STRATEGICALLY INCREASING INTER-GENERATIONAL

INVOLVEMENT AMONG THE MEMBERSHIP OF IVY

CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH IN BUFORD, GEORGIA

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A Project

Presented to

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by

Craig Darryl Dale

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APPROVAL SHEET

STRATEGICALLY INCREASING INTER-GENERATIONAL

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_____

(Second Reader)

Date_____

To Caroline,

my loving wife and friend;

to Presley, Maggie, Chloe, and Charlie,

the apples of my eye;

to my father and mother who have always supported me;

and to my wonderful brothers and sisters of

Ivy Creek Baptist Church and First Baptist Church Decatur,

all of whom have loved and supported me in this endeavor.

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PREFACE

I am a husband, a father, a pastor, and a student. Though I wear many hats, the roles that I play are not compartmentalized. Each is affected by the others. Therefore, I wish to thank my wife, Caroline, who has encouraged and supported me throughout all of my educational pursuits. I am thankful for our four children and live in constant amazement that God has blessed us so richly. All of them have sacrificed much in order for me to pursue this goal, and I am truly grateful.

I also want to thank Ivy Creek Baptist Church. Their support, prayers, patience and participation have been invaluable sources of encouragement to me. To be called "pastor" is a privilege. To be called "pastor" at Ivy Creek is a blessing beyond words. Without these fine people, this project would have never taken shape. I am humbled and grateful to be their pastor.

I am also thankful for the faculty and staff of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Particularly, I am grateful for the assistance and encouragement that I received from my supervisor, Dr. John David Trentham.

Ultimately, I give all praise to God. His grace has been sufficient for me, and apart from that grace, I could have accomplished nothing. To God be the glory.

Craig D. Dale

Buford, Georgia

May 2015

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Purpose

The purpose of this project was to help fulfill the mission of Ivy Creek Baptist

Church in making disciples of all believers by strategically increasing inter-generational

involvement of the adult members of the church through the application of the teachings

of Paul's letter to the church in Philippi.

Goals

The first goal was to evaluate the current inter-generational involvement in the

various ministries of Ivy Creek Baptist Church. A survey was distributed to a stratified

random sampling of 50 active church members ages 18 and older from each of the four

adult generations represented in the congregation.[1] The purpose of the survey[2] was to

gauge participants' attitudes and perceptions regarding inter-generational ministry

involvement. In addition, the survey provided information that gauged the level to which

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[1]Gary McIntosh suggests that four generations exist in relationship with one another at any given time: young, adult, mature, and senior. He renames them as Builders (born prior to 1946), Boomers (born 1946-1964), Busters (born 1965-1983), and Bridgers (born 1984-2002) in *One Church, Four Generations: Understanding and Reaching All Ages in Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002). By McIntosh's parameters a new generation will have begun in 2003. However, the four most recent generations that include adults as defined by their ages and relationships to each other will be the focus of this study.

[2]See appendix 1.

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each demographic stratum was involved in inter-generational ministry activities. In addition to the survey, church staff and ministry leaders compiled reports regarding their specific areas of ministry that detailed the involvement and volunteerism of the respective generations represented in the church.[3] The results of the survey along with the submitted ministry reports were analyzed jointly to determine which ministries involved which generations. This information formed the baseline used to measure the impact of the sermon series from Philippians as well as the formation of ministry-specific volunteer/participant job descriptions. The benchmark of success of this goal was accomplished by determining the baseline of inter-generational ministry involvement and participation within Ivy Creek Baptist Church prior to the sermon series through Philippians.

The second goal was to develop inter-generational volunteer/participant ministry opportunities at Ivy Creek Baptist Church. Staff and ministry leaders were asked to identify specific areas within their ministries that would be strategically enhanced through the integration of new volunteers and participants from different generations. A job description identifying the desired generational volunteer along with a set of qualifications and expectations were produced for each desired addition.[4] The number of inter-generational volunteer/participant job opportunities that were created measured this goal. The goal was deemed to be successful because a total of twenty-nine

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[3]See appendix 2 for a template of this report.

[4]See appendix 3 for a list of questions that each ministry leader was provided in order to assist them in creating a job description. See appendix 4 for a sample job description that was provided along with the questions.

different inter-generational volunteer/participant opportunities were identified, and appropriate job descriptions were developed for each position. The goal was also considered to be a success because that collection of descriptions was disseminated to the congregation.

The third goal was for Ivy Creek Baptist Church to realize an increase in inter-generational involvement through teaching the foundational principles of partnership between generations put forth in the epistle of Philippians. This was accomplished through a series of twelve expository sermons preached on Sunday mornings. Sermon notes and outlines were provided to the congregation for each sermon in the series, which explained the biblical support for generational partnership within the local church.[5] In order for the effectiveness of the sermon series to be measured, a post-sermon series survey identical to the pre-sermon series survey was given to the same stratified random sampling of church members that participated in the first survey. The difference in the answers provided by the participants in the pre- and post- surveys underwent comparison and statistical analysis according to the *t*-test for dependent samples in order to determine if there were changes in participation among the sample, and/or if beliefs and attitudes toward inter-generational involvement occurred following the sermons.[6] Sermon series effectiveness was also measured by the response of volunteers to the collection of inter-generational volunteer/participant job opportunities. The means of measuring the impact of the sermons on the congregation was undertaken by comparing the mean responses to

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[5]See appendix 5 for sermon notes and outlines.

[6]Neil J. Salkind, *Statistics for People (Who Think) They Hate Statistics*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2008), 190.

the pre-sermon series survey with the mean responses to the same survey once the twelve sermons had been completed. The benchmark of success was measured by a positive increase in attitudes favorable toward, and involvement in inter-generational ministries of the church.

Context

Ivy Creek Baptist Church is located in Buford, Georgia, in Gwinnett County, less than two miles from the Mall of Georgia, the largest mall and shopping district in the state. Twenty years ago, the area surrounding the church was largely farmland, and small neighborhoods. However, the population growth that affected all of north Georgia dramatically changed the landscape of the Buford community as well. Based upon data collected from the Georgia Baptist Convention, the population within a five-mile radius of the church increased by 134 percent from 1990 to 2010.[7] Significantly, persons living in families as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, account for 91 percent of the total population within five miles of the church, and 94 percent within three miles of the church. Based upon 2010 data, of the population living within five miles of the church, the largest subgroup by age is 35 to 44 year olds, which make up 17 percent, followed by 45 to 54 year olds at 15 percent, and 25 to 34 year olds at 13 percent. The 55 to 64 year old demographic make up 11 percent, while those 65 years and over total 8 percent of the population. Preschool-aged children account for 10 percent of the population, grade school-aged children make up 11 percent, and middle- and high school-aged children

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[7]*Community Assessment Profile, Ivy Creek Baptist Church, Buford, Georgia* (Duluth, GA: Georgia Baptist Convention, Research Services, 2012).

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total 9 percent of the population. The smallest subgroup is comprised of those from 18 to 24 years old at 7 percent. Such demographic data not only shows that the mission field of Ivy Creek Baptist Church has increased dramatically in the past twenty years, but also that the field is very diverse with respect to its generations.

The church has definitely benefited from the increase in population, and has experienced substantial growth. Based upon church records, between 2001 and 2011, the total membership of Ivy Creek increased by 43.5 percent, and weekly worship attendance grew from an average of 170 to around 400. What was once a small, rural church comprised mostly of extended family units has transitioned into a generationally diverse congregation.

Prior to 2010, Ivy Creek Baptist Church had only two pastors in the previous fourteen years. James McNeal pastored the church from 1996 until 2002. At the time of McNeal's departure, he was near 65 years old. Jim Ferguson followed McNeal and pastored the church from 2002 until he retired in 2010 at 75 years old. Under Ferguson's leadership, Ivy Creek Baptist Church became well aware of the growth and diversity of its surrounding community. During his ministry the church began to experience significant growth and change. Ferguson led the church in a building campaign that resulted in the construction of a new worship facility that more than tripled the seating capacity of the former sanctuary. The church began holding its worship services in the new building in October 2007.

In 2010, at the age of 40, with a wife and three young children, I became pastor of Ivy Creek Baptist Church. This point is significant in that the church made a conscious decision to appoint leadership that was closer to the demographic median age

of the community, and whose family more closely resembled the families that live near the church. Though there had been growth in the church in previous years, much of that growth had taken place in older age groups. By choosing their present pastor, the membership hoped to move in a direction that would more intentionally engage the discipleship of younger families.

God has been gracious and has blessed Ivy Creek Baptist Church abundantly since 2010. According to church records, resident members who actively attend worship services have grown by over 45 percent in that period, increasing from 219 to 405. Of the 186 new additions, 114 are in their forties or younger, constituting almost 80 percent of the total number of active resident members in the church in that age bracket. Furthermore, the growth the church has experienced in this age group has had the side effect of boosting the number of children involved in Sunday school programs by nearly 60 percent, and in other children's ministries by over 75 percent.

Ivy Creek Baptist Church has grown, and the median age of the church has gotten younger since 2010. The church is progressively reflecting the makeup of its home community, and the potential for continued growth remains astounding.

As pastor of Ivy Creek Baptist Church, one of my primary responsibilities is to cast vision for the continued growth and overall health of the church. In order for that to happen, the church must be led to recognize that cooperation between multiple generations will be a key component to the effective ministry and future growth of the congregation. This responsibility must be undertaken with an eye toward being one who accepts the role of an under-shepherd who lovingly and caringly tends to his entire congregation, which includes older, long-time members and younger, more recent

additions. Consequently, it was necessary to appeal to a source that is timeless,

universally true and authoritative with regard to the church. Scripture must be the

unifying force that not only points the body to the overall mission of the church, but also

directs the church in appropriate decorum and response to growth and change.

Rationale

One of the key metaphors used of the New Testament church is that of being a

part of a family. One of the Apostle Paul's favorite terms to refer to believers was

brethren. Furthermore, Scripture teaches that when a person places his or her faith in the

Lord Jesus, they are adopted into the family of God (Gal 4:4-6; Eph 1:5; Rom 8:15). No

doubt such a consistent use of metaphorical language is designed to give people a

common thread by which they can understand what a church body should look like and

how it should function. Because a church is a spiritual family, there are certain

characteristics that are similar to, or at least should be similar to human families. As

Mollie Ziegler Hemingway writes, "Congregations are families that, by definition,

include people of all ages and circumstances."[8] Gary McIntosh asserts that from a

historical perspective, "four generations often exist together, interlaced in a particular

moment of time: young, adult, mature, and senior."[9]

Since families are multi-generational, a family tree is not formed by one

generation, but by the reproduction of one generation culminating in the formation of

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[8]Mollie Ziegler Hemingway, "Segregated in a Whole New Way: A Church Family from the Same Generation Isn't Much of a Family," *Christianity Today* 54, no. 1 (January 2010): 54.

[9]Gary L. McIntosh, *One Church, Four Generations: Understanding and Reaching All Ages in Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002), 10.

another generation, which continues and perpetuates the cycle. Consequently, in any given family unit, depending on life expectancy, there can exist up to five generations of family members.[10] Because of the presence of multiple generations within an extended family unit, each generation represents a distinctive and integral component of the family makeup and dynamic. Furthermore, each generation has a responsibility to the other generations that are present within the family unit. As each generation grows older, the responsibilities change and become more in line with the responsibilities of the generation that preceded it. Consequently, children eventually become mothers and fathers, who eventually become grandparents, great-grandparents, and so on.

The New Testament church family should be no different from that of human families in the sense that it should be comprised of multiple generations that are committed to fulfilling the responsibilities that each has to the other. As Hemingway notes, "Each of us learns and benefits from caring for the old, the sick, the suffering, and the dying, just as we benefit from the vitality that children, teens, and young adults bring. We all have vastly different experiences in life. By existing together in one community, we all benefit."[11]

The timing of this project was crucial for Ivy Creek Baptist Church because as the church continues to grow numerically, its need for inter-generational involvement continues to grow as well. With the explosion that has been realized in the children's

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[10]Peter Menconi argues for six generations in *The Intergenerational Church: Understanding Congregations from WWII to www.com* (Littleton, CO: Mt. Sage Publishing, 2008), xviii.

[11]Hemingway, "Segregated in a Whole New Way," 54.

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ministries, there has not been a correlative growth in volunteers willing to serve in those same ministries. That is not to say that there have not been new volunteers, but in many cases, the volunteers have come from the generation of those who are the parents of the children those particular ministries are targeting. Though there has been some, the church has not experienced a significant growth in volunteers for children's ministries from the generation of grandparents. Without a correction in this area, the burden upon parents to provide the ministries necessary to reach their children may prove to be too great, and growth within these generations may be stunted. Furthermore, if the children's ministry responsibilities are not shared among all of the adult generations, then there is the distinct probability that the discipleship of the generation of parents will suffer because they may not be able to regularly participate in other ministries of the church designed to encourage their discipleship. Such a scenario runs counter to what constitutes a sound church and to the teaching of the Apostle Paul in his admonition to Titus (Titus 2:1-8).

Another concern is the lack of participation by younger generations in other ministries in which the church is engaged. For example, the women's and men's ministries of the church are largely populated by those who are grandparents and great-grandparents, with a smattering of commitment from those of the generation of parents, and almost none of those who are on the cusp of joining that generation. It is conceivable that the focus of these ministries, as well as others, plays a part in the reason why they are not more inter-generational in nature. In fact, there may be cause for certain ministries within the church to fade away due to their lack of relevance to younger generations. However, for crucial ministries, if inter-generational participation does not increase, then

there is a distinct possibility that even though the church is growing at a rapid pace, it may become necessary to reorganize those ministries in order to incorporate inter-generational participation.

There is also the pastoral concern that members of Ivy Creek Baptist Church will fail to experience not only the spiritual growth that comes with serving and participating within an inter-generational culture, but that they will also never experience the joy that accompanies such service and participation. My hope is that each generation represented within the church will begin actively seeking out opportunities to become involved with and serve other generations. Such a shift in the culture of the church will serve to unite the entire body toward the common purpose of advancing the Kingdom of Christ and fulfilling the Great Commission.

Though there are many passages in both the OT and NT that would have served as excellent sources of instruction, the book of Philippians was selected as the text to undergo exposition during the twelve week sermon series that focused on inter-generational ministry. There were three primary reasons for choosing Philippians. The first was that it is my practice to preach through books of the Bible chapter by chapter, and preaching through Philippians allowed for me to do that over the course of the twelve weeks. Second, according to Luke's description in Acts 16 of the first members of the church in Philippi as well as the internal evidence from the letter itself, the makeup of the church was very diverse with regard to not only social status and ethnicity, but also to generational identity. Such diversity set the stage for much of Paul's comments and instructions to the Philippian church, and made for an excellent authoritative source from which specific application for Ivy Creek could be derived. The final reason for choosing

Philippians was that in it Paul addresses specific issues that diversity raises, such as unity within the church, self-sacrifice and putting the interests of others first, and how to properly deal with conflict within the church. These issues along with the fact that in Philippians, the gospel is of foremost importance to Paul made it an excellent book through which to preach.

Definitions

Expository preaching. In his book on expository preaching, Harold Bryson describes the practice as involving "the art of preaching a series of sermons either consecutively or selectively from a Bible book. Each sermon within the series needs to expose a biblical truth."[12] Walter Liefeld concludes, "The essential nature of expository preaching . . . is preaching that explains a passage in such a way as to lead the congregation to a true and practical application of that passage." He further states, "If exposition is explanation, expository preaching is explanation applied."[13] John Stott concurs and states that the expositor's responsibility "is to open [the biblical text] up in such a way that it speaks its message clearly, plainly, accurately, relevantly, without addition, subtraction or falsification."[14]

Generation. The term "generation" is used in the Bible to describe "the 'circle' of life, spanning from a man's birth to that of his son; this period was reckoned to

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[12]Harold T. Bryson, *Expository Preaching: The Art of Preaching through a Book of the Bible* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 34.

[13]Walter L. Liefeld, *New Testament Exposition* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1989), 6.

[14]John R. W. Stott, *Between Two Worlds: The Challenge of Preaching Today* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1982), 126.

be forty years (Num 32:13; Deut 2:14). The term was also used to refer collectively to all people living in such a period."[15] In his book *One Church, Four Generations*, Gary McIntosh defines the term generation as "a group of people who are connected by their place in time with common boundaries and a common character."[16] For the purpose of this project, the term "generation" was used to refer to individuals connected by the common boundary of their age (i.e., Builders, Boomers, Busters, and Bridgers)[17] as well as by the common character of their relationship as represented within a given family unit (i.e., children, parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, etc.).

      Inter-generational ministry. The purpose of this project was to enhance inter-generational involvement of church membership. Though Ivy Creek has become more multi-generational in that it has experienced an influx of people from younger generations while also keeping those from older generations, such growth and diversity has not necessarily translated into its becoming a church with a healthy "inter-generational" church ministry. Peter Menconi notes in his book *The Intergenerational Church* that "while many churches are *multigenerational* and seemingly healthy on the surface, in reality, the generations act like ships in the night that pass by one another but rarely have meaningful contact and interaction."[18] For the purpose of this project, the use of the terms "inter-generational" and "inter-generational ministry" reflected not simply

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[15]A. C. Myers, "generation," in *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 1987).

[16]McIntosh, *One Church, Four Generations*, 11.

[17]Ibid., 10.

[18]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 13.

the presence of multiple generations, but rather the meaningful and necessary interactions through fellowship and service that should occur between generations.

Limitations and Delimitations

The main limitation of this project was its length of nineteen weeks. The desire was to see mutually beneficial relationships develop between all of the generations of the church. However, the evaluation of the success of this endeavor will take much longer than nineteen weeks to assess fully. Within the parameters of the nineteen weeks, the measure of change in the beliefs and attitudes of the surveyed sample toward inter-generational partnerships, as well as a calculation of how many new participants and volunteers were added to the existing ministries of the church were the only means of evaluating the project. The ultimate efficacy and worth of this endeavor will only be seen in the long-term relationships that are not only developed but are also maintained.

With regard to the pre- and post-sermon series survey, participants in the survey were delimited to adults ages 18 and over. The purpose of this age delimitation centered on the fact that typically by the age of 18, an individual has the ability to choose for themselves what activities and forms of service within the church they desire to engage.

A further delimitation of church membership was imposed upon those who participated in the surveys. The purpose of delimiting participation in the surveys to those who are members was two-fold. First, to become a member of Ivy Creek Baptist Church, one must profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, thereby declaring their union with Christ. It was my conviction that only those who had trusted in Christ and entered into that union with Him could be expected to be changed by the power of the Holy Spirit

working supernaturally through the exposition of the Scriptures. The second reason for delimiting survey participants to being members only was that by having officially joined the church body, such individuals had demonstrated that to some level they had attached value to this locally organized body of believers. It was my conviction that those who had deemed this local church body to be valuable were the ones most likely to be positively impacted by the exposition of the Scriptures which addressed the inter-generational relationships that exist within the church.

Research Methodology

The successful completion of this project was accomplished when the specific goals of the study were attained. An evaluative process was put in place first to determine the baseline from which growth in inter-generational partnerships were measured. The first steps were to establish a benchmark, which allowed for the evaluation of the impact of the sermons. The baseline and its evaluation were developed with the assistance of the church staff and ministry leaders of each department (children, youth, men, women, music and missions). Each ministry leader provided data that detailed the demographic makeup of the volunteers and participants in their respective ministries.[19] From this data, the change in the involvement of the various generations represented in whole church was determined.

Additionally, a pre-sermon series survey was administered to a stratified random sampling of 50 persons over the age of 18.[20] Utilizing church records, church

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[19]See appendix 2.

[20]See appendix 1.

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members were separated into four generational strata based upon their ages.[21] A simple

random sample from each stratum was obtained that was weighted according to the

percentage that each stratum made up of the whole membership population.[22] The

objective of this survey was two-fold. First, it asked for the age of the participating

member, and identified the areas of ministry in which he or she has served in the past.

The second purpose of the survey was to assist in the accomplishment of both

the first and third goals of this project. The survey included eleven declarative statements

designed to provide a foundational understanding of participants' attitudes and beliefs

toward inter-generational involvement and partnerships. Participants were asked to

respond to the eleven declarative statements based on the six-point Likert scale indicating

strong agreement, agreement, somewhat agreement, somewhat disagreement,

disagreement, or strong disagreement.[23] The results formed the baseline from which

changes in beliefs and attitudes were measured.

A time of instruction to increase knowledge among the congregation regarding

inter-generational partnerships was essential. This instruction consisted of twelve

expository sermons preached from the epistle of Philippians that emphasized the

importance of members collaborating with each other for the sake of the gospel and the

sake of the health of the church. A post-sermon series survey identical to the pre-sermon

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[21]McIntosh, *One Church, Four Generations*, 11.

[22]Based upon information on how to obtain an effective sampling in Michael
Sullivan III, *Fundamentals of Statistics,* 3rd ed., Sullivan Statistics Series (Boston:
Prentice Hall, 2011), 30.

[23]Adapted from Rensis Likert, "A Technique for the Measurement of
Attitudes," *Archives of Psychology* 22, no. 140 (1932): 1-55.

series survey was given to the same selected sample of participants. The difference in the answers provided by the participants in the pre- and post- surveys underwent comparison and statistical analysis according to the *t*-test for dependent samples.[24] The purpose of conducting such statistical analysis was to determine the reliability of the differences between the two surveys. The objective was to determine if the average responses of the participants represented an inferential change in attitude and behavior regarding inter-generational partnerships following the Philippian sermon series.

