

Tell the Coming Generation

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[0 : 00] You're listening to a sermon recorded at Providence Community Church, Truth and Beauty in Community. If you are in the Kansas City area, please consider joining us in person next Sunday.

We meet in Lenexa, Kansas at 10 a.m. every Lord's Day. Until then, we pray that as you open your Bibles, the Lord will open your heart to receive His Word.

Well, good morning, church. I'm very happy to be with you this morning. I have visited here actually once about a decade ago, and both times that I've come, this has felt a little bit like coming home because I actually lived in Overland Park from about age 12 to 15.

We moved away when I was in high school. But I've loved Kansas City, and I've loved you all from afar. I come with greetings from Sovereign Grace Church of Louisville.

I've been a member there since its beginning, its founding, 12 years ago. And I love that in Sovereign Grace, one of the things I love about being a part of Sovereign Grace is that we can visit other cities and find brothers and sisters who love the Lord and are building churches and families with the same kind of priorities and goals and values that we hold dear.

[1 : 13] And visiting another Sovereign Grace is a great experience because C.S. Lewis described the kind of camaraderie that exists that marks Christian friendships.

He said, Friendship is born at the moment when one person says to another, What? You too? I thought I was the only one. And I feel like I've had that you too kind of experience every time I visited another Sovereign Grace church.

And getting to know some of you yesterday at the parenting seminar, I felt like, oh, there it is. You too. We've got people who love the Lord and are striving to build churches and families the same way.

And so at Sovereign Grace Church of Louisville, we make a habit of praying for other Sovereign Grace churches. Every Sunday, we pick at least one Sovereign Grace church, and we pray for them.

We pray for you all often. And I suspect they are praying for us this morning, praying for you all this morning. And please know that if you ever come to Louisville, you will find a church full of people who will greet you and say, What? You too.

[2 : 22] You'll have that experience with them as well. So I want to also thank those of you who came to the parenting seminar yesterday. I'm so grateful for your humility, your desire to grow, and to parent your children well and in the Lord.

And it says a lot about your humility and your desire to grow. And I think all that humility also reflects the leadership that you have. So I want to commend to you, Chris and Angela.

I've really enjoyed being here and getting to know them better this weekend. We get to spend time with them at the pastor's conference last week. And I've been so impressed by their love for the Lord, their love for you all, their love for each other and their children.

It is a great blessing for a church to have a pastor who strives for godliness in every area of life, have a godly marriage, godly parenting, and who loves the church as much as Chris and Angela love you.

So you are blessed to have them. And I thank God for Chris and Angela, and I'm sure you do as well. Now, I could talk all morning about what a blessing it is to be here, but I've also been asked to preach.

[3 : 29] So if you would open your Bibles, please, to Psalm 78. As you're turning there, I should tell you, Nicole and I have four kids, and we've been parents now for almost 22 years.

Children are 21, 20, 17 to 15, two boys and two girls. And one of the things that has surprised us most in parenting is how much our children love to hear the stories of our experience growing up.

It surprises me because I don't think that I had a very remarkable childhood. It was kind of boring in many ways, just normal suburban kid, American growing up.

But our kids love these stories, and they want to hear them again and again. And maybe that should not have surprised me given how much my two sisters and I loved hearing my parents' stories as we grew up.

We loved it when mom and dad would tell us stories. My dad was in the Navy, and I loved his stories of the sea. Now, my sisters would quickly grow bored with tales of engine rooms and celestial navigation.

[4 : 33] This wasn't their thing, I guess. I loved it. They would grow tired of it. But no one would ever grow tired of my mom's stories. My mom went to be with the Lord about two years ago, but I can't wait for you to meet her.

She was a great storyteller. And she had amazing stories. And we would ask her for these same stories again and again. We wanted to hear again the story. Mom, tell us about the time Uncle Clifton taught you to play golf.

So she would launch into a story about how Uncle Clifton got her set up with the right grip and the right stance. And then on her very first swing, backswing with the nine iron, clonked Uncle Clifton right in the head, laid him out cold, just on his back, out.

