

ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS #10

Restoring Generational Connections

Part 3

Introduction

I want to continue our teaching on “Ask for the Old Paths” with Part 3 of our message on “Restoring Generational Connections”.

What do I mean by ‘Restoring Generational Connections’?

Restoring “Generational Connections” is the task of recovering spiritual continuity between the generations. In a godly nation, it applies to the State as well as the Church.

We have been showing how...

Our challenges today, in the Church and in the Nation, are the result of generational disconnection!

Many of our modern American churches have disconnected from the faith of our fathers.

A new generation of Marxist/Socialist politicians are totally disconnected from our founding fathers and documents.

The Good News is that God Himself has promised to perform this very thing before the 2nd coming of Christ...

Malachi 4:5-6

Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, or else I will come and strike the land with a curse.

Vine’s Expository Dictionary

“Turn”

To return or go back; to bring back; to move back to the point of departure;

to return along a path already traveled.

7 Keys to Generational Reconnection

- God acts and thinks generationally (in terms of covenant)
(God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob)
- Generational disconnection bring God's curse/Generational connection brings God's blessings
- Generational connections depend upon remembering our history
- Generational Connections succeed through honor and fall through dishonor

Romans 12:9-10 ESV

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil. Hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.

Tonight I want to cover the last 2 points...

7 Point Preview

- Successful Generational Connections produce a synergy of power and anointing upon the present generation
- The continuity of successful Generational Connections requires faithful fathers and submitted sons

I. Successful Generational Connections Produce a Synergy of Power and Anointing

A. Synergy of Power

Dutch Sheets

The Holy Spirit spoke to me about the 'synergy of the ages'—the importance of connecting with past generations. In short, the synergy of the ages is *multiplied power through generational agreement and honor.*

1. What is 'synergy'?

Synergy

The interaction or cooperation of two or more organizations, substances, or other agents to produce a combined effect greater than the sum of their separate effects

Dutch Sheets

Synergy is a multiplication of power through combined effort. One plus one equals two. But not when God's people work together.

2. There is a synergy (or multiplication) of power promised to God's people.

Leviticus 26:7-8

You will chase your enemies, and they shall fall by the sword before you. Five of you shall chase a hundred, and a hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight; your enemies shall fall by the sword before you.

a. **God says 5 can chase a 100; so then 100 can chase 2,000. Right? Wrong! 100 will put 10,000 to flight! This is the power of synergy!**

3. Something powerful happens when the younger generation connects with the older generation!

Dutch Sheets

When the younger generation, (Elisha) received the mantle of the older generation, (Elijah), the younger generation received a 'double anointing'!

4. He's referring to the master model of Elijah and Elisha on Elijah's last day on earth...

2 Kings 2:9-10

And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, "Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?"

Elisha said, "Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me."

a. Elijah, (the older generation), had reached out to Elisha, (the younger generation) and Elisha responded by following Elijah, even though he had many opportunities to turn back. He wasn't following for finances.

Matthew Henry

Elisha, having this fair opportunity to enrich himself with the best riches, prays for a double portion of his spirit. He asks not for wealth, nor honor, nor exemption from trouble, but to be qualified for the service of God and his generation.

b. The young Elisha saw the value of the life of the older Elijah and wanted to follow his footsteps.

Matthew Henry

All of us, both ministers and people, ought to set before us the example of our predecessors, to labor after their spirit, and to be earnest with God for that grace which carried them through their work and enabled them to finish well.

5. This is what happened to me in my own journey with Jesus; as I followed close after the teaching of great teachers who enriched me so much, my greatest desire was to follow in their footsteps to be a blessing to others.

2 Kings 2:10

So he said, "You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so."

a. A 'hard thing' means Elisha has asked for something Elijah cannot give; God alone can give him this; the only condition is that Elisha stays with him until the end; 'If you continue with me until I am taken up' means, you will receive the 'double portion' of Elijah's spirit if he maintains the generational connection until the end!