Pursuant to the expository sermon series, a clear list of opportunities on how members of each generation could become involved in inter-generational partnerships within the various individual ministries of the church was presented to the church body. Staff and ministry leaders developed volunteer/participant job descriptions that identified specific needs within each of their ministries, and they further identified the desired generational volunteer or participant that would ideally be able to fulfill those job descriptions.[25] All of the volunteer/participant job descriptions were collectively assembled and distributed to the membership, clearly communicating to each generation where they had an opportunity to serve. This communication with the church body provided the congregation the opportunity to apply the knowledge that was gained through the expository sermon series, and thus accomplished the second goal of this project. The congregation was encouraged to volunteer to become part of the various ministries of the church by responding to the specific volunteer/participant job

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[24]Salkind, *Statistics for People (Who Think) They Hate Statistics*, 190.

[25]See appendices 3 and 4.

descriptions that interested them. Following the assimilation of all new volunteers and

participants, each staff and ministry leader was asked to provide data that detailed the

new demographic makeup of the volunteers and participants in their respective

ministries.[26] The program was considered successful because involvement and

participation among the adult generations of the church in at least one inter-generational

program increased.

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[26]See appendix 2.

CHAPTER 2

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR
THE EXISTENCE AND NECESSITY OF
INTER-GENERATIONAL CHURCHES

In two separate statements, one occurring soon after His resurrection, and the second just before His ascension, Jesus emphasized the global nature of the impact of the gospel, and the necessity of His disciples to be engaged in its transmission. In Matthew 28:18-20, commonly referred to as the "Great Commission," Jesus commands His disciples to replicate themselves by making disciples of all nations. In Acts 1:8, Jesus promises the power of the Holy Spirit to be that which propels His disciples out from Jerusalem to Judea and Samaria, and ultimately, "to the end of the earth." The imperatival nature of both commissions insinuates that the disciples were actively to begin their going, baptizing, teaching, and witnessing. However, the immensity of the scope of Jesus' commissions certainly did not insinuate that their tasks would be completed quickly. In fact, over two millennia later, the burden to continue that work remains.

The result of two thousand years of passing time is that local church communities have been, and will continue to be made up of multiple generations that live and worship together. Each generation, much like the individuals who make them up, has its own unique identity. Nevertheless, the commissions of Christ necessitate that these individual and often very diverse generations must work together. This chapter will examine various biblical foundations that will demonstrate that unity in diversity is a prerequisite for inter-generationality in any local church community.

Biblical Foundations for Inter-Generational Ministry

The passing of time has created a byproduct not specifically mentioned in Jesus' commissions but which must be necessarily assumed. A proper reading of the NT establishes that this byproduct is not only something that must be necessarily assumed by Jesus' words, but is also a necessary ingredient for the fulfillment of His words. The byproduct of fulfilling Christ's commands that is at the same time necessary for the continued fulfillment of those commands is the existence of multiple generations of people who pass on the truth of the gospel to the generations that follow them. Without such a byproduct, the global nature of our Lord's commission would not be possible.

The passing down of truth from one generation to the next did not begin as a result of the Great Commission, however. Such inter-generational relationships find their roots in the decrees of God all the way back in the OT. Peter C. Craigie notes that the concept of the responsibility of adults educating children is an important theme in the context of covenant that weaves its way throughout the book of Deuteronomy (Deut 4:9; 6:7, 20; 11:19; 31:13; 32:46).[1] Because the continuity of God's covenant promise, "in its fullness, was contingent upon the obedience of the people of God . . . it was vital that the people of God not only remember their experience of God's mighty hand, but also that they pass on the memory, and thus the experience, to their children."[2] Accordingly, J. S. Pridmore asserts, "The religion of the Old Testament is not an individual adult affair to which a child's relationship is uncertain, but a communal and corporate life of faith and obedience to Yahweh in which the child has his own rightful and unquestioned place."[3]

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[1]Peter C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy,* The New International Commentary on the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1976), 133.

[2]Ibid.

[3]John S. Pridmore, *The New Testament Theology of Childhood* (Hobart, Australia: Ron Buckland, 1977), 28-29, quoted in Allan G. Harkness,

Allan Harkness notes that "churches of the New Testament maintained the intergenerational model drawn from their Old Testament roots, with persons of all ages considered to be integral."[4]

As a consequence, throughout the Bible a consistent value is placed upon intergenerational relationships, not only between adults and children, but between varying adult generations as well. From the inception of the church through its continued growth and development, the NT outlines the existence and responsibilities of differing generations within the body. The book of Acts gives significant insight into the intergenerational identity of the NT church by providing both the narrative as well as the historical backdrop to the formation of many of the individual church congregations of the first century.

Luke begins the book of Acts by telling his readers how the commission given by Jesus to His disciples to be His "witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8) through the power of the Holy Spirit came to happen. In Acts 2, he describes how the centrifugal force of the Holy Spirit propelled Jesus' disciples out of the Upper Room in which they had gathered on the day of Pentecost. Suddenly, they spoke in languages that heretofore had been unknown to this small band of Jesus' followers, and they gave testimony to the fact that Jesus was the Messiah. In the middle of this marvelous display of the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Peter began to preach to the Jews who had gathered from all over Palestine in Jerusalem to observe the feast. In his sermon, Peter unmistakably proclaimed the universality of the scope of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which no

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"Intergenerationality: Biblical and Theological Foundations," *Christian Education Journal* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 127.

[4]Harkness, "Intergenerationality," 127.

doubt became visible by the fact that about three thousand people gladly received his words and were baptized (2:41). The gift of the Holy Spirit had come with power and descended upon a very large and diverse crowd that not only consisted of multiple languages, but no doubt, multiple generations as well.

Such diversity within the newly formed body of believers was not unique to that first church in Jerusalem, however. In Acts 16, Luke recounts that under Paul's leadership, he along with Silas and Timothy traveled to the Roman colony of Philippi. As a result of the missionary work in which this team engaged, a church was founded whose "nucleus was formed by a group of 'God-fearing' women, who, because of the lack of a Jewish synagogue in the city, [had made it their habit to meet] by the river on the Sabbath for 'prayer.'"[5] The diversity of that nucleus, however, appears to extend past that of a few women of differing socio-economic strata to include both genders and multiple generations. From Luke's account in Acts 16, Frank Thielman identifies the early members of the church as being the wealthy merchant Lydia along with those in her household, as well as the Philippian jailor and his family, and possibly the young slave girl who had been delivered from the evil spirit.[6] As had been the case in Jerusalem, inter-generational relationships were both normative and necessary in Philippi.

Later, according to Acts 18, the Apostle Paul arrived in the city of Corinth during his second missionary journey with the intent of taking the message of the gospel to the Jews in the synagogue located there. The Jews, however, were not interested in Paul's message concerning Jesus, and they opposed him. As a result, Paul "moved to a

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[5]Gordon D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995), 27.

[6]Frank Thielman, *Philippians*, The NIV Application Commentary Series (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 17.

nearby Gentile home and ministered predominantly to the non-Jewish peoples of the town," though the ruler of the synagogue was ultimately converted along with his family.[7] Ultimately a church was established in Corinth, and Paul remained there for eighteen months during which time many heard his message concerning Jesus and believed and were baptized (Acts 18:8). Craig Blomberg asserts that the number of converts and the size of the church in Corinth cannot be known, stating, "Any given house church could probably accommodate a maximum of fifty people, but we do not know how many separate gatherings there may have been."[8] What can be known from the resulting letters that were exchanged between the apostle and the church, however, is that when Paul left Corinth, he left behind him a church comprised of multiple generations that was no doubt "thriving [and] throbbing with vitality."[9]

Later in Paul's life, after he was ultimately released from Roman custody following the events of Acts 28, he along with Titus and Timothy set out on an evangelization mission to the island of Crete. Though the team experienced success, they also encountered opposition from Hellenistic Jews, necessitating that Paul leave "Titus on the island to regulate things by putting the churches in order."[10] After Paul and Timothy's separation from Titus, Paul eventually separated from Timothy, leaving him to oversee the church in Ephesus. The resulting letters from Paul bearing the names of his

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[7]Craig L. Blomberg, *1 Corinthians,* The NIV Application Commentary Series (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 21.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text,* The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000), 29.

[10]Gordon D. Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus,* New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988), 4.

two protégés make up what are referred to as "the Pastoral Epistles" (PE).[11]   Paul's

stated purpose for the first letter to Timothy occurs in the middle of the letter in which he

states, "I am writing these things to you so that, if I delay, you may know how one ought

to behave in the household of God" (1 Tim 3:14-15). Philip Towner notes that the letter

to Titus was written in order to encourage him to lead the church(es) in Crete "to embody

the grace of God in so full a way that its life, from household to community, [would be]

radically different from the depraved expectations of the values of Cretan culture."[12] In

both of these letters, Paul encourages the development of inter-generational relationships

between Timothy and Titus and older men, younger men, older women, and younger

women (1 Tim 5:1-2; Titus 2:2-7). He specifically urges the children or grandchildren of

widows to take responsibility for the care of their widowed mother or grandmother (1

Tim 5:4). He also speaks to the role of older women in the training of younger women

(Titus 2:3-5).[13]

From these passages, it is clear that the churches of the NT were comprised of

multiple generations that came together for the purpose of worshiping and serving Christ.

Yet, it is equally clear that such diversity among the generations no doubt produced

friction that at times threatened the unity and effectiveness of the church's mission. A

more in depth examination of these and other pertinent biblical passages combined with

an application of the truth they convey will show that a healthy church will be made up of

multiple generations that develop cohesive bonds and are able to cooperate together for

the purpose of fulfilling the Great Commission.

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[11]Philip H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus,* The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2006), 1.

[12]Ibid., 75.

[13]As summarized by Harkness, "Intergenerationality," 125.

The Gospel Transcends All Social Divisions: Acts 2:42-47

In Acts 2:42-47, Luke turns his attention to the description of how that first congregation of believers in Jerusalem related to one another. This passage is often accepted as a cohesive unit whose subject matter is a description of early church life.[14] In it, Luke describes four practices to which the new believers devoted themselves that were common among the new believers that assembled together. The first activity on Luke's list to which this large, newly formed, culturally and generational diverse congregation devoted itself was to the teaching of the apostles. That Luke would begin with this activity is significant because it insinuates the priority that such teaching had in the life of the early church. This was a necessary activity, not simply as a means of disseminating information, but as a critical component for making true disciples. As Jesus' Great Commission had instructed them, the apostles were to not only go and baptize, but they were also to teach, thereby ensuring the transmission of correct doctrine to the newly converted disciples.

Such teaching was undoubtedly inter-generational in nature. This NT church was comprised of predominately Jewish believers, and the common core of their cultural heritage was built upon truths being passed down from one generation to the next. The most fundamental creedal tradition of the Jewish people states, "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (Deut 6:4-5). As Christopher Wright notes, this is both a statement affirming the central truth *about* God, and it is also a call for commitment *to* God.[15] Eugene Merrill asserts that the second person singular

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[14]So, John R.W Stott, *The Message of Acts: The Spirit, the Church & the World*, The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 81, and Ajith Fernando, *Acts*, The NIV Application Commentary Series (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998)*,* 119.

[15]Christopher J. H. Wright, *Deuteronomy,* Understanding the Bible

verb for "to hear," which begins Israel's Shema is also an imperative verb that "emphasizes the corporate or collective nature of the addressee, that is, Israel. The covenant was made with the nation as a whole and so the nation must as a unified community give heed to the command of the Lord."[16] As a consequence, it is no small thing to note that the Shema is followed by another set of commands designed to aid adults in teaching the law to their children. Moses insinuates that the way to make this message indelible on their hearts is through constant repetition. "Thus whether while sitting at home or walking in the pathway, whether lying down to sleep or rising for the tasks of a new day, teacher and pupil must be preoccupied with covenant concerns and their faithful transmission."[17] The core of the Hebrew faith relied on the inter-generational instruction regarding truth and obedience. Such patterns of behavior would have been ingrained in these Jewish converts, and would have no doubt carried over into how truth and obedience were communicated to younger generations in the NT church as well.

The second activity Luke identifies to which these new believers devoted themselves was to "the fellowship." The Greek word that Luke uses to describe the activity is κοινωνία which carries the meaning of a "close association involving mutual interests and sharing." In other words, it means "association, communion, fellowship, close relationship."[18] By highlighting this particular activity, or better yet, a particular

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Commentary (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 95.

[16]Eugene H. Merrill, *Deuteronomy,* The New American Commentary, vol. 4 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994), 162.

[17]Ibid., 163.

[18]Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature,* rev. and ed. Frederick W. Danker, 3rd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), Logos Bible Software, s.v. "κοινωνία."

way of living, Luke alerts his readers to its stark contrast from what would have been the norm for this culturally and generationally diverse crowd prior to their inclusion into the body of believers. Therefore, "the fellowship" that was shared among this first church was, as Stott reasons, a common share in the vertical fellowship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, which led further to a commonly shared horizontal fellowship.[19] The horizontal nature of this fellowship is even implicated in the final two practices that Luke identifies, the devotion to the "breaking of bread" and to "prayer."

From Luke's historical account, what is apparent is that on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit not only moved with power within the lives of those first followers of Christ who had gathered in the Upper Room, but also within the hearts of the large and diverse crowd who gathered to hear Peter's sermon. The result of the Holy Spirit's work was that a collective body was formed in Jerusalem whose unity centered on the worship of Jesus as Messiah. Though the diversity of this body extended to their cultural makeup, social status, gender and age, they found common ground in their newfound faith that transcended all other divisions. The work of the Holy Spirit led them to rely on the apostolic teaching of truth and upon the communion they had with each other despite their superficial differences.

Unity and Cooperation Are Necessary among Diverse Generations within the Church: Philippians 2:1-4

The diverse makeup of the Philippian church set the stage for the message Paul desired to communicate to them. His emphasis on unity and cooperation among the various members of the Philippian church permeates the entire letter alerting his readers not only to the challenges that diversity can bring, but also to the absolute necessity of unity in spite of such diversity.

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[19]Stott, *The Message of Acts*, 82-83.

In a highly rhetorical style, Paul begins this paragraph, which is actually one very long sentence, by posing a series of four questions, or "if" clauses: "If there is any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy." These clauses have caused many to scratch their heads. Gordon Fee offers that part of the difficulty in understanding these clauses lies in the fact that "what precisely Paul is appealing to in each case is less than clear."[20] Similarly, Frank Thielman wonders why Paul chose "precisely these qualities for his list?"[21] Peter O'Brien states, "The precise relationship of each [phrase] to the other is far from certain, and even where two or more commentators have agreed about parallel phrases, they have frequently differed as to the precise meaning of the expressions in parallelism."[22] Moises Silva offers a solution to the dilemma, stating that these "clauses are deliberately compressed and vague, since the appeal is primarily emotional. That is, verse 1 is not intended to function as a set of four rational, theological arguments but rather as impassioned pleading."[23] In other words, before Paul launches into a clear cut appeal to unity among the Philippian membership that will call them to put aside their personal agendas, he focuses their attention on what they held in common by being "in Christ," namely – Christ's consolation, their comfort of love, their fellowship in the Spirit, and the affection and mercy (or compassion) that they shared with the Apostle.

These clear affirmations of what each person enjoyed as a result of their

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[20]Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians,* 157.

[21]Thielman, *Philippians,* 96.

[22]Peter T. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians: A Commentary on the Greek Text,* The New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1991), 167.

[23]Moises Silva, *Philippians,* 2nd ed., Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 87-88.

relationship to Christ leads Paul to move to the verb of the sentence in 2:2 in which he tells the Philippians to "fulfill my joy" or "complete my joy." Though verbs often carry much freight in Greek sentence structure, and though imperative verbs such as this one often garner much attention when it comes to discerning what the author intended to communicate, such is not the case here. In fact, Fee states that the urgency of Paul's appeal through the use of "this imperative seems unnecessary."[24] Silva concurs and notes that "the main verb of a sentence does not necessarily convey the writer's main concern," a fact made plain in that "the primary thought of the whole passage focuses not on Paul's personal yearnings for joy but on the Philippian's unanimity of mind, enjoined in the subordinate clauses that follow."[25]

The emphasis that Paul places upon unity and cooperation is found in 2:2 where in similar fashion to the fourfold "if" phrases of 2:1, Paul links together four synonymous phrases in which he encourages the members of the Philippian church to be "like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Fee notes that "the 'wayfaring person though a fool' could not possibly miss the point" of Paul's argument.[26] It is obvious that according to Paul's line of reasoning, unity, or "spiritual oneness" was a crucial element that needed to exist among the members of the Philippian church.[27]

In 2:3-4, Paul tells the Philippian believers how they were to achieve this spiritual oneness. He states that if the Philippian church were to achieve unity, its members would have to be on guard against "selfish ambition" and empty "conceit." As

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[24]Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians,* 183.

[25]Silva, *Philippians,* 86.

[26]Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians,* 184-85.

[27]Thielman, *Philippians,* 87.

O'Brien states, "The unity and harmony that Paul earnestly desires for his readers can be achieved only if they reject all forms of self-seeking and vainglory, and instead humbly regard one another as more important than themselves."[28] He continues his appeal in 2:4 by asserting that looking out solely for one's own interests is a behavior to be avoided and replaced with a profound concern for the other person. Silva notes that the "overarching concern of this section" is the issue of humility, which stands in "opposition to such as expressions as 'selfishness' and 'looking out for oneself.'"[29] Thielman adds that the attitude of humility that Paul says "should characterize the believer's relationship with fellow believers," is what connects this section to the next, because there Paul will describe how humility "is the chief quality of Jesus' relationship with us."[30]

Paul's obvious insistence upon unity was expressed to a diverse set of individuals who comprised the collective church at Philippi. His emphasis on cultivating solidarity and harmony while eschewing selfishness and self-focus should alert modern readers to the fact that this early church was plagued by many of the same issues that churches face today. Individual agendas, gender-specific agendas, and generational agendas were all potential threats to church unity, not to mention the added stress of opposition from those outside the church. Nevertheless, Paul urges that such obstacles can be overcome by individual believers setting their minds on serving other believers out of a spirit of unity and cooperation.

Church Health Demands That There Be Generational Interdependence: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

The city of Corinth was a prosperous, heavily populated, and culturally diverse

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[28]O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians,* 167.

[29]Silva, *Philippians,* 87.

[30]Thielman, *Philippians,* 97.

city described as being at once, a first-century version of New York, Los Angeles, and Las Vegas.[31] The church that Paul planted in the city flourished and grew. It was not, however, without its issues and problems. Based upon the information gathered from reading Paul's letter, many have deduced that the Corinthian church had become divided into factious parties. Craig Blomberg argues that powerful leaders were promoting "themselves against each other, each with his band of loyal followers."[32] Furthermore, based upon the content of the letter, the church was also dealing with the sexual misconduct of its members, from consorting with prostitutes to incest to ill-advised celibacy. There were disagreements concerning the roles that men and women were allowed to assume within the church, as well as arguments with regard to what constituted a spiritual gift and how and when that gift could be used. The diversity of the membership led to divisions along socioeconomic lines that only exacerbated the problems. Though hesitant to label all of the Corinthian problems the result of one underlying cause, Blomberg believes that the disunity the church experienced "was marked by a recurring arrogance and immaturity."[33]

Though the Corinthian church was without doubt embroiled in conflict and controversy, Anthony Thistleton offers an insightful understanding of the purpose behind Paul's letter. He asserts that "whether the issue of discord is dominant or merely a constituent component of a wider set of problems, not ecclesiology but a reproclamation of grace and the cross to Christian believers takes center stage" because "as recipients of

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[31]Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987), 3.

[32]Blomberg, *1 Corinthians,* 17.

[33]Ibid., 23.

the sheer gift of divine grace through the cross, all stand on the same footing."[34]

While the gospel, and not ecclesiology, may be the primary focus of 1 Corinthians, without doubt, the proclamation of the gospel has definitive repercussions with regard to how the church relates to itself and understands its responsibilities. In this passage, Paul demonstrates that in a healthy church body, not only should multiple generations exist, but there should also be generational interdependence rather than generational independence.

First Corinthians 12:12-26 finds its locus within the context of Paul's corrective instruction to the Corinthian church regarding how its members should conduct themselves within the context of corporate assembly and worship. The great diversity of the city of Corinth was mirrored in the diversity that was visible within the church, and there existed the continued temptation to play favorites and exalt individual groups that possessed either wealth or specific spiritual gifts. In order to correct such behavior, in this passage Paul does not advocate that everyone should be alike in order for unity to exist, nor that individual groups should exist independently of others. Rather, his point is to show through the analogy of the human body that the body of Christ must necessarily be diverse with regard to its makeup while at the same time recognizing that the individual parts are dependent upon each other in order to remain unified as a body.

Both Fee and Blomberg note that there is a chiastic pattern inherent in Paul's argument from 12:12-26 that highlights a healthy body is both diverse and unified. Fee notes that 12:12 is written in an ABBA pattern:

For just as   the body is one,   A
          yet has many members,   B
          and all the members, though many,   B′
              are one body,   A′
     So also is   Christ.[35]

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[34]Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians,* 33-34.