And that was the end of the golf lesson. We wanted her to tell us the story about when mom and dad got married. Small town, South Carolina, in June, in a heat wave, in a church with no air conditioning.

My resourceful grandfather, being the guy that he was, went around town and collected all the big fans that he could to try to cool off the sanctuary of this little church. At the critical moment, as the doors open and my mom steps into the sanctuary, the fan right here grabs hold of her veil.

[5 : 44] Gets sucked right into that fan. She lived. I'm here. It's okay. Worked out all right. We love the story of the time that mom, 16 years old, newly minted driver's license.

She's driving down the main street of this small town, South Carolina. And in front of her is a police cruiser, a police officer right in front of her. He pulls over and parks up against the sidewalk.

And at just the right moment, maybe just the wrong moment, depending on how you look at it, he throws the door open. And mom catches the door with the bumper of the car and lays it flat against the hood of the police cruiser.

Mom panics, doesn't know what to do. Parks in the middle of the street, jumps out. Police officer doesn't say a word to her. Walks into the store right there, right there that my grandfather was the manager of. Walks up to him.

Steven, need to have a conversation about Nancy's driving. We love these stories. These are stories that shaped us. They were stories that helped us understand who are we?

[6 : 42] Where did we come from? What does it mean to be a Whitaker? Stories that explain how we got here. These stories explain a lot about our family and what we're like. And now we are doing, Nicole and I are doing the same thing for our children.

It turns out we are tapping into a long tradition of generational storytelling. People have long recognized the power of story to shape hearers.

If you go back about 300 years, there was an 18th century Scottish politician named Andrew Fletcher. And he is attributed with the saying, let me write the songs of the nation and I care not who makes its laws.

He understood that even through song, if you tell the story, you shape the people. Now, if you go back further, go back about a thousand years, the Anglo-Saxon word for poet was shope.

It's a word that in normal usage meant to create or to bring out. Our modern English word shape comes from that Anglo-Saxon word for poet because they recognized that stories shape people.

[7 : 56] Stories shape people's character, their perceptions and their affections. And so we would be wise to pay attention to the stories that we tell as well.

And today we're gonna look at Psalm 78. This is a psalm that is based around generational storytelling. It's a psalm that tells stories to shape generations.

And when the fathers of our faith begin to tell their family stories, what we get is the history of the saving works of God.

And it turns out that storytelling is one of the ways that God intends to pass on the central truths of the faith to the coming generation. Now, Psalm 78 is 72 verses long.

It's the second longest psalm in the Psalter. We're not gonna read the whole thing this morning. The first eight verses function as a kind of introduction to the psalm. So I'm gonna read just those eight verses and we'll maybe dip in a little bit to the rest of the psalm.

[8 : 59] But I would encourage you sometime in the next day or two, set aside some time and read the entire psalm so you can get an idea of what is the context that these first eight verses fit in. So I'm gonna read Psalm 78, one through eight, and then we're gonna pray.

Psalm 78, a maskil of Asaph. Give ear, O my people, to my teaching. Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable. I will utter dark sayings from of old, things we have heard and known that our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord and his might and the wonders that he has done.

He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children that the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments and that they should not be like their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, we thank you for your word. We thank you for the stories it contains and all it teaches us about the ways that you intend to shape the coming generation through stories about you, about who you are, and about what you've done.

[10 : 38] We pray that through these stories, you would help us to see with our eyes, to hear with our ears, and to set our hearts upon all that you would show to us. And we pray this in the name of your son, Jesus Christ, whom we love with all our hearts.

Amen. Amen. Now, if we were to go on and read all 72 verses of Psalm 78, I think we would find this. The big idea of this psalm is this.

The stories that we tell to the next generation about God shape the next generation and their love for God.

The stories we tell to the next generation about God shape the next generation and their love for God. So we're going to see how this works out in these eight verses, and we're going to do this in three steps.

The first thing this psalm teaches us is that we have a mandate. This psalm gives us a mandate. It's a mandate to tell the coming generation. Tell the coming generation.

