

In the Middle: Generations (Grad Sunday)

05.28.2023

Prayer {Grad Slide}

Can you let them know

One more time

How much you VALUE them?!?

In Titus chapter 2

We get a great picture

Of the responsibility of the older generation

For the younger

Titus 2:2b (NLT) - Exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have sound faith and be filled with love and patience.

Exercise self-control

This is especially important

For first time parents of graduates

If you've graduated several already

This may be no big deal

But for you rookies

Pay attention

When they prepare to leave for college or military or what-have-you

Do not chain yourself to their car

Remember the Bible says to

Exercise control

Do not ask to move into the dorm with them

Exercise control

Do not print up a T-shirt

With your face on it

Exercise control

These tips

Will help you with point #2

Be worthy of respect

But before we leave

Exercise control

Let me say a bit more

The next several months

Are going to be filled with lots of tasks

Lots of emotions

Lots of margin-less living

If that's true

And it likely is

Be prepared for the difficulties

That those things bring

Psychologists tell us to

HALT if we're hungry, angry, lonely, or tired

You will be hungry, angry, lonely, or tired

A lot

Over the next couple months

So, it's important

That you "Keep your head in all situations." – 2 Timothy 4:5a (NIV)

Be self-controlled

Be worthy of respect

I think its interesting

And significant

How the Bible approaches influence

It never calls for heavy-handed leadership

The Bible tells children to honor father & mother

It never tells father & mother to demand honor

The Bible calls spouses to give each other love, respect, even submission

But it never tells us to demand those things from each other

The Bible tells us to pray for, and be subject, government authority

But it never tells politicians to demand obedience

And here

It tells us to be *worthy* of respect

The onus is always on us

I want to show you

A quote I found

See if you can guess

Where it came from

“The children now love luxury; they have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise. Children are now tyrants, not the servants of their households. They no longer rise when elders enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter before company, gobble up dainties at the table, cross their legs, and tyrannize their teachers.”

Any guesses?

– Socrates (470 – 399BC)

There has always been

A generational battle

When it comes to respect

The older generation

Thinks the younger is disrespectful

The younger generation

Thinks the older is out of touch

But Scripture cuts past all of that

Paul says, "you... be worthy"

If you have a graduate

Or a near graduate

You have been experiencing

And will continue to experience

The natural, healthy pulling away

Towards independence

You want that

We all know examples

Of when that doesn't happen

You want that

But independence and disrespect
Can often feel pretty similar to parents
So be sure you're being
Worthy of respect

Live wisely.

This is another
Common theme in Scripture
That will serve you very well
In the coming days

Ephesians 5:15-17 (NIV) - Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore, do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

Parents of this year's graduates
You are painfully aware
Of a reality that faces every parent
Behind you
From the other parents of teens
To the parents of elementary students
To the parents of preschoolers and babies

You will only be given

So many opportunities

So, make the most of them

My youngest daughters

Just finished their junior years of high school

And I remember when Lauren & Emily

Got to this point

I remember thinking

All of their lead blockers

Are out of the way

Every "last event" for the seniors

Was the last time that event

Wouldn't be the

"last event"

For them

So, graduation this week

Was the last of the last things

Now the runway has been cleared for them

I'm painfully aware

That I need to make the most

Of every opportunity

Because a year from now

My girls will be preparing to go

To stupid college

The end of that verse

Calls us to know what the Lord's will is

It even alludes to the idea

That to not know what the Lord's will is

Is foolish

It's in moments like this

That that question

Becomes even more focused

Graduates

How many of you are sick of the question

"So, what are you doing next year?"

Transitions force us to answer the question

What's the Lord's will?

Because we have options

Graduates are asking

What career do I want to pursue

Parents asking

What does empty nesting look like

Grandparents are saying

Don't worry... They'll be back...

To live wisely

We have to answer

The fundamental questions

Of life

I saw this list recently

And wanted to share it with you:

Teens:

Who am I, and who am I becoming?

(Identity)

Twenties:

What will I do with my life?

(Purpose)

Thirties:

How do I manage my responsibilities?

(Priority)

Forties:

How do I feel about the person I've become?

(Alignment)

Fifties:

Have I reached my ceiling?

(Significance)

Sixties:

Where is my place?

(Mission)

Seventies:

How do I handle the sense of loss?

(Grieving)

Eighties:

Does anybody remember who I was?

(Obscurity)

Nineties:

How will I face the end?

(Legacy)

Life is full of questions

We are constantly thinking we've arrived somewhere

Or we're finished

At the end

The reality

Whether you're 13 or 83

You're in the middle

So, you need to live wisely

In the middle

Make the most of every opportunity

In the middle

Seek to understand what the Lord's will is

In the middle

Titus 2:2b (NLT) - Exercise self-control... be worthy of respect, and to live wisely.

The passage ends by calling them to:

Have sound faith and be filled with love and patience.

Ultimately

The best parenting advice I can give you

Is to have sound faith

Personally

And pray to God

To fill you with love & patience

Parenting is not for the faint of heart

News flash

Parenting is not for the faint of heart

There have been times

Over the last 24 years

With each of my girls

That I have beamed with pride

At what a great parenting job I've done

And there have been times

Over the last 24 years

With each of my girls

Where I felt in over my head

And ready to throw in the towel

Parenting is quite possibly the best example

Of "In the middle"

That I know of

So, if you've been given the responsibility

To shepherd someone from the next generation

Whether they're a baby or teenager

Whether they're biological or adopted or you've just acted like they were

There're few things you can do

That are more positive for them

Then to have a sound faith

Personally

I regularly hear people complain

About their parents making them do church things

And they say their parents did that

And they're not going to

I get that

I do

But I have two objections:

First – do you do that with the dentist or homework

I didn't want to do either of those as a child

But that was never up to me

If you impose on hygiene or homework

Then don't be a hypocrite

Did you catch the 3 h's

That's preaching gold right there

If you impose on hygiene or homework

Then don't be a hypocrite

Second – I have seen people walk away from faith

Because their parents demanded that they do things

That they didn't do themselves

So, you have to go to church

But I'm not going

You have to go to VBS

And I'll cuss up a storm while I'm dropping you off

But I have never met a person

Whose parents were sold out to Jesus

AND EXPECTED church participation

Whose kids used the demands as a reason to walk away from faith

So, purpose yourself

To have a sound faith

And to try to be filled with love and patience

For your kids

What job matters more than this?

Imagine a company

With 100 employees

And those 100 employees make widgets

Or provide insurance

Or maintain a network or something

And that's all great

But those 100 employees

May also raise about 250 human beings

And that averages to about 600 grandkids

With their fingerprints on their life and choices

1500 great grandkids

And by the time you have over 100,000 lives influenced

100,000 lives

That's about 2 Spring Hills

And that's assuming you never impact a single kid

Whose not your child

As great as other career options are

No widget is better than that

Exercise self-control, to be worthy of respect, and to live wisely. They must have sound faith and be filled with love and patience.

And by doing that

You can make the most of every opportunity