Blomberg applies the chiastic structure to the entire passage:

> The initial statement of the metaphor (12:12)
>   A – Theme of unity (12:13)
>   B – Theme of diversity (12:14)
>   B' – Theme of diversity described in greater detail (12:15-21)
>   A' – Theme of unity described in greater detail (12:22-26)[36]

As both structures make clear, the emphasis of this passage that is elucidated not only in the opening verse, but also in the supporting illustrations that follow it is that there are many who make up the body of Christ, yet the body is one. And though the body is one, it is yet made up of many members. In other words, diversity and unity are not only possible, but also necessary. Fee notes, however, that "a large number of interpreters . . . despite the structure and all the signals to the contrary, see the passage as emphasizing [only] unity."[37] He counters that Paul's concern is for the essential unity of the church, "but that does not mean uniformity."[38]

The fact that uniformity was not the point of the body of Christ is clearly understood by what Paul says in 12:13. The church in Corinth itself was very diverse because those who made up its membership came "from all ethnic and socioeconomic brackets of the ancient world."[39] Though not explicitly stated in this context, it is logical to conclude that the church in Corinth was also comprised of a diverse set of generations as well. Therefore, just as there was beauty in the diversity of the ethnicities and social statuses, there is also beauty in the church when there is diversity among generations. As Paul reiterates in 12:14, "For the body is not one member, but many."

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[35]Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians,* 373.

[36]Adapted from Blomberg, *1 Corinthians,* 245.

[37]Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians,* 805.

[38]Ibid., 374.

[39]Blomberg, *1 Corinthians,* 245.

In support of his claim, the apostle moves in 12:15-20 to demonstrate with respect to the human body that every body part serves an important function. Any claim by any body part to the contrary is rendered silly (12:15-16). Blomberg summarizes Paul's words in the remainder of the paragraph by stating, "Without the diversity that comes from specialization of function, one no longer has an organism, merely one giant organ, unable to do anything."[40]

Beginning in 12:21, Paul begins to draw the net around the Corinthian believers by making application of his metaphors to their specific situation. Thiselton notes that what had lain implicitly in his previous words now becomes explicit. Not only does Paul's metaphor "of the body reassure those with supposedly 'inferior' or 'dispensable' gifts that they do indeed belong fully to the body as essential limbs and organs, but [it]…now explicitly rebukes those who think that they and their 'superior' gifts are self-sufficient for the whole body."[41] In effect, Paul states that were the eye able to speak, it could not express its independence of the hand without fault, nor could the head express its independence of the feet without fault.

To the contrary, Paul goes on to make the point that where there seems to be "less value, power, or honor in the body, compensation occurs to preserve relative equality."[42] Fee maintains that Paul is pointing to the fact that certain body parts that may appear to be weak by outward estimations are actually integral and necessary to the body. "Appearances deceive, Paul is saying. If one removed an organ because it appeared weak, the body would cease to be whole. So with the church. All the parts are

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[40]Ibid., 246.

[41]Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians,* 1005.

[42]Blomberg, *1 Corinthians,* 246.

necessary, no matter what one may think."[43] Blomberg concurs, and summarizes Paul by stating that "the true value of a particular body part is often inversely proportional to its outward appearance."[44]

In 12:24-26, Paul sums up his discussion of the body by concluding that it was created in the way that it was by God so that in its diversity of parts, there would be unity. The point is not division, but dependence. The same should be said for the Corinthian church. The members of the body should show care for each other rather than disdain. Paul indicates in 12:26 that just as is true in the human body, when one part is in pain, the whole body suffers, so it is in the body of Christ. Paul's meaning in the last part of the verse in which he speaks of a member being "honored" is somewhat less clear. Thiselton surmises that Paul is describing a situation in which the fingers of a musician, or the hands and feet of an athlete are praised, and thus the entire person is congratulated on his or her skills or coordination.[45] Once more, such illustrations show that though diverse, the body is unified, and that each individual part is dependent upon the others, and is itself necessary to the overall health and well-being of the body. In these verses, Paul is drawing the net around the Corinthian church so that they can see that "this is how they are to be toward one another, precisely because, as Paul will spell out clearly in v. 27, they are the one body of Christ and individually members of it, and therefore members of one another."[46]

What becomes evident when reading this passage is that Paul's corrective instructions were written in the context of the internal power plays and one-upmanship

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[43]Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians,* 381.

[44]Blomberg, *1 Corinthians,* 246.

[45]Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians,* 1012.

[46]Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians,* 383.

that had become normative within the Corinthian church, specifically as it pertained to corporate worship and behavior. Though Paul's focus was narrow, Fee acknowledges that this passage "is ready-made for present-day application."[47] Blomberg asserts that these verses remain "largely self-explanatory, and their overarching principles are clear. Body parts are interdependent, not independent of each other."[48]

Given the understanding that the modern day Christian church is a family comprised of different generations that have different needs, and differing abilities to offer with regard to service and support, Paul's words are just as direct and applicable. The generations within the church body do not exist independently of each other, nor are they entities unto themselves. Rather each depends upon the other, albeit some to a greater or lesser degree. However, all are part of the unified body of Christ as expressed in a local congregation. As such, diversity is good because it ensures the health and viability of the church past the life cycle of one generation. But the church must be careful not to disregard the young who may not have reached certain levels of maturity or achieved certain levels of wealth. Nor should the old who no longer have the physical health or mental acumen necessary to engage in certain activities within the life of the church be treated with disdain. Furthermore, not all of the labor and financial responsibilities necessary for the operation of the church should be laid upon those who find themselves in the middle simply because their time has come. Rather, the overall health of the church body is reliant upon it being made up of multiple generations that exist in a state of generational interdependence rather than generational independence.

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[47]Ibid.

[48]Blomberg, *1 Corinthians,* 252.

Discipleship Requires That Older Generations Invest in
Younger Generations: Titus 2:1-8, 1 Timothy 5:1-2

The NT letters of Titus and 1 Timothy are strikingly similar in many ways.
Both purport to have been authored by the Apostle Paul, and both are written as letters of
instruction and encouragement to two of Paul's protégés who served as overseers of
churches that Paul had planted. Titus oversaw the church in Crete while Timothy had
been left by Paul to oversee the church in Ephesus. Though Pauline authorship is
challenged on a number of fronts, it should be noted, however, that having read and
considered the various arguments related to Pauline authorship of the PE, the following
exegesis of these passages is written with the assumption that Paul did indeed write both
letters.

In light of the context in which both letters were written, the two passages
under consideration serve to demonstrate that the process of making disciples is designed
to be accomplished by one generation investing in the next, which will in turn do the
same. Disciples made in this way will be ones who bring glory to Christ and avoid
damaging the testimony of the church

How the church conducts itself is of tremendous importance to Paul because
"as is the case throughout the PE, Paul requires the church members to meet, at a
minimum, basic standards of decency so that their behavior will not bring reproach on the
church."[49] With regard to the letter written to Titus, Philip Towner notes that the larger
section of Titus 2:1-15 addresses behavior within the church, "which to judge from v.1,
had been ethically compromised under the influence of the culture and resistant Jewish-
Christian teachers who were quite comfortable with the Cretan status quo."[50] Fee

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[49]William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles,* Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 46
(Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 2000), 407.

[50]Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus,* 77.

comments that "the passage does not so much address *ad hoc* problems in Crete as it does in a more general way call for good works and a lifestyle on the part of Christians that will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive (v.10)."[51]

Paul begins this section with the adversative phrase, "But as for you," which emphatically signals that something was to differentiate Titus from the Cretans previously referred to in 1:10-16. Paul tells Titus he is to "speak things," which indicates he is to engage in teaching and instruction of those under his care. The teaching that Titus was to engage in was in "things which are proper for sound doctrine." Therefore, the opening verse of this passage indicates that what Titus was to teach was to be a complete "180-degree change in direction"[52] from what the Cretan false teachers taught with the hope that his teaching would ultimately result in "the people themselves [living] differently from the false teachers."[53]

Beginning in 2:2, Paul identifies those in the church who would benefit from Titus' sound teaching. Paul recognizes both males and females within the church, while also distinguishing them according to their general ages, or generations. In 2:2, he tells Titus that he is to instruct "older men" to be "sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience." While it cannot be definitively determined where the line of demarcation was drawn between "older" and "younger" men, Towner assesses ancient literature and states that "old men [were] at least somewhere upward of forty years old, possibly into their fifties or sixties."[54] Fee notes that "it is chiefly from among these men that the elders/overseers of 1:5-9 will be selected. Hence it is not surprising that the

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[51]Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus,* 184.

[52]Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus,* 718.

[53]Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus,* 185.

[54]Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus,* 720.

qualities urged on them correspond" to what Paul said in that passage as well as in 1 Tim 3:2, 8.[55] Paul continues in the same vein in 2:3, telling Titus to also teach "older women." The same age classification applied to men in the previous verse also applies to women here. Like their male counterparts, these older women were to also be instructed in reverence, temperance and soberness, and to control their tongues. Paul says they are to be "reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine." Fee notes "that both the older men and older women in the church are urged to set a different kind of example."[56]

In Paul's letter to Timothy, he issues a truncated version of these instructions. Paul's words of 1 Timothy 5:1-2 come on the heels of his instruction for Timothy not to allow other people to look down upon him simply because of his youthful age (4:12). That imperative is balanced by the imperative of 5:1 in which Timothy is instructed that he is not to rebuke an older man. Surely, as Fee asserts, this "does not mean he should not 'urge' an older man toward right conduct."[57] No, Timothy, though he may be younger, should engage in encouraging an older man in similar fashion to the way that Titus was admonished to instruct men older than him. In Timothy's case, Paul adds that he should treat those older than him with the same level of respect as one would render to his father. Towner offers that "Timothy's appropriate action and attitude are described with a term that encompasses 'exhorting, urging, encouraging, consoling and comforting.'"[58] He goes on to comment that Paul's use of the comparison of an older man to "a father" contributes to the underlying moral logic of the command. Since in

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[55]Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus,* 185.

[56]Ibid., 186.

[57]Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus,* 112.

[58]Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus,* 331.

Greco-Roman and Jewish homes, the father was owed complete respect, "Timothy is called to treat even older men in need of correction with a certain deference and politeness that will ensure that the correction is unifying rather than divisive."[59] Mounce adroitly draws attention to the underlying tension that exists in such generationally specific relationships: "Just as it is difficult for an older person to respect the teaching and leadership of a younger man (4:12), so also it is difficult for a younger man to know how to instruct and correct the older people in the church."[60]

Paul continues his instruction to Timothy by telling him to treat men not classified as "older," but rather those who were "Timothy's own age or younger," as brothers.[61] Furthermore, he is to treat older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters. In other words, Timothy is to treat all believers, regardless of their ages, "as members of the same family of God – fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters. His approach should not be one of domination but one of encouragement, including respect and honor."[62]

As has been established, Paul' common concern in both letters was that the churches in Crete and Ephesus remain unified, though generationally diverse. With specific regard to Titus and the church in Crete, Paul's further goal was to provide instructions that would allow the church to have and maintain an exemplary reputation and testimony in the eyes of those outside the church. For Titus, modeling the correct types of behavior would not only protect the church's image from those inspecting it from the outside, but it would also serve to perpetuate that same positive behavior in the

[59]Ibid.

[60]Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles,* 269.

[61]Ibid., 270.

[62]Ibid., 271.

generations that followed on the inside. Paul's goal to see positive inter-generational relationships established and perpetuated becomes clear by what he tells Titus in 2:3-4. There he says that older women should be "teachers of good things – that they admonish the young women." Mounce asserts that from the context of what Paul writes, he does not envision the older women holding "an official teaching position in the church but rather [engaging in] informal, one-on-one encouragement."[63] Towner accuses Mounce of "beating a dead horse," and states emphatically that "absolutely nothing is said about the mode of this teaching."[64] Fee notes that the Greek word "σωφρονίζω" translated as "admonish" or "train" is highly unusual and literally means "to bring someone to his or her senses."[65] Whether Paul intended the mode of instruction from older women to younger women to be formal or informal may be debated. What cannot be debated, however, is that Paul intended for an older generation of women to invest in, train up, and in some cases shake to their senses younger women with regard to how they were "to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands." (2:4-5). Keeping with the theme of his letter, Paul emphatically gives the overall reason why such instruction is necessary at the end of 2:5 by stating, "…that the word of God may not be blasphemed." Mounce notes that "this is the first of three times Paul shows that his concern for the Cretan church is the reputation the church has with non-Christians," with the latter two occurrences coming in 2:8 in his instructions to younger men, and in 2:10 to slaves.[66]

In 2:6 Paul identifies the last generational group to be addressed in this passage

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[63]Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles,* 410.

[64]Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus,* 724-25.

[65]Fee, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus,* 187.

[66]Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles,* 412.

– "young men." Towner notes that "younger men might be from twenty to thirty years of age, with some flexibility at the upward end."[67] Paul gives a single exhortation to Titus regarding them: he is to urge the young men to be self-controlled. The context of Paul's exhortation carries over to 2:7-8 in that he urges Titus to become a model of genuine Christian behavior. Setting a good example for others "was intrinsic both to formal and informal ancient education. Within his churches, Paul assigned himself this task (Phil 3:17; 1 Thess 1:6; 2 Thess 3:9), and Timothy (1 Tim 4:12) and Titus, church leaders (1 Pet 5:3), and believers in general (e.g., 1 Thess 1:7) were instructed to do likewise."[68] Here, Paul tells Titus that instruction within the church is to consist of exhortation accompanied by a demonstration of a life surrendered to the precepts of what is taught. In other words, Titus' good words were to be confirmed by his good works.

As previously noted, in 2:8 Paul once more confirms the overarching goal of such behavior, "…that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you." The investment Titus was to make in the lives of the younger men of the Cretan church was not only for their benefit and growth in discipleship, but it would also serve the purpose of removing any opportunity for those opposed to the true gospel from having anything subversive to say.

What is explicitly clear from Paul's letter to Titus, and what may also be inferred from what he writes to Timothy is that Paul is clearly concerned about the reputation of the churches they oversee. He knows that if their members mirror the cultures in which they live, then the churches will lose their influence, and the gospel will suffer reproach. Therefore, Paul's instructions for both Titus and Timothy is for them to be teachers of sound Christian doctrine in order that their ministry might produce

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[67]Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus,* 730.

[68]Ibid., 731.

spiritually mature men and women whose behavior will be sufficient to silence all critics.

Particularly in his letter to Titus, Paul makes it clear that Titus is not to be the only source of encouragement toward godly living. A responsibility is also placed upon the older generation of women in the Cretan church to invest in the younger generation of women within the church body. No doubt, the purpose of such a responsibility was to protect the church from a sullied testimony through the process of making disciples. The responsibility of an older generation investing in a younger one was not only assigned to older women, however. Paul reiterated that Titus was also to instruct younger men, and to model for them a Christian character above reproach. It should be necessarily assumed that such teaching did not fall strictly to Titus, but that other older men within the Cretan church would shoulder the same duties and responsibilities that were laid upon their female counterparts. They too would be expected to engage in investing in the younger generation of men that would follow them.

What becomes clear is that for the church to make a lasting impact upon the culture in which it exists, older generations within the church body must invest in the younger generations that follow them. In both formal and informal ways, the natural relationships that develop between believers within the church should translate into opportunities for discipleship to take place. When younger generations benefit from the experience, instruction and spiritual maturity of those older than them, the church as a whole is strengthened, and better equipped to maintain a credible witness to the outside world.

Conclusion

The specific command of Christ to make disciples of all nations necessitated that His followers move out into the world and begin replicating themselves. His command is just as valid today as it was two centuries ago. As the NT reveals, the formation of the church is the primary vehicle through which this commission is to be

carried out. As has been shown through the examination of critical passages in both the OT and the NT, in order for the church to carry out the Lord's command, it must by necessity be inter-generational in its makeup. The church must not simply be multi-generational, but the diversity of generations must serve one another in a spirit of unity and cooperation, further recognizing that each is dependent upon the other. Such a recognition should therefore lead to a perpetual process of disciple-making that is accomplished by one generation investing in the next. It is only as such inter-generational relationships develop and mature that a church will be able to properly fulfill the command of Christ and ensure its health and future viability.

CHAPTER 3

THEORETICAL/SOCIOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR
INTER-GENERATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

A trip to the mall, grocery store, sporting event or concert will reveal that there are multiple generations of people coexisting with each other. In fact, on any given venture out into the public arena, one will likely encounter individuals who are in their eighties all the way down to those newly born. As stated in the previous chapter, the healthy NT church will mirror its culture in this way: it too should be comprised of multiple generations. Furthermore, it should be the goal of each NT church to honor and respect each generation represented within its congregation, and to see those generations partner with each other for the sake of the gospel. Often, however, such partnerships suffer and sometimes dissolve due to differences in the values and personalities each generation possesses. However, by gaining a better understanding of the differing generational mindsets and value systems as well as the trends associated with them, the church may leverage and capitalize on generational diversity for the sake of gospel unity.

William Strauss and Neil Howe have posited that a generation is a "special cohort-group whose length approximately matches that of a basic phase of life," which they estimate to be approximately twenty-two years.[1] Though age certainly figures into a generation's identity, other markers are more prominent in determining that identity. The events and conditions experienced during the formative years of one's life primarily tend

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[1]William Strauss and Neil Howe, *Generations: The History of America's Future 1584-2069* (New York: William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1991), 34.

to determine one's identity and worldview. Jean Twenge asserts that the culture into
which one is born, formed by "the highs and lows of pop culture, as well as world events,
social trends, economic realities, behavioral norms, and ways of seeing the world" are
what molds a person when they are young and stays with them for the rest of their lives.[2]
Therefore, what emerges as many individuals share common events and conditions is that
they develop a collective "generational personality."[3] This understanding has led Gary
McIntosh to offer a fuller, more descriptive definition of a generation as a people
"connected by a place in time, by common boundaries, and by a common character."[4]

<center>**Generational Identification and Defining Characteristics**</center>

The current adult population within the United States is represented by five
primary generations that are identified by various names attempting to give insight to the
characteristics and values held by the individuals included in that generation. The
defining characteristics of each of these generations will be identified and discussed.

G.I. Generation

The oldest adult generation in today's society is commonly referred to as the
G.I. Generation. It is generally agreed upon that individuals who make up this generation
are those who were born prior to 1925. Admittedly, this generation is waning both in its
numbers and in its ability to participate in current church life. However, the influence

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[2]Jean M. Twenge, *Generation Me: Why Today's Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled – and More Miserable Than Ever Before* (New York: Free Press, 2006), 2.

[3]Lynn C. Lancaster and David Stillman, *When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2002), 13-14.

[4]Gary L. McIntosh, *One Church Four Generations: Understanding and Reaching All Ages in Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002), 15.

this generation has had upon successive generations is impressive. This is a generation

whose formative years were marked by the Great Depression, and whose adulthood was

defined by WWII. Strauss and Howe describe G.I.'s as "America's confident and

rational problem-solvers: victorious soldiers and Rosie the Riveters; Nobel laureates;

makers of Minuteman missiles, interstate highways, Apollo rockets, battleships, and

miracle vaccines."[5] As Julie Coates states, "This is the generation that survived the

depression, won a world war, and shaped the world as we know it today through tough

post-war policies."[6] G.I's were born before the invention of "television, penicillin, sound

movies, rockets, traffic lights, washing machines, and plastics." As such, Peter Menconi

notes that "their values were forged during a simpler time."[7]

Because of their experiences and the circumstances foisted upon them by the

world, the G.I. Generation became composed of people who valued community and civic

responsibility. The Great Depression and a world at war molded them into a generation

of people who lived lives of delayed gratification, placing duty before pleasure.[8] This is

a generation of fixers, made up of "'men's men' who have known how to get things done

[and who] always seemed to do it big, and do it together."[9] Dubbed "The Greatest

Generation,"[10] the G.I. Generation derived much of its greatness "from the sense of

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[5]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 261.

[6]Julie Coates, *Generational Learning Styles* (River Falls, WI: LERN Books, 2006), 63.

[7]Peter Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church: Understanding and Reaching All Ages in Your Church* (Littleton, CO: Mt. Sage Publishing, 2010), 37.

[8]Ibid., 38.

[9]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 261.

[10]Tom Brokaw, *The Greatest Generation* (New York: Random House Publishing Co., 1997).

community that came from confronting and overcoming a shared threat" of poverty, war and change.[11]

Silent Generation

Born after 1925 and before 1943, the Silent Generation arrived just a little too late to be a part of the war-era heroism, and too soon to be identified with the radical cultural changes of the 1960's. This generation's "boundaries are fixed less by what they did than by what those older and younger did – and what the Silent themselves just missed."[12] Strauss and Howe note that the "Silent widely realize they are the generational stuffings of a sandwich between the get-it-done G.I. and the self-absorbed Boom. Well into their rising adulthood, they looked to G.I.s for role models…and fell under the trance of their free-spirited next-juniors, the Boomers."[13] Because of their positioning between two highly influential generations, the Silent Generation is "often described as a helper generation…[and] a generation of peacemakers."[14]

Because their parents were preoccupied with the residual consequences of a world at war and the aftermath of the Great Depression, Menconi notes that "many members of the Silent Generation were raised in an overprotected environment in which they were to be seen and not heard."[15] In an article written over forty years ago by a member of the Silent Generation, Gerald Clarke, the then Associate Editor of *Time* magazine noted that "the term Silent Generation may have been unflattering, but it was not inaccurate." He acknowledged that with few exceptions members of his generation

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[11]Coates, *Generational Learning Styles*, 75.

