

THE NEXT GENERATION
August 20, 2017 Morning Service
Psalm 71:17-18

Psalm 71. We'll be looking there. Psalm 71. The Next Generation. I opened up my morning paper today and found some information. First of all, I got bad news. They were talking about we are right in the height of hurricane season so you ought to be prepared. I got here and our disaster relief people were out there and had these magazines. They've got a bunch of them, one for every family. If you want one, it'll help you be prepared.

Then I opened up and I saw on the business front fold, "Millennials: Time to Launch a Startup." I thought, hey, our pastor's preaching about that this morning. So I began to read what Ms. Rhonda Abrams had to say. She began to write about the millennial generation and about their being involved in business, being the first fully digital generation. Growing up alongside the Internet. We have some children that are young today that have never known time without a cell phone. God help us. They use social media like crazy. They're the ones most likely to be able to succeed at using the Internet to find customers.

There was a grandmother. I've been down to the preschool building this morning. You know, now we have the computers and you check in. The kids go up and put their name in and they get a sticker. There was a grandmother there checking in. She couldn't get it to work. So I saw one of our young mothers. I said, "Would you just walk over?" She said, "I will, pastor." In about that long she had it punched in and fixed it for her. Different generations. It's who we are and what we're accustomed to. You know, Elvis died 40 years ago this week. I shared that with one of our deacons this morning. He said, "Who?" He's 33 years old. He said, "I've heard of him." I said, "Lord, you haven't even lived, son. I'm telling you right now."

The next generation. David spoke to it in Psalm 71, verses 17 and 18. Hear the word of the Lord. David is old and he's praying a prayer and this is his prayer.

*O God, You have taught me from my youth,
And I still declare Your wondrous deeds.
And even when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, [God don't leave me now. I'm getting old and gray and bald but don't forsake me]
Until [Lord, stay with me until what? Until] I declare Your strength to this generation,
Your power to all who are to come.¹*

There's the millennial generation around us. They're growing into young adulthood. Many of them single and then a great majority of them that are married, young adults that are down here in our preschool this morning, babies everywhere. It's

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that millennial crowd and they are huge numbers in our culture. Some are in this service today but mostly not. We'll flip and in the second service there'll be a great number of those millennials that'll be in the worship time at 11:00. But not only have we got that generation, we've got college students that are all around. The University of West Florida is growing, growing, growing, growing. College students all around us. Middle school and high school students, we see them. Last Sunday this section here was just packed with those high schoolers, middle schoolers wearing those shirts. They'll be in here in this second service. Then we've got preschool and children, those little ones.

I stood down at this end of the building this morning. Kids were running up to me and grabbing my pant leg and giving me a high-five. "Good morning, pastor. Good morning, pasture, preacher." They come and when they get into middle school and high school they don't come talk to me so much anymore but those little ones come. It's the next generation that are coming. David said, "Lord, since I was just little you taught me and don't leave me now even when I'm old. O God, don't leave me until I can tell the coming generation, the one that's alive now and the one to come after that. Until the present generation and those – God don't leave me. Don't let me die and, God, don't take your hand off of me, an anointing and unction and spirit fullness until I can teach them and declare to them strength, power, and wondrous deeds."

Every Timothy needs a Paul and every Paul needs a Barnabas and every young person and young adult needs an older believer to help bring them along in the ways of God in our culture. Now this generation that's coming behind us, they're facing some things that my generation didn't face. They are facing a godlessness. Oh I prayed the last seven days for our students that are off to the university campuses. They will be challenged about their faith like they've never been challenged before, both in the classroom and outside.

In fact, I read just this week about a young student that was in a class where an atheistic professor stood up and just lambasted faith. After getting done, he said, "Is there anybody in this room that now believes in God?" One little girl, Sarah said, "I do." He had her stand up and said, "Look outside. Do you see a tree?" She said, "Yes." He said, "That's real." He said, "Do you see grass?" "Yes." "Well that's real." He said, "Look up. Can you see the sky?" She said, "I can." "That's real." He said, "Can you see God?" She said, "No." He said, "What more must I say?" A little boy stood up and said, "I have some questions I want to ask Sarah. Sarah, outside, do you see that tree?" She said, "Yes." He said, "Do you see that grass?" She said, "Yes." He said, "Look up. Can you see the sky?" She said, "Yes." He said, "Look at our teacher. Can you see his brain?"