[11 : 40] The psalm opens with a call for attention. Look at verse 1. Look what it says there. Give ear, O my people, to my teaching. Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. And in verse 2, he explains why.

Why should you pay attention? Why should we listen to Asaph in this song? Here's why. He says, I will open my mouth in parables, in a parable, and I will utter dark sayings from of old.

He's saying, I've got something to tell you. I'm going to explain it. He says, I'm going to tell you some dark stories. When we hear this phrase, dark stories here, don't think morbid, right?

This doesn't mean like Edgar Allan Poe. What he means is these are parables. They're riddles.

They're things that are locked up. Things that might not be immediately transparent to us, but that need to be explained and illustrated and illuminated for us so that we would understand.

These are stories from the past that have significance for the present and prepare hearers for the future. And he explains in verse 3 and in verse 4, these two verses, verses 3 and 4, Asaph invites his hearers.

[12 : 44] He invites us to join him in this generational storytelling. He says, They are things that we have heard and known that our fathers have told us.

We will not hide them, but we will tell. We will tell the coming generation. And there, right there in that verse, that is the mandate. We are invited to get on board with what Asaph is doing.

We're invited to join him in telling the coming generation. We have this mandate along with him to join in shaping the coming generation of God's people through stories.

And we can do this on every page of our Bibles. Have you thought about the ways that the stories that we have in this book have shaped us?

Have you ever thought about that? Have you thought about the ways the books of the Bible have shaped your faith and have shaped your expectations and your understanding of who God is and

what he does in the world?

[13:46] Think about how a book like Ruth has shaped our confidence that God is sovereign over every disappointment and difficulty and detail in life.

Think about how the book of Exodus has shaped our awareness that God wants to have a people for himself that he can be with and live among and lead as his chosen holy people.

Think about how the book of Acts has shaped our sense of the importance of the church for God's plan to make the gospel known among the nations. Think about how the book of Ephesians has helped us to see more clearly the grace of God to sinners like us and his purposes in choosing sinners for himself through election.

These are stories that shape our love for God. They have shaped our understanding of who God is and who we are and what our relationship to God is like and should be.

And the mandate of this psalm is to tell these stories to the coming generation. Not just the stories of our lives, but the stories that are contained in this book. Now, I can imagine that some people might hear what I've said so far and think, Oh, I see. I get it.

[14:59] This is a parenting message. I can sort of tune out for a bit. I'm going to start planning the menu. Think about what's for lunch. Think about the game this afternoon.

When am I going to get my nap? Well, not so fast. Just because you don't have children, or maybe your children have grown up and moved out, actually this psalm is for you too.

Because this psalm teaches us that generational storytelling is the responsibility of the family and the church. Look at where this verse begins, where this psalm begins.

Verse 1, give ear, dads. No, that's not what it says. Give ear, O my people. Incline your ears to the words of my mouth. He doesn't start with listen up, dads.

He says, O my people. He addresses all of God's people. And so God, through Asaph, he's addressing all of us. He's alerting us to a responsibility that we share.

[15:56] We're in this together. If Asaph were here this morning, he would insist that this generational storytelling is a church-wide responsibility. So if you don't have children, this mandate is for you as well.

And you can see that right in the, look at the pronouns that exist here. Asaph begins with first person singular, my teaching, the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth.

I will utter dark sayings. And in verse 3, then he suddenly switches to first person plural. We have heard and known that our fathers have told us we will not hide them from their children.

We, we, our, us, we. We're in this together. Passing on the gospel is a responsibility that we share. Now, you might be thinking, well, okay, if I don't have children of my own, or if I'm an empty nester and my kids have grown up and moved out, how do I do this?

Maybe you don't even serve in children's ministry and you don't have the opportunity to be around the kids all that often. How are you doing this? How are you participating in the generational storytelling?

[16:59] Well, one of the ways you do it is by living a godly and a faithful life. One of the best things you can do is faithfully live out the truth of the gospel and let the transforming effect of the gospel just be seen in your life.

