

"Raising Up The Next Generation "

Discussion Guide: Inspired By Pastor Willie Joe Lightfoot Sr.

Summary

This sermon focuses on the biblical mandate to pass faith and wisdom to the next generation, emphasizing that every believer has a responsibility to mentor and invest in young people. Pastor Lightfoot uses Psalm 78:4 as the foundation, explaining that we must not hide God's works from children but actively show them His praises, strength, and wonderful works. The message challenges both older and younger generations - calling adults to be present, purposeful, and prayerful mentors while urging young people to remain faithful, honor those who came before them, and stay connected to the church. The sermon was delivered on Youth Sunday and included powerful presentations from young people in the MIB (Mentors Inspiring Boys and Girls) program, demonstrating the very principle being taught.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You with grateful hearts, thanking You for bringing us together in this sacred space. Lord, we ask that You open our hearts and minds to receive what You want to teach us today about raising up the next generation. Help us to be receptive to Your Word and willing to examine our own roles in mentoring and investing in those who come after us. Holy Spirit, guide our discussion and help us to see clearly how we can better serve You by serving the young people You have placed in our lives. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one piece of advice or wisdom that an older person shared with you when you were younger that still impacts your life today?

Key Verses

- Psalm 78:4
- Deuteronomy 6:6-7
- 2 Timothy 2:2
- Proverbs 22:6
- Ecclesiastes 11:9
- Luke 16:10

Questions

- What does it mean to 'not hide' God's works from the next generation, and how can we practically apply this in our daily lives?
- The sermon mentioned that young people need our 'presence, purpose, and prayer.' Which of these three do you think is most challenging for adults to provide, and why?
- How can the church create a safe space for young people to express themselves authentically while still providing godly guidance and correction?
- What are some ways that older generations might be 'dropping the ball' when it comes to mentoring young people today?
- The pastor emphasized that faithfulness in small things determines our platform later. Can you share an example of how this principle has played out in your life or someone you know?
- How can we balance honoring traditional values while giving young people permission to serve and lead in ways that might look different from previous generations?
- What role should the church play in addressing the social justice concerns that many young people are passionate about today?
- How can we help young people discover their purpose in God rather than just correcting their behavior?

Life Application

This week, identify one young person in your life (whether in your family, church, or community) and intentionally invest time in them. This could be through a meaningful conversation, offering encouragement, sharing your testimony, or simply being present and available. Commit to praying for this young person daily and look for opportunities to help them discover their gifts and calling in God.

Key Takeaways

- God's design has always been generational transfer - faith was never meant to stop with us but to be passed like a baton to the next generation
- Young people need three things from us: our presence (showing up and being available), our purpose (helping them discover who they are in God), and our prayer (covering them in intercession)
- We must give young people permission to serve and lead, developing them by releasing them rather than waiting until we think they're 'ready'

- Faithfulness in small things determines our platform later - both young and old must be willing to serve faithfully in whatever capacity God calls them
- The church must be a safe place where young people feel welcomed, loved, and valued for who they are while being shaped into who God wants them to become

Ending Prayer

Lord Jesus, we thank You for this time of fellowship and learning together. We pray that You would help each of us to be faithful in our calling to raise up the next generation. Give us wisdom to know how to mentor and invest in the young people You place in our lives. Help us to be examples of Your love, grace, and truth. We pray for the young people in our families, our church, and our community - that they would know their worth and calling in You. May we be bridge-builders between generations, passing on not just knowledge but a living faith that transforms lives. Use us, Lord, to prepare the next generation for Your glory. In Jesus' precious name we pray, Amen.