Some of these kids are standing in some tough situations, alright? But God's raising up a generation. I'm telling you, friend, when they begin to love God they take a stand and speak and they become salt and light and God's church to their generation in their culture but it is our job of those of us that happen to be like David and a little older

to help bring them along. What is it the next generation needs? David teaches us there are three things we need to share with this coming generation.

Number one. They need a model. They need a role model. The coming generation, the next generation needs a model. David said, "Lord, don't leave me until I declare." Let me tell you, friend, you will never bring along the next generation until you are the real deal. Some of you need to get over self, die to self, get filled with the Spirit of God until He makes you what scripture says you are and you believe what the Bible says that you are and you get dead to yourself, take up your cross, and walk in spirit fullness in order to exemplify the role model that God would have you be.

It's what David did. David exemplified that model when he went against the enemy called Goliath. We know that story when he picked up those stones and put in his pouch and killed Goliath. We know that David lived it when he overcame the jealousy of Saul. You remember. When God raised David up he came marching in the town and the lady said, "Oh, Saul's killed his thousands but David's slain tens of thousands." And the green-eyed monster of jealousy got on Saul. David was playing his instrument at dinner one night and Saul, the Bible says, picked up a spear and threw it across the room and it lodged in the wall.

I'm just a country preacher. I married a lady that's a home economics major and thank God for that. I've been to big time dinners with my wife and I didn't even know which utensil to pick up. She said, "Just work from the outside in and you'll usually be alright." But even I know that it's bad etiquette to pick up a spear and throw it at a dinner guest, alright?

What caused Saul to do that? Jealousy. Dear friend, if you live for God there will be those around you that will rise up with that green jealous spirit within them and they will try to bring you down. I'm talking about some people that you go to church with. When that jealousy gets on them you've got to learn to stand and be the real deal and not run off.

I talked with a sweet lady this week about inviting her to church. She said, "Pastor, we are walking, our family is walking in the quicksand of church disappointment." I said, "What do you mean?" She said, "We've been in churches and we've gotten hurt and it's very hard." Let me tell you, friend, you've got to be an overcomer. Don't let people run and rule your life. You let Jesus run your life. You let Him raise you up. David knew about that. God had taught him with Goliath. He taught him with Saul. He taught him. David had learned not only to overcome the enemy and overcome jealousy, David had learned to overcome rebellion from his own family. You know the story.

Absalom has been banished. He was banished from the kingdom and Joab said to David, "Why don't you let the boy come back?" He said, "Okay he can but he can't come up to the palace." You know the story. Absalom stood out at the city gate and as people go in to see the king they'd come out. He'd watch them and they'd have a little

frown on their face and old Absalom would say, "Hey, you know, if I were the king it wouldn't be like that." Some people come marching in and they go up to see David and Absalom would say, "Hey, if you don't get what you want, just remember. If Absalom was on the throne things would be different."

The Bible says that Absalom stole the heart of Israel from his father, David. Rebellion. Rebellion. To the point David had to leave and Absalom came after him riding on the king's mule, the Bible says, and you know if you've read your Bible that Absalom ran under that oak tree in Mamre and most of us think he got his hair caught but the Hebrew construct is not that his hair is what got him hanging in the tree. Literally the branches got him around the neck when he ran into the fork of a tree and then his hair got tangled and he was dangling with his feet. A mule ran out from under him and two guys came to General Joab and said, "Our enemy's hanging in the tree. What should we do?" Joab said, "Kill him." They said, "No, we will never touch the Son of God's anointed." The Bible says that Joab took three spears and went to the oaks of Mamre and ran him through. When David heard it he wept.

Now you listen to me. Don't you ever let your heart get so hard when people come against you in rebellion that you cannot weep when they are broken. You're the person with the – you're not the real deal if you rejoice over their hurt. Can I get an Amen in this place? You know it's the truth. What this generation needs to see is the real deal. A role model when our enemies come against us, when jealousy rises up against us, when our own family kin and church folk rebel, we must stay true, taking up our cross. Sometimes the rebellion of your own family will be the cross God makes you bear to the place it breaks you that you die to self so you can live to Christ. You've got to be dead to self so you can be alive to Jesus. Pick up your cross and follow Him.

