

NEXT-GEN MINISTRY

Part 5 of The Savior King. Psalm 78:1-8.

Peter Foxwell. The Cornerstone Church. October 11, 2026.

Dismiss the Middle School

STUDY GUIDE

As you came in this morning, you should have received a bulletin. Inside, you'll find a simple study guide you can use in a few different ways: to follow along with today's teaching, to reflect on during your personal devotions this week, or to spark conversation in your small group.

More resources are available online. The link is in your study guide.

Let's get started on today's teaching ...

INTRODUCTION

During a qualifying heat of the women's 4x100-meter relay at the 2016 Rio Summer Olympics, U.S. track star Allyson Felix was preparing to pass the baton to the English Gardner when a Brazilian athlete bumped into her. Felix stumbled and dropped the baton, thus eliminating the USA from the final.

The US team appealed, and the video playback revealed what happened. The team was reinstated for the final, which they won.

Running fast is only one component of a relay. Passing the baton is just as important.

And the same is true in the Christian faith. Yes, we must each run the race God has set before us, but we must also hand the faith on to the next runner.

Today, we're talking about passing the faith on to the next generation. I can't think of a more urgent call than to raise a new generation that knows and follows Jesus Christ as their God and Savior.

Faith isn't inherited by accident; we must pass it on intentionally.

Bruce Wilkinson¹ talked about passing on the faith using a three-chair illustration.

- Chair 1: Grandpa **lives** the faith; he's spiritually alive and **committed** to Jesus.
- Chair 2: His son **borrow**s the faith. His commitment to Jesus is **compromised**; he kinda knows the basics, but he lives like the world.

¹ "This illustration is adapted from Bruce Wilkinson's 'Three Chairs' teaching in Experiencing Spiritual Breakthroughs, 1999, Lifeway."

- Chair 3: The grandson **leaves** the faith. He does not personally trust in Jesus, does not know the basics of the faith, and is either **complacent** about or hostile to Christianity.

I've seen this cycle of commitment, compromise, and complacency over and over again, and it breaks my heart.

The good news is: we can break the cycle if we are intentional about it. We can pass on a living faith by modeling it and teaching it to the next generation.

And this is an urgent priority for everyone in the Cornerstone family. Whether we're parents or not. We should want the next generation to have faith.

We can't force someone to believe like us, but we can set the table for them. We can show them the beauty and truth of the Christian faith and offer it to them.

PSALM 78 AND NEXT-GEN MINISTRY

Psalm 78 tells us how. Please stand for the reading of God's Word.

It was written by a teacher who led worship in the Temple. He was passing on godly wisdom to the congregation. It sounds a lot like a short sermon.

My people, hear my instruction;

listen to the words from my mouth.

2 I will declare wise sayings;

I will speak mysteries from the past — (the meaning of past events)

3 things we have heard and known

and that our ancestors have passed down to us.

4 We will not hide them from their children,

but will tell a future generation

the praiseworthy acts of the LORD,

his might, and the wondrous works

he has performed.

5 He established a testimony in Jacob (Israel)

and set up a law in Israel,

which he commanded our ancestors

to teach to their children. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9; 8; 32)

6 so that a future generation —

children yet to be born — might know.

They were to rise and tell their children

7 so that they might put their confidence in God

and not forget God's works,

but keep his commands.

8 Then they would not be like their ancestors,

a stubborn and rebellious generation,

a generation whose heart was not loyal

and whose spirit was not faithful to God.

HOW TO PASS THE FAITH ON TO THE NEXT GENERATION

Ok. Let's talk about passing the faith along to the next generation. What do we, as a church family, need to do?

1. RECEIVE THE FAITH - verses 1-3

My people, hear my instruction ...

If we don't receive the faith, we can't pass it on.

Receiving the faith involves two things:

- **First, we must know the content of the faith - “the instruction.”** Asaph reminded the congregation that their faith rested on what God had said and done in Israel's past, ***“mysteries (the theological interpretation of events), and things we have heard and known.”***

Today, our Christian faith rests on Jesus Christ: who he is, what he did and said, and what he is doing for us now. That's the content that we must know and believe.

We can learn the content of our faith here on Sundays, in our small groups, or through personal Bible study. I'm always happy to help.

- **Secondly, we must embrace the faith BY faith.** We need a genuine, living trust in and commitment to Jesus Christ. Then the Holy Spirit will be in us, and we will be spiritually alive. Otherwise, we're just passing on a powerless philosophy or ritual.

We cannot pass on a living faith unless we embrace our own living faith. That's a decision we should make. Jesus always urged people to turn to him in faith (for example, John 6:35-37; 7:37-39).

2. RELAY THE FAITH - VERSES 4-5

We will not hide them from their children, but will tell a future generation...

