

How to Build a Multi-Generational Church — September 17 & 18, 2016
Follow-up Bible Studies

Written by Maggie Baxter

Day One: Deuteronomy 11:16-21

- Why must God's people be careful (16)? What is the consequence of their idolatry (17)? Maybe we don't literally bow down to other Gods, but idolatry *is* just as prevalent today in forms such as money, sex, power, and entertainment. When you turn away from the Lord, what do you turn toward? Repent and ask God to transform your heart so it's fixed on Jesus.
- Describe all the different ways God wants his people to remember his words (18-20). What do you think all of these images and symbols mean on a spiritual level? Specifically, how are God's people to share his message with their children (19)? Adults help point kids toward Jesus. This week, what is one specific way you can partner with God to do this? Pray for grace to walk this out.
- What benefits do God's people reap when they fix his words in their hearts like this (21)? Consider the multi-generational impact this has. Give thanks to God for any way the faithfulness of someone from a different generation has been a blessing to you.

Day Two: 1 Samuel 3

- Set the scene of this text (1-3). Explain the boy Samuel's misunderstanding (4-8). How did Eli help clear up the matter (9)? What happened next (10)? Despite his flaws, as evidenced in verse 13, Eli made himself available to help Samuel discern the voice of the Lord. If you feel unqualified to help a younger person in this way, talk to God about it. What do you sense him responding? Despite your feelings of inadequacy, how does God want to use you to impart wisdom to the younger generation?
- What did the Lord tell Samuel (11-14)? Describe the next morning (15). Summarize Samuel's conversation with Eli (16-18). As he grew up, how did Samuel's future unfold (19-21)? Re-read verse 1 alongside verses 19-21. When the "word of the Lord was rare," God used a very young man to speak to his people. How does this make you feel, and what does it mean for the church today?

Day Three: Psalm 127

- When do builders labor in vain (1)? When do guards stand watch in vain (1)? Why is losing sleep to toil for food done in vain (2)? Think about these admonitions in the context of God's ownership of the church. If you fail to acknowledge that the church is the Lord's, how might this get in the way of welcoming different people, including those from different generations? What adjustments in heart and practice do you sense the Holy Spirit asking you to make?
- How does Solomon describe children (3)? What is it like to have kids (4-5)? What protection does God offer to children (5)? How do these verses about kids make you feel? Much of society ignores and disdains children. What higher road does God call the church to take? What role you can play in cherishing kids? How do you think this may draw people toward the church?

Day Four: Proverbs 4

- How does this collection of proverbs begin (1)? How does the father express empathy toward the son (2-4)? Has anyone ever been a spiritual parent to you like this? How did it benefit you? Thank God for this gift. Think about paying it forward: whom does the Lord now want you to "instruct in the way of wisdom"? Invite this younger person into this journey. How do you think each of you will benefit from the experience?

- Why does the father urge his son to pursue wisdom (5-9)? What is the result of heeding these words (10, 13, 20-22)? What different types of imagery does the author use to contrast valuable wisdom with wickedness (11-12, 14-19, 22-27)? Ask God to show you areas in your own life where he wants you to renew your commitment to wisdom and maturity. Identify at least one practical way to respond and put it into action this week.

Day Five: 1 Timothy 4:11-16

- What does Paul encourage Timothy to do as a pastor (11, 13)? What reassurance does he offer regarding his youth (12)? Think about all the temptations we have to look down on someone: too young, too old, too rich, too poor, etc. What attributes are you most likely to look down upon? Repent and ask God to deepen your respect for individuals and to give you a sincere longing for a church composed of all different types of people.
- What example does Paul ask Timothy to set (12)? Describe the powerful way he received spiritual gifts (14). Pray that you too could supernaturally impart gifts, especially to young people. This week, pray for at least one person in this way.
- Overall, how does Paul want Timothy to conduct his ministry (15-16)? Why (15-16)? Notice that he emphasizes both life *and* doctrine. Do you think they are equally important? Why or why not? Imagine writing your own letter to a younger person who's just beginning to serve the Lord in some specific way. What would you emphasize? How would you encourage the person?