I'm telling you, when this generation sees that in an older generation they'll say they've got something I've got to have. What's this generation need? David said they need a role model. God, don't give up on me until I can declare to this generation. Number one, they need a role model. Number two, this generation, they don't just need a model, they need a mentor. They need a mentor. David said, "Lord, let me declare. Until I declare Your strength, until I declare Your power, Lord, let me be a teacher. Let me be a mentor."

The Bible says so much about generations. One generation. Listen just to three verses out of the book of Psalms. Psalm 33:11 where the Bible says: *The counsel of the Lord stands forever, The plans of His heart from generation to generation.* Now a lot of things change about generations. Let me tell you, the truth of God does not change from generation to generation to generation.

I've shared with you before. I have some millennial blue jeans. They have holes in them. I've never understood that. I've watched some young folks walking in this morning with ripped jeans. So I got me a pair and I wore them up to my momma's house. She kind of looked at me funny. I went to bed and I got up the next morning

and they'd been patched. That's that generation. Amen. Styles change from generation to generation.

Let me tell you, the truth of God does not change from generation to generation to generation. What was right and wrong when my great granddaddy was alive is right and wrong when my grandchildren rise up. The truth of God is the same from generation to generation. The jeans may look different but let me tell you, the truth of God is the same.

Psalm 78:6, 7, and 8, look at this:

*That the generation to come might know, even the children yet to be born,
That they may arise and tell them to their children,
That they should put their confidence in God
And not forget the works of God,
But keep His commandments,
And not be like their fathers,
A stubborn and rebellious generation,
A generation that did not prepare its heart
And whose spirit was not faithful to God.*

He's saying that one generation needs to teach another even when their fathers become stubborn and they leave the truth. That's where we are in our generation. We've got a generation that's gotten hard-hearted and stubborn and said, "We'll just forget God." That doesn't mean that God quit. It means those of us in the minority report need to rise up and be a mentor of teaching the coming generation. One more. Psalm 145:4 where the word of God says: *One generation shall praise Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts.*

One generation to the next generation, the next generation shall declare the mighty acts of God. The kids that meet in the 678 building, you should be teaching the children and the young people should be taught by the college kids and the millennials ought to be teaching those coming along and those of us of the baby boomer generation ought to be teaching the millennials and those of you that are as old as my momma and daddy ought to be teaching my generation.

I'm telling you, we had a deacon's meeting last Thursday night. It was one of the best meetings we've ever had in the history of having deacons here. I'm just telling you, it was just the spirit of the whole meeting. There was young and old and in between just coming together around the things and the ministry and the work of God. I was so thrilled of what I saw. What we've got to do is mentor. Listen. Every man especially. Anybody's invited but every man ought to be in this service tonight at 5:30.

Shaun Pillay that we brought in who preached for us a couple of times in July, Brother Shaun is going to be teaching tonight about men and then we've going to have a special kind of prayer time at the end of the service tonight. I'm telling you, you ought

to be in church tonight. You ought to come and hear what our newest staff member is going to share about men mentoring men mentoring men. We're going to teach about that and talk about that and then we're going to practice that as one mentors another mentors another mentors another.

Yesterday I spoke to the Pensacola High School football squad and one of the men that introduced me and got me in to do that public high school event yesterday and our men that Shaun's had go and they cooked hamburgers and hot dogs. On that squad there's one boy. He looks to be about 6'5" or 6" to me. He's a great big guy. He's committed to Central Florida as a defensive end. We had hamburgers and hot dogs. When he went through the line, I've never seen so much meat on one plate in all of my life. It was just about to bend in, you know. It takes a lot of fuel for that big old body.

The man that introduced me said, "This is my pastor and I'm only standing here because 20 years ago he mentored me and now I'm mentoring you." I didn't even realize the truth of all of that. I was so encouraged and knew what I was going to preach on and I thought, thank you, Lord Jesus, that I taught one and now he's teaching others. One day they'll teach some more and one day I'll go to heaven and if we do our job, generation after generation after generation, we will mentor and mentor and mentor. One on one, one on three, one on five. It's the way we do it. It's the way David did it.

