

STUDENT LESSON

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PSALM 78:1-8; 70-72

I want to turn your attention today to a Psalm that lays a Biblical foundation for the role of the church in reaching Gen Z. Take a moment to read through Psalm 78. While you are reading, ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to and heart to His Word.

In verses 1-8, we see that there is a charge for the leaders of Israel to teach the next generation the works of God, so that they do not become like their fathers. Their fathers were a stubborn generation that turned their back on God and His work. They are challenged to faithfully teach this next generation the, "... praiseworthy acts of the LORD, his might, and the wondrous works he has performed."

This same challenge is laid out for us as we work with the next generation. How do we reach and disciple Gen Z, to where they will not turn from God like many generations before them? It is a simple question that we make more complicated than we should. The simple, but not easy, answer to the above question is simply: your adult leaders.

We can find this in Psalm 78:70-72. God raised up a leader in David to lead his people in the way that is pleasing to God. God is still in the business of raising up leaders to lead and disciple the generations below them. Our current students (Gen Z) are crying out for healthy relationships with adults. Adults who will have the posture of verse 72 to shepherd and guide them.

Springtide Research Institute put on the largest survey of Gen Z to date and they discovered that, "Of young people ages 13-25 with no adult mentors, 24% say they never feel their life has meaning and purpose. But for those with even just one adult mentor, this number drops to 6%."

Take a moment and read that statistic again. Just one adult leader can transform a student's life. If you think that statistic is off, just think of who was/is that one person, small group leader, coach, teacher, or youth pastor that helped you the most?

Gen Z is not a generation that shows up for the spectacle and awe. They have grown up with a smart phone in their hand and have access to all of the best entertainment at the push of a button. But what they cannot get from their smart phone is genuine relationships. And this is where the church can step up, and should, fill that gap in their life.

This next generation is longing and searching for a safe place in which they can ask the hard questions of their faith and know that they will not be judged for asking them. The church is primed, and tooled, for just a season as this.

They seek authenticity, not perfection. They seek Truth, not the tickling of their ear. They seek acceptance, and there is a loving Savior who is ready to meet them.

SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

1. Who is that one person in your life that has made an impact on your life?

What did they do that stuck out the most to you?

2. How can you be that influential figure in the life of someone younger to you?

Ask God to give you the name of a person that he wants you to contact. Once you have the name, write them a note or send them a text to start a gospel conversation.

3. How can you create a culture of accountability when it comes to sharing the gospel with your lost friends and family?

4. What is one practical step you can take today to connect an adult volunteer and student in your ministry?