Live like a Christian. That has more power for the next generation than you might realize. Your faithfulness as a Christian, your participation and service in the church, it models to the coming generation everything that parents are trying to teach their kids.

I can't tell you how many times the Whitakers have sat around the dinner table and I've had some virtue that I thought it was important to educate my children about. And I've asked them, who do you know that is a servant?

Who do you know is faithful? Who do you know is generous? Not stingy. Let's talk about that. And they immediately start naming names of people in the church. One of our favorite people to talk about and to hold up as a model is a couple in our church named Arnie and Dawn.

Arnie and Dawn got married, I think in their late 40s. They don't have children of their own and yet you will see them at almost every church event. They are the best.

[18:14] Arnie is one of these guys who can fix everything and does fix anything and everything for church members. He has spent time as a diesel mechanic and as a jewelry repair guy. So it doesn't matter.

Biggest wrench you've ever seen down to the smallest tweezers. He can fix it all. And he is serving the church constantly by building stuff and fixing stuff. Dawn comes from Mennonite stock.

So every single church event that we have, Dawn is cooking for it. And I tell you what, ladies meetings, that sort of thing, the sweetest old grandmother in our church, she will be throwing elbows to get to Dawn's muffins because they are so good.

They serve the church all the time. So if we ask our kids, who do you know that's a servant? Oh, Mr. and Mrs. Bear, Arnie and Dawn, they're servants. And there are so many of you who are doing the same thing in this church.

You are modeling for the parents around you what it means to live a faithful Christian life. And so just by living, by being faithful to walk out the Christian life, you are helping to tell a true story to the coming generation.

[19 : 22] You are serving the parents around you to do that. Another way that you can assist, if you do not have children of your own or your children now have grown up and moved out, moved on, you can pray.

You can pray for the parents that are seated around you. You can pray for the parents in your small group. You can pray through your list of families in the church.

We have at Sovereign Grace Church of Louisville, we have a photo directory. We have pictures of every member of the church laid out over 31 pages. I don't think I have to spell that out too much. It works great because you can pray for a page a day.

I go through and I pray for those families all the time. Help them to tell stories to the coming generation. So you can pray for parents around you. And if you're not sure what to pray, ask them. Oh, as a parent, there is nothing better than to hear that someone is praying for me. I have never felt my need for help, my need for strength, and my need for wisdom more than in parenting.

[20 : 23] So if you're not sure what to pray, ask. That will be a huge blessing to some parents. Pray for strength, pray for wisdom, pray for faithfulness. So telling the coming generation is a community project, but it's also a responsibility that is distinct to families.

So it's a responsibility for the church and it's a responsibility for the family. And look in this psalm, in verse three and verse five, Asaph singles out fathers. He mentions fathers.

Things that our fathers have told us. Verse five, which he commanded our fathers. Doesn't mean that moms are excluded from this, but I think Asaph knows the moms are on it. The moms are gonna do the work.

But dads, we need to be reminded. We need to be prodded. We need to be encouraged. We need to be helped and instructed. We need to be motivated to do this. And so Asaph singles out fathers that we have a duty to lead our families, to train and to teach our children, to tell them the stories and to think through a strategy for discipling our children.

We are called to tell our children about Jesus and to call them to faith and repentance. And this is a call to an entire way of living. This is about creating cultures in families and in churches, cultures that tell the stories of God's saving work.

[21 : 43] There's so many ways to do this in parents. We talked some about this yesterday and I'm sure that many of you are doing this already. In our family, we adopted a tradition that Nicole's parents did with her.

They read a lot of books together. They would sit around the dinner table and read books. For years they did that. And we have often sat around after dinner, just sat around the table and read together.

We love to read biographies. So we've read biographies from church history. And not long ago, we read Corey Tenboom's *The Hiding Place*. We read Elizabeth Elliot's *Through Gates of Splendor*.

And reading stories like this, it's like a gospel twofer because you get to hear and see the stories of these great saints of church history. But then our kids are wondering, why is dad crying?

Why are we having to stop reading? Because dad is so moved by these examples. And I get to tell them, this affects me. They get to see on display my own passion for God or your passion for God as you read.

