

Finding Fresh Purpose in Your 60s

There is a generation that spent the '60s finding themselves. They are at it again. That same generation, now in their 60s, is finding themselves all over. However, this time it is completely different.

Over the last three years, I have been working with those in their 50s, 60s and 70s and found several significant realities. This is a generation that has so much to give—time, wisdom, history, finances, encouragement, love—yet they believe a myth that they have nothing to offer and that even if they did, younger generations would not be interested.

Those 50 and above are often looking for new direction, feeling a loss of value and hoping to regain purpose. I was recently speaking at a conference of more than 400 people who are 50 or older and heard these same things. “We want to pursue Jesus with all of our lives, but we don’t know how to move forward. We need direction.” Many are living disenfranchised lives, believing they don’t belong, don’t have value and don’t have a voice.

My great joy has been to witness these lies be broken. I am watching a generation finding themselves—not the self-realization of the '60s, but finding their identity and purpose in relationship through Christ. One of our interns recently wrote, “In the last few weeks, the Lord has unlocked our hearts in many areas where we were stuck for many years. We are healing and receiving revelation of His love. We have hope and vision again.” Scripture makes it clear there is a significant role for those of the older generation in the lives of those who are younger. Deuteronomy 6:6–9 makes it clear how parents are to lead their children, and Psalm 145:4 tells us “One generation shall praise Your works to another

and shall declare Your mighty acts.”

One of the things lost for this generation has been their voice. “I have nothing of value to say.” “No one wants to hear what I think.” “I don’t know how to talk with the younger generations.” These are lies I believe Father God wants to break down in order to accomplish His promise of turning the hearts of fathers to the children and the hearts of children to their fathers (Mal. 4:6). Last fall I felt the Lord saying, “Your voice matters!” Not to me alone, but to this generation He has given a voice and He says, “I want to hear your voice. I want to hear you as you minister to Me through worship and prayer. And I want to hear your voice as you speak My love to the next generations.”

This is the prayer of the Psalmist,

O God, You have taught me from my youth; and until now I have proclaimed Your wondrous works. Now also when I am old and gray, O God, do not forsake me, until I have proclaimed Your strength to this generation, and Your power to everyone who is to come” (Ps. 71:17-18).

The writer’s heart is to declare the beauty and majesty of God to those who are younger, and even to those yet to be born.

In contrast to this is the reality of Israel given in Judges 2:10 which says,

That generation passed away, and after them grew up a generation who did not know the Lord or the deeds that He had done for Israel (Judg. 2:10).

And we know what happened in light of this failure of the older generation to proclaim the nature and works of the Lord.

Then the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the Lord (Judg. 2:11a).

I believe that Father God is calling this generation of boomers and builders back to a deeper purpose in their lives—one rooted and grounded in intimacy and identity found in Him! This sentiment is reflected in testimonies of our interns.

“The direction we are looking for in life and ministry, I have just come to discover ... is in simply knowing Him and loving Him (Jesus) and sitting in His presence” (Ps. 27:4).

“The Lord is restoring us to His original purpose for us. I desire a closer and an intimate relationship with Him, which is His heart’s desire for us.”

“I didn’t know that our Lord Jesus has been longing for me to come and dwell in His presence. I mean to come to a place of intimacy with Him. Thank God for the Simeon Company program.”

Father is calling this generation to greater intimacy in Christ, to agreement with Him and His purposes, to experience His love, and to express the Father’s love to younger generations. The results of this is a deeper relationship with God for this and each new generation—even those yet to come. This calling is reflected in the words of Psalm 78:

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 insightful sayings of old, which we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, but will tell the coming generation the praises of the Lord, and His strength, and the wonderful works that He has done. For He has established a rule in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our father that they should make them known to their children, that the generation to come might know them, even the children who are not yet born, who will arise and declare them to their children: that they might set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments

(Ps. 78:1-7).

So what is this generation—in their 50s, 60s and 70s—finding? They are finding intimacy with Christ. They are finding their identity in Him. They are finding purpose and direction for the future. They are finding their voice. And they are finding joy!

“I was desperate for a purpose for the rest of my life. Now I am full of purpose beyond hope and understanding.”

“I was aimless, discouraged, and hopeless about my future in God. Now I am encouraged, my vision is renewed and I am excited for God’s future plans for my life.”

Father is doing a new work. He is raising up a younger generation to pursue Him and declare His beauty to the nations. But he is also restoring an older generation to bring encouragement and hope to this new generation! {eoa}

Brad Tebbut was born in Vancouver, BC, and has been married for 36 years. He and his wife, Jennifer, have two beautiful children through adoption. Brad was involved in youth ministry for over 30 years before coming to IHOPKC and is now actively proclaiming the glory of God and beauty of Jesus through worship and prayer. He currently leads the Simeon Company Internship at IHOPKC, a training experience and mentoring community for those 50 and older. He is passionate about bringing hope to each new generation.