[12]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 281.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Coates, *Generational Learning Styles*, 77.

[15]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 43.

were "serenely uninvolved, interested primarily in [themselves] and [their] own desires, [and] tended to be bored by politics and self-removed from social issues."[16] However, as they grew older and came of age, this generation produced facilitators and technocrats, and became "the consummate helpmate generation which…produced three decades of top Presidential aides…but no Presidents."[17]

Boomers

The first cohorts of the Boomer Generation are sometimes known as "victory-babies"[18] who were fathered by G.I.'s returning home from WWII. The trailing edge of this generation is not as distinct, with sociologists differing on the exact year that serves as its bookend. The general consensus is that the Boomer Generation concluded as the post-war birthrate began to decline in the early 1960's.

The impact that this massive generation has had on American culture is still being felt today. Menconi asserts that "the Boomer Generation started it all: No one paid much attention to generations until Baby Boomers came along."[19] Perhaps that is the case because the post-war Boom Generation is credited with changing much of what had been considered standard before them. McIntosh notes that the "large Boomer birth rate created a 'pig-in-a-python effect.' As one can see the bulge of a pig moving through the digestive tract of a python, so the Boomer wave can be observed moving through society."[20] Strauss and Howe note that Boomers "have thus far ranked among the most self-absorbed in American history," creating a "culture of narcissism [that became] a

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[16]Gerald Clarke, "The Silent Generation Revisited," *Time,* June 29, 1970, 46.

[17]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 279.

[18]Ibid., 301.

[19]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 57.

[20]McIntosh, *One Church Four Generations,* 71.

central theme of the Boom lifecycle through rising adulthood."[21]

A major identity marker of the Boomer Generation is competitiveness. As Lancaster and Stillman note, one cannot "be born and raised with eighty million peers competing…for everything from a place on the football team in an overcrowded high school to a place in the college of [one's] choice to placement with [one's] dream company and *not* be competitive."[22] Consequently, Boomers are considered to be "fierce work-a-holics, competitors who are dedicated to success both at work and in the classroom."[23]

For the majority of its members, "the assassination of JFK…was the event that triggered the Boomer Generation. This traumatic event, along with the ongoing civil rights movement and the growing Vietnam War, created rumblings of social change within America."[24] As a consequence, not only are Boomers known for their competitiveness, but they are also sometimes referred to as "Challengers" because when the members of this generation hit their teens and twenties in the 1960's, "they challenged the morals, rules, and traditions of their parents, schools, and the government."[25] Menconi notes that such a challenge to the norms and mores of the G.I. and Silent Generations caused a countercultural change that "took root and defined the 1970s decade." Marijuana usage and sexual promiscuity drastically increased, while the divorce rate among couples also moved rapidly upward.[26] With age, however, the Boomer Generation "flocked from drugs to religion, to 'Jesus' movements,

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[21]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 301-2.

[22]Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide,* 22.

[23]Coates, *Generational Learning Styles*, 83.

[24]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 59.

[25]Mcintosh, *One Church Four Generations,* 73.

[26]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 63-64.

evangelicalism, New Age utopianism, and milliennialist visions of all sorts. As they did, they spawned the most active era of church formation of the twentieth century."[27]

Boomers are educated, independent questioners of authority. They are media- and cause-oriented activists who comprise what sociologists refer to as a "lead generation" which "tends to set the agenda for the entire nation."[28]

Generation X

The leading edge of this generation, which is just as ambiguous as is the trailing edge of the Boomer Generation, coincides with the distinctive decline in birthrates that occurred in the early 1960's. Appropriately, the trailing edge is also somewhat vague, coming to an end in the early 1980's. Those born into that span of years have been dubbed members of Generation X. Strauss and Howe refer to them as the Thirteenth Generation, and note that much "like the music many of them listen to, 13ers can appear shocking on the outside, unknowable on the inside. Elders find it hard to suppress feelings of disappointment over how they are turning out – dismissing them as a 'lost,' 'ruined,' even 'wasted generation.'"[29]

Sociologists are quick to point out, however, that the disdain felt by older generations toward members of Generation X may not be entirely warranted, and also may not be the Gen Xers' fault completely. Strauss and Howe note that the euphoric awakening experienced by the Boomers in the 1970s was to the Gen Xers "a nightmare of self-immersed parents, disintegrating homes . . . confused leaders, a culture shifting from G to R ratings, new public-health dangers, and a 'Me Decade' economy that tipped toward the organized old and away from the voiceless young." In every way imaginable,

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[27]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 303.

[28]Mcintosh, *One Church Four Generations,* 89.

[29]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 317.

Generation X encountered a world more penalizing than anything their predecessors ever knew.[30] Coates concurs, and notes that "this generation has had an uphill climb in many ways. Maligned by older adults…this generation's reality is that their economic situations are very different from those of their predecessors."[31]

Not only did members of Generation X face difficult economic situations, but during their formative years, the societal climate was rapidly changing as well. As Strauss and Howe state, "No other generation in living memory has come of age with such a sense of social distance . . . [or] grown up in families of such complexity."[32] Coates describes Gen Xers as "survivors of psychedelic parents, divorces, one-parent families, step families, both parents working, razor blades in their Halloween candy, latchkey lives, violence on television, on the streets, and in the schools."[33] Menconi adds that "perhaps the single most important event in the lives of many Gen Xers was the divorce of their parents, experienced by over 40 percent of Gen Xers."[34] As such, members of this generation tend to value a true family atmosphere while remaining intensely independent.

Millennials

Beginning in the early 1980s, the first members of this generational cohort arrived as "Baby on Board" signs began appearing in vehicle windows. "As abortion and divorce rates ebbed, the popular culture began stigmatizing hands-off parental styles and

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[30]Ibid., 321.

[31]Coates, *Generational Learning Styles*, 92.

[32]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 323-25.

[33]Coates, *Generational Learning Styles*, 99.

[34]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 91.

recasting babies as special."[35] As a result, the Millennial Generation is comprised of "confident, optimistic young people who feel valued and wanted."[36]

The name "Millennial" is derived from the fact that the trailing edge of this generation concluded as the new millennium began. McIntosh asserts that a more descriptive name for this group is "Mosaics" because such a name "points to the fact that they are a heterogeneous generation of views, tastes, beliefs, and ethnicity."[37] Coates agrees, stating that the Millennial Generation "is the most diverse generation in history. [Furthermore,] members are born to the most diverse mix of parents in history as well – from teenagers to middle-aged moms who postponed childbearing to establish a career – from Boomers to Xers."[38] Howe and Strauss note that because of surges in immigration, "Millennials have become, by far, the most racially and ethnically diverse generation in U.S. history. Nearly 35 percent of Millennials are nonwhite or Latino, versus only 14 percent of G.I.s."[39]

Not only are Millennials diverse, they are the most wired generation as well. Members of this generation are "incredibly smart about and driven by technology, [and] they are profoundly shaped by, and comfortable with the new technologies that connect people around the world electronically."[40] In his book *Generation iY,* Tim Elmore notes

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[35]Coates, *Generational Learning Styles*, 112.

[36]Ibid., 113.

[37]Mcintosh, *One Church Four Generations,* 161.

[38]Coates, *Generational Learning Styles*, 112.

[39]Neil Howe and William Strauss, *Millennials Rising: The Next Great Generation* (New York: Vintage Books, 2000), 85.

[40]Eric Greenberg and Karl Weber, *Generation We: How Millennial Youth Are Taking Over America and Changing Our World Forever* (Emeryville, CA: Pachatusan, 2008), 24.

that technology is such a defining part of Millennials' life that he segments the generation into two parts, those born before 1990, and those born after. The younger cohort of Millennials, Elmore names "iYers" because "more than any previous group, this younger population has been defined by technology."[41] Elmore notes that the youngest of the Millennials have "literally grown up online. Theirs is the world of the iPod, iBook, iPhone, iChat, iMovie, iPad, and iTunes. And for many of them, life is pretty much about 'I.'"[42]

The internal diversity of this generation combined with their natural affinity for technology and technological advances have created a generation that is much more global in mindset. Menconi states that the "globalized world is now a smaller village and a larger playground for Millennials. It is not uncommon for teenagers to regularly communicate online with their contemporaries all over the globe. Consequently, Millennials in the United States feel more at home in the world than do previous generations."[43]

It is this comfort with diversity that has allowed this generation to readily accept the postmodern world in which value is placed on tolerance and acceptance of multiple points of view. Often for Millennials, truth is not an objective fact to be accepted at face value, but rather "is found by giving serious consideration to inclusive, interactive, complex systems of thought."[44]

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[41]Tim Elmore, *Generation iY: Our Last Chance to Save Their Future* (Atlanta: Poet Gardener Publishing, 2010), 13.

[42]Ibid.

[43]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 127.

[44]Mcintosh, *One Church Four Generations,* 165.

Differences and Points of Contention that Exist
between the Generations

As to be expected, generational gaps have forged mindsets among the members of the various adult generations that stand in stark contrast to one another. The different cultural experiences of each generation combined with an ever-changing societal structure has produced a population of adults who approach life from vastly different perspectives based upon vastly different value systems. McIntosh opines, "When the events of life are not dramatic or the pace of change is slow, the tension created in the succession of generations is mild. However, in times of rapid and climactic change, the generational progression creates lots of frustration and conflict, which is what has been taking place during the past half century."[45]

It should be noted, however, that generational conflicts are nothing new, and certainly did not originate in the past fifty years. A quotation commonly attributed to Socrates states, "The children now love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for adults, and love to talk rather than work or exercise. They no longer rise when adults enter the room. They contradict their parents, chatter in front of company, gobble down food at the table and intimidate their teachers."[46] In fact, as Coates remarks, "There has probably never been a time when adults did not observe that the younger generation was, in nearly every way, less likely to succeed than their predecessors unless the youth experienced some miraculous turn-around in attitude and behavior."[47] The generational flow of tension does not only come from older generations toward younger, however. As Menconi notes, "It seems every generation has to blame

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[45]Ibid., 201-2.

[46]See Coates, *Generational Learning Styles,* 49, and William Ayers, *To Teach: The Journey of a Teacher* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2001), 16.

[47]Coates, *Generational Learning Styles,* 49.

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someone for the stress and chaos that accompanies coming of age and usually it is the preceding generation that receives this blame."[48]

Blame, however, is not the only reason that generations quibble and fight with one another. At a much deeper level, members of different generations simply see the world differently than those of other generations. For example, in his book *Bowling Alone,* Robert Putnam investigates the reason why civic engagement in America experienced a significant across-the-board decline in the last third of the twentieth century. His investigation leads him to ask, "Do people of different ages behave differently because they are momentarily at different points in a common life cycle or because they enduringly belong to different generations?"[49] His research and analysis leads him to conclude that the visible decline of civic engagement "is attributable to the replacement of an unusually civic generation by several generations (their children and grandchildren) that are less embedded in community life."[50] Coates summarizes Putnam's findings by stating that he "presents overwhelming evidence that there are significant, measurable differences in social attitudes and behavior that are unquestionably generational."[51] In other words, because a generation's identity or personality is unique to that generation, as it moves from one lifecycle to the next (from youth to adulthood to midlife to senior adulthood) it will carry that personality with it. This generational, or "peer personality" is what Strauss and Howe define as "a set of collective behavioral traits and attitudes that later expresses itself throughout a

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[48]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 127.

[49]Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 248.

[50]Ibid., 275.

[51]Coates, *Generational Learning Styles,* 49.

generation's lifecycle trajectory."[52]

Consequently, the natural tension that seems to develop between contiguous generations combined with the fact that the rapid change of the past fifty years has produced drastically different generational personalities that are constantly pushing their own views and agendas, has led to the creation of an environment in which conflicts, misunderstandings, and contentions are the norm. In fact, as Lancaster and Stillman note, "Generational differences are here to stay….[and] when hard times hit, the generations are likely to entrench themselves even more deeply into the attitudes and behaviors that have been ingrained in them."[53]

The two oldest generations represented in current society find more common ground between them than do their offspring. In fact, the G.I. and Silent Generations are sometimes grouped together by sociologists under the moniker of "Traditionalists." As the name suggests, their values and perceptions are of a more traditional persuasion, and the commonality reflected between them "probably developed from the slower pace of life experienced in their formative years."[54] By and large, the G.I. and Silent Generations are made up of adults that "are respectful of authority and [desire] respect in return. They prefer a learning environment that is stable, orderly, and risk-free. Adults in this group tend to be conformers, and they appreciate logic, consistency, and discipline."[55] In his work, Gary McIntosh summarizes the members of these two generations as patriotic, loyal, hard-working people who are frugal savers. They are private and cautious, but also respectful, dependable, and stable.[56]

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[52]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 32.

[53]Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide,* 8.

[54]Mcintosh, *One Church Four Generations,* 30.

[55]Coates, *Generational Learning Styles*, 77

[56]McIntosh, *One Church Four Generations,* 38-41.

The similarities between these two generations does not negate the fact that all has not always been copacetic between them. In fact, as Menconi identifies, "Having lived in the shadow of the greatest generation, many Silents were irritated by the dominance of the G.I.s….Silents often were given the secondary roles of management . . . [and] were typically not allowed to lead."[57] As a result, the postwar coming-of-age era of the Silent Generation produced youths who felt "an inner-world tension amid the outer-world calm . . . . Older generations didn't expect them to achieve anything great, just to calibrate, to become expert at . . . 'fine tuning' [the] hydraulic G.I. wealth machine."[58]

Furthermore, as Clarke notes, Silents developed a skepticism and aloofness due to the changes they received in the messages told to them by those older than them. "As youngsters during WWII, we collected paper, stomped on tin cans and weeded victory gardens to help the heroic Russians and defeat the hated Nazis and Japs. Before most of us were in our teens, we were taught that the Germans (no longer Nazis) and the Japanese (no longer Japs) were our allies and the once heroic Russians our enemies."[59] Though Silents were the last generation to accept without question "the traditional American values of work, order and patriotism," Clarke notes that their skepticism of those older than them, caused Silents to realize that such traditional values were rented rather than bought, "and anything rented can be discarded without a sense of loss."[60]

The clashes that emerged between the G.I. and Silent Generations were benign, however, in comparison to those that erupted as the Boomers came of age. Strauss and Howe describe what is referred to as the "Consciousness Revolution" which began to be

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[57]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 142.

[58]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 287.

[59]Clarke, "The Silent Generation Revisited," 47.

[60]Ibid., 49.

waged across the gap between the G.I. and Boomer Generations. This revolution "began with families, as a revolt against fathers," but the patriphobia spread beyond the family to the rest of society as the fury that Boomer youth experienced over Vietnam also spread.[61] Richard Croker paints the picture of the stark differences that emerged when he notes that those of the Greatest Generation believed along with one of their icons, General Douglas MacArthur, "in 'those magic words: Duty, Honor, Country.' When Boomers began shouting 'Hell no! We won't go,' it was a harsh contrast indeed."[62]

Many sociologists point to the fact that this generational confliction began much earlier, however. Boomers were raised on television, a luxury that their parents never had, and their grandparents would have never dreamed about. Television shows such as *Leave It to Beaver, The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet,* and *Father Knows Best* dominated the 1950s airwaves, as well as the formative minds of Boomer youths. However, as Croker notes, many Boomers began to notice a disconnect between what was portrayed on popular TV shows and what was reality in communities across America. Suddenly, these youth who were learning to think for themselves began seeing hypocrisy everywhere. While Croker notes that with the turn of the decade into the 1960s, Boomers did not suddenly become "screaming revolutionaries," they were well on their way.[63] Strauss and Howe note that in "launching the modern 'Consciousness Revolution,' Boomers found their parents' world in need of a major spiritual overhaul, even of creative destruction." Such a society-wide generation gap carried over from the 1960s into the 1970s in which "the Boom ethos remained a deliberate antithesis to everything G.I.: spiritualism over science, gratification over patience, negativism over

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[61]Stauss and Howe, *Generations*, 302.

[62]Richard Croker, *The Boomer Century, 1946-2046: How America's Most Influential Generation Changed Everything* (New York: Springboard Press, 2007), 4.

[63]Ibid., 29.

positivism, fractiousness over conformity, rage over friendliness, self over community."[64]

The generational splash created by the Boomer Generation caused ripples to cascade over both their predecessors and their successors. As Menconi notes, since Boomers "are generally more aggressive than Silents in pushing themselves to the front," Silents often find themselves resenting "Boomers who think the world centers around them and their needs," finding them to be self-centered and indulgent.[65]

In general, the same feeling emerges from Gen Xers toward those of the Boomer Generation. As a member of Generation X, Robert George describes himself as one who "grew up somewhat in darkness – overwhelmed and obscured by a group who rewrote all the rules of life and living as they grew up."[66] George further states that after "having been bequeathed a legacy of AIDS, crack, and much hypocrisy" because Generation X followed "in the wake of the SexDrugsRocknroll generation and its cultural domination," life has not been easy.[67] Twenge notes that in the 1970s, "rampant divorce, a wobbly economy, soaring crime rates, and swinging singles culture made [it] a difficult time to be a kid."[68] The Boomer Generation no doubt made a splash upon American culture, and in general, George sums up why both Silents and Gen Xers have little regard for Boomers, "Every decision [Boomers] have made, every protest staged, and every political agreement they have hammered out has benefited them primarily."[69]

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[64]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 287

[65]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 143-45.

[66]Richard A. George, "Stuck in the Shadows with You: Observations on Post-Boomer Culture," in *Generations Apart: Xers vs Boomers vs the Elderly,* ed. Richard D. Thau and Jay S. Heflin (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 1997), 25.

[67]Ibid., 27.

[68]Twenge, *Generation Me,* 52.

[69]Ibid., 29.

Opinions regarding members of Generation X fared no better, however. In 1983, the U.S. Department of Education published *A Nation at Risk* which described the nation's then-current student population as a "rising tide of mediocrity" [70] whose educational skills "will not surpass, will not equal, will not even approach, those of their parents."[71] In their book *The Fourth Turning,* Strauss and Howe discuss how such a welcome to their coming-of-age party by those generations that preceded them made Gen Xers to feel dumb, unwanted, and useless.[72] They further note that talk regarding Generation X often degenerated "into pretentious putdowns by a Boomer-dominated media bent on confirming the superior authenticity of their own Awakening-era youth."[73] Such tensions only further exacerbated the belief "by Gen Xers that Boomers are self-centered and not to be trusted."[74]

Significantly, the distrust of Generation X toward their elder Boomers is replaced by jealousy toward their junior Millennials. Members of Generation X tend to feel unwanted, having come into existence during a time when making babies abruptly fell out of favor. Society wide hostility toward children (illustrated by buttons worn by women that read "Stop At One," "None Is Fun," and "Jesus Was an Only Child"), coupled with birth control pills and ultimately, legalized abortion set the tone for

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[70]National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, 1983), 1.

[71]Ibid., 4.

[72]William Strauss and Neil Howe, *The Fourth Turning, An American Prophecy: What the Cycles of History Tell Us About America's Next Rendezvous with Destiny* (New York: Broadway Books, 1997), 233.

[73]Ibid., 235.

[74]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 145.

Generation X, telling them that they were not wanted.[75] Millennials, however, never

received such a message. In fact, in their book *Millennials Rising,* Howe and Strauss

note that during "the Millennial child era, dating back to the middle '80's…every

political figure . . . had to swear by family values to have the slightest chance of public

approval."[76] Twenge further analyzes that "reliable birth control, legalized abortion, and

a cultural shift toward parenthood as a choice made [the Millennial Generation] the most

wanted generation in American history."[77]

       The fact that Millennials predominately feel as though they are wanted has had

the effect of reducing the strife that typically exists between them and their parents. In

fact, Millennials "are so close to their parents that college students typically check in

about ten times a week, and they are all Facebook friends. Kids dress alike, listen to the

same music and fight less than previous generations, and Millennials assert that older

people's moral values are generally superior to their own."[78] Nevertheless, there exists

significant generational gaps between Millennials and their predecessors. Elmore notes

that the youngest of the Millennials have an organic familiarity with the online world due

primarily to the fact that on average they spend seven-and-a-half hours each day in front

of a computer screen, significantly more than any of their predecessors.[79] Furthermore,

based upon the findings of a new study from the Pew Research Center, Peter Coy asserts

that "Millennials don't seem to take comfort in the same things as their elders do….Far

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[75]Strauss and Howe, *The Fourth Turning,* 194.

[76]Howe and Strauss, *Millennials Rising,* 123.

[77]Twenge, *Generation Me,* 4.

[78]Nancy Gibbs, "How Millennials Perceive a New Generation Gap," *Time,* March 11, 2010, 72.