[22 : 45] I love that. What about hospitality? When you have families over for lunch after church on Sunday or whenever it is that you do it, what a great opportunity to say, hey, let's hear your testimony and make sure the kids are nearby.

Oh, they soak that stuff up. Even if they don't seem to be listening and they're on the floor playing with Legos, they're absorbing so much. They're hearing the stories from generation to generation. You can even talk to your kids about how he saved you. Tell them the story of your salvation. I was so perplexed.

So many times my kids want to hear the story of how I became a Christian. It's kind of like, well, I don't know. God just sort of turned a dimmer switch. I don't ever remember not believing in Jesus. Gone to church my whole life since I was a baby.

And then one day I realized I needed to stop sinning. My repentance caught up with my faith and I started to live like a Christian. They were like, oh, so they love these stories. I'm so grateful that we have in our Bibles, I'm grateful we have the testimony of Paul.

[23 : 48] We have this dramatic, sudden transformation in Acts chapter nine. But aren't you so glad that we also have Lydia's story in Acts chapter 16? It just says there that the Lord put on our heart to believe what the things that Paul said.

Just as quiet and as simple as you could imagine. And so as you tell your children, as you tell the next generation the story of how you became a Christian, that is faithful generational storytelling.

And know that the Lord is eager to empower your preaching of the gospel. The Lord loves these stories. The Lord is himself a storyteller. And he loves to bless and empower these stories.

Now for some of you, just a brief aside here too, some of you, generational storytelling might mean not so much telling the coming generation as the previous generation.

There are some of you, I would imagine, in a group this size, there are probably some of you who are first generation Christians. Or maybe your parents or other family members were just marginally Christian. And now you have been transformed by the power of the gospel.

[24 : 57] Maybe Jesus Christ has gotten a hold of you. And you're looking at the generations behind you. Your parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, maybe other siblings. And now you have an opportunity for generational storytelling that works back up the chain.

And even though this psalm talks about downstream effects of telling the coming generation, know that God loves to work in families. And God loves the proclamation of the gospel that goes upstream as well.

He loves it when we preach the gospel to parents, aunts, uncles, grandparents, siblings, cousins, whatever the case may be. The Lord loves to bless that as well. So in the church and in families, we have a mandate to tell the coming generation.

That is our mandate. Now, fortunately for us, Asaph has not only told us to tell the coming generation, he's also told us what to tell the coming generation.

So this is the second step. In verses four and five, if you're a note taker, this is the second point, is we have a message. We have a mandate. And secondly, in verses four and five, we have a message.

[26 : 03] The message is what to tell the coming generation. Not only have we been told to tell the coming generation, we have been told what to tell the coming generation. And in verses four and five, there are two categories.

Look at verse four. It says, we will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation. Here's thing one, the glorious deeds of the Lord and his might and the wonders that he has done.

It seems like three things, but that's one thing. Then comes the second thing. He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children and so on.

So these two things, the glorious deeds of the Lord and his might and the wonders that he has done and a testimony in Jacob and a law in Israel. In other words, teach them God's works and teach them God's word.

Do you see how all those things fall under those two headings? Teach them God's works and teach them God's word. And so let's start with God's works. What are these glorious deeds of the Lord that Asaph refers to?

[27 : 10] What are the wonders that we are to proclaim to our children? Well, that's actually what the rest of the psalm is about. I mentioned earlier that this psalm is 72 verses long, and we've only read eight verses, but what the rest of the psalm is about is God's saving power through the Exodus.

Throughout the Old Testament, the Exodus is the quintessential example of God's power to save. And the entire rest of the psalm describes what happens when God's people forget that story or ignore that story or wander from that story or turn their back on that story.

And it describes then a cycle of Israel's rebellion, God's anger and judgment, Israel's repentance, and God's forgiveness and restoration of blessings.

