dan Reiland, "3 Things Millennial Leaders Need From the Church"

LET EVERY GENERATION PRAISE THE LORD

By
Kenneth W.
Hagin

“So we, Your people . . . will show forth Your praise to all generations.”

—Psalm 79:13 (NKJV)

“Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts; let them proclaim your power.”

—Psalm 145:4 (NLT)

This article was adapted from a message Kenneth W. Hagin preached on February 19, 2017, as Rhema Bible Church celebrated the grand opening of its Varsity Youth Building.

We see in Psalm 145:4 that each generation is to tell its children about the mighty things that God has done. By doing this, we are preparing the next generation to follow God’s plan for their lives.



Knowing about God just doesn’t happen accidentally. We have to teach children about Him. When our kids are young, we teach them things like looking both ways before crossing a street. In the same way, they have to hear us talk about the things of God, His greatness, and how He has moved in our lives.

HAVING A HEART FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Young people today face a far different world than the one I grew up in. Today’s generation is different than older generations. In spite of our differences, we need to show younger generations support and understanding. It’s important that we have a heart for all of the different generations that are represented in church today.

Sometimes older generations don’t appreciate the energy of the youth, but I do. If you run with young people, you’ll stay young. But if you sit down and do nothing, you’ll get old. The more mature generations may have wisdom and experience, but they need the energy, idealism, and enthusiasm of the younger generations.

Malachi 4:5–6 NKJV

4 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.

5 And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”

From these verses, we see the need to have a heart for young people. They are valuable and have a lot to give to our world. One of the keys to generational cohesion is maintaining a young heart. Be young in your spirit. Be flexible. And don’t put young people down.

In church congregations today, we can have as many as six generations under one roof. Although we all have different ideas of how things should be, we have to have cohesion with one another. We have to understand that each generation is important and has something to give. And those of us in older generations need to realize that it’s our responsibility to teach and be involved with younger generations.

REALIZE THEIR POTENTIAL

Today's kids need us. They need to see our strong faith. They need to know that we're interested in them as people. There are many young people today that have problems with acceptance. They need to be reassured that they're accepted and that they belong.

Young people don't have to be very old to start contributing to the world.

By age six, Mozart gave piano concerts in Europe. At age seven, Helen Keller, blind and deaf, mastered a vocabulary of 625 words. At age 10, Thomas Edison set up a laboratory in his basement. At 18, Joan of Arc led 3,000 French soldiers to victory in Orléans.

Long before Samuel became a prophet, he ministered to the Lord as a young boy. In the Bible, David was a teenager when he was anointed king of Israel.

There is great potential in young people. They will be the world's leaders in not too many years from now. It's important that seeds of greatness are planted in their hearts and are cultivated and fertilized with the Word of God. Like it or not, older generations are passing and younger generations are taking over.

SHOW THEM GOD'S TRUTHS

The younger generation needs us to show them how to live for God and how stay



Every generation has to find their own faith."

with God. Many young people today don't understand right from wrong. They're not taught absolutes in school. They're taught, "Okay, whatever." They believe in tolerating everything, even if it's against God. There is no clear sense of right or wrong and no moral boundaries.

Romans 12:2 in *The Message Bible* explains exactly what kind of world our kids are living in today and what needs to be done:

"Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you."

Our kids need help in knowing what truth is and how to establish safe boundaries. Because of what we see on TV and what we are surrounded with on a daily basis, we can fall into the trap of accepting what is wrong as right. Yes, we have to love everybody, but

we don't love what they do. Society tolerates things the Bible calls sin, and our young people are losing sight of what the Word of God says.

Every generation has to find their own faith. Our prayer is that our kids will have the same testimony that David had: "O God, You have taught me from my youth; and to this day I declare Your wondrous works" (Ps. 71:17 NKJV).

SIX GENERATIONS

All six of these generations are living in the United States today.*

GI Generation—born 1901–1926

Mature/Silents—born 1927–1945

Baby Boomers—born 1946–1964

Generation X—born 1965–1980

Generation Y (aka Millennials)—born 1981–2000

Generation Z (aka Boomlets or the "1" generation)—born after 2001

*The years vary and are estimates.

Source: marketingteacher.com/the-six-living-generations-in-america/



There's Power in Generational Unity!

The generation gap is perhaps one of the greatest issues in the Church today—yet one of the least addressed. Satan wants the young to despise the old and the old to despise the young. If he can divide us, we will never be everything that God wants us to be.

Drawing from Scripture and his more than 50 years in ministry, Kenneth W. Hagin shares vital keys to uniting the generations. We are all in different stages of life. But we can join together to become an effective, explosive witness for God in our community and around the world.

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WHAT THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS WISH THE OLDER UNDERSTOOD



NINE THINGS WE WANT YOU TO KNOW

1 WE LOVE GOD. We want to obey the Lord, just as you do. So give us some room to learn to hear God's voice and walk out what we believe He is saying to us. We want to use our gifts and talents for Him, but we need guidance to know how to do that.

2 WE'RE NOT ALL DUMB. We might be crazy, and the way we approach things might be uncomfortable or different to you, but we do hear the Holy Spirit. Just because a lot of our generation seems entitled and undependable doesn't mean we all are.

3 WE CAN HELP YOU. We want to share what we know about technology and new paradigms that can help a church grow. Don't overlook our potential. Don't doubt us just because we're young. We have passion and energy, and we want to use it for God's glory. Please allow our creativity and God-given skills to be used. Give us room to fail and learn from our failures.

4 WE'RE NOT TRYING TO TAKE OVER. Paul didn't despise Timothy's youth. He let Timothy run some things while Paul was teaching him. Please consider letting go of the reins instead of micromanaging us. We know and honor the fact that you're the boss, and we're not trying to take over. Don't be insecure.