Matthew Henry

Elisha's prayer would be answered if he kept close to his master, observing him to the end. 'If thou see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so, otherwise not'. A diligent attendance upon his master's instructions, and a careful observance of his example until his last scene were the conditions an proper means of obtaining much of his spirit.

b. If you read the whole story you'll see how many times Elijah left the door open for the young Elisha to leave; but Elisha stayed the course.

2 Kings 2:11-12

Then it happened, as they continued on and talked, that suddenly a chariot of fire appeared with horses of fire and separated the two of them; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it, and he cried out, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen!"

Hebrew Note

The Chaldee translates these words as: "My master, my master! Your ministry, was of more use to Israel than horses and chariots."

c. Here we have a declaration of the younger valuing the older and receiving a double portion of his anointing.

Adam Clarke

He took up the same mantle with which he had been called by Elijah to the prophetic office, and the same by which Elijah Had divided the Jordan. His having the mantle was a proof that he was invested with the authority and influence of his master.

2 Kings 2:14-15

Then he took the mantle of Elijah that had fallen from him, and struck the water, and said, "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" And when he also had struck the water, it was divided this way and that; and Elisha crossed over. Now when the sons of the prophets who were from Jericho saw him, they said, "The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha."

6. **Elisha struck the water and said, "Where is the God of Elijah?" Today we need to strike the waters again and ask, "Where are the Elijah's of God?"**

7. Elijah and Elisha are a model of the synergy of generational connections; how fathers connect to sons and how the anointing of God can flow and multiply when there is generational connection. Now let's move on to the 7th Key...

II. The Continuity of Generational Connections Requires Faithful Fathers and Submissive Sons

A. Our Model is Joshua Preparing God's People for the Promised Land

1. After 400 years of bondage in Egypt, and 40 years wandering in the wilderness, God's people crossed the Jordan and entered into the Promised Land to fulfill a covenant promise God had made to their father Abraham centuries before.

2. But before God would allow them to fight their first battle for their Promised Land, He commanded Joshua to undertake a task that would restore the generational connection that had been lost by the generation in the wilderness.

Joshua 5:2-3

At that time the Lord said to Joshua, "Make sharp knives for yourself and circumcise the sons of Israel again the second time." So Joshua made flint knives for himself and circumcised the sons of Israel at the hill of the foreskins.

3. Circumcision, the removal of male foreskin, was practiced by a number of nations in antiquity, but God gave it to the nation of Israel as a sign of His covenant with Israel. It began with their forefather Abraham.

Genesis 17:9-11

And God said to Abraham: "As for you, you shall keep My covenant, you and your descendants after you throughout their generations. This is My covenant which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: Every male child among you shall be circumcised...in the flesh of your foreskins, and it shall be a sign of the covenant between Me and you.

4. Israel had faithfully kept the covenant: Abraham to Isaac, to Jacob, to Jacob's sons, the 12 tribes of Israel and through 400 years of Egyptian bondage; but the generational connection was broken during the 40 year walk through the wilderness. The fathers had failed to keep the generational connection alive.

Joshua 5:4-5

And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: All the people who came out of Egypt who were males, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on the way, after they had come out of Egypt. For all the people who came out had been circumcised, but all the people born in the wilderness, on the way as they came out of Egypt, had not been circumcised.

5. This was nothing less than a failure of the fathers of all those born in the wilderness to maintain the generational covenant with God and they all died under His judgment.

Joshua 5:6

For the children of Israel walked forty years in the wilderness, till all the people who were men of war, who came out of Egypt, were consumed, because they did not obey the voice of the Lord — to whom the Lord swore that He would not show them the land which the Lord had sworn to their fathers that He would give us, "a land flowing with milk and honey."

6. Here in Joshua 5, they are out of the wilderness; but before they can possess the land, God appoints Joshua as a spiritual father to do what their physical fathers had failed to do...keep the covenant that maintains the generational connection.

B. Look at the Spiritual Implications of Joshua 5

1. The Apostle Paul taught the Corinthian Church to study the Exodus of Israel into the Promised Land as a physical representation of spiritual truth.

1 Corinthians 10:6,10

“And all these things happened as examples for us...written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.

a. “Examples” is ‘tupos’ in Greek—a type; a model; a physical foreshadow of spiritual truth.

