



Ministry News

FROM Len Evans

How to Pass the Baton

Here's practical wisdom for helping the next generation walk with God.

You may not be in full-time youth ministry. But I bet you are just as concerned about **passing on a strong faith to young people you care about.**



With the massive changes taking place in our culture today, do you ever wonder how to even start passing on your values to the next generation? I know one parent who felt so overwhelmed that he said, "I feel like I'm charging hell with a squirt gun!"

God's Way

Psalm 78 gives us God's simple yet profound secret for passing the baton. It also describes the disastrous results for Israel when they ignored His advice. Verses 4-7 are the crux of God's counsel:

Tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power, and the wonders He has done... that they may set their hope in God and keep His commandments.

God's Wonders

The people of Israel had a front-row seat to witness the incredible miracles of God - like crossing the Jordan River on dry ground, toppling the walls of Jericho in an instant, unlikely victories in battle, getting water from a rock and food from the sky - and on and on!

You'd think it would be easy - almost unavoidable - for them to share these stories with their children. But, by and large, it didn't happen. Instead, the Israelites were characterized as "stubborn, rebellious, disloyal and unfaithful" (v. 8). They refused to keep God's laws. They turned back in the day of battle (vs. 9-10), and

"continued to sin and rebel against God" (v. 17).

How did God respond? Three times, this single chapter records that God's wrath burned against His people. Why was God so angry? Psalm 78:7-8 said it was because **they no longer "put their trust in God."** Why not? How could they lose confidence in God after all He had done for them?

What Leads to Lack of Faith?

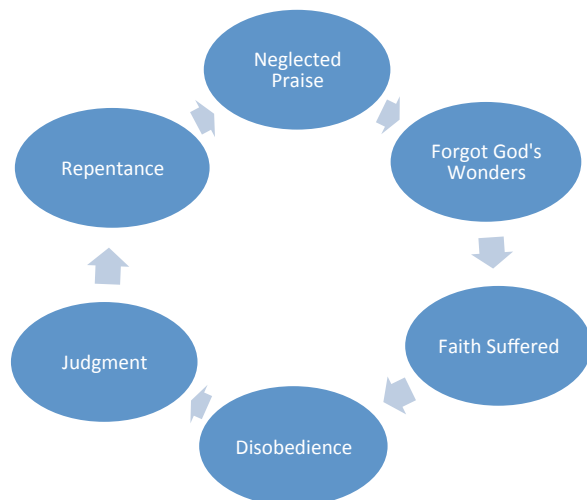
Verse 11 gives an unexpected, yet very "human" excuse. They simply **forgot**. They had not made a habit of talking about God's "praiseworthy deeds." Before long, God's miracles became unknown and irrelevant to the younger generation.

It seems like such a small thing - not to praise the Lord for what He has done. But when young people didn't hear the "God stories," it directly affected their **belief in God** and His relevance in their daily lives.

This was the first step on a slippery slope leading to a "Cycle of Unbelief." They abandoned God's laws and covenant, setting

themselves up for harsh judgment. Many eventually responded in repentance, only to return to the same pattern. They had not yet learned that faith is born in praise.

Cycle of Unbelief



What You Can Do

God wants us to be *people of praise* - every day. Let's recommit to help the next generation "**not forget** the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, His power and the wonders He has done." Consider these suggestions to help you pass the baton to the young people you love:

- 1) **Look.** Each day, notice God's fingerprints on your life and actions. Share with others!
- 2) **Landmarks.** Be sure your loved ones know how you received Christ and what events God used in your life to shape you.
- 3) **Observe.** Share with others how you see God working in their lives.
- 4) **Praise.** Thank God specifically and often for what He has done.

The good news is that there are many young Christ-followers who are passionate for God and the gospel.

Equipping, mobilizing and supporting teenagers is not just a task for youth workers. It's a calling for each of us to pass on our fervor for God and His work. Youth are a precious treasure that must be guarded; their lives

invested for the future of our families, our nation and the church of Jesus Christ.

Thanks so much for partnering with us to "pass the baton" to the next generation!

Evans Update

Coaches Corner - August 7-12, I am traveling to Lake Geneva, Wisconsin for a two-day training event with Lead 222. I'll be learning to help coach youth workers across Texas and New Mexico. Go to Lead222.com for more info.

Workshop - I'm traveling to Lovington, N.M. this month to provide a personalized training event for a church's youth and children's ministry teams.

Good News Lubbock - Progress is being made, but things are almost always slower than we hoped! So this will launch in January 2016. I'm now meeting with senior pastors who have a heart for unity and reaching Lubbock together.



Loving the West Coast: Sarabeth & Taylor at Stanford University in Palo Alto, Calif. before