Asaph told his congregation to pass the baton on to a “**future generation.**” He urged them to speak about God’s “**acts, his might, and his works.**”

He did not say to pass on dry-as-dust **content**. He wanted them to share the faith with enthusiasm; to talk about God’s **praiseworthy acts** and his **wondrous works**.

If we’re not excited by the Christian faith, why would our kids be? We want to inspire awe and wonder that leads to a heartfelt **COMMITMENT** to Jesus Christ as God and Savior.

How will we relay the faith and pass the baton?

- This begins in the **home**. Parental influence is paramount. **Teach** the Bible and **testify** to your experience with Jesus; what it feels like to be loved by God, to be forgiven and free, or to receive strength in hard times.
- The **church** can reinforce what parents do. Our youth and children’s ministries are not just optional programs. They are absolute necessities.
- This can also happen in the **community**. Consider working with kids, coaching a team, leading a Scout group. Make connections with kids and families. Share your faith.
- **Prayer** is vital. Pray for our children and grandchildren to believe - to embrace the Christian faith, to have a living faith, and to be filled with awe and wonder.

3. RESPOND TO THE FAITH - verses 6-8

So that ... so that ... then ...

If we embrace the truth and pass it on, we will see the next generation respond.

Verses 6-8 describe three ways the next generation will respond:

- Verse 6: ***SO THAT a future generation might know***. An unbroken chain of faithful believers, generation to generation, will pass the faith on.
- Verse 7: ***SO THAT they might put their confidence in God***. We speak so they'll believe, turn from themselves and their sins, and trust in Jesus as their God and Savior.
- Verse 8: **THEN, they would not be ... a rebellious generation**. They embrace Jesus' teachings and live a godly lifestyle.

We cannot believe for the next generation, but we can make sure they hear the truth and see it lived out in us.

Our goal is not simply that they know what we believe, but that they put their own faith in God—that they trust in Jesus, follow his ways, and pass the faith on to those who come after them.

We tell the story, we live the faith, and we trust our gracious, saving God to work in their hearts.

WILL YOU COMMIT TO NEXT-GEN MINISTRY?

Church family, I love you. I care about your souls. That is why I preach the Word, and that is why I pastor with all my heart.

But I want you to know what weighs on my heart: the children and teenagers God has entrusted to us.

Will they know the Lord? Will they love and worship him? Will they study his Word? Will they follow Jesus with their whole hearts?

We have 18 years to invest in their spiritual well-being. And those years fly by. One day you are buckling them into a car seat. Before you know it, they are asking for the car keys.

We cannot save them. Only Jesus can do that. But we can faithfully pass on the Christian faith to them. We can show what it looks like to trust Jesus, to worship him, to love his church, and to serve with joy.

This is so vital. Think about it:

Where will the next-gen Christians, Christ-centered families, Christ-centered influencers, and Christ-centered ministers and missionaries come from?

Where will they learn the content of the Christian faith?

Where will they discover a faith of their own?

Some of them may be sitting in the Kids Zone this morning. Some may come to youth group this evening. God has given us the next generation; how will we pass the baton to them?

My urgent plea is this: please, please, please invest.

Invest with your prayers. Invest your time. Invest your energy, your love, and your money in the discipleship of our children and teenagers.

I'm asking you to respond in three specific ways.

1. **Pray:** "Lord, please raise up a new generation of faithful Christians." Pray for them by name. Pray for their parents. Pray for their teachers and leaders.
2. **Serve:** Volunteer in Kids Zone or our youth group. We need faithful adults who will show up and love consistently.
3. **Give:** Give to our special early Christmas Offering. At Christmas, we celebrate that the Father gave His Son for us. What better time to give so that the next generation can hear about our Savior.

Let me tell you about our early Christmas offering:

Keynote presentation.

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Use any or all of the following questions to guide your group's conversation about Sunday's sermon.

Observation

In Psalm 78:1–8, what words or phrases describe what one generation is supposed to pass on to the next?

Verses 6–8 describe several hoped-for results using phrases such as “so that” and “then.” What are the results, and how do they build on one another?

Interpretation

Verse 4 says, “We will not hide them from our children.” What does “hide” mean in this context? How might modern believers hide their faith from their children?

Read Deuteronomy 4:9-10; 6:4-9; 32:46; Jude 1:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 2 Timothy 2:2. How do these passages shed light on Psalm 78's concern for passing on the faith to the next generation?

Application

The sermon says, “We cannot believe for the next generation, but we can make sure they hear the truth and see it lived out in us.” What encouragement would you give a parent/grandparent grieving over a prodigal child?

What might a younger person learn about trusting God simply by watching you, and what is one example you would like to set more intentionally?

How are you investing your life, love, or money in next-gen ministry? Is there something more you would like to do? How could your small group support you in stepping up?