

Generation Connection:

Supporting this generation's advancement of the gospel



BOX OF BASICS

3 Connections for a generation connection

- I. To our teens' culture
- II. To our teens' cause
- III. To our local church

theme

Every generation can impact the campus with the gospel.

proposition

Elisha's passing on of a mantle illustrates a *generation connection*.

text: 1 Kings 19:19

introduction

(Use a video segment, campus missionary or SYATP promo segment.)

Today we will endeavor to make a generation connection—a connection to support the work that God is doing in and through this generation.

3 Connections to have a generation connection

I. A connection to our teenagers' culture

Often, the media reports the negative about this generation. We hear and see many accounts of violence, drugs, and pre-marital sex.

- A. To connect, we must understand this generation has had:
1. Its security of a family replaced with weekend visits.
 2. Its dreams and goals replaced with a live-for-the-moment mentality.
 3. The standards of right and wrong replaced with tolerance.
 4. Its innocence replaced with disappointment and shame.

With all the ills of America, who has been impacted the most? Our children. Our teenagers. How do we begin to understand this generation and make a connection to its culture and world?

- B. To connect, we must understand a past generation connection. We can learn from another generation connection in the life of Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 19:19). In verse 19, we see the powerful beginning to their relationship that will help us today.

1. The older went to the younger. We must go where the young people are and not expect them to come to us. We must initiate the connection!
2. A mantle was given. Elijah placed a mantle around Elisha, symbolizing commitment, value, and a mentoring relationship.

notes:

Generation Connection (continued)

What sign are we giving the teenagers of our church and of our city that we are committing to them, valuing them, and mentoring them? How many of you came to know Christ because people had been praying for you? How many of you can remember in your early Christian days some infectious believers and how you wanted to become like them?

These people were your Elijahs. They gave a mantle to you and made an impact in the way you lived your life. Now, we are Elijahs to this generation, which is full of Elishas who are waiting for us to place a “cloak” around them. If we want to understand the culture of this generation and make an impact in the lives of our youth, we must place a mantle of relationship around them.

Despite the dark clouds around this generation, God is raising up a generation that sees people’s needs and tries to do something about them.

II. A connection to our teenagers’ cause

God is doing a work in and through this generation. From church altars to camps, retreats and youth services, students are feeling the call of God to reach their friends for Christ and make a difference in their world. As we look at this generation today, from in-style colors and hairstyles to music trends, this generation might remind you of the generation of the late '60s and early '70s. But there is one significant difference. The past generation was saying, “Give me a cause, and I’ll go die for it.” This generation is saying, “Give me a cause that will give me hope.” Churches that seek to serve people by meeting the felt needs of their communities and world are the most attractive to this generation.

Teenagers want to have hope and to share it with others. Today, we can see students who are willing to take a stand for Christ and truth despite the opinions of their peers. Youth and youth workers have been networking and praying together across denominational lines for nearly two decades. For example:

- See You at the Pole: SYATP started with 25 students, and now more than 3 million participate.
- Bible clubs on school campuses: In 10 years, we have seen more than 14,000 Bible clubs started across America.
- Campus Missionaries: One of the fastest growing strategies to reach students for Christ in schools is challenging students to see themselves as missionaries to their schools. Thousands have been making this commitment in recent years.
- True Love Waits: TLW has grown from one youth group to more than one million teenagers. The latest statistics show that teen sexual activity rate, birth rate, etc., are at their lowest levels in decades, helped in part by students who have made the TLW commitment.

notes:

Generation Connection (continued)

How many of our generation took public stands for their faith in front of peers at school? Could this teenage generation be those at the forefront of God's work, reviving His Church and penetrating the lost world?

notes:

III. A connection to our local church

For years, many parachurch youth organizations focused their ministry toward the campuses of America. But now, church youth ministries in America are awakening to the great open door and the "field ripe for harvest" on the campuses of America. Students are realizing that God wants to minister through them, and they are seeing their schools as a key place where God is working.

As our students and teachers endeavor to reach their schools and peers for Christ, we want to establish a connection of support and prayer with them. (Distribute the Prayer Zone Partners brochure to the congregation. PZP brochures can be ordered by calling 1.800.641.4310 and requesting item 731-324. They can also be ordered from the online store at www.yausa.com. The brochures come in packages of 100.) Here is a simple way that we can support our students and teachers with prayer everyday. PZP is designed so adults can adopt one or more schools to consistently pray for the students, administrators and teachers on a regular basis. PZP ministry enables adults—the Elijahs—to begin to make a generation connection that lasts in our church.

(Instruct adults to fill out a brochure and inform them that PZP static stickers are available to serve as a reminder. To order, request item 731-325.)

conclusion

Think about this with me!

- There is a Christian on every campus in our nation.
- There is a Christian church within reach of every school.
- Almost every future leader passes through the doors of junior high and high school—every future judge, CEO, police officer, schoolteacher and U.S. president.
- Young people are far more reachable for Christ before leaving high school than after.
- Studies show that 75 percent of all decisions for Christ take place by age 17.

That is the vision. With a massive goal to reach 56,000 campuses, there is a sense of urgency to ensure that every student in every school in every community has a chance to hear the invitation to respond to Christ at least once.

(Transition into commissioning service.)