[79]Elmore, *Generation iY,* 33.

fewer of them identify with a religion or a political party. They're less likely to be married than previous generations were at the same age, [and] only half call themselves patriotic."[80]

The Millennial Generation may also be the most self-important as well. In their work *Generation We: How Millennial Youth Are Taking Over America and Changing Our World Forever,* Greenberg and Weber assert that because of the large numbers associated with this generation, Millennials will "have a gigantic impact on American society, and in turn, on the world."[81] Their impact is already being felt in that even though they are still young, the ethnically diverse Millennial Generation has already changed menus across America. A recent *Associated Press* news article reported that salsa has now replaced ketchup as the number one requested American condiment, and that tortillas now outsell hamburger and hotdog buns.[82] Greenberg and Weber predict such trends will continue, stating that in the coming years, the sheer numbers of Millennials will affect major industries such as real estate, education, and automobiles, while also exerting considerable political clout. The Millennial Generation "is about to rock the world. There are so many of them, they can't help doing it even if they wanted to."[83]

Somewhere, members of Generation X are seething with jealousy toward

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[80]Peter Coy, "No Faith, No County, No Marriage, Still Millennials Are Optimistic," *BusinessWeek.com,* March 7, 2014, 4, accessed May 22, 2014, http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2014-03-07/no-faith-dot-no-country-dot-no-marriage-dot-still-millennials-are-optimistic.

[81] Greenberg and Weber, *Generation We,* 21.

[82]Suzette Laboy, "As US Demographics Change, So Does the Menu," *AP News,* October 17, 2013, accessed May 23, 2014, http://bigstory.ap.org/article/changing-demographics-changing-our-taste-buds.

[83]Greenberg and Weber, *Generation We,* 21.

Millennials over the prospect of their potential success while simultaneously grumbling under their breath at the poor hand dealt to them by the Boomers. Menconi notes that as the Millennials have come into adulthood, growing evidence indicates that they "are more ambitious and focused than are their older Gen X counterparts, creating the real possibility that they will grow impatient and weary of the self-conscious angst of Gen Xers."[84]

In all cases, stereotypes mark the landscape of any discussion of generational personalities and their behaviors. From "the annoyingly precocious Millennial kid, or the tattooed Generation X slacker, or the guilt-ridden, workaholic Boomer, or the lifeless retired Traditionalist leaning back on the porch swing," minds are filled with stereotypical, media-fed images.[85] Lancaster and Stillman summarize the genesis of how such stereotypes arise, and the results they often bring about:

> Stereotypes . . . arise from resentment. Xers resent Traditionalists for being resistant to change and unwilling to hand over the reins. Boomers resent Xers for finding it so easy to change jobs whenever they feel like it and for demanding balance in their lives the Boomers would never have thought to ask for. Traditionalists resent Millennials for their entitlement mentality when Traditionalists had to work for everything they've gotten. Millennials resent the Boomers for leaving the planet a mess when they were supposed to be the ones to clean it up. And on it goes.[86]

Ways to Overcome Generational Differences and Work Together

John Ortberg notes that we live in a society that is "niched by generation as never before." He recalls that "thirty years ago, families had one TV with three channels; and if people watched something, they watched the same something together. Today

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[84]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 148.

[85]Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide,* 17.

[86]Ibid.

there are more channels than you can count, and they no longer broadcast; they narrowcast to a little sliver in the age spectrum."[87] Such group selection of audience points to the fact that today's adult generations have become increasingly more isolated from each other. Isolationism, however, particularly within the church, must be resisted. As discussed in the previous chapter, such an attempt goes against the clear teaching of Scripture, and it will only further perpetuate a sense of apathy that will undermine generational relationships. Within the church, apathy often surfaces as "ageism," which Menconi defines as "the attitudes and acts of prejudice and discrimination directed against other people based on their chronological age" be they older or younger.[88]

Rather than become apathetic, churches must become proactive. Though there may be numerous differences and points of contention between the different generations within a church body, it is necessary nonetheless that they be able to communicate and cooperate with each other. It is therefore necessary that individual members of the various generations in general, but also leaders who pastor and oversee the collective groupings of these individuals recognize that there are points of common interest and agreement between the generations that link them together, and make cooperation possible.

The foremost and most obvious area of commonality within the church that must drive intergenerational partnerships is the fact that individuals, regardless of their generational cohort, share a common faith in Christ. As the Apostle Paul writes in Eph 4:5-6, there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over

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[87]John Ortberg, "The Gap: The Fractured World of Multi-Generational Church Leadership," *Leadership* 30 (Summer 2009): 50.

[88]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 151.

all and through all and in all." Regardless of age or worldview, salvation comes only

through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that faith unites all believers together. Such a

shared faith does not negate the differences between the generations, but it should drive

individuals of different generations and different value systems together as opposed to

them drifting farther apart.

The task will not be simple, however. As Lancaster and Stillman note,

"Finding common ground with members of our *own* generation…is relatively easy….But

with members of another generation, connecting can be much more difficult. The same

factors that bind one generation can drive apart members of different generations."[89]

Nevertheless, diversity in general, and generational diversity specifically should be

valued rather than avoided. As Chad Hall notes, "Jesus' ministry included disciples of

various backgrounds, women of all ages, and even the most marginalized." As a result,

the church gives "testimony to the kingdom's radical expansiveness by the breadth of

ages in our congregations."[90]

In their book *When Generations Collide* in which they interview employers

and employees from multiple generations, and examine businesses that have learned both

the pitfalls and the upsides of integrating multiple generations together within the

workplace, Lancaster and Stillman assert that "far from being something to be frightened

about, generational diversity is something to get excited about."[91] Recounting the

experiences of a manufacturing and marketing firm that intentionally created a

multigenerational workforce, the authors noted that many Gen Xers "shared what it has

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[89]Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide,* 35.

[90]Chad Hall, "*All in the Family* Is Now *Grey's Anatomy:* Today's Segregation Is by Age," *Leadership* 27 (Fall 2006): 33.

[91]Ibid., 46.

meant to them to have an older friend or mentor they could look up to. And many Boomers and Traditionalists have mentioned what a breath of fresh air it was to work with someone younger."[92] In other words, as individuals from different generations began spending time with one another, their attitudes toward each other changed, and their appreciation for each other increased.

Gary McIntosh noted the same response among members of different generations when it came to their interaction with one another at church. His research showed that while offering age-graded activities was proper, and even appropriate under many conditions, such activities tended "to segregate the generations and limit their communication." He asserts that rather than focusing the majority of their energy and efforts toward segregating various generational cohorts, churches should be proactive in creating opportunities for the various generations within the church to actually spend time together because such opportunities "help generations to understand and love each other."[93]

In his book *The Intergenerational Church,* Peter Menconi concurs with McIntosh's findings and states that "one way of improving relationships between… generations is simply have them spend more time together, getting to know each other better."[94] He notes that in order to avoid, or at least minimize the tension that naturally exists between the generations, many churches have opted to provide "separate venues for each generation to have their needs met." However, he opines that "these 'church-within-a-church' approaches to managing intergenerational tensions in reality succeed in isolating generations…further dividing an already fragmented society."[95] Church

[92]Ibid., 45.

[93]McIntosh, *One Church Four Generations,* 220.

[94]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 145.

[95]Ibid., 149-50.

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consultant Amy Hanson blogs that though "there is a time and place for dividing people by age in some ministry settings, leading churches today are creating environments where age barriers are broken down [by] offering service opportunities where young and old work together, and [by] hosting strategic intergenerational events."[96] At a minimum, if churches wish to unite their diverse memberships, it will be necessary that their memberships come together and spend time with one another, developing their spiritual lives together, "not only [by] praying and planning, but also [by] having fun together."[97]

Time spent together is not the only solution, however. In order for the church to overcome the potential schisms that can develop between the generations due to their differences, "there must be an appreciation of all the generations in the church. A basic attitude recognizing that all the generations have something to offer is critical, and stereotyping between generations must be minimized."[98] Lancaster and Stillman make a salient point from the world of business that also rings true within the church. They note that in companies, it is "still uncommon for younger generations to be seen as credible [by older generations]....On the flip side, too many members of the younger generations assume that youth equates with being the most up-to-date, cutting edge, and in touch. They forget that experience is what gets you up the hill" and not necessarily over it.[99] McIntosh asserts that for those in different generations, and for those managing or pastoring different generations, encouraging "mutual respect between the generations" is

[96]Amy Hanson, "Breaking Down Age Barriers: Churches Becoming Intergenerational," *Leadership Network,* August 2, 2010, accessed February 20, 2014, http://leadnet.org/breaking_down_age_barriers_churches_becoming_intergenerational/

[97]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 167.

[98]Ibid., 166.

[99]Lancaster and Stillman, *When Generations Collide,* 43.

absolutely necessary.[100]

In a candid interview of father and son, James and Jonathan Merritt, the senior pastor and staff member respectively of Cross Pointe Church in Duluth, Georgia, the issue of mutual respect and appreciation that should exist between differing generations became evident. When asked about whether his Millennial Generation had a disdain for the evangelism techniques of his father's Boomer Generation, Jonathan Merritt replied that among his generation there is "sometimes a disdain for anything that smacks of the previous generation." He continues, "Every generation makes mistakes, every generation has blind spots. I see my dad's generational blind spots because there's enough road behind them. But I don't clearly see the mistakes my generation is making." The junior Merritt acknowledges, however, that the generations that follow will criticize his generation just as he has criticized his father's. James Merritt offers this piece of advice to his son, "Okay, criticize my generation but continuously ask, 'What can we learn from your generation?'"[101] Critical to the profitable interaction between differing generations is a recognition that each generation developed its personality due to its location in time and as a result of the circumstances which it faced. As such, each generation has reasons for why it views the world the way it does, and for why it values certain aspects of life and ministry. Generations do not necessarily have to agree upon every detail, but wisdom necessitates that rather than simply dismissing an entire cohort of individuals, one should attempt to sift through the chaff in order to obtain the truly valuable kernels of wheat. Later in the interview, James Merritt goes on to acknowledge that with regard to evangelism and the subsequent issues of "decisionism" versus life transformation and the

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[100]McIntosh, *One Church Four Generations,* 232.

[101]Marshall Shelley, "Can One Church Handle Two Generations' Attitudes toward Evangelism and Service? A Conversation with James and Jonathan Merritt," *Leadership* 33 (Winter 2012): 26.

necessary implications of salvation, he had learned from and been helped by the viewpoint of his son. The senior Merritt states that "Jonathan's generation has given my generation a needed wakeup call regarding some of these issues."[102]

Practically speaking, mutual respect occurs when individuals put down the broad brush with which they paint every other individual within a particular generation, and begin the process of attempting to get to know those individuals as persons. Showing respect also requires that leaders be willing to share their leadership power with those from other generations. Furthermore, incumbent (and often older) leaders must resist the urge to "pull rank" on those younger than them "with father (or mother)-knows-best thinking." In other words, "more years on earth does not necessarily mean more wisdom or insight."[103]

Though the temptation to do so will always be strong, leaders who have learned things a certain way, and are certain that those ways will work, must resist the temptation to only see the world through their own set of lenses and fail to recognize that there may actually be other productive and potentially even more effective ways of doing things. On the other hand, those seeking to assert their leadership potential into an environment that appears closed off and perhaps resistant to a younger mindset must not immediately become flippant and bored with the status quo. As Menconi states, "while older leaders may want business as usual, they must realize that change is necessary in our rapidly shifting world." On the flipside, younger leaders must not immediately assume that because it is new, it must be right and good.[104]

Though each generation may tend to be myopic and disposed to approach

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[102]Ibid., 27.

[103]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 166.

[104]Ibid.

issues within the church strictly from the perspective of how it affects them and others like them, such approaches must be eschewed in favor of leaving a heritage. As Strauss and Howe so poignantly note, "Like a person, a generation is allotted a limited time in each phase of life. Ultimately, most of what we associate with our generation – styles, habits, and artifacts – will disappear. We leave behind no more than what we persuade or oblige younger generations to take from us."[105] Therefore, rather than one's priority being to protect one's viewpoint and set of traditions, "leaders have a responsibility to themselves and their congregations to develop and nurture new generations of leaders." Value should be placed on leaving a legacy.[106]

As life expectancy continues to increase, so will the number of years that multiple generations will continue to interact with each other in churches. Consequently, if the church is going to overcome the generational differences that inherently exist within it in order to fulfill its mission in making disciples, then the members of the church, regardless of the generations with which they are affiliated, will have to become more externally focused. In fact, such external focus will not only be necessary to reach the next generation for Christ, but it will have the added benefit of galvanizing the different generations together for a common goal. There is great value in a church becoming externally focused, because when "the various generations corporately serve others, the focus is off generational differences and on working and cooperating together. Through service, generations can readily learn from each other and learn to appreciate each other while growing in their relationship with Jesus Christ."[107] Such should be the goal of multigenerational churches, that they should increasingly become more

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[105]Strauss and Howe, *Generations,* 287.

[106]Menconi, *The Intergenerational Church,* 171.

[107]Ibid., 205-6.

intergenerational. As Menconi states, "Healthy intergenerational communication and community is so rare in our culture that a church that succeeds at both will become like a city on a hill. It will exude light, impart power, radiate warmth, and invite strangers. Its influence will shine far beyond its walls."[108] May it be so.

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[108]Ibid., 217.

CHAPTER 4

DETAILS OF THE MINISTRY RESEARCH PROJECT

The ministry research project consisted of numerous elements. Included in those elements was the coordinating with church staff and ministry leaders to evaluate the current snapshot of involvement and volunteerism of the various generations within each ministry of the church. The project also included a pre- and post-sermon series survey of a stratified random sampling of 50 active Ivy Creek Baptist Church members from different generations in order to gauge attitudes and perceptions regarding inter-generational ministry involvement. The project centered on a 12-week expositional sermon series through the book of Philippians that emphasized the partnerships that should exist among church membership for the sake of the gospel. Also incorporated into the project was the production of volunteer/participant job descriptions that alerted church membership to specific needs and opportunities for service within the various ministries of the church. At the conclusion of the project, church staff and ministry leaders were asked to reassess the involvement and volunteerism of the various generations within their respective ministries.

Coordination with Church Staff and Ministry Leaders

The official start of the project began with preliminary meetings with the church staff and ministry leaders during the week of August 11, 2014. This group included the Minister of Music, the Children's Director, the Youth Minister, the directors of both the Men's and Women's Ministries, and the Chairman of the Missions Committee. The purpose of these meetings was to allow for the nature, purpose and

specific goals of the project to be communicated and explained. Each leader was provided a form that asked them to provide statistics that detail the demographic makeup of the volunteers and participants in their respective ministries.[1] It was requested that these forms be submitted by the beginning of the sermon series so that those numbers would form the baseline against which any future changes and growth could be measured.

During these meetings, the leaders were asked to evaluate their respective ministries and identify specific jobs or areas where additional inter-generational involvement would enhance their ministry's overall health and effectiveness. This evaluative process culminated in the production of volunteer/participant job descriptions that identified specific ministry needs and the desired generational volunteer or participant that would ideally supply those needs. Each ministry leader was asked to submit their respective volunteer/participant job descriptions by the fifth week of the sermon series to allow for evaluation, editing and production.

Following the sermon series and the production and dissemination of the volunteer/participant job descriptions, ministry leaders were once more asked to evaluate the involvement and participation of the various generations within each of their respective ministries. Forms like the ones submitted prior to the beginning of the sermon series were generated, and the numbers were compared between the two sets to assess if any change had taken place.

Pre- and Post-Sermon Series Surveys

A pre-sermon series survey was administered to a stratified random sampling of 50 active church members over the age of 18.[2] Though the church's total congregation

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[1]See appendix 2.

[2]See appendix 1.

size is larger, at the time the survey commenced, it was determined based upon church records, attendance and participation that Ivy Creek Baptist Church consisted of 344 active adult members. The sample size of 50 members whose answers would be used for both surveys was nearly 15 percent of active adult membership, which was determined to be sufficient to show a true representation of the mindset and involvement of the adult membership as a whole.

Utilizing the church's informational database, these church members were separated into four generational strata based upon their ages.[3] A simple random sample from each generational stratum was obtained that was weighted according to the percentage that each generation made up of the whole membership population.[4] This was accomplished by setting up an Excel spreadsheet that divided all 344 active church members into four strata based upon their ages. Table 1 shows the generational breakdown of those active members and the number of participants from each generational stratum necessary for this to be a stratified sampling.

In order to get a random sampling for each generational stratum, each individual member was randomly assigned a number by using the =RAND() formula in Excel. Members were then sorted within each stratum according to the random number they were assigned from the smallest to largest. Members with the largest randomly assigned numbers in each generational stratum were then selected to participate in the survey. Each generational stratum was intentionally over-recruited for participants so as to ensure that the target sample per stratum, and the total targeted sample of 50 would be

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[3]Gary L. McIntosh, *One Church, Four Generations: Understanding and Reaching All Ages in Your Church* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002), 11.

[4]Based upon information on how to obtain an effective sampling in Michael Sullivan III, *Fundamentals of Statistics,* 3rd ed., Sullivan Statistics Series (Boston: Prentice Hall, 2011), 30.

Table 1. Generational sample sizes

Generational Strata	Total Members	% of Total Members	Recruitment per Strata	Sample size per Strata
18-30 year olds	34	9.9	11	5
31-49 year olds	82	23.8	19	12
50-68 year olds	136	39.5	26	20
69+ year olds	92	26.8	19	13
	344	100	75	50

achieved. Once the recruitment subgroup for each generational stratum was identified, the random number assigned to each individual was turned into a unique personal identification number (PIN) which was then used by each participant in both the pre- and post-sermon series surveys. The creation of this PIN accomplished two things. First, it allowed for the survey to be anonymous. Names were not in any way attached to the survey itself, thereby encouraging the participants to be completely honest in their answers. The second purpose for the PIN was that it allowed for there to be one consistent group of 50 participants whose responses would be compared pre- and post-sermon series. Consequently, only responses where the unique pre- and post-sermon series surveys PIN's match were kept.

An account was established through the website SurveyMonkey that allowed for the survey to be accessed and taken online by those members who wished to do so. During the week of August 25, 2014, an email was sent to each person within the recruitment group of each generational stratum requesting their participation. The email further explained the purpose of the survey, and included their own PIN as well as a link that allowed them to immediately access the survey. For those members for whom the church did not have an active email address, hardcopy forms of the survey along with the

same information that was contained in the emails were mailed to their addresses or hand-delivered.

The survey itself asked for the participant to identify his or her generational age group, as well as questions regarding their church attendance and a personal assessment of their current participation level within the ministries of the church. The survey also asked the participating member to identify the areas of ministry in which he or she had served in the past, or where he or she is currently serving. The survey also included questions designed to provide a foundational understanding of participants' opinions of what partnership within the local church body means; how important it is to have inter-generational partnerships within the local church body; how church fellowship is affected by inter-generational involvement; and how satisfied the participant currently is with his or her inter-generational participation within the ministries of the church, and how willing he or she would be to take a more active role. This part of the survey utilized a six-point Likert scale[5] indicating strong agreement, agreement, somewhat agreement, somewhat disagreement, disagreement, or strong disagreement. The results of this survey provided a foundational understanding of the participants' knowledge and attitudes regarding inter-generational partnerships within the ministry of the church. The results of this pre-sermon series survey formed the baseline from which changes in involvement and attitudes were measured by the post-sermon series survey.

Following the sermon series through Philippians, an identical survey was sent to each of the original participants from the first pre-sermon series survey. During the week of December 1, 2014, an email containing a link to the survey as well as the PIN for each participant was sent out just as it had been before. Also, for those who were unable

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[5]Adapted from Rensis Likert, "A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes," *Archives of Psychology* 22, no. 140 (1932): 1-55.

to take the survey online, hardcopies of the survey were mailed or hand-delivered. Once the post-sermon series surveys were completed and returned, the final dataset was cleansed and reduced to the target number of 50, with the breakdown of those 50 respondents corresponding to the target sample per generational stratum.

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Expositional Sermon Series through Philippians

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Beginning on Sunday morning, September 7, 2014, a 12-week sermon series through the book of Philippians commenced. The purpose of the sermon series was to demonstrate the importance of partnership within the context of the local church body. Each sermon examined and explained the selected text while also applying it in order to demonstrate that inter-generational partnerships and collaborations are beneficial not only for the sake of the gospel, but for the sake of the health of the church as well. Each sermon was accompanied by a sermon outline and summary statement entitled "Sermon in a Sentence" which was provided to the congregation for each successive sermon.[6]

Sermon 1: Philippians 1:1-11

The first sermon of the series introduced the role the 12-week series would play in the overall completion of the project. It also established the supposition that an inter-generational church is more than just a church simply comprised of multiple generations, but rather is one in which the differing generations within the church work and serve together for the purpose of seeing the gospel advanced and seeing each other mature in the faith.

The sermon established that Paul's letter to the Philippians would serve as an ideal book of the Bible to study with regard to inter-generational church ministry due to the occasion of the formation of the church in Philippi, and what is known of the makeup

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[6]See appendix 5.

of that first-century congregation of believers. From what can be ascertained from Luke's account in Acts 16, the Philippian congregation was not only diverse generationally, but also ethnically and culturally. The exposition of the sermon text brought out the fact that Paul repeatedly used the important and intentional phrase "you all" throughout the introduction to his letter in order to draw attention to the diversity that was evident within that congregation. The inference is that though they were diverse, they were united into one "you all" church family.