5 WE THINK DIFFERENTLY. Some of our mutual tensions aren't because we want different things; we just communicate our thoughts differently than you do. We want to get back to sharing the Good News of Christ instead of complaining that the young are lazy and the old are outdated.



At the end of the day, if you don't have Millennials, you don't have anyone to hand off the church to."

—unknown

6 WE'RE OPEN TO CORRECTION. We know we make mistakes, and we want to get it right. Please don't correct or humiliate us in public—give us a chance to grow. See us through to a solution. Discipline us, but then coach us, keep us accountable, get in the Word with us, and see us through to success or healing.

7 WE HAVE EXPENSES. We realize we have to work our way up if we're hired by the church. But paying us so little that we can't make ends meet adds incredible pressure to our lives. If you don't pay us enough to live, we'll have to get a job and spend less time on the vision of the church.

8 WE ARE PASSIONATE. Once we've committed to a church, we just don't want to attend. We want to jump in with both feet and be active. Give us a mission with purpose and put us to work.

9 WE HAVE QUESTIONS. We have tough questions about the Bible, today's moral issues, and how to conduct our lives as Christians. Don't sweep tough subjects under the rug, but talk about them openly. Guide us to God's answers and help us confront our daily challenges.

FIVE THINGS WE'RE LOOKING FOR

1 AUTHENTICITY. We've watched church leaders fall in a culture of duplicity and political games. Anyone whose life models authenticity and transparency will catch our attention. Stop trying to be cool. Be real, truthful, and vulnerable. Talk about your concerns and mistakes. When applicable, be willing to admit that you're wrong.

2 VISION. We are drawn to churches that dream big and that show by example a big God doing amazing things through normal people. We want to be involved in a cause and make a meaningful, tangible difference, as opposed to being a "volunteer in church." We have the energy and passion to help execute the vision. But to follow your vision, we need you to write it down and impart it to us.

3 RELATIONSHIP/COMMUNITY. We can hear sermons online, read blogs, or follow ministers on Twitter any hour of the day or night. What draws us to church isn't just the message—it's the relationships and the community. We want a Christ-centered place of belonging that moves beyond the surface and asks the hard questions. We want a place where we're there for each other, developing together as disciples of Jesus.

4 MENTORS. We very much want to be discipled by the older generations. Please take us under your wing to share your wisdom and experience with us! Help us discover our mission in the world, and help us to use our talents and gifts to their full capacity. Show us by your example how to live and lead. Be our spiritual father/mother we can run to when troubles or questions arise. Care about us and be consistent with us.

5 IMPACT. We don't want to just attend church and give monetary support. We want to affect real change in the world. Christianity without action is at best an incomplete faith, at worst a false one. We're not concerned with building multimillion dollar campuses of comfort and exclusivity. We're interested in building homeless shelters or working with drug addicts. We want the church to be the missions sending agency—to raise up missionaries and church planters, send them out, and care for them while on the field. We're less concerned about big church buildings than about getting the Gospel to the several billion people who haven't yet heard. We don't want to be separate from today's culture; we want to find ways to engage them for the glory of God.

WHAT DO MILLENNIALS WANT TO SEE IN THE CHURCH 10 YEARS FROM NOW?

"I'd love to see all generations operating in the church at once. Millennials are wondering, 'Do we have to wait our turn, or can we do this together?' We're willing to do it together. Hearing our leaders say that rather than echo the rhetoric of the world about our generation is a big deal for us."

—Kaira McKinnon ('15, '16)

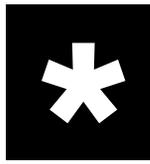
"I would love to see every church filled wall-to-wall with the gifts of the Spirit in operation through the older generation and the younger generation alike. It's time for honor, loyalty, and patience to be restored."

—Shaina Moore ('15, '17)

"Ten years from now, I'd like to see all churches come as one. I just want to see the Body of Christ validating upcoming generations, and us pushing past generational and denominational barriers to come as one."

—Darwin Hernandez ('16, '17)

To listen to the entire conversation, check out "An Honest Talk With Millennials" @ jentringle.com/podcast



*Millennials are now the largest generational group, exceeding baby boomers.**

SIX THINGS WE NEED FROM YOU

1 WISDOM AND GUIDANCE. We know we need your help to be effective in Christian life and ministry. You've "been there, done that" and can guide us through a lot of the challenges we face. Many of us have grown up without godly wisdom and desperately need yours. Don't give up on us because of different methodology. Talk *to* us, not *at* us. Wisdom from the prior generation is always relevant and never ages.

2 UNDERSTANDING. Remember back when you were starting out? You didn't know how to do life, you didn't have enough money, and you were passionate but ignorant. That's where we are today. If we work a full time job and volunteer at church, don't expect us to volunteer 40 hours a week. Help us grow into a life of service while equally serving our families so we don't burn out.

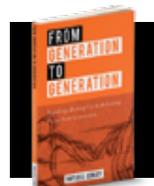
3 OPENNESS. Don't be stuck in old ways of doing things! Every church needs to be open to new ways of connecting with people, community, networking, technology, worship music, and so forth. We don't want to just talk about what God *can* do, we want to do it. Give us room to help and really *do* what has been placed on our hearts to enhance the kingdom. *Listen to us.*

4 EMPOWERMENT. Jesus empowered His disciples and gave them a command to go into all the world. It was risky and messy, but it worked. Investing in us will allow the Church to accomplish big things. Allow us to take ownership, and give us room to make mistakes. Give us representation at the table, a voice in church decisions.

5 SUPPORT. If you put us in positions of leadership, stand by us, even when we do something dumb—and we will! Don't lecture or humiliate us from the pulpit, don't talk badly about us when we mess up. Do correct and discipline us, but in private. Be for us, not against us. Let us know you value us and our insight. Give us room to lead and learn on our own, but don't be completely hands off. Keep tabs on us and give us accountability, because we don't have as much experience as you do.