The next generation. They need a model. They need a mentor. Thirdly, don't miss this. They need a message. What is the message that the next generation needs? It's the same as always and David says, "Until I declare your strength to this generation and your power to all who are to come." Strength and power. Say those two words with me. Here we go. Strength. Power. One more time. Strength. Power. You are to show and teach. This is the message. The strength of God and the power of God. Those are two different Hebrew construct words that you find in this text.

First of all is strength. It is the word strength in the Hebrew tongue which means arms or shoulder or force. It means onward. This is the outward display of God. This is Philippians 4:13. I can do all things through Christ who what? Strengthens me. That's the strength. We need to teach the coming generation about the strength of Almighty God. There's nothing God can't do. You need to show them the strength of God. This outward manifestation, that when something need be done we trust God and He gives us strength and just the force to put your shoulder to the wheel and get it done.

People say to me from time to time, "You know, pastor, I've just gone about as far as I can go." You need a win from elsewhere. You need for God to carry you on. Sometimes we don't have strength because we've not learned Sabbath rest. Yeah. God's taught us some principles. When you walk in the power of the Spirit of the Sabbath rest and the strength of the daily walk with God He then gives you strength for the journey of what it is you have to do. Teach them the strength of God.

Now the second word is the word power. This is not the outward manifestation of God. It is the inward manifestation of God. This word power can be translated mastery or valor. It can be translated bravery or champion. That that is inward. I shared it with the young people yesterday. I tell – every time I'm with a sports group I tell them this. I have the heart of a champion. It's just in the body of a wimp, alright? It's the inward. I've got the inward motivation. It's just this outward thing is beginning to kind of melt away on me, alright? But it's the inward man. It's what Philippians says not in 4:13 that I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me but it's Philippians 4:7 that God gives a peace that surpasses, goes by it, passes all worldly comprehension. It's this inward peace.

Now there are two marks of this generation that are alive today. I'm reading in Tim Howard's brand new book, *Walking Off the Map*, just two weeks ago. He has done a ton of background on the generation that is coming and they're just moving into adulthood and college kids behind them and youth. That generation that's there. We'd call them millennials and the X and the Y that's coming right behind them. He said there are two vast needs. Number one is their amorality. We need to teach them about things that are right and wrong, that they're struggling. What used to be wrong is not wrong anymore. They've lost the plumb line. They've lost the ridge of truth. It's not easy to get that back into a generation after it's gone. Many things that were wrong when I was a kid are not wrong anymore. I'm amazed not in the church. I'm amazed in the pulpit of what I see in young preachers even with the alcohol issue.

I read this week that eight out of ten millennials have an alcohol problem. It doesn't mean they're a drunk but it just means that beverage alcohol gives them fits. We don't want to deal with that issue. So the first one's amorality. I'm not even preaching about that but the second one that Tim found in this book is anxiety. An anxious spirit, worried. If I send my kid off to school, are they going to be okay? What's going to happen? Financially are we going to be able to make it? Am I going to be able to measure up? There's this anxious spirit, the spirit of anxiety.

Friend, you will never help that generation get over being anxious if you don't quit worrying yourself. Let me run that by you one more time. You'll never teach the coming generation not to be anxious if you don't stop worrying yourself. You say, "Preacher, there's so much to worry about." Hey, check it out when you get home or right now. I'm telling you, God's on the throne and He hadn't moved. Amen. He's still there. Trust Him. Don't walk through worried and anxious.

Dr. Passmore, I went up to the hospital last night. You'd already been there. I went to see our friend, John Stacey, a preacher. He got a bad report this week. I walked in and said, "John, how are you doing?" He said, "Evidently I'm on the way to heaven, preacher." That was the first word out of his mouth. He said, "They've told me I can't get better. There's nothing they can do." He said, "I'm taking a chemo treatment right now." They had him all hooked up. He said, "They're going to give me two more

and I'll probably go home to die." I said, "You know, doctors don't know everything." He said, "I know they don't know everything. I may live and I may not."