The sermon also went on to emphasize the importance of Paul's use of the term "κοινωνία" in 1:5, which is variously translated as "fellowship" (NKJV) and "partnership" (ESV). The "fellowship" or "partnership" that the Philippian church had with Paul was "in the gospel."

The sermon made application of these points by emphasizing that the congregation of Ivy Creek Baptist Church must also recognize that though they too are generationally, as well as culturally and ethnically diverse, they have been united into a "you all" family through the work of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, though diverse, they are called to a "fellowship" or "partnership" in the gospel just as the Philippian congregation was. The sermon concluded by emphasizing the joy that results from such partnership in the gospel.

Sermon 2: Philippians 1:12-26

Joyful unity and partnership within a church congregation is not easy to pull off, nor will it happen apart from obstacles and challenges. The next sermon in the series addressed the obstacles and challenges that Paul faced as a result of his commitment to the advancement of the gospel. Though Paul was in prison for proclaiming the gospel, and though he was being ridiculed by others who were also preaching Christ, Paul's joy remained constant because he recognized that the gospel message was still advancing in spite of his circumstances. Furthermore, because the nature of the surpassing good news

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of the gospel was such that there was no downside for Paul whether he lived or died, he could continue to live with joy.

The application of the sermon focused on the fact that what was true for Paul is also true for the congregation of Ivy Creek Baptist Church. If God can take even the most terrible of situations and use them for His advantage; and if the frustrations and troubles caused by the petty jealousy and envy of others are no match for the joy that God offers in Christ; and if the promise of eternity with Christ is enough to provide the boldness necessary to continue in gospel partnership even in the face of death; then when the advancement of the gospel of Christ becomes an individual's and a congregation's highest priority, that person and that congregation will be able to overcome whatever challenges may come to steal their joy, and they will be able to press on in their partnership in the gospel.

Sermon 3: Philippians 1:27-2:4

This sermon began by reemphasizing two primary points brought out in the first two sermons. The first was that the congregation of Ivy Creek Baptist Church is to be a "you all" church family. In other words, though it is diverse in its makeup, it is to be united. Second, the commitment to the advancement of the gospel must remain first and foremost in the lives of individuals and in the life of the church. These two recapitulations culminated in the first phrases of what would become an overarching thematic statement of the church's identity that would recur throughout the rest of the series: "We are to be a 'you all,' 'gospel-first' family of believers." A further exposition of the sermon text revealed that Paul encouraged the church in Philippi to remain united in the face of external opposition and internal unrest often caused by individuals or affinity groups who push for their own agendas.

The application of this text was simple and straightforward. How Paul encouraged the Philippian church to behave as a result of who they were in Christ carries

over to how Ivy Creek Baptist Church should behave as a result of who this congregation is in Christ. Being united to Christ will inevitably bring about suffering and opposition from those who are not a part of the faith. As a consequence, comfort and ease is not the first priority for a believer or for the church as a whole. Plainly stated, partnership in the gospel will require sacrifice, and will often necessitate suffering. Furthermore, because unity among the church body is so important, the needs of others must be of high priority to the body of believers. Consequently, an overemphasis on comfort, ease, and personal agendas have no place among a "you all," "gospel-first" family of believers.

Sermon 4: Philippians 2:5-11

This sermon built off the previous sermon's emphasis of removing selfish agendas by examining the humble attitude that Christ displayed through His condescension by leaving the glories of heaven and becoming a man. Paul's declaration that the same humble approach that dominated the mind of Christ is also to be the dominant attitude of every believer. Such a declaration set the stage for a clear application of this immensely Christological passage. Just as Christ displayed selfless, purposeful and sacrificial service, so also should the congregation of Ivy Creek Baptist Church be willing to live lives of unreserved self-sacrifice for the sake of the gospel and the glory of God.

Sermon 5: Philippians 2:12-18

Here as in the previous sermons, it was important to reestablish the fact that Paul wrote his letter to a "you all," "gospel-first" family of believers. Though the Philippians were diverse, they had been united by the gospel which had become their first priority. As such, though the context of Paul's letter to the Philippians is different, the application of what he writes is clear, and would carry over to any diverse modern day congregation of believers.

This sermon acknowledged the fact that this text is tightly connected to the Christological passage that precedes it. In fact, in these verses, Paul draws from the example that Christ set, and gives further instructions that result from that example. What emerges is that Paul encourages believers to live without complaining, to be positive examples for others to follow, and to maintain their joy even in the face of sacrifice. Gospel partnership among a generationally diverse congregation will require those believers to live submissive, holy, and upright lives that will not only serve as examples for others to follow, but will also cause them to live lives full of joy.

Sermon 6: Philippians 2:19-30

This sermon focused on the examples of Timothy and Epaphroditus as described by Paul and how they embodied the servant-hearted mindset of Christ. From the information that is available not only in these verses, but throughout the rest of the letter, it becomes evident that both men had servants' hearts that were centered on the things of Christ. Furthermore, just as Christ had done, both men were willing to put the interests of others ahead of their own, all for the sake of Christ and the gospel.

The application of this text led to an expansion of the overarching thematic statement of the church's identity that had been introduced earlier in the series: "We are a 'you all,' 'gospel-first,' 'servant-hearted' family of believers." Such an understanding led to the declaration that the congregation of Ivy Creek Baptist Church must be willing to be sent anywhere, serve anyone, sacrifice anything, love intensely, and cooperate fully for the cause of Christ.

Sermon 7: Philippians 3:1-11

The fact that Paul rejected anything and everything that the culture in which he lived would have classified as assets in order to find his identity and source of joy in Christ alone communicates just how consumed he was by the gospel. Paul wanted his

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life to count for the glory of Christ and for the sake of the gospel. The intensity of Paul's desire set the stage for the exposition of this text, and served as the means by which the church in Philippi and modern day readers may understand his warnings and declarations. Paul warned against those who preached salvation by any other means except by faith in Christ alone. The danger in such preaching is that it will ultimately cause one to treasure something more than Christ, which Paul emphatically denies. Paul wanted nothing more than for his identity to be swallowed up in the identity of Christ because he recognized that what Christ provided him was infinitely greater than anything he could ever receive elsewhere.

The application of this text to the congregation of Ivy Creek Baptist Church centered on the desire that one's life should count for the glory of God. Therefore, the overarching thematic statement of the church's identity was expanded to include that same motive for existence: "We are a 'you all,' 'gospel-first,' 'servant-hearted' family of believers who want our lives to count for the glory of God." In order for one's life to count, that person must reject all forms of works-based righteousness, treasure Christ above everything else in the world, and trust in Christ to provide everything they will ever need. This is what gospel partnership demands among a generationally diverse congregation.

Sermon 8: Philippians 3:12-16

This sermon began by attempting to give definition to what it means to be a disciple. Discipleship is not a point on a line, but rather a process of becoming more and more spiritually mature by becoming more and more like Christ. That process will never be completed in this life, but is a progression that each believer must nevertheless make a priority. Paul certainly recognized the never-ending nature of discipleship and made it clear from this text that he had not yet achieved perfection, and that it was his habit to continue to press forward and strain toward the goal that Christ had set before him.

The application of this text established that just as Paul longed for the future reality of heaven and the joys that awaited him, so should those who make up the family of believers at Ivy Creek Baptist Church. Consequently, because the best is still yet to come, "you all," "gospel-first," "servant-hearted" believers who desire for their lives to count for the glory of God will invest their present in their future. That means that as it pertains to serving Christ and His church, taking it easy, relaxing, and checking out are not options for believers. That was certainly not the attitude that Christ exemplified, and maturing believers will not adopt that attitude either.

Sermon 9: Philippians 3:17-4:1

Paul was certain of some very important things that he wanted the Philippian church to be certain of as well. Paul knew who he was, he knew to whom he belonged, and he knew where he was going. Every believer must focus and be assured of those same things. Their identity as a Christian means that they have been united to Christ and that they now belong to Him by virtue of the fact that He purchased their pardon through His shed blood. As a consequence, the Lord has promised that eternal life in heaven is the future reward for those who by faith have been united to Him.

With these points being established at the beginning, the sermon was then able to move through the text and ultimately to a direct application to the congregation of Ivy Creek Baptist Church. Keeping the gospel central by always remembering who they are, to whom they belong, and where they are going necessitates seeking out and striving to become a mentor worth imitating. But, as Paul had previously stated, there will always be enemies of the cross of Christ who will always value the wrong things and point believers in the wrong direction. Such a recognition demands that a "you all," "gospel-first," "servant-hearted" family of believers who desire that their lives count for the glory of God will stand firm and remain fixed on the truth of the gospel. Standing firm does not imply standing still and becoming stagnant, however. Rather, as Paul has previously

stated, those whose identity is wrapped up in Christ, and whose future has been secured by Christ must continue to press on and strain forward toward the goal that has been set before them. This is what will be involved when a multi-generational church engages in gospel partnership.

Sermon 10: Philippians 4:2-9

This text of this sermon dealt with the apparent conflict that had emerged between Euodia and Syntche, two evidently prominent women within the Philippian congregation. Paul had set up what he wanted to say to these two women by how he had discussed the attitude of humility and putting the interests of others ahead of one's own earlier in the letter. Obviously, this was not the attitude these two women had been displaying, nor the action that they had been engaged in up to this point. Nevertheless, in this very public appeal, Paul encouraged them to settle their dispute and adopt the same mindset of Christ. He moves on to exhort the entire congregation to rejoice in the Lord no matter what circumstances may come their way. Such rejoicing would no doubt not always be easy nor normal. Likewise, Paul encourages the congregation to always respond with gentleness or kindness, which would attract attention and serve as a positive testimony to their faith in Christ. Furthermore, though it may have been natural for these Philippian believers to worry about their circumstances and the opposition that they faced, Paul advised them not to worry, but to allow the peace of God bring them comfort. The focus of their minds was not to be upon what may have been the natural things to focus on, but rather on the things which were true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous and praiseworthy. This was what they had learned from Paul and what they must demonstrate in their own lives.

The application of this text dealt with helping the congregation to recognize that their natural responses to what life throws at them are not always the right responses. When opposed, the natural response may be to fight back rather than to display humility

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and gentleness and kindness. The natural response to trials may be depression and worry rather than rejoicing and confidence in God and His provision. Moreover, the natural focus of life often leads away from the things that Paul commands the Philippians to focus on. The point is that a "you all," "gospel-first," "servant-hearted" family of believers who want their lives to count for the glory of God will put into practice and live out what they say they believe even though they may be tempted to do otherwise.

Sermon 11: Philippians 4:10-13

Satisfaction is something that everyone seeks, but few find. So often, the things that people search for to bring them contentment only leave them feeling empty and hungering for more. As Paul nears the end of his letter to the Philippians, he makes a point to emphasize the fact that true satisfaction that brings joy, and true contentment that is not contingent upon having much or negated by having little, is rooted in a deep conviction that Christ is completely sufficient to meet every need of the believer.

The application of this text involved reflecting on what it means to be "in the Lord," what it means to be content regardless of the circumstances, and what it means to develop a Christ-centered confidence. The congregation was encouraged to consider if they were seeking satisfaction in anyone or anything other than Christ. It was reiterated once more that gospel partnership necessitates a willingness to sacrifice comfort for the sake of the gospel, and for the sake of becoming truly satisfied and content in Christ.

Sermon 12: Philippians 4:14-23

In the final sermon of the series, the text focused on the generosity of the Philippian congregation. Paul mentions that they had helped him out financially on more than one occasion, and in doing so, had shared in the gospel ministry with him. Though their generosity had no doubt decreased their own available funds, Paul makes sure they understand that according to God's accounting methods, they were by no means going in

the hole. In fact, Paul wanted them to know that what they had given had served to advance the gospel, and in doing so, they had benefitted themselves. After all, Paul had already made it clear that money and possessions will never bring satisfaction or contentment. Rather, the believer is to trust in God to be the supplier of every need.

Keeping with the overarching thematic identity that had played a big part in the application of this letter to the congregation of Ivy Creek Baptist Church, this final passage allowed for a recapitulation of much of what had been learned over the twelve sermons. The application of this final section took into account the previous themes and concluded: Members of this "you all," "gospel-first," "servant-hearted" family of believers who want their lives to count for the glory of God will make gospel partnership their top priority, and trust God to meet all their needs.

Volunteer/Participant Job Descriptions

During the initial meetings with church staff and ministry leaders, the goal of producing volunteer/participant job descriptions explaining the needs and corresponding opportunities for service within each ministry was discussed and explained. Each leader was commissioned to create as many volunteer/participant job descriptions as were needed for their respective ministries. Questions to ask and examples to follow were given to each leader to assist them in the production of such descriptions.[7]

Midway through the project, these volunteer/participant job descriptions were collected from the ministry leaders, and were edited for content and uniformity. Each description included a brief explanation of requirements and responsibilities of each volunteer/participant, as well as the desired generational volunteer/participant that would ideally be able to fulfill those job descriptions. The descriptions also listed the contact information necessary for someone to volunteer or desire to participate.

[7]See appendices 3 and 4.

Once the editing process was complete, all of the volunteer/participant descriptions were amassed into a collective set that were categorized according to their respective ministries. This collective set was produced and made available to the entire congregation of Ivy Creek Baptist Church during the final two weeks of the sermon series through Philippians. The volunteer/participant job descriptions were also uploaded to the church's website and categorized according to their respective ministries. From the website, anyone interested in volunteering or anyone who wanted more information was able to send a message directly to the ministry leader for further communication.

CHAPTER 5

PROJECT EVALUATION

The purpose of this project was to help fulfill the mission of Ivy Creek Baptist Church in making disciples of all believers by strategically increasing inter-generational involvement of the adult members of the church through the application of the teachings of Paul's letter to the church in Philippi.

The project had three major goals, which provided the criteria by which to evaluate its success. The first goal was to evaluate the current inter-generational involvement in the various ministries of Ivy Creek Baptist Church. The second goal was to develop inter-generational volunteer opportunities for ministry at Ivy Creek Baptist Church. The third goal was for Ivy Creek Baptist Church to realize an increase in inter-generational involvement through teaching the foundational principles of partnership between generations put forth in the epistle of Philippians.

The research began on Monday, August 11, 2014, and concluded Friday, December 19, 2014. The following is a concise compilation that seeks to evaluate the overall success of the project as determined by an assessment of the project's goals through an examination of the research and the data collected throughout the process. Following the assessment of the project's goals, the strengths and weaknesses of the project will be discussed along with some theological and personal reflections, followed by a conclusion.

Assessment of Project Goals

This project set out to attain three goals. Following will be an assessment of these stated goals.

Evaluation of Current
Inter-Generational Involvement

The first goal of the project was to evaluate the current inter-generational

involvement in the various ministries of Ivy Creek Baptist Church. This process involved

coordinating with various ministry leaders within the church to compile reports regarding

their specific areas of ministry that detailed the involvement and volunteerism of the

respective adult generations represented in the church. Table 2 provides a raw data

summary of the compiled reports.

Table 2. Summary of inter-generational ministry involvement

	Children's	Youth	Missions	Music	Men's	Women's	Total
18-30	17	2	9	9	0	27	64
31-49	37	4	21	13	3	124	202
50-68	40	1	19	33	57	148	298
69+	10	0	6	15	3	135	169
Total	104	7	55	70	63	434	733

Note: The numbers reported for the Children's and Youth Ministries reflect only the
volunteers in leadership and supervisory roles, while all other ministry numbers reflect
leadership as well as general participation.

The raw data provided from these reports aided in creating a snapshot

indicating which adult generations were involved in which ministries, and in what

percentages. Table 3 tabulates the raw numbers provided by each ministry leader, and

presents them in the form of percentages.

The information obtained showed that there were obviously some ministries

that attracted the involvement of some generations more than others. Nevertheless, when

looking across all the ministries, the percentages of each generation's involvement was

similar to the percentage that generational stratum made up of the entire congregation.

Table 3. Percentages of ministry involvement
among all generations

	Children's	Youth	Missions	Music	Men's	Women's	Total
18-30	16.3	28.6	16.4	12.9	0	6.2	8.7
31-49	35.6	57.1	38.2	18.6	4.8	28.6	27.5
50-68	38.5	14.3	34.5	47.1	90.4	34.1	40.7
69+	9.6	0	10.9	21.4	4.8	31.1	23.1

Based upon membership information obtained through the church's informational

database, Table 4 compares the percentage that each adult generation made up of the

whole membership population to the percentage that each adult generation was involved

in the ministries of Ivy Creek.

Table 4. Comparison of membership and involvement
among adult generations

Generational Strata	% of Total Members	% of Ministry Involvement	Difference
18-30	9.9	8.7	-1.2
31-49	23.8	27.5	3.7
50-68	39.5	40.7	1.2
69+	26.8	23.1	-3.7

In order to complete the goal of evaluating the current inter-generational

involvement in the various ministries of Ivy Creek Baptist Church, a pre-sermon series

survey was given to a stratified random sampling of 50 active adult church members.

The four adult strata that the survey focused on were 18-30 year olds, 31-49 year olds,

50-68 year olds, and 69+ year olds.

Participants were asked to respond to the question: "On average, how many times a week have you attended worship at Ivy Creek in the past year?" Significantly, the pre-sermon series survey revealed that only 4 percent responded that they attended worship less than twice per month. On the other end of the spectrum, 68 percent indicated that they attended worship four or more times a month. Such responses indicate that regular worship attendance was a high priority for those surveyed.

The results of the survey went on to show that ministry participation was also a high priority as well. Participants were asked to respond to the question: "Since becoming a member, has your participation in the life and ministries of Ivy Creek increased, remained the same, or decreased?" The responses showed that 66 percent said that their participation had increased, 28 percent indicated that it had remained the same, while only 6 percent said that their participation had decreased since becoming a member of Ivy Creek. Notably, those who indicated that their participation levels had dropped since becoming members of Ivy Creek cited health and family issues as the reasons for the decrease. Also of note is the fact that the high percentage of increased involvement reported in the survey was evenly distributed among all of the different generational strata.

In the latter part of the pre-sermon series survey, participants were asked to identify specific ministries in which they had participated in the past. In order to gauge attitudes and perceptions regarding inter-generational involvement, and to add more dimension to the snapshot being assembled, the scope of this question was broadened to allow for the inclusion of ministry involvement in previous churches in which the participant had served. The answers provided by the survey participants uncovered a number of interesting revelations.

One revelation was that a high percentage of participants from all four adult

generations displayed a willingness to interact with and serve younger generations. The pre-sermon series survey showed that 80 percent of the participants had served in some capacity in Children's Ministry at some point in the past. Similarly, 76 percent indicated that they had served in some capacity in Youth Ministry at some previous point. While no time limit was placed upon when the participants who responded had actually served in these ministries, the high percentages of past participation and involvement in the Children's and Youth Ministries indicate a favorable response on the part of these adult generations when presented with opportunities to interact with and serve younger generations.

The responses of those surveyed regarding past involvement in Missions Ministry was also impressive. The results showed that 70 percent of respondents said that at some point in the past they had participated in some way in Missions. Furthermore, that high percentage was consistently reflected among the respondents in all generational strata.

The survey also revealed that 54 percent of participants reported that they had participated in some area of Music Ministry at one point in their lives. While that number reflects a sizable drop in participation levels when compared to the other areas of ministry being surveyed, the decrease is most likely attributed to musical talent and ability rather than to any other reason. What is significant, however, is that, as previously noted, this participation percentage proved consistent among the four generational strata.

Due to the fact that the sample size used to take the surveys was randomly selected, the random sampling consisted of 30 females and 20 males. When asked to assess their previous participation in either the Men's or Women's Ministries, the collective group reported an 80 percent involvement. Of note, that percentage was consistent among all four generational strata, which appears to run counter to the raw data submitted by Men's and Women's Ministry leaders, particularly with regard to the

younger two generational cohorts. In order to help explain the difference between the two sets of reported data, it is important to note that the survey called for participants to indicate any past ministry participation, which may, but does not necessarily reflect a current participation in those ministries.

What is notable from the responses to the pre-sermon series survey is the consistently high level of past involvement reported by the surveyed sample in the various ministries of the church. In fact, the high percentage of past involvement across the various ministries of the church among the four generational strata revealed a generally high level of value placed upon one generation serving another (as reflected with the Children's and Youth Ministries), and upon inter-generational participation (as reflected with the Missions, Music, Men's and Women's Ministries).

In order to dig a little deeper in an attempt to gauge perceptions and attitudes toward inter-generational involvement, the middle section of the pre-sermon series survey consisted of 11 declarative statements. Participants were given 6 options from which to choose regarding their agreement to each statement. The responses allowed the participant to indicate strong disagreement, disagreement, somewhat disagreement, somewhat agreement, agreement, or strong agreement. Each response was assigned a numerical value (strong disagreement = 1; disagreement = 2; somewhat disagreement = 3; somewhat agreement = 4; agreement = 5; strong agreement = 6). The mean value for each statement was determined by adding the total values of each response and dividing by the total number of responses. Table 5 provides the mean value of each statement as determined by the participant's responses.