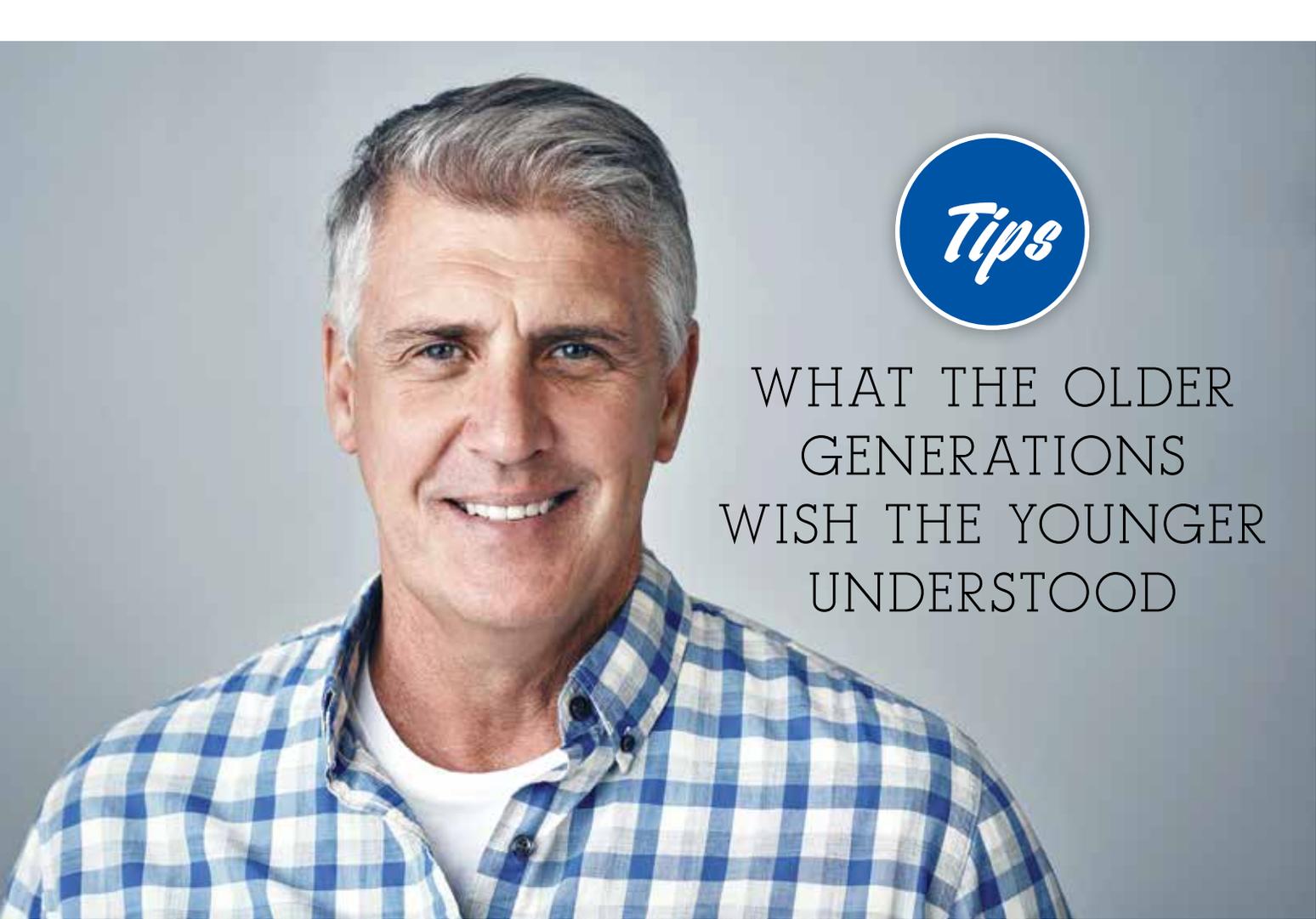
6 COMMUNICATION. Don't just give us a job or assignment without any input. You have expectations of how you want a job done—please communicate that to us! We need an open door where we can talk to a leader without reservation and where we can get advice and help. Help us start *and* finish well.

*Source: census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-113.html



God commanded His people to transmit truth generationally. It was not optional for His people then, and it is not optional for us, as His people, today."

—Bayless Conley, *From Generation to Generation*



WHAT THE OLDER GENERATIONS WISH THE YOUNGER UNDERSTOOD

SIX THINGS WE WANT YOU TO KNOW

1 DON'T OVERLOOK THE VALUE OF OUR EXPERIENCE. You are standing on the shoulders of those who have gone before you—those who have built a foundation that establishes the truth and authority of God's Word. Your ability to see further into the future is a result of standing on our shoulders.

2 WE STARTED ON A FOUNDATION BUILT BY THOSE WHO WENT BEFORE US. It's your turn to build on our foundation. This foundation is valuable and was paid for with struggle, sacrifice, tough life lessons, and hard work. We are fully invested in this vision. For this reason, we are cautious about handing it off to you. The handover will come in increments and with careful consideration. The way you'll get promoted is through faithfulness, reliability, and showing respect.

3 WE BELIEVE IN YOU. We know that your input and ideas will significantly shape the trajectory of ministry. Living things change and grow. We are aware of that. We need your expertise, energy, and enthusiasm. You need our experience and stability so you don't repeat our mistakes.

4 CHANGE TAKES TIME AND PATIENCE. It takes time to adapt to a different way of doing things. Be patient to help us along. Show us your new way and help us understand. At the same time, be patient with our current way. Understand that this "old way" has served us for many years. The reasons behind what we do and how we do it may not be obvious to you, but they have been arrived at with careful consideration. Help us envision our new role as we transition you into your new role.