John's a funny guy. He said, "I've confessed every sin I know and some I'm not even sure I've ever done. I've confessed everything I know." He said, "Pastor, when I get to heaven, do you think I'll see Brother Rousseau?" Brother Rousseau was the pastor before Brother Jerry here. I said, "Well I think he's there." He said, "I know he's going to be there. I mean can I see him with my eyes is what I want to know?" I said, "Oh yeah. We'll be known as we're known." I said, "That's over my pay grade. I don't know but I just know what the scripture says."

I stood there. You know, when I walked out I didn't have much to worry about. I confessed my sin all the way down those three flights of steps. I said, "Lord, forgive me that I'd worry about anything. This gentleman, he's facing death. I mean he's not just looking down the gun barrel. He got in the chamber." I took his hand and we prayed and I prayed for him but I tell you, I wish he'd have just prayed for me.

Anxious. George Mueller said it this way. Listen. Here's what Mueller said. The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety. Whew. Hook your wagon up to that, beloved. When you decide to worry, you've decided not to believe but when you decide to have true faith, you bring anxiety to an end. Nobody walked by faith like Mueller. God, teach us all.

I'm telling you, this coming generation, that's the message they're looking for. They're looking for a church that says, "We're going to trust God no matter what." We're going to walk by faith and not be anxious. That's the message that they need of strength and power. Say those two words again. What is it they need? Strength and power. That's the words they need. Strength and power. I was reading this week thinking about this message, thinking about a young person and I found him over in John chapter 1. You remember Jesus is walking and Andrew follows Christ. You know, in the twelve there were two sets of brothers in the twelve. Andrew was the brother of who? Simon Peter. The Bible says that Andrew walked with Jesus and then he walked after his brother and he brought his brother, Peter, unto Jesus.

How old are these disciples? I mean Jesus is 30. These are young men. They're following after Christ. I got to thinking about Andrew. Andrew, all he did was bring people to Jesus. But now when they started writing scripture there are no books called I Andrew and II Andrew. There's I Peter and II Peter but Andrew is the one that got Peter to Jesus and Peter got to write the books. The leader of the church in Acts 15 was not Andrew. It was Peter. I mean Peter rose to the place that our Catholic friends see him as the first pope of the church, the leader.

You remember the story of when they had the 5,000 they were going to feed them and they had the five loaves and the two fish and the little boy. You remember who brought the little boy to Jesus with the bread and the fish? It wasn't Peter. It was Andrew, John's gospel. It's recorded in all four gospels but only in John's gospel does it

say that Andrew brought the little boy. Here's what I'm telling you. Everybody knows about Peter but there would be no apostle Peter without the brother Andrew.

You may never be known anywhere for anything but if you bring one to Christ and mentor them to Christ and show them the way by example to Christ, even if they get to write the books and get their name in lights and you don't get anything, let me tell you, there's another scorecard being kept. The Lord's writing it in a book. I can't prove this but I know I'm right. When we get to the other side Peter will carry Andrew's shoes because he was the one that brought Peter. You see, the issue is this. Who are you bringing to Jesus and of the next generation who are you mentoring to follow Jesus?

Both my children will be in the next service. I've tried to mentor them and bring them along. Their mother has probably done much better than I have but I've tried to be a part of that. I've wept through my son's divorce. I've wet the tears of the carpet. I've prayed over him. I've challenged him from the bottom of my guts. I've seen him stand for Christ. I've done that with my daughter. I've done that with that young man that said yesterday, "I had some responsibility." I'm so far from being what God would equip me to be in mentoring. I've got to repent and do better but if God gives you two or three and you walk with them through the valleys and get them to the foot of the cross, I think that's what David's talking about in Psalm 71, verse 17 and 18. "O Lord, even when I'm old and gray, don't leave me now. Don't leave me now until I can tell this generation and the one to come about Your strength and power."

So I have that generation in front of me. Then you have a generation of your children's children. You've got to raise them up and teach them. You laugh and have more fun with them but it's just as real because you'll give an account. These kids, these little ones down here. I walked about in that deal this morning. It's amazing what's down there. They're so smart and they're learning but they're going to walk up here and bring all their trouble. Just like you've got it. They've got to meet somebody that's a little older that'll bring them along. It's what David called us to do. Lord, don't give up on us now until we teach the strength and power and wondrous deeds of our great God.