As can be ascertained from the data above, the participants in the pre-sermon series survey reported a high level of agreement with the eleven declarative statements in favor of inter-generational participation and involvement. These results, when combined with the high percentages of participation and involvement in the various ministries of

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Table 5. Pre-survey beliefs and attitudes related to inter-generational ministry

Survey Statement	Pre-Survey Mean
1. I believe that age diversity is a key component to a healthy church.	5.66
2. Our church congregation feels like one large family.	5.22
3. I have a strong sense of belonging to this congregation.	5.46
4. I believe the Bible addresses the inter-generational relationships that exist within the church.	5.58
5. I have learned significant biblical truths from someone older than I am.	5.38
6. I have learned significant biblical truths from someone younger than I am.	5.22
7. At church, it is important for me to interact with others who are not in my age group.	5.3
8. I have a responsibility to serve generations other than my own in my church family.	5.52
9. I am content with my current level of involvement in the various inter-generational ministries of the church.	4.28
10. I know how to become involved in the various inter-generational ministries of the church.	4.9
11. I would be more likely to participate in one or more of the inter-generational ministries if I knew beforehand what was expected of me.	4.4

the church reported across the generational strata, as well as the self-reported high

priority of regular worship attendance paints the picture of a surveyed sample that is committed to serving each other, and willing to participate with each other in service of others.

As previously stated, the first goal of the project was to evaluate the current inter-generational involvement in the various ministries of Ivy Creek Baptist Church. The accumulation and assessment of data from the respective ministry leaders within the church as well as the assessment of the responses to the pre-sermon series survey constituted the successful completion of the first goal of the project.

Develop Inter-Generational Volunteer/Participant Opportunities

The second goal of the project was to create and develop inter-generational volunteer opportunities for ministry at Ivy Creek Baptist Church. A collaborative effort between the church staff and the various ministry leaders produced volunteer/participant job descriptions for each of the respective ministries within the church.[1] Each of these descriptions included the necessary qualifications and a list of expectations of each volunteer or participant. The goal was deemed to be successful because multiple inter-generational volunteer/participant opportunities were developed from the various ministries of the church, and that collection of descriptions was disseminated to the congregation in hard-copy form as well as on the church's website.

Realize an Increase in Inter-Generational Involvement

The third goal of the project was for Ivy Creek Baptist Church to realize an increase in inter-generational involvement through teaching the foundational principles of partnership between generations put forth in the epistle of Philippians. In order to

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[1]See appendix 6.

accomplish this goal, a series of twelve expository sermons was preached from the epistle, each emphasizing the necessity of inter-generational partnership and involvement within the life of the church.

In order to measure the effectiveness of the sermon series in hopes of realizing an increase in inter-generational involvement, a post-sermon series survey identical to the pre-sermon series survey was given to the same stratified random sampling of church members. The responses provided by the participants underwent comparison and statistical analysis to determine if any changes in participation and/or attitudes toward inter-generational involvement occurred following the sermons.

To the question, "On average, how many times a week have you attended worship at Ivy Creek in the past year?" it was notable that by the end of the sermon series, the percentage of participants who indicated that they attended worship 4 or more times a month increased from 68 percent to 74 percent. Also, those who responded that they attended worship less than twice per month dropped from 4 percent to 2 percent.

As it pertains to ministry participation and involvement, the responses indicate very little difference between the pre- and post-sermon series numbers. Nevertheless, what is notable from the responses to both surveys is the consistently high level of self-reported past involvement by the surveyed sample across the various ministries of the church. Such results from both the pre- and post-sermon series surveys are positive and encouraging. However, because such positive responses to ministry participation in the pre-sermon series survey reflected a high value placed upon inter-generational partnerships, a concern was created as to whether the sermon series through Philippians that focused on inter-generational partnerships would be shown to have had any measurable effect on the surveyed sample. In order to gauge whether the sermon series through Philippians had any effect on beliefs and attitudes toward inter-generational involvement, the pre- and post- answers to the middle section of the survey underwent

analysis. Table 6 provides the mean value of each declarative statement as determined by the participant's responses in the post-sermon series survey.

Table 6. Post-survey beliefs and attitudes related to inter-generational ministry

Survey Statement	Post-Survey Mean
1. I believe that age diversity is a key component to a healthy church.	5.66
2. Our church congregation feels like one large family.	5.5
3. I have a strong sense of belonging to this congregation.	5.48
4. I believe the Bible addresses the inter-generational relationships that exist within the church.	5.7
5. I have learned significant biblical truths from someone older than I am.	5.42
6. I have learned significant biblical truths from someone younger than I am.	5.28
7. At church, it is important for me to interact with others who are not in my age group.	5.48
8. I have a responsibility to serve generations other than my own in my church family.	5.5
9. I am content with my current level of involvement in the various inter-generational ministries of the church.	4.56
10. I know how to become involved in the various inter-generational ministries of the church.	5.3
11. I would be more likely to participate in one or more of the inter-generational ministries if I knew beforehand what was expected of me.	4.38

As was the case with the pre-sermon series survey, the means of the responses to the eleven declarative statements in the post-sermon series survey showed high levels of agreement. Therefore, in order to determine if the sermon series through Philippians that focused on the foundational principles of inter-generational partnerships had a statistically significant effect, a *t* test for dependent samples was applied to the mean responses to the eleven statements between the pre- and post-sermon series surveys. Table 7 reveals the comparison of the pre- and post-sermon series mean scores to the eleven declarative statements, and Table 8 reveals the results of the *t* test for dependent samples of those mean scores.

Table 7. Comparison of pre- and post-sermon series mean scores

Statement #	Pre-Survey Mean	Post-Survey Mean	Mean Difference
1	5.66	5.66	0
2	5.22	5.5	0.28
3	5.46	5.48	0.02
4	5.58	5.7	0.12
5	5.38	5.42	0.04
6	5.22	5.28	0.06
7	5.3	5.48	0.18
8	5.52	5.5	-0.02
9	4.28	4.56	0.28
10	4.9	5.3	0.4
11	4.4	4.38	-0.02
Total	5.1745	5.2963	0.1218

Table 8. Results of *t* test for dependent samples

	Mean	t Stat	t Critical two-tail	P(T<=t) two-tail
Pre-Survey	5.1745			
Post-Survey	5.2963			
Change	0.1218	-2.8098	2.2281	0.0185

The results of the *t* test reveal that the expository sermon series from Philippians that focused on the principles of inter-generational partnerships did make a statistically significant difference on the beliefs and attitudes of the surveyed sample. That difference was shown by a small, yet significant increase in positive responses toward the eleven value statements, which resulted in the t Stat absolute value being greater than the t Critical two-tail value ($t_{(10)}$ = -2.8098 > t Critical two-tail = 2.2281), and the *p* value being less than .05 (*p* = 0.0185 < 0.05).

Nevertheless, the margin of increase was so small that caution should be shown when attempting to draw conclusions. In fact, the statistical analysis across the various generational strata show that while there were uniform increases in agreement with the statements concerning beliefs and attitudes, only one stratum produced statistically significant results. Only the stratum made up of those sixty-nine years old and older showed a statistically significant increase in agreement with the eleven statements made in the survey. Even among this group, however, the mean increase from pre- to post- results was very small.

The overall picture revealed by the pre- and post-sermon series responses as well as an analysis of the changes between the two, is that the surveyed stratified random sampling consisted of a highly committed group of church members of various ages who were already actively involved in the various ministries of the church, and who valued

inter-generational interaction both through service and mutual participation prior to hearing the sermon series through Philippians. Consequently, any realized change in positive attitudes toward inter-generational participation as well as any increase in ministry involvement among the whole of those who participated in the surveys could only be marginal at best. Nevertheless, though the change was marginal, the encouraging point of the analysis is that such change was positive, and that it was reported across all four generational strata.

The second phase of attaining the goal of realizing an increase in inter-generational involvement and participation among the congregation of Ivy Creek Baptist Church was to assess the response of the congregation to the volunteer/participant job opportunities. Two weeks before the end of the sermon series, 29 different opportunities were presented to the congregation in hard-copy form. These same opportunities were also posted on the church's website so that anyone interested in volunteering or obtaining more information was able to send a message directly to the ministry leader for further communication.

After promoting the opportunities for involvement and participation to the congregation and reminding them how they were able to volunteer and become involved, the number of people who either expressed interest in the various posted opportunities, or who actually responded by volunteering was tabulated. A summary of those results show that the Children's Ministry had responses to three different volunteer opportunities from two new volunteers. The Missions Ministry saw 22 people express interest in the various mission opportunities that were identified, resulting in 11 who made an immediate commitment to serve. The Music Ministry also grew by 11 new members. While the Men's Ministry did not have a taker for any of its posted volunteer/participant job descriptions, the ministry did see 63 first-time participants attend a Men's Ministry event. Significantly, of those 63 new participants, 51 were under the age of 50. The Women's

Ministry experienced similar results. While no one volunteered to serve in the posted

volunteer position, the ministry did see 28 first-time participants attend a Women's

Ministry event following the sermon series.

The final stage in assessing whether or not the third goal was successful

involved asking the various ministry leaders to once again provide data that detailed the

demographic makeup of the volunteers and participants in their respective ministries.

Table 9 shows the new numbers as reported by the various ministry leaders.

Table 9. Post-sermon series summary of inter-
generational ministry involvement

	Children's	Youth	Missions	Music	Men's	Women's	Total
18-30	17	2	11	9	7	32	78
31-49	39	4	26	14	29	132	244
50-68	40	1	22	41	66	158	328
69+	10	0	7	17	6	140	180
Total	106	7	66	81	108	462	830

Note: The numbers reported for the Children's and Youth Ministries reflect only the
volunteers in leadership and supervisory roles, while all other ministry numbers reflect
leadership as well as general participation.

Table 10 shows the net increase of volunteers and new participants by

comparing the pre- and post-sermon series totals.

The stated benchmark of success for the third goal of this project was for a

positive increase in attitudes favorable toward and involvement in inter-generational

ministries of the church. As has been stated, though all generational strata showed an

increase in attitudes favorable toward inter-generational ministry involvement and

participation, a statistically significant increase could not be established among each

Table 10. Comparison of generational ministry involvement
totals pre- and post-sermon series

	Pre-sermon series	Post-sermon series	Increase
18-30 year olds	64	78	14
31-49 year olds	202	244	42
50-68 year olds	298	328	30
69+ year olds	169	180	11
Total	733	830	97

generational strata. Nevertheless, as was shown, a statistically significant increase did

occur when measured across the entire surveyed sample, albeit marginal. Furthermore,

based upon the data reported by various ministry leaders, 97 people either volunteered to

assume new responsibilities by responding to the volunteer/participant job opportunities,

or became first-time participants in a ministry in which they had not previously been

involved. Based upon this information and analysis, the third goal of this project is

deemed to have been successful.

Strengths of the Project

This project demonstrated two primary strengths. The first strength takes into

consideration the overall benefit that came from the systematic exposition of the letter to

the Philippians. Because the sermon series worked from the beginning to the end of the

letter, Paul's emphasis on partnership and cooperation among the diverse membership of

the Philippian congregation was able to be shown one building block at a time and

applied directly to Ivy Creek Baptist Church. Consequently, and somewhat

unexpectedly, as the study developed over the course of the twelve sermons, an

application-based sentence put together from the exposition of various sermon passages

emerged: "We are a 'you all,' 'gospel-first,' 'servant-hearted' family of believers who

want our lives to count for the glory of God." This statement not only became a way to encourage members to recognize the unity they have through the gospel and the necessity for partnership and service that such unity brings, but it also became the church's de facto identity statement. In fact, this statement is being considered for inclusion in all future letterhead and other means of communication as a way not only to tell others who the membership of Ivy Creek Baptist Church is, but also to serve as a constant reminder to the church of who they are and what their goal is to be.

A second strength of the project was the creation and compilation of the volunteer/participant job opportunities. The benefit was three-fold. First, it forced staff and ministry leaders to assess their individual ministries and required them to be specific with regard to what areas of service and participation were needed within those ministries. Unfortunately, assumptions are often made that members within the church will automatically recognize and know how they can become involved in a particular ministry, and will know what will be expected of them if they do become involved. Those assumptions, as is so often the case, are unfounded. The volunteer/participant job opportunities provided specificity with regard to time commitment, responsibilities, and other pertinent information. Most importantly, however, they identified how members of the congregation could become involved, and who they could contact to volunteer or obtain more information. Clear and specific information communicated to the church family was shown to be beneficial.

Another benefit that emerged from the creation of the volunteer/participant job opportunities was their addition to the church website. Their online presence coupled with the ability of those in the church family to apply for any of the available positions online proved to be of significant value. Upon notification of the church family through a church wide email containing an imbedded link to the specific webpage, the church's webmaster noted significant increases in online traffic to the church's website, and high-

volume traffic to the various volunteer/participant opportunities. Though certainly not every volunteer/participant job opportunity received a reply, the fact that such information is now available to new attenders as well as the entire church family is a significant step forward.

Along the same lines, a third benefit was realized through the creation of the volunteer/participant job descriptions. Not only were descriptions created for vacant and available areas of service, but descriptions were also created for those areas not currently in need of volunteers. Obviously, the goal was to see an increase in volunteers who would fill positions currently vacant. But there was also a need to have job descriptions in place for those positions where people were already volunteering and participating. Therefore, during this process, staff and ministry leaders also developed these descriptions as well. While only the vacant and open positions were posted online and presented to the congregation, the compendium of all volunteer/participant job opportunities was assembled for reference and future use.

Weaknesses of the Project

The principal weakness of this project proved to be the pre- and post-sermon series survey instrument. Reflection upon the effectiveness of the survey instrument revealed two areas that would need to be addressed should the survey be repeated. When analyzing the results of the pre-sermon series survey, it became apparent that the overwhelming majority of responses to the declarative statements reflecting beliefs and attitudes toward inter-generational ministry involvement were in the "Agree" and/or "Strongly Agree" categories. Such responses to the pre-sermon series survey created a baseline that was so high that there remained very little margin for improvement in the post-sermon series survey. In any self-reporting questionnaire or survey there is the potential for inflated numbers. Nevertheless, in the way that the eleven declarative statements in this survey were worded, a participant in the survey quite possibly may

have determined that responses disagreeing with those statements would reflect negatively on the participant. Even though every assurance was made to those who made up the surveyed sample that their responses would remain anonymous, it is distinctly possible that an inherent bias may have been created unintentionally, influencing responses to be more agreeable than reality would suggest.

However, the high baseline that was reported in the survey could also be due to the fact that the selected sample who took the survey was made up of active adult church members. Should the survey in its present form be more widely disseminated to include youth, as well as those who are not considered active members but are still part of the church family, the reported numbers could potentially look very different. In fact, I believe that such a future use of the survey in this way will actually present an even more accurate picture of Ivy Creek's collective beliefs and attitudes toward inter-generational ministry.

The second area of the pre- and post-sermon series survey tool that would need to be redesigned is the final section in which respondents were asked to identify areas of ministry in which they had served in the past. In retrospect, the question surrounding each individual ministry should have been designed so that participants could identify both past and current involvement. The clarity that such an option would have provided would have aided in constructing a more accurate pre-sermon series snapshot of inter-generational ministry involvement, and would have also provided a better data set from which to measure sermon series efficacy in comparison to the post-sermon series data set.

A second weakness was the timing of the project. The problem was not with when the sermon series was preached, but rather with when the church family was asked to respond to the volunteer/participant job opportunities. The project schedule called for the presentation of the opportunities to the church family to take place two weeks prior to the end of the sermon series. However, because the sermon series ended on November

30, 2014, the volunteer/participant job opportunities were made available to the church family right as the Thanksgiving holiday season came into full swing. Due to holiday travel, worship attendance during the last two weeks of the sermon series was down, which resulted in the full congregation only becoming aware of all of the opportunities for involvement after the sermon series was completed. To further confound the issue, because the December church calendar was so full of events related to Christmas, the volunteer/participant job opportunities were regrettably buried under all of the other activities. Such conflicts with events taking place both outside and inside the church no doubt caused a delay if not a reduction in response to the volunteer/participant job opportunities.

Theological Reflections

This project was built upon two bedrock assertions. The first is that expositional preaching of the Scriptures through the power of the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary for church health. Because Scripture is God's divinely inspired, perfect treasure trove of instruction, its exposition will announce truth to the listening congregation. This will not be truth based upon the preacher's opinions, but will rather be truth that is based upon the inerrant, infallible Word of God. Expositional preaching will not only announce such truth, but it also will go to great lengths to show how that truth should be applied to the life of the hearer. It is only after the truth of God's Word has been applied that life-transforming change will occur. The Apostle Paul describes the change that results from the application of God's truth: "But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life" (Rom 6:22). When compared to death, what could better exemplify health than eternal life? Therefore, expositional preaching of the Scriptures through the power of the Holy Spirit is absolutely necessary for church health.

The second assertion upon which this project was built is that an inter-

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generational church is a healthy church. It is true that multiple generations can exist together and can be called a church, but that is not the same as being inter-generational, and it certainly is not as healthy. Different generations can exist side by side and have very little personal interaction with one another, but such an existence does not serve in any way to perpetuate the message of the gospel to future generations, nor does it encourage growth in discipleship. It is only through following the biblical example of one generation of believers serving and investing in another that the differences that naturally exist between them will be overcome. Without the requisite humility that comes through service, those differences will only become matters of pride around which each generation can rally. Whenever that happens, unity and harmony – key components to a healthy church – become secondary or even tertiary goals, and the church finds itself living a schismatic existence. There is nothing healthy about divisiveness when it comes to the family of God. Therefore, the harmony and unity that results from inter-generational partnerships and involvement will aid in producing a healthy church.

Personal Reflections

This project served to confirm what I have understood my calling as a pastor to be. From the moment that the Lord placed me in my first pastorate I understood that the weight put upon me was to preach the truth of God's Word. I have metaphorically referred to my calling as the Lord's command for me to feed His sheep. More definitively, however, I understand God's call upon my life is not to attempt to feed His sheep anything that I choose. Rather, the Lord has called me to feed His sheep only from His Word. If I dare engage in preaching anything other than what has been revealed in God's Holy Word, then I recognize that I have stepped beyond the bounds of my calling, imperiling not only myself, but also those whom I have been called to feed. Therefore, the exposition of Paul's letter to the Philippians held me firm in my calling and in my commitment to "feed the sheep."

There is another weighty part to the calling that the Lord has placed upon me that was confirmed through the course of this project. Metaphorically speaking, not only has the Lord called me to feed His sheep, but He has also called me to love His sheep. That means that I am to love the ones that the Lord brings, whomever they might be, and however young or old they might be. Though I fully believe it is my responsibility and the responsibility of the church to reach out to as many in our community as we can, I acknowledge the sovereignty of God, and acknowledge that Ivy Creek is His church, and that He will bring into this family of believers those that He desires. The necessary implication of that means that I must love those that are here, and those that the Lord brings. Loving the Lord's sheep encompasses many things, among which is the responsibility that I have to challenge them on the authority of God's Word to step outside of their comfort zones and self-interests so that they can embrace what is best for them, both individually and corporately. A pastor does not show love to his church family by never confronting them with their necessity to live lives obedient to God's Word. This project served as a reminder to me of that call that God placed upon me to "love the sheep."

Conclusion

If the church is to be a true family of believers as the Bible indicates that it should be, then it will be comprised of multiple generations who serve each other and work together for the cause of advancing the kingdom of Christ. Selfishness and pride will be replaced with self-sacrifice and humility, with each generation will esteeming others better than themselves, and with each placing the interests of others ahead of their own (Phil 2:3-4). To have this mindset is to model the mindset of Christ, which should be the goal of every believer. As that transformation takes place in the lives of individual believers, the church will move from simply being a congregation, and it will become a family. And not just any kind of family, but "a 'you-all,' 'gospel-first,' 'servant-hearted'

family of believers who want their lives to count for the glory of God."

APPENDIX 1

PRE- AND POST-SERMON SERIES SURVEY

Agreement to Participate:
The research in which you are about to participate is designed to assess your
understanding of and participation in the inter-generational areas of ministry at Ivy Creek
Baptist Church. This research is being conducted by Pastor Craig Dale for purposes of
collecting data for a ministry project. In this research, you will simply answer questions
before we begin the sermon series and you will answer the same questions after we
conclude the series. Any information you provide will be held *strictly confidential*, and
at no time will your name be reported, or your name identified with your responses.
*Participation in this study is totally voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the
study at any time*. By your completion of this survey, you are giving informed consent
for the use of your responses in this research.

Please place a mark next to the answer that best describes you.

1. What is your age?

    (   ) 18 - 30   (   ) 31 - 49   (   ) 50 - 68   (   ) 69+

2. On the average, about how many times have you attended worship services at Ivy
    Creek in the past year?

    (   ) None   (   ) About once a month

    (   ) About once or twice a year   (   ) About two to three times a month

    (   ) Once or twice every three months (   ) Four or more times a month

3. Since becoming a member, has your participation in the life and ministries of Ivy Creek increased, decreased or remained the same?