2. Circumcision, (like New Testament water baptism), is a physical act that speaks of inner, spiritual reality. Circumcision is, literally, the cutting away of excess flesh. But even in the Old Testament, it is primarily spiritual in nature.

a. Circumcision is a matter of the heart.

Deuteronomy 10:15-16

The Lord delighted only in your fathers, to love them; and He chose their descendants after them, you above all peoples, as it is this day. Therefore circumcise the foreskin of your heart, and be stiff-necked no longer...

b. God Himself takes up the 'knife' because an uncircumcised heart is how He prepares the hearts of fathers and sons so we can love Him as we should!

Deuteronomy 30:6

And the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, so you can love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.

3. Only men with circumcised hearts can love God as He commands and live the blessed life He wants to give us. And it's worse than that. The consequence of our failure to father our sons brings the wrath of God's chastening upon us!

Jeremiah 4:4

Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, and take away the foreskins of your hearts, you men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, lest My fury come forth like fire, and burn so that no one can quench it, because of the evil of your doings."

4. Notice that a father's failure to circumcise their sons, to connect the generations with the covenant of their forefathers, is 'evil' in the sight of the Lord. And it brings God's judgment on the land.

5. We now live in a land with a shortage of functioning fathers, in the home and in the church.

a. Even the secular sociologists tell us that our communities are collapsing

Fatherhood.org

There is a father factor in nearly all the social ills facing America today. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2020), 19.7 million children, more than 1 in 4, live without a father in the home.

b. Compared to children in homes with a functioning father, these children are...

- 4X more likely to live in poverty
- 7X more likely to become pregnant as teenagers

- 2X more likely to drop out of high school
 - 2X more prone to obesity
- More likely to commit crime and go to prison
 - More likely to abuse drugs and alcohol

6. Where are the missing fathers? They are 'renegades'.

'Renegade'

One who reneges

'Reneged'

To deny responsibility; to go back on a promise or commitment.

7. Under the Law, it was the responsibility of the fathers to circumcise their sons; but then as now, *an entire generation of fathers had failed their sons; so God raised up Joshua as a spiritual father to do what their physical fathers had failed to do; restore the generational connection to the faith.*

8. We believe that God will raise up faithful fathers today. (ELIJAH!)

C. God is Calling For Faithful Fathers

1. In the prophecy of the coming Elijah ministry, the hearts of the fathers turn first. God begins with the fathers. Elijah made the 1st move toward Elisha. So we see Joshua takes up the initiative here.

The Biblical Illustrator

The obligation of keeping up the spiritual continuity of the generations presses with special force on the Church's fathers, Pastors, and teachers. The prophetic office of the Church consists in the permanent function of maintaining an old and unchanging faith, by showing its power of adapting itself to constantly new conditions; it is to interpret the old faith to the new generation, with fidelity to the old, and with confidence in the new.

2. God is so serious about this that He was ready to kill Moses because he had failed in his fatherly responsibility of circumcising his own son! This is one of the most overlooked verses in the Bible!

Exodus 4:24

And it came to pass on the way, at the encampment, that the Lord met him and sought to kill him.

Matthew Henry

God's displeasure against Moses was a great change; a moment ago God was conversing with him, and lodging a trust in him, as a friend; and now he is coming forth against him as an enemy.

The Biblical Illustrator

So long as Moses discarded the national seal or sign of the covenant made with Abraham, he was essentially unfit to be the champion and deliverer of God's people. His position was that of a rebel, determined not to submit to an ordinance acknowledged to be Divine. God would sooner 'kill' Moses than allow him to enter the Lord's work in a state of hardened disobedience.

a. Moses offense was not something he had done but something that he had failed to do.

Matthew Henry

Omissions are sins, and must come into judgment, and particularly the contempt and neglect of the seals of the covenant; for it is a sign that we undervalue the promises of the covenant and are displeased with its conditions. Moses had made a bargain and is not now willing to seal and ratify it.

3. God would have killed Moses except for his wife. Thank God for our wives!

Exodus 4:25-26

Then Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at Moses' feet, and said, "Surely you are a husband of blood to me!" So He let him go. Then she said, "You are a husband of blood!" — because of the circumcision.

Adam Clarke

According to the law (Gen 17:14,) the uncircumcised child was to be cut off from his people, so that there should be no inheritance for that branch of the family

in Israel. Moses, therefore, for neglecting to circumcise the child, exposed him to this cutting off, and it was but barely prevented by the prompt obedience of Zipporah.

4. Moses' wife understood situation better than Moses! And this is true of our own day. Our wives quickly see our failures at fathering and resent us because they end up taking up the knife we should have wielded!

a. Zipporah's act appeased the wrath of God and saved the father and the son. I wonder how many fathers God has spared because a godly wife was willing to do the man's job for him?

5. Moses went on to be one of God's greatest heroes; but it all could have ended before it began, over this matter of circumcision. He broke the generational covenant connection and only avoided the curse because his wife restored it.

Matthew Henry

When we return to God in a way of duty, He will return to us in a way of mercy; take away the cause of God's judgment, and the effect of God's judgment will cease.

6. God is not only calling for faithful fathers; He is also calling for...

D. Submitted Sons

1. Joshua was given an overwhelming task; Bible scholars tell us there were 600,000 men to be circumcised! He was ready to be a faithful father but he never could get it done unless there were submitted sons.

2. Circumcision is painful; that's one of the reasons God commanded it be done on the 8th day of a child's life. Not only because it wouldn't remember. There was a medical reason.

Dr. S.I. McMillen, "None of These Diseases"

God commanded Abraham to perform circumcisions on the eighth day after birth. This is the ideal time to carry out the procedure because it ensures that the infant's blood readily clots after circumcision. For the first four days after birth, an infant has a limited amount of vitamin K and clotting factors in its

blood. On day five, the level of these materials increases, reaching the maximum level on day eight.

3. Israel had been in the wilderness 40 years; so some of those needing circumcision were well into their 30's!

a. It's one thing to circumcise a baby; it's another thing to circumcise a grown man.

b. Spiritually speaking, as a Pastor, I can verify it's true!

4. Testimony.

III. Close

A. Review: Ask For The Old Paths

The Biblical Illustrator

Perhaps the chief danger attending modern progress is the neglect of antiquity, especially as to religion. The Christian religion is in imminent danger of drifting from her ancient landmarks.

1. God has promised to send an Elijah ministry before the 2nd coming of Christ that will restore the hearts of the fathers to the children and the children to the fathers; we have called it 'Restoring Generational Connections' and have covered 7 Keys to what it looks like.

7 Keys to Generational Reconnection

- **God acts and thinks generationally (in terms of covenant)
(God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob)**
- **Generational disconnection bring God's curse/Generational connection brings God's blessings**
- **Generational connections depend upon remembering our history**
- **Generational Connections succeed through honor and fall through dishonor**

7 Point Preview

- **Successful Generational Connections produce a synergy of power and anointing upon the present generation**
- **The continuity of successful Generational Connections requires faithful fathers and submitted sons**

2. We can apply this truth to our homes and our churches; everyone has a part to play in restoring generational connections.

3. God must awaken the younger to their need for the older; and He must awaken the older to love the younger enough to reconnect them with their covenant.

Dutch Sheets

America now needs a new generation of pathfinders and way-makers to arise and lead us back to our roots. Ironically, the way *forward* is sometimes *behind* us. Contrary to what many people believe, 'old' does not mean 'outdated'. The future must always be built on yesterday's strong foundation. The path to the future is connected to the past...and that path runs through us.

Closing Prayer

Title

Father, I remind you of your promise by the Prophet, to send an Elijah ministry to restore the godly connection between the generations; to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the hearts of the children to the fathers.

I pray that you reconnect America with the covenants of our founding fathers.

I pray you reconnect your church with the faith of our fathers.

I pray the Elijah anointing of the old will fall upon the young Elisha's.

Let us not forget it was an 'unfathered' generation that took the Promised Land when spiritual fathers did their duty. And as we do our duty, restore our nation to its original purpose as an expression of your Kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. In Jesus name, Amen!