A while back, I did an interesting exercise with this psalm. I took four different colored highlighters, and I read through the psalm with these four highlighters, and I highlighted these four categories. Israel's rebellion, God's righteous anger, Israel's repentance, God's gracious forgiveness. It's a colorful psalm. It's pretty cool to see. And if this psalm teaches anything, it teaches that we are sinners, that sinners deserve God's discipline, that God disciplines those he loves, and when we repent, God is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.

[28 : 41] As I read this psalm, I think, you know, I would have been a pretty good Israelite. I think I would have fit right in with these people. And so this psalm teaches the Exodus as the great saving act of God.

And next time you read through your Old Testament, pay attention to how often the authors refer back to the Exodus. And as Christians, we should learn from that.

We should pay attention to how often God refers to his saving works. In the Old Testament, over and over and over again, the authors point back to the Exodus.

But in the New Testament, we get a new and better story. It's a story that maps really well onto the story of the Exodus.

Just like the ancient Israelites, we were in slavery too. Slavery to sin was our Egypt. Jesus is our Moses.

[29 : 38] While we wander in the wasteland of this world, we gather together with the people of God in order to meet with God, to learn from God, and to fellowship with him. And like the Israelites wandering in the wilderness, we eagerly anticipate the day when we will cross over into the promised land, when we will finally see God and dwell with God in his place, when we will finally be set free from sin and death.

The Exodus is a great story, but it is just a shadow of the far greater story of the gospel of Jesus Christ. And so let's teach that.

Let's teach these stories to our children that as we read our Old Testament and our New Testament together, we're teaching them the great story, the glorious deeds of the Lord, saving us in and through Jesus Christ.

And the only way we can do that is by teaching them God's word. We teach them God's works by teaching them God's word. And so we read God's word to them and with them.

We teach them the stories that are in this book so that they would have it in them. And parents, I'm sure there are many ways that you are doing this already.

[30 : 55] But I think as we think about preparing our children for their future, for the life that God has out in front of them, there is no greater gift we could give them than a habit of daily Bible reading.

As much as I want my kids to know how to change a tire or flip an omelet, I have, you know, high priorities, big ambitions for their life. Most of all, I want them to know how to meet with God every day, to be in a habit of getting up and seeking God in his word and in prayer.

When our kids were little, we just had them listen to God's word. Then as they grew older and started to read, we got them Bibles that would be appropriate to their age. The language was tailored to their capabilities.

We started training them into a habit of rising early and meeting with God and doing that before they did any other thing. As they got older, I wrote Bible studies for them so that they could each morning spend time meditating on God's word and thinking about what it meant.

And then as they got older still, we started buying Bible studies that would help them. Marty Machowski's books and others like it. If you don't know that name, look it up. I'll tell you about it later. As they got older, we started waking them up earlier so that they would rise early and start their day with the Lord.

[32 : 14] And we talk about it. And you do this too. So many opportunities to talk about God's word. As you rise, as you go out, as you come in, as you lay down, stoplight moments.

I often would tell my kids if they got in the car with me, they were entering Dad's School of Wisdom and Virtue. Welcome. Welcome to Dad's School of Wisdom and Virtue. What are we going to talk about today?

And as we're driving off to Home Depot or whatever it is, we have conversations because this book is full of stories of salvation that shaped God's people. It worked.

They shaped us. And now we get to tell those stories to the coming generation to shape them. And if that isn't reason enough, if you're not motivated by that alone, there's more.

This psalm gives us a mandate and it gives us a message and finally it gives us a motive. If you're taking notes, the third point is it gives us a motive and the motive why we should tell the coming generation.

[33 : 14] This psalm tells us to tell the coming generation, teaches us what to tell them, and it teaches us why. And in verses 6 through 8, we get the why. To see this, we actually need to start back up in verse 5 because it says, he established a testimony in Jacob.

He appointed a law in Israel which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children that the next generation. Do you see that little word that?

Did you notice verse 6, verse 7, verse 8, they all begin with the word that. And there are the reasons why we should teach the coming generation.

Verse 6 teaches us that we need to tell these stories to the next generation because there is more at stake than just the next generation. Let's count the generations as we go.

Look at beginning in verse 5, which he commanded our fathers to teach to their children. So that's us, to teach to their children that the next generation, there's our kids, might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children so that they should set their hope in God.

[34 : 22] That's at least four generations in view. Four generations of storytelling that are going to be affected by our faithfulness in passing on these stories. So parents and church, what you're doing now can and will have downstream effects for years, decades, maybe centuries, if the Lord carries.

I teach a geometry class, I teach math in a little school my wife runs, and I wish I had a whiteboard and we could like do the math here, but I mean, just try to picture this. If you have a few kids, if you have three or four kids and each of those kids has three or four kids and each of those kids has three or four kids and most of those kids get married and they have neighbors and co-workers and friends and church members, then in a few generations, your faithfulness now will have affected dozens, maybe hundreds of people in just three or four generations.

It's amazing to think about. So dads, when you come home from work at the end of a long day and you're thinking, man, I'm tired, I want to eat, I want to put my feet up, I want to put the game on, then I want the kids to get to bed quietly and I want to get to bed myself.

Maybe you're thinking, I don't even want to talk about around dinner. I'm just tired, I'm worn out, I'm beat. Think about this. You sit down at that dinner table. Your kids are around that table and pulling up a chair.

Your grandkids, your great-grandkids, your great-great-grandkids are at that table too. And your faithfulness in that moment, despite your fatigue and your weariness to lead a spiritual conversation and talk to your kids about how was your day, how did the Lord help you today, let me tell you about this thing, let me tell you about how I was tempted and God helped me.

[36 : 07] In that moment, you are passing on the gospel to generations that you might not ever see. And moms, moms, moms, you sacrifice your strength every day.

And I think Psalm 78 gives us a picture of a family reunion generations from now. I have in my mind this picture of my great-grandmother.

She lived to be 99 years old. For her 95th birthday, we had a birthday party for her. People came from all over the country. It was so big, we had to rent a warehouse that was under construction and we parked in half of it and the other half of it, we partied.

There are so many people there and moms, can you picture a day, someday, a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand years from now when generations are gathering around you saying thank you for what you did?

Because the work that you are doing now, so much of the work that moms do right now is undone every day. You cook meals that get eaten.

[37 : 15] You wash dishes that get eaten upon. You clean floors that get soiled. You wash clothes that will be dirtied and worn again.

You make beds that will be slept in. You wipe noses that do what noses do. So much work that mothers do gets undone, but Psalm 78 is a precious reminder to you that the work that you do in telling the coming generation will never be undone.

This is work that cannot be undone. You are planting seeds of the gospel in these children's hearts that will be passed on generation after generation. And we're praying.

We need the Holy Spirit's help. We're praying that it will bear good fruit in their lives, but we trust the Lord that it will bring about fruit for decades, longer.

What a wonderful thought. So, why should we tell the coming generation that the next generation might know them? Another reason in verse 7 that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments.

[38 : 28] Do you see a sequence here that they should set their hope in God, they should not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments? We're praying that they would know, that they would remember what they know, and then that they would act on what they know.

That's what's going to happen if we tell these stories. And the third reason in verse 8 is that they should not harden their hearts and resist the grace of God. It's a simple warning. Actually, the rest of the psalm is actually a very thorough and detailed warning about the dangers of departing from the faith.

And those are stories that our children need to hear too. It's a sobering story. And as we read a story like this, we can pray and ask, Father, please let this not happen in our family and in our next generation.

But it's a reminder of the grace of God. This warning is a gracious reminder that if our children hear these stories, we are giving them the opportunity to follow God, to serve and obey him, to know him, and then to pass on to their children these same stories.

We tell these stories so that the coming generation might know the glorious deeds of the Lord. Now, I want to tell you about one other way that we're applying this psalm.

[39 : 39] This is going to feel like a little bit of a shift and this is not my normal way of preaching, but Chris asked me to tell you about one of the ways that we are applying this principle of generational storytelling in Louisville, and that is in the creation of Trinity College of Louisville.

Two and a half years ago, I started a college. I wanted to found a college based on this idea of passing on to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord. I wanted to start a Christian liberal arts college founded with the goal of fusing the best of sovereign grace, passion for gospel-centered everything with a classical liberal arts curriculum.

I thought what I would love to see is a college where discipleship and education are fused together. What happens in the classroom and what happens in the church are joined together for the sake of next generation discipleship.

And I'm happy to say it's not the first time that our denomination, Sovereign Grace Churches, has ventured out into education. 26 years ago, C.J. Mahaney led Sovereign Grace Churches to found a pastor's college.

I was a part of the second class. I graduated in 1999, last class of the millennium. That foundation that I received in the pastor's college, that has served me for the rest of my life.

[40 : 58] It served me in the last 22 years as a Sovereign Grace pastor. It served me in 10 years that I spent in business in Louisville. It served me in several years as a classical school headmaster.

And now it's serving me as a president of a college. And I want to provide a similar foundation to our next generation. We want to provide a similar foundation for them, very similar to the vision that you all have for Knox Classical School.

We want to pass on this gospel to the next generation. Given the hostility that exists in our culture to the gospel and to Christianity, we know that our children and their generation are going to face challenges to their faith far greater than any that we've seen yet.

And that's why it's more important than ever to equip the next generation with biblical discernment, with character and conviction and courage. We want to raise up young people who are well-educated and wise.

We want to raise up young men who are godly leaders in the home and the church, in their workplaces and in community. We want to raise up young women who are passionate about training the next generation in the home and mentoring other women in the priorities of Titus 2. [42 : 11] We want to encourage students and parents to think of their college education as part of their discipleship. I know you've already been led to think that way because of the way you are striking out into education as well.

But all education is discipleship. The question isn't if our college students will be disciplined, it's by whom and into what. I don't want to leave anybody with the wrong impression.

You can send your child to a different college and still be a faithful member of a Sovereign Grace Church. You can still be a good member of Providence Community Church and go somewhere else. I'll still be your friend even.

But we want churches to know that Trinity College is here and available and we're able to serve the next generation of young people by providing academically robust, thoroughly Christian education that is meaningfully embedded in the life of the local church.

Our website is TrinityCollegeLew.com Hope you'll check it out. Subscribe to our newsletter, maybe follow us on social media. If you'd like to know more, I will hang out after church today as long as you want to talk and be here.

[43 : 20] And if you miss me for some reason, Chris will be happy to get you in touch with me. A lot more you can learn on our website. Now, I didn't come here to make this sermon a commercial for Trinity College.

But since we're together as part of a denomination, we are together in Sovereign Grace. We want you to know about this thing that's happening in our denomination. So I'd also be grateful for your prayers. Please pray that God would send us students.

Please pray that God would provide our daily bread for the college. Colleges don't get far without students and without money. So be grateful for your prayers. Now, all of this, all of this that I'm doing with Trinity College, all that you're doing with Knox, Classical Academy, and all you're doing with the homeschool co-op that meets here, all of that, all of our generational storytelling is meant to accomplish the spread of the gospel, not only out into the world, but on into our homes and into the next generation.

The glorious deeds of the Lord and his might and the wonders that he has done, these stories that are in the Bible, God has used them. He will use your faithful telling of these stories to spread the fame of his name to the next generation and beyond.

Let's pray. Father in heaven, we thank you for your word. We thank you for all those who went before us who were faithful to tell the coming generation. Somebody told us, every single person in this room, somebody told us.

[44 : 47] We're grateful for those people and as we think of them now, we remember them with gratitude to you. And now as we consider our responsibility to pass this gospel on to the next generation, Father, would you give us grace and strength and wisdom to know how to do that?

Would you be pleased to prosper our efforts to tell the coming generation of the glorious deeds of the Lord? Father, we pray that Providence Community Church would have a long and fruitful history for years, for decades, maybe for centuries to come, of faithfully proclaiming the gospel to one generation after another that you might be glorified and your church might continue to grow.

We pray all this in the name of your son, Jesus, whom we love with all our hearts. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Abend Nab! Abend Nab!