(   ) Increased   (   ) Remained the same   (   ) Decreased

If your participation has increased, which of the following are reasons for that? (*Choose all that apply*):

(   ) More time available   (   ) Better health

(   ) Because of children   (   ) Stronger faith

(   ) Accepted new responsibility within   (   ) More positive attitude toward
     the church   the church

If your participation has decreased, which of the following are reasons for that? (*Choose all that apply*):

(   ) Less time available   (   ) Health problems

(   ) Because of children   (   ) Decreased faith

(   ) Given up responsibility within   (   ) More negative attitude toward
     the church   the church

Please circle the response that most closely describes your agreement with the following questions:

4. I believe that age diversity is a key component to a healthy church.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

5. Our church congregation feels like one large family.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

6. I have a strong sense of belonging to this congregation.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

7. I believe the Bible addresses the inter-generational relationships that exist within the church.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

8. I have learned significant biblical truths from someone *older* than I am.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

9. I have learned significant biblical truths from someone *younger* than I am.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

10. At church, it is important for me to interact with others who are not in my age group.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

11. I have a responsibility to serve generations other than my own in my church family.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

12. I am content with my current level of involvement in the various inter-generational ministries of the church.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

13. I know how to become involved in the various inter-generational ministries of the church.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

14. I would be more likely to participate in one or more of the inter-generational ministries if I knew beforehand what was expected of me.

Strongly Agree   Agree   Somewhat Agree   Somewhat Disagree   Disagree   Strongly Disagree

15. In the past (whether at Ivy Creek or another church) I have participated in the
following ministries (*Choose all that apply*):

Children's Ministry

( ) Leadership

( ) Nursery worker

( ) Children's church

( ) AWANA's

( ) Sunday school teacher/helper

( ) Music

Music Ministry

( ) Leadership

( ) Choir member

( ) Instrumentalist

( ) Praise team

( ) Soloist

Men's Ministry

( ) Leadership

( ) Cooking-team volunteer

( ) Other _____

Youth Ministry

( ) Leadership

( ) Volunteer

( ) Sunday school teacher/helper

( ) Music

Missions Ministry

( ) Leadership

( ) Local outreach involvement

( ) Regional/National involvement

( ) Overseas involvement

Women's Ministry

( ) Leadership

( ) Other _____

APPENDIX 2

TEMPLATE FOR REPORTING MINISTRY
VOLUNTEERISM/PARTICIPATION

Area of Ministry: _____

Ministry Leader: _____

Total number of participants/volunteers actively serving in this ministry: _____

Demographic breakdown of participants/volunteers:

Male: _____   Female: _____

Ages: 17 and younger: _____

               18-30:   _____

               31-49:   _____

               50-68:   _____

               69+:   _____

APPENDIX 3

QUESTIONS PROVIDED TO MINISTRY LEADERS TO
ASSIST WITH CREATING VOLUNTEER/
PARTICIPANT JOB DESCRIPTIONS

1. To whom does the volunteer report? For example, who oversees ushers and to whom does the volunteer report when scheduled to work? [1]

2. What tasks are the volunteer responsible for performing? For example, what does the usher do when he/she is on duty?

3. Where is the job performed? For example, where do ushers meet before, during and after church services and where do they hang their coats or purses while on duty?

4. When is the shift the volunteer will be working? For example, when is the usher scheduled to work as part of the volunteer job schedule?

5. How does the volunteer perform job responsibilities? For example, how does an usher dress, how do they communicate with guests, how do they take the offering, etc…?

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[1]These questions are adapted from *Smart Church Management*, "Example Church Volunteer Job Description," accessed June 28, 2013, http://smartchurchmanagement.com/example-church-volunteer-job-description//.

APPENDIX 4

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

Volunteer Job Title[1]:   Usher
Reports to: Usher Chairman
Scheduled Shift: Sundays 10:45 am – 12:15 pm
Job Location: Foyer of Main Worship Center

Job Duties:
- Straighten chairs in auditorium
- Fill chair pockets with offering envelopes
- Stack offering baskets
- Hand out bulletins to all arriving worshipers
- Usher guests to seats
- Assist people with special needs, i.e., wheelchair, stroller, etc.
- Collect offering
- Empty offering baskets, sort and put in safe

Details of Job:
- Ushers meet in the foyer to organize and disseminate all necessary materials.
- Usher supplies, offering baskets, envelopes, bulletins, umbrellas, first aid kit, are all located in the church office.
- Male ushers are asked at minimum to wear collared shirts with long pants. Female ushers are asked at minimum to wear appropriate business-casual attire (no shorts).
- Volunteers should report for their shift at least 15 minutes ahead of time.
- Ushers are expected to represent the church in a positive way and demonstrate good people skills by being polite, patient, encouraging and engaging with the congregation and visitors.

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[1]Adapted from *Smart Church Management*, "Example Church Volunteer Job Description," accessed June 28, 2013, http://smartchurchmanagement.com/example-church-volunteer-job-description//.

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APPENDIX 5

SERMON SERIES OUTLINES

Sermon 1: Philippians 1:1-11 "Partnership in the Gospel Brings Joy"

    <u>Sermon in a Sentence</u>: You will experience joy when God works through you and you partner with others in the church family to work for the sake of the gospel.

    1. We may have come as a bunch of individuals, but in the Lord, we become a "you all"…we become a family!

    2. Because the gospel of grace links us together as a "you all" family, we must join arms together as a family in the fellowship of the gospel.

Sermon 2: Philippians 1:12-26 "The Priority of the Advancement of the Gospel"

    <u>Sermon in a Sentence</u>: When the advancement of the gospel of Christ becomes your highest priority, you will be able to overcome whatever challenges may come to steal your joy, and press on in the partnership of the gospel.

    1. God can take even the most terrible of situations and use them for His advantage.

    2. The frustrations and troubles caused by the petty jealousy and envy of others are no match for the joy that God offers in Christ.

    3. The promise of eternity with Christ provides us with the boldness we need to continue our gospel partnership even in the face of death.

Sermon 3: Philippians 1:27-2:4 "Characteristics of a "You All," "Gospel-First Family"

    <u>Sermon in a Sentence</u>: A "you all," "gospel-first" family is made up of individuals who, in the face of external opposition and internal unrest, remain fearlessly and selflessly united to each other in the partnership of the gospel.

    1. Citizens of God's heavenly kingdom will fearlessly stand united in their gospel partnership in the face of external opposition.

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      2. Citizens of God's heavenly kingdom will selflessly remain unified in the gospel by placing the interests and concerns of others ahead of their own.

Sermon 4: Philippians 2:5-11 "The Necessary Mindset of Gospel Partnership"

Sermon in a Sentence: As members of this "you all," "gospel-first" family, we should display the same humble mindset that Christ had, because it prepares us to live a life of unreserved self-sacrifice for the sake of the gospel and the glory of God.

      1. As citizens of heaven, our actions should be controlled by our mindsets, and our mindsets should be like that of Christ.

      2. The mindset of a citizen of heaven should be one of selfless service and purposeful sacrifice for the sake of the gospel.

      3. Selfless, purposeful and sacrificial service is mindset that brings glory to God.

Sermon 5: Philippians 2:12-18 "Joyful Lives That Light Up the World"

Sermon in a Sentence: With Christ serving as our example and God working in us, we who are members of this "you all," "gospel-first" family should live submissive, holy, and upright lives that will not only serve as examples for others to follow, but will also cause us to live lives full of joy.

      1. Believers should not be complainers.

      2. Believers should be positive examples.

      3. Believers should be joyful in the face of sacrifice.

Sermon 6: Philippians 2:19-30 "The Heart of a Servant"

Sermon in a Sentence: Members of a "you all," "gospel-first" family will seek to cultivate servants' hearts.

      1. A servant's heart will be centered upon the things of Christ.

      2. A servant's heart will put the interests of others ahead of their own for the sake of Christ.

Are you willing to be sent anywhere, serve anyone, sacrifice anything, love intensely, and cooperate fully for the cause of Christ?

Sermon 7: Philippians 3:1-11 "A Life That Counts for the Glory of God"

Sermon in a Sentence: A "you all," "gospel-first," "servant-hearted" family of believers will be made up of people who seek to live lives that count for the glory of God.

1. Those who seek to live lives that count for the glory of God will reject all forms of works-based righteousness.

2. Those who seek to live lives that count for the glory of God will treasure Christ above everything else in the world.

3. Those who seek to live lives that count for the glory of God will trust in Christ to provide everything they will ever need.

Sermon 8: Philippians 3:12-16 "Pressing on toward the Future Prize"

Sermon in a Sentence: The magnificence of the future reality that Christ has secured for believers should motivate us to live spiritually mature lives that invest unreservedly in that future today.

1. Spiritually mature believers will develop a deep longing for the future, recognizing that the best is yet to come.

2. Spiritually mature believers will sacrificially invest their present in the future.

3. Spiritually mature believers know that their future is guaranteed by the past.

Sermon 9: Philippians 3:17-4:1 "Remember Who You Are, Whose You Are, and Where You are Going"

Sermon in a Sentence: "You all," "gospel-first," "servant-hearted" believers who want their lives to count for the glory of God will remain centered on the gospel by remembering who they are, Whose they are, and where they are going.

1. You should seek out for yourself, and desire to be for others a mentor worth mimicking.

2. You must recognize that you live among many who are enemies of the cross.

3. You should live your life in the hopeful expectation of heaven.

4. You must stand firm…but not stand still.

Sermon 10: Philippians 4:2-9 "Confronting the Old Normal with the New Normal"

Sermon in a Sentence: Members of this "you all," "gospel-first," "servant-hearted" family of believers who want their lives to count for the glory of God will put into practice and live out what they say they believe even though they may be tempted to do otherwise.

1. The importance of Christian unity demands that conflicts between believers be settled, not nurtured.

2. Confidence in God's sovereign providence requires that believers respond to opposition with joy, kindness, prayer, and thankfulness rather than worry and retaliation.

3. Having been taught the Scriptures and given positive Christian examples necessitates that believers think and act a Christians, not as the world does.

Sermon 11: Philippians 4:10-13 "Are You Satisfied?"

Sermon in a Sentence: "Joyful satisfaction" necessitates learning a "regardless contentment" that is rooted in a "Christ-centered confidence."

1. True "joyful satisfaction" comes from being "in the Lord."

2. "Regardless contentment" is not natural, but it can be learned.

3. "Christ-centered confidence" is what allows believers to face anything life throws at them.

Sermon 12: Philippians 4:14-23 "The Top Priority of Gospel Partnership"

Sermon in a Sentence: Members of this "you all," "gospel-first," "servant-hearted" family of believers who want their lives to count for the glory of God will make gospel partnership their top priority, and trust God to meet all their needs.

1. Believers for whom gospel partnership is a top priority will display compassionate generosity.

2. Believers for whom gospel partnership is a top priority will display consistent generosity.

3. Believers for whom gospel partnership is a top priority will recognize the eternal value of their present generosity.

4. Believers for whom gospel partnership is a top priority will trust in God's generosity.

APPENDIX 6

VOLUNTEER/PARTICIPANT JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Children's Ministry

Volunteer Job Title: AWANA Game Director Assistant
Reports to: AWANA Commander, Children's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: Wednesdays, 6:15-8:00
Job Location: Education Building/Parking Lot Game Circle
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:
- Complete background check and return to church office
- Assist AWANA Game Director however needed
- Plan games each for AWANA clubbers grades K-5
- Keep record of scores and report to Sparks/TNT Directors
Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: AWANA Small Group Leader/Listener
Reports to: AWANA Commander, Children's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: Wednesdays, 6:15-8:00
Job Location: Education Building
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:
- Complete background check and return to church office
- Guide small groups of AWANA clubbers in memory work by listening to them recite Bible verses
- Keep attendance records
- Collect weekly dues
- Maintain control of clubbers/teach respect of God's house
Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Children's Church Teacher
Reports to: Children's Church Director, Children's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: One Sunday per month, 11:00 service
Job Location: Education Building

Age Requirement: 18+; Youth 6th-12th grade may participate at the discretion of the director
Job Responsibilities:
- Complete background check and return to church office
- Prepare lesson with age appropriate activities
- Create a positive experience for parents and children
- Represent the church in a positive way and demonstrate good customer service skills by being polite, patient, encouraging, and engaging with children and parents
- Inform Children's Director of any problems or issues that develop

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Children's Church Teacher (Substitute)
Reports to: Children's Church Director, Children's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: Sunday 11:00 service (as needed)
Job Location: Education Building
Age Requirement: 18+; Youth 6th-12th grade may participate at the discretion of the director
Job Responsibilities:
- Complete background check and return to church office
- Be available to fill in when teacher is absent
- Prepare lesson with age appropriate activities
- Create a positive experience for parents and children
- Represent the church in a positive way and demonstrate good customer service skills by being polite, patient, encouraging, and engaging with children and parents
- Inform Children's Director of any problems or issues that develop

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Preschool Department Babies Teacher (Substitute)
Reports to: Children's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: Sunday 9:15-10:45 am / 10:45-12:15 pm (as needed)
Job Location: Classroom SC3-Upstairs Main Sanctuary
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Complete background check and return to church office
- Be available to fill in when teacher is absent
- Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to service start
- Welcome families as they drop off children and find out feeding, sleeping, special needs of each child
- Provide comforting environment with music, age appropriate dvds, toys
- Fulfill basic infant needs- feeding, diaper, paci, sleep
- Wipe down toys at the end of each session
- Collect dirty linens in basket for cleaning volunteer to wash

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Preschool Department Disinfectant Aide
Reports to: Children's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: Weekly
Job Location: Upstairs Main Sanctuary
Age Requirement: 18+; Youth 6th-12th grade may participate at the discretion of the director
Job Responsibilities:

- Complete background check and return to church office
- Collect dirty cups and linens to wash at end of each Sunday morning
- Return to preschool department classrooms before the following Sunday service

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Preschool Department Greeter (Substitute)
Reports to: Children's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: Sunday 9:15-9:45 am / 10:45-11:15 am (as needed)
Job Location: Preschool Check-In Area-Upstairs Main Sanctuary
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Complete background check and return to church office
- Be available to fill in when either Preschool Department Greeter is absent
- Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to service start
- Welcome families as they drop off children
- Have new families fill out info sheet for each child and put in Director's box in office
- Give new families ICBC diaper bag tag
- Explain security procedures to parents and assist in completing security sticker
- Label all bags, cups, etc for each child
- Escort new parents/child to appropriate class and introduce to teacher
- Mark attendance form as each child arrives

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Preschool Department Leader Assistant
Reports to: Children's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: Weekly
Job Location: Upstairs Main Sanctuary
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Prepare weekly reminders with lesson plan/suggested activities for office to mail out to Sunday volunteers by Tuesday of each week. Send out reminder text/email/phone call to volunteers on Thursday of each week.
- Maintain supply closet with craft supplies, teaching materials, activities for teachers.
- Prepare supplies as suggested by lesson plan for 11:00 service volunteers. Copy coloring sheet for teachers. Put away unused supplies before the next Sunday
- Communicate with Children's Director any needs or requests from preschool department teachers/ greeters

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Preschool Department Nursery Coordinator
Reports to: Children's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: Weekly
Job Location: Upstairs Main Sanctuary
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Coordinate volunteer schedule for Sunday morning services as well as special services (i.e. Revival, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc)
- Schedule should be completed on a quarterly basis and given to Church Secretary to mail out two weeks before schedule begins
- Find Substitute Teachers and Assistants as needed

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Preschool Department Toddlers/Preschool Teacher (Substitute)
Reports to: Children's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: Sunday 9:15-10:45 am / 10:45-12:15 pm (as needed)
Job Location: Classroom SC1 or SC2-Upstairs Main Sanctuary
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Complete background check and return to church office
- Be available to fill in when teacher is absent
- Arrive at least 15 minutes prior to service start
- Welcome families as they drop off children and find out feeding, sleeping, bathroom, and special needs of each child
- Provide comforting environment with music, age appropriate dvds, toys
- Prepare Bible lesson and activities as age appropriate
- Check diapers or take potty
- Wipe down toys at the end of each session
- Collect dirty linens in basket for cleaning volunteer to wash

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: VBS Teacher (Bible Study, Missions, Music)
Reports to: Children's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: VBS week and any prep time prior
Job Location: TBD
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Complete background check and return to church office
- Prepare lessons using VBS materials

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Youth Ministry

Volunteer Job Title: Middle School/High School Event Host/Chaperone
Reports to: Youth Ministry Director
Time Commitment: as needed
Job Location: Youth House
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Complete background check and return to church office
- Be available on a monthly basis to chaperone youth events or host youth events in your home as decided with Youth Minister
- Set a Christ-like example with attitudes and actions for youth
- Create a positive experience for parents and youth
- Represent the church in a positive way and demonstrate good people skills by being polite, patient, encouraging, and engaging with youth and parents
- Inform Youth Minister of any problems or issues that develop

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Youth Small Group Leader
Reports to: Youth Ministry Director
Time Commitment: TBD
Job Location: Youth House
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Complete background check and return to church office
- Schedule mentoring/discipleship meetings with small group of 5-6 youth with purpose of discipleship
- Find out prayer needs of each student and commit to praying for them
- Set a Christlike example with attitudes and actions for youth
- Create a positive experience for parents and youth
- Represent the church in a positive way and demonstrate good people skills by being polite, patient, encouraging, and engaging with youth and parents
- Inform Youth Minister of any problems or issues that develop

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Missions Ministry

Volunteer Job Title: Christmas Mission Project Volunteer
Reports to: Missions Committee Chair
Time Commitment: TBD
Job Location: TBD
Age Requirement: 12+
Job Responsibilities:

- Assist with the distribution of toys, clothes, and other items collected from the Ivy Creek congregation for those in need at Christmas

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Volunteer Assistant at M28 Church - Atlanta church plant
Reports to: Matt Dye, pastor of M28 Church
Time Commitment: 2-3 hours per volunteer activity
Job Location: M28 Church, midtown area of Atlanta
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Assist as needed with various events/activities at M28 Church
- Serve alongside the leadership staff of this church plant as an extra set of hands for their various outreach events and church services
- Potentially help set up/tear down for their Sunday morning services
- Potentially help teach the children's church lesson on Sunday mornings

Contact Info: [Removed for Publication]
For more info on M28 Church: http://www.m28church.com/

Volunteer Job Title: Server for World Changers Lunch
Reports to: Debbie Bowen, World Changers Lunch Coordinator
Time Commitment: TBD (will occur in July 2015)
Job Location: TBD
Age Requirement: 12+
Job Responsibilities:

- Pick up food, utensils, and table from Ivy Creek to be served to the World Changers workers at their work site
- Serve the food to the workers
- Interact with the World Changers team of volunteers
- Clean up after lunch is finished and dispose of trash
- Return table and any unused items back to Ivy Creek

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]
For more info on World Changers: http://www.lifeway.com/worldchangers/
Volunteer Job Title: Guatemala Mission Trip Team Member
Reports to: Missions Committee Chair, Leader of Mission Trip
Time Commitment: July 5-11, 2015
Job Location: Guatemala City, Guatemala
Age Requirement: 18+; Ages 12-17 may participate with parent or legal guardian
Job Responsibilities:

- Assist needy families who live and work in the city dump (Several generations have grown up scavenging the dump for food as well as recyclables and discarded items to sell.)
- Conduct Bible classes for children
- Assist with the construction of simple homes, and/or local church projects
- Teach Bible in the school that our church supports
- Help with feeding programs
- Participate in worship services in mission churches and visit with families in their homes all for the purpose of winning souls for Christ

Minimum Qualifications:

- Must have received Christ as Savior and made a decision to follow Him and His teaching
- Must have valid Passport for travel outside of U.S.
- Demonstrate active Christianity by involvement in church activities
- Recruit people committed to be prayer partners for mission trip
- Be willing to participate in mission trip fundraising activities
- Be responsible to raise or pay a minimum of 50% of trip cost
- Demonstrate ability to work with team members

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Hope Program Store Volunteer for Pregnancy Resource Center of
                        Gwinnett (PRCG)
Reports to: (PRCG)
Time Commitment: TBD
Job Location: 337 West Pike St., Lawrenceville, GA 30046
Age Requirement: 18+; Ages 12-17 may participate with Director's approval
Job Responsibilities:

- Maintain Hope Program Store for clients
- Check all used items for quality
- Mark certain items with points
- Re-package diapers
- Pack layette sets (certain items makeup set)
- Separate incoming clothes by season, male/female, size
- Select and hang clothes in store
- Clean some used items
- Mark all food/milk with visible dates
- Remove outdated food/milk
- Inventory supplies

Other Service Opportunities Offered through PRCG:

- Peer Counselors
- Receptionists
- Administrative/Date Entry
- Registered Nurses
- Teachers/Facilitators
- Registered Diagnostic Medical Sonographers
- IMPACT Abstinence Education Speakers
- Prayer Partners
- Spanish Speaking Volunteers
- Male Volunteers for Men's Ministry

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

For more info on PRCG: http://www.prcg.org/

Music Ministry

Volunteer Job Title: Sunday Services Choir Member
Reports to: Minister of Music
Time Commitment: Wednesdays, 7:00-8:15pm and Sundays, 9:10-9:30 plus two services.
Job Location: Main Sanctuary
Age Ranges: 18+; Youth 6th-12th grade may participate at the discretion of the director

Job Responsibilities:
- Must desire to worship through song
- No previous choir experience nor audition is expected to participate
- All voice parts needed: Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass
- Attend weekly rehearsals (a minimum of 2 a month is expected)
- Sing/lead in musical worship at the beginning of each of the weekend services. It is expected that you would attend the service of one in its entirety
- Attend special rehearsals for yearly events (Christmas at Ivy Creek and Spring Concert). In the fall, this means once monthly Sunday afternoon