5 DON'T EXPECT PERFECTION. We have not traveled this way before. We will make mistakes. When you disagree, do it with grace. Explore decisions that you may not agree with. Stay for the long haul as we navigate these waters. That is a sign of maturity. There will be give and take. Most of the time, change will come in increments not landslides.

6 OUR HISTORY IS IMPORTANT TO US. You know those worship songs (or books or preachers) that were popular when you got saved, the ones that remind you of your first experiences with God? Or those songs that take you right into the Lord's presence? We have those too, they're just a little older. Someday your history will be older too. Remember that everything has value. We understand the need to incorporate new music, technology, and culture today, but please don't devalue our history.

EIGHT THINGS WE'RE LOOKING FOR

1 COMMITMENT. The *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* defines commitment as "an agreement or pledge to do something in the future." The mindset of many believers today is that church attendance, dedication to the Word, and the work of the ministry is optional, occasional, and/or based on convenience. We're watching to see if you're committed to God, ministry, and people.

2 A TEACHABLE SPIRIT. Ask questions and be eager to learn. This shows us that our time and effort is well spent. It also opens the door



for us to learn from you. Be willing to receiving counsel, direction, and correction from older, more experienced leaders. We are reluctant to help and mentor young people who are arrogant or unteachable.

3 RESPECT. It's fine to have different ideas and opinions, but honor those the Lord has used to nurture you spiritually and bring you to faith (Exod. 20:12). And hey, the way you treat your spiritual fathers and mothers will be the way your spiritual sons and daughters treat you when you're older.

4 CHARACTER. Your character matters more than your skills. Skills are easier to teach than character. Skills, gifts, and abilities may get you to the top, but it takes character to keep you there. Build your life on the foundation of character development (2 Peter 1:5-9) and not upon the faulty foundation of gifts and abilities.

5 FAITHFULNESS. We want you to come to church not just to get something, but to put your hand to something. Church shouldn't be something you do when there isn't anything else going on. It should come first. It's hard to mentor you, promote you, or give you responsibility when we don't know if you'll show up or stick around.

6 COMPASSION. If you truly care about people, be willing to accept correction and instruction. This improves the lives of those you work with and for. We want you to genuinely love God, His Word, and people more than a title or position.

7 A STRONG WORK ETHIC. We're looking for young people who know more about responsibility than entitlement, who have a sacrificial attitude rather than a "give me" attitude. We want you to show up on time, give notice if you can't be there, know how to count change, and complete tasks without supervision. Don't dodge the menial tasks, shirk responsibilities, or do just enough to get by.

8 INITIATIVE AND FOLLOW THROUGH. We love your enthusiasm and great ideas. We would also love to see you put legs to that big idea and follow it through to completion.

SIX THINGS WE NEED FROM YOU

1 DILIGENCE. Be a self-feeder. Maintain a vibrant relationship with God and a regular devotional life, including reading the Bible. Be spiritually strong and not always having to be "propped up." Keep reading, studying, and growing in your walk with Christ.

2 ENGAGEMENT. We want you to be able to engage and work well with others. Get along. Be part of the solution, not the problem. Be able to build a team. As much as possible, don't do ministry alone.

3 RESILIENCE. You'll have plenty of setbacks. Life and people will disappoint you. You'll make mistakes and have to be corrected. We want you to be able to rebound and keep moving forward. At times you may not understand what God is doing in your life, but keep the vision of your calling and push forward, regardless of disappointments or troubles. When you fall down, get back up again.

4 GRATITUDE. We wish you were more thankful for what you have instead of complaining about what you don't have. Learn to be content with who God has made you to be and what He's called you to do. Don't compare yourself to others. Be thankful for where He has allowed you to be right now.

5 PASSION FOR THIS MINISTRY. We know there are a lot of great ministries out there, but resist the urge to compare them to this one. We are called and committed here to obey God and make *this* ministry the best it can be. We'd appreciate you being focused on that too.

6 PATIENCE. We know you want to accomplish great things, but don't always be in a hurry to try something new. Learn how to listen to Wisdom (the Holy Spirit) to avoid emotional highs and lows that can lead to or hinder progression in our communities. Listen to other ideas besides just what you want.

FIVE THINGS I WANT YOUNG PEOPLE TO KNOW

by Gerald Brooks

- **1 KINGS 12:6-18**—A new young king sought advice from two sources: older and younger advisors. The older advised him to do what's best for the people, while the younger told him to do what's best for him as a leader. The new king followed the advice of the latter. It didn't go well. The lesson here is that when you're young, you'd better watch whose advice you're listening to.
- **1 TIMOTHY 4:12**—People watch your life long before they listen to your words. Your life is your message; it creates a platform for your words. When will people listen to you? After they have watched you.
- **1 PETER 5:5**—It's one thing to have confidence, it's another thing to lack humility. You have to have both. Learn the power of respect. You may disagree, but do it respectfully. Older people with authority don't always use it correctly, but respect is always the right response.
- **PSALM 119:9**—You're not smart enough, strong enough, and don't know enough on your own. You need something bigger than you, which is God's Word—hold on to it.
- **ECCLESIASTES 11:9**—Just because you do something that doesn't appear to have consequences now, doesn't mean the consequences won't happen eventually. Don't think you can sow wrong things and get away with them.

[Editor's Note: Also read "Generational Challenges: Merging Young and Old," by Gerald Brooks, starting on page 16.]

MERGING YOUNG AND OLD

Gerald Brooks ('77) and his wife Geni pioneered Grace Outreach Center in Plano, Texas, in 1982. His leadership podcast is available on iTunes and Google Play. Follow him on Twitter @GeraldBrooks_TX. GeraldBrooksMinistries.com



The number one question I am asked by pastors is, “How do you get older people and younger people to work together in your church? How can we navigate through this?”

To help answer that question, I went to every place in the Bible I could find that dealt with the young and old together. Here are a few things I found.

THE MOSES MODEL: FROM THE OLDER POINT OF VIEW

Part of Moses’ mission was to look for young people whom God was positioning for the future. Joshua was on the opposite end of the age spectrum from Moses. If we’re going to follow the biblical model, we must look for young people whom God is positioning.

Once he found Joshua, Moses:

1 GAVE HIM PROXIMITY. Moses allowed Joshua to be in meetings he didn’t deserve to be in and hear conversations he didn’t deserve to hear. Leadership is caught, not just taught. It must involve proximity to someone who is actively leading.

2 INVOLVED HIM IN KEY DECISIONS. When the 12 spies came back from the Promised Land, Joshua was involved in the decision, even though he was overruled. As a leader, if you give young people proximity, they also have to be involved in decision making.

3 ELEVATED HIS INFLUENCE BEFORE THE PEOPLE. Moses was the one who had relational equity with the congregation. It was up to him to let them know he was giving Joshua the position *and* the authority.

4 KNEW WHEN IT WAS TIME FOR THE HANDOFF. Moses finished his race and didn’t hang on.

THE JOSHUA MODEL: FROM THE YOUNGER POINT OF VIEW

Here are six questions that the life of Joshua poses to young people in ministry.

1 CAN YOU SERVE IN SOMEONE’S SHADOW? For 40 years, Joshua served in the shadow of Moses. Don’t talk about being “The Joshua Generation” if you haven’t served in anyone’s shadow.

2 CAN YOU LEARN IN THE SECOND SEAT? I’m sure there were times when Joshua thought, “I don’t think Moses should do that.” But I’ve learned as much from people’s mistakes as I have from their successes. The person above you isn’t always going to be right. But you can learn just as much from that.

3 CAN YOU APPRECIATE THE OPPORTUNITY? When someone trusts you enough to put you in rooms you don’t deserve to be in and let you hear conversations you don’t deserve to hear, they are putting you on the fast lane to leadership. That’s an opportunity.

4 CAN YOU HANDLE IT WHEN THEY’RE TIRED? It’s one thing to be with a leader when they’re at their best on stage, but can you handle their doubts and insecurities off the platform? Everyone looks good under the anointing.

5 CAN YOU GROW WITHOUT BEING OUT FRONT? Joshua did lead on the battlefield, but we don’t see it. If you can’t grow out of the spotlight, you’re not going to grow in it. Growth isn’t a location issue, it’s a heart issue.

6 CAN YOU WAIT YOUR TURN? Being Joshua takes time. Being the leader Moses was destined to be first started as a 40-year journey through the backside of the desert. Why would Joshua’s leadership development not have a time limit on it?

Pastors, teach both of these models in your church. You don’t get one model without the other. Working together they produce longevity. If we learn both models, we can take a one-generational ministry and make it multigenerational, which is the heartbeat and intent of God.

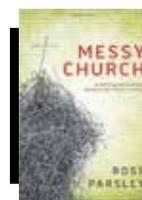
IT’S ABOUT PERSPECTIVE

David teaches us that some views of life are only formed over an extended period of time. *“I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread”* (Ps. 37:25).

A lot of the frustration between older and younger generations has to do with perspective. Older people think, “How many times do I have to tell them?” or “Why don’t they get it?” Younger people think, “All they do is talk,” or “Why don’t they just let me do it?”

Older people have to understand that some perspectives can’t be learned when someone is 25 years old—they just take longer. Young people need to know that while you may understand a concept, sometimes the meaning or value is lost until you’ve lived through it.

For example, everyone is a perfect parent until they have kids. It works the same way in ministry. Pastoring is easy, until you’re one. Those who have lived longer have seen more things done right and wrong, so they have a bigger vault than younger people do. That doesn’t mean younger people aren’t smart. It just means we have different perspectives.



We need to serve the entire family and not just the next generation in order to truly be multigenerational.”

—Ross Parsley, Messy Church



BOTH YOUNG AND OLD HAVE RESPONSIBILITIES

“Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance. Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can urge the younger women to love their husbands and children.”

—Titus 2:2–4 (NIV)

No matter what your age is, in ministry there are responsibilities. If you’re older, you might retire from a position, but you can’t retire from the will of God.

I have older people in my church who could be very beneficial to younger people, but they feel like they’ve done their time and now they get to coast. They’re not sharing their wisdom.

Listen, if you’re not dead, you’re not done. The Bible says those who are seasoned in Christ have a responsibility to communicate truths to younger people. I reduce this to three things:

1 MODEL. There are two men in our church approaching 90. When I see them I say, “You inspire me.” They’ve been so faithful in their work life, family life, and faith life. They’ve modeled that it’s possible.



“If you’re not dead, you’re not done.”

2 MESSAGE. Talk about what you know. For example, in our young married group, we have some of the older married people come in and talk about being married.

3 MENTOR. Everyone in the congregation who’s over 50 has a spiritual obligation to take someone under their wing and teach them what they know.

If you’re younger, it’s your responsibility to learn. And it’s not the older generation’s responsibility to find you. You know who I mentor? Those who want to be mentored. In a room full of wisdom, don’t hang out with other young people. Instead, put yourself in a place to be mentored. And here are three things to ask and learn from an older, wiser mentor:

1 DAILY. How do you do life every day? How do you stay married for 40 plus years?

2 DEVOTIONS. How do you put God first when you have a job, family, and so forth?

3 DISCIPLINE. How do you manage your flesh and stay disciplined?

[Editor’s Note: You can listen to Gerald Brook’s entire message on generational challenges online at goo.gl/wLFTb2.]

INSIGHT: OWNERS AND RENTERS

In reality, most young people have never owned a house. All they’ve known is renting. When they don’t like one place, they go rent something else. Then we put them in positions of spiritual ownership. We ask them to think spiritually in ways they’ve never had to think naturally. Part of the conflict older generations feel is that they are owners. These two different mindsets have to be navigated through.

Are you a Pastor, Assistant Pastor, Youth Minister, Children's Minister, Music Minister, Missionary, Itinerant or Chaplain?



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W

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RESOURCES

Great Web Articles:

"Why Millennials Are Dropping Out of Church" goo.gl/2qvvTI

"Who Goes to Church and Why: Barna Research" goo.gl/VoJJ5n

"The Church as a Genuine Community?" goo.gl/G2oAVA

"5 Things Millennials Wish the Church Would Be" goo.gl/fkvKhQ

"10 Reasons Churches Are Not Reaching Millennials" goo.gl/OoaqLL

"The Church Millennials Want to Attend" goo.gl/kUPuEI

"3 Things Millennial Leaders Need From the Church" goo.gl/yXxdRA

Great Websites:

genimperative.com Chuck Underwood is the founder and principal of the generational consulting firm, **The Generational Imperative, Inc.** Underwood is one of the handful of pioneers who created, developed, and popularized the field of generational study.

goo.gl/YrvH9t **The Center for Generational Studies**, now known as Common Sense Enterprises, Inc., specializes in managing cross-generational teams in the workplace, as well as preparing for the workforce to come.

Great Books:

Next Generation Leader: 5 Essentials for Those Who Will Shape the Future by Andy Stanley

Synergize: Generational Synergy in the Local Church by Chad E. Waller

Generational Synergy: End the Gap. Bring the Change by Eric Reeder

One Church, Four Generations: Understanding and Reaching All Ages in Your Church by Gary L. McIntosh

Seasons of a Leader's Life: Learning, Leading, and Leaving a Legacy by Jeff Iorg

From Generation to Generation: Reaching, Raising Up, and Releasing Every Next Generation by Bayless Conley

Messy Church: A Multigenerational Mission for God's Family by Ross Parsley

A Great Message:

Watch Denise Hagin Burns as she ministered at *Winter Bible Seminar 2017* on "The State of Our Youth Today." vimeo.com/205085944. To purchase an MP3 of this message, go to rhema.org/store.

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RHEMA BIBLE CHURCH DEDICATES NEW VARSITY YOUTH BUILDING



Sunday, February 19, 2017, was a very special day in the history of Rhema Bible Church. The new Varsity Youth Building—built completely debt free after almost 15 years of planning—was dedicated!

During the morning service, Kenneth W. Hagin delivered an inspiring message titled, “Let Every Generation Praise the Lord.”

“We need to help young people so they will follow God’s plan for their lives,” said Rev. Hagin. “This building is very important because this is a place for the next generation to experience God. This is where our young people will praise God and learn how to follow Him.”

After the service, the entire RBC church family walked to the new building, which sits adjacent to the Rhema Library. There, they watched the ribbon cutting ceremony led by Family Ministries Pastor, Denise Hagin Burns.



Where Are They Now?

1979

Jesten Peters ('79) has been recognized as a “Distinguished Professional in Her Field” in the 2017 edition of *Women of Distinction Magazine*. Jesten served in local churches and ministries for more than 40 years before she founded Keys of Authority Ministry in 2005. In 2012, she authored her first book, *Running to Win the Race*. Jesten writes and travels full-time in ministry. KeysOfAuthorityMinistries.org



1980

Tim ('80) and Sandy (Harrison '82, '83) Redmond live in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where Tim is a business growth consultant, helping CEOs and entrepreneurs grow their profits to support their churches and accomplish God's vision for their lives. They have four children: Matthew, 26; Robert, 25; Joshua, 20; and Andrea, 18. RedmondGrowth.com



1987

Toby Downes ('86, '87) and his wife, Donna, pastor High Rock Church in Grants Pass, Oregon, where they recently celebrated their one-year anniversary. Pictured with Toby (right) is Rhema alumni **Mark Solares ('82, '83)** (left) who serves as worship pastor. Toby and Donna have three sons: James, 29, who is married; Matthew, 28; and Jacob, 27. HighRockChurchGP.org



1988

Kristan Gray ('87, '88) has recently been named director of Nebraskans United for Life, in addition to being an author and speaker. She and her husband, **Scott Gray ('85, '86)** live in Shenadoah, Iowa, and have three children: Ryan, 23; Matt, 21; and Haley, 19. KristanGray.com



1991

William Deagle ('90, '91) and his wife, Jessica, have transitioned from being an executive pastor in Virginia to traveling full-time in itinerant ministry. They are starting a Bible School in Peten, Guatemala; ministering to pastors and leaders in Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania; and teaching in a Bible school in Honduras that William helped start over 20 years ago. They are based out of Auburn, Georgia, with their three children, Jonathan, Shea, and Josiah. WilliamDeagleMinistries.org



Sunday Burquest (Farrand '90, '91) was a contestant on the reality TV show “Survivor” in the fall of 2016, and is also a cancer survivor. She and her husband Jeff have been on staff at Living Word Christian Center in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, where she served as Young Adult Pastor, and she also travels and speaks. The Burquests have four children: Carter 23, Brock 21, Tucker 19, and Kennedy 17. sundayburquest.com



1992

Pattie Stephenson Kasomo ('91, '92) and her husband, Titus, have been in Arusha, Tanzania, as missionaries for almost a year. They started Dream Center, a Saturday kids church that ministers to hundreds of children each week. They also help in a local church and teach at New Life Outreach's Bible College in Arusha. facebook.com/pattie.kasomo



1993

Guinn and Karen Shingleton (both '92, '93) have moved to Oviedo, Florida, where they recently accepted a position as family care pastors at East Coast Believers Church, pastored by **Norm Dubois ('92, '93)**. Previously, the Shingletons pastored Faith Outreach Family Church in Terre Haute, Indiana, for 22 years. EastCoastBelievers.church



Where Are They Now?

Jack Nieves ('91, '93) recently graduated Summa Cum Laude with a Doctorate of Theology degree from Andersonville Theological Seminary in Camilla, Georgia. He lives in Cumming, Georgia, and serves as a teaching minister in Abiding Church, Kennesaw, Georgia.



1996

Jody ('95, '96) and Tonya (Miller '95) Carsten returned to work in their home church in Sanford, Michigan, after graduating. In 2009 they worked with **Matt ('91, '92) and Julie ('90, '91) Beemer** at Club1040. In May of 2013, the Carstens planted City Church in Traverse City, Michigan, and in 2016, purchased and renovated a school with 18 acres of land. Their son, **Zachary Carsten ('10, '11)** and wife, **Karla (Sanchez-Guadarrama '13, '14)** and their daughter, Mackenzie, and husband, Zech Nelson, work with them. CityChurchTC.com



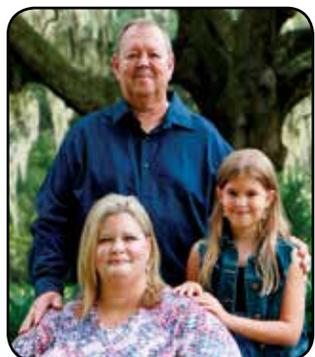
1997

Nate Sweeney ('96, '97) and his wife, Monica, pioneered Catalyst Church in Bentonville, Arkansas, 20 years ago. They have three children: Emma, 15; Jillian, 11; Nathaniel 10. CatalystNWA.com



1999

Lisa Stephens (Bruning '98, '99) and her husband, Troy, live in Keystone Heights, Florida. They recently started The Church Courageous in Melrose, Florida (Lisa's hometown). Troy is the senior pastor and Lisa is the children's and women's minister. They have one child: Adysen, 9. TheChurchCourageous.com



2000

Francisco Vega ('99, '00) and his wife, Oshea, live in East Point, Georgia. They recently planted the Arc City Church in an inner city area of metro Atlanta. They have two children: Jayden, 3, and Christiana, 5. ArcCityChurch.org



2002

Crystal McLennan ('01, '02) and her husband, John, live in Lakeland, Florida, where they are the lead children's pastors at Victory Church. They also travel and minister at camps, churches, and schools where John uses ventriloquism to reach kids with the gospel. VictoryLakeland.org



2004

Jeff Bardel ('03, '04) and his wife, Kelli, announce the birth of their daughter, Tessa Grey, born April 18, 2017, weighing 9 pounds, 6 ounces. Jeff and Kelli have two other daughters, Lily, 12 and Kenli, 3. Jeff is an itinerant minister, and Kelli is a nurse. They live in Graham, North Carolina. JeffBardel.com



Allen Lindon ('03, '04) and his wife, Terri Lynn, live in Soddy Daisy, Tennessee, where he is a chaplain with the Hamilton County Sheriff's Office, as well as pastor of Eleven22 Church in Cleveland, Tennessee. They have two children: Elizabeth, 4, and Everleigh, 2. Eleven22.church



2006

Tabitha Holst (Lloyd '05, '06) and her husband, Steve, were married Saturday, August 2, 2014, in Hawthorne Hallow, Kenosha, Wisconsin. They live in Zion, Illinois, and Tabitha hosts a cooking blog. ChefTees.com



2008

Chad ('07, '08) and Sarah (Hennenfent '05, '06, '07) Stewart pastor Word of Life Church in Sand Springs, Oklahoma. They have twins, Jax and Ava, born April 2, 2016. MyWordOfLife.com



Where Are They Now?

Danyelle Wilson ('07, '08) opened *Casa de Promesa*, a women's home in Guatemala, where she has lived as a full-time missionary for four years. The home serves at-risk women and women in crisis. [facebook.com/nancydanyelle](https://www.facebook.com/nancydanyelle)



2009

David ('08, '09) and Ashley (Colver '06, '07) Steinberg were married December 30, 2016, and are the administrative pastors at Dream Church, a pioneered work in Canton, Georgia. DreamChurchCanton.com



Kayla Talladino ('08, '09) married Robert Moody in 2013, and moved to Enid, Oklahoma. Robert is a quality assurance inspector and tech director for the Air Force, and Kayla is a stay-at-home mom. In 2014, they welcomed their first daughter, Selah, and in 2016, they welcomed their second daughter, Rhema.



2011

Michael ('10, '11) and Courtney (McCormack '09, '10) Varricione live in Oxford, Alabama, and are expecting their first daughter after having three boys: Emmanuel, 5; Isaac, 3; and Jesse, 19 months. Michael works as an assistant manager at Publix supermarket. Courtney is a stay-at-home mom. Together they serve as assistant children's pastors at Word Alive International Outreach in Oxford.



2012

Brad Fleisher ('11, '12) and his wife, Tina, are blessed to announce the birth of twins, Isaac and Isabella, on November 18, 2016. They join brother Joshua, 4, and sister Sophia, 2. Brad works in building maintenance for COR Construction, and Tina is a stay-at-home mom. They attend Mechanicsburg Brethren in Christ Church in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania, where they are involved in the worship ministry and are beginning a 12-step ministry for marriage recovery.



2014

Crystal Humes (Goss '13, '14) married Logan Humes on March 28, 2015, in St. Louis, Missouri. They live in Willisburg, Kentucky, and have a daughter, Jessa Rose, born June 13, 2016, weighing 9 pounds, 10.5 ounces. Logan works at a title company and does some itinerant ministry, while Crystal is a stay-at-home mom.



Craig ('96, '97, '14) and Susan (Brower '91, '92) Brown have been traveling into the Republic of Georgia for three years. They have translated and published 25 Faith Library books from the Greater European Book Project into the Georgian language. They live in Rogers, Arkansas, where they work and volunteer in the ministry of helps for Faith Builders Family Church. They recently released a music CD as a missions fundraiser under the band name "Fat Chord Sunday." The Browns have two children: **Johanna Erickson, 19 ('15, '16, '17)** and Creighton, 17. TurntheWorldUpsideDown.org / FatChordSunday.com



2015

David ('13, '14, '15) and Christina ('13, '14) Sheets live in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, where David works in the IT department at Rhema Bible Church and Christina is a stay-at-home mom. They have two children: Ashley, 5 and William, 1.



Steven ('13, '14) and Elizabeth ('13, '14, '15) Karbowski announce the birth of their daughter Scarlett, born December 20, 2016. Steven and Elizabeth live in Timber Lake, South Dakota, where they serve as Children and Youth Pastors at New Hope Church for **Pastor Bryce & Colette Schafer ('05, '06)**.



HOMEGOINGS

YEARS ATTENDED	NAME	DATE OF PASSING
'75.....	Mary E. Williams*	January 28, 2017
'77.....	Glenn Jordan.....	September 29, 2016
'78.....	Christine Eaves.....	November 2016
'78, '79.....	John Jacobs*	October 14, 2016
'78, '79.....	Lawrence T. King III.....	November 25, 2016
'78, '92.....	Lynda Robinson*	April 23, 2017
'78, '79.....	Marvin Sampson.....	February 2016
'78.....	Sondra Berry Young.....	September 21, 2016
'79, '80.....	Daryl Latta.....	October 7, 2016
'80.....	C.H. Brian.....	January 2017
'80.....	Russell W. Campbell.....	June 8, 2010
'80.....	Ann Farrell.....	November 11, 2016
'80.....	Joanna Hackathorn.....	February 4, 2016
'80.....	Don Hunsaker.....	September 6, 2015
'80.....	Lynda Hyman.....	June 5, 2017
'80, '81.....	Michael Norman*	June 12, 2017
'80.....	Harold Rosensteel*	January 14, 2017
'81.....	Veda Nea Jaeger.....	February 14, 2017
'81.....	Gloria Martinez.....	April 7, 2017
'81, '82.....	Rigoberto Perez*	March 27, 2017
'81.....	Mary Rushton.....	February 18, 2017
'82.....	Stan Moore Sr.*.....	January 3, 2017
'82, '83.....	Robert L. Smith.....	March 20, 2016
'82, '83.....	Caroline Webb.....	February 24, 2017
'83, '84.....	Dorothy Miller.....	October 2016
'83, '84.....	Robert Valentine*	May 14, 2016
'84, '85.....	Carol Cerulli Cooper*	April 30, 2017
'84, '85.....	Joe Gay*.....	January 11, 2017
'85.....	David Rittgers.....	December 1, 2016
'85, '86.....	Steven Thurman.....	October 15, 2016
'86, '88.....	Garry Chee*.....	November 6, 2016
'86.....	Herman Depass.....	September 15, 2016
'87, '88.....	Michael Finn.....	May 4, 2017
'87, '88.....	Elmer (Chico) Howard*.....	May 27, 2016
'87, '88.....	Carl See*.....	March 17, 2017
'87, '90.....	Peggy Tannehill.....	October 20, 2016
'87, '88.....	Dorothy Wilson.....	October 2016
'89, '90.....	Lalon Blair.....	October 21, 2016
'89, '92.....	June Carmona.....	October 14, 2016
'89, '92.....	Harry J. Hayes.....	May 5, 2016
'89.....	Lara M. Webber.....	October 19, 2016
'90, '91.....	Anne I. Cooper.....	August 19, 2016
'90, '91.....	John "Gordy" Johnson*.....	April 2016
'92, '93.....	Darlene Buesinger.....	March 2, 2017
'93, '94.....	Dee Boyd*.....	June 23, 2017
'93, '94.....	Bill G. Fahler.....	January 16, 2017
'93, '94.....	Garner Parker.....	July 3, 2016
'94, '96.....	Frank Fuksa.....	July 26, 2016



RHEMA SCHOOL OF STUDENT MINISTRIES UPDATE

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HOMEGOINGS, CONTINUED

'94, '95.....	Rickmon Pridmore*.....	April 28, 2017
'94, '95.....	Linda Smith.....	December 28, 2016
'95, '96.....	Vicki Jesseph*.....	November 18, 2015
'96, '97.....	Mary Hoskins.....	May 5, 2017
'96, '97.....	Henry Lay.....	November 1, 2011
'96, '97.....	Willie Mitchell*.....	August 12, 2016
'96, '97.....	Jerardo Sanchez*.....	March 17, 2017
'98, '00, '01.....	Sharon Hopf*.....	January 30, 2017
'00, '01.....	Pearlie Smith.....	December 16, 2016
'01, '02.....	Allen Darisay.....	July 2017
'01.....	David Dixon.....	May 7, 2016
'02, '03.....	Renee Hart.....	January 2017
'03, '04.....	C. Harlon Jacobs.....	October 20, 2016
'04, '05.....	Jeremy Davis*.....	August 15, 2016
'04.....	Angel Faulk.....	February 8, 2017
'05, '06.....	Peggy Hill.....	February 1, 2017
'08, '09.....	Shawn Shockley.....	February 11, 2017
'10, '11.....	Terry Brown.....	October 15, 2016
'10, '11.....	Jorn Gulbrandsen.....	January 9, 2017
'11, '12.....	C.J. Vandergriff.....	February 11, 2017

*Indicates past or present member of RMAI (Rhema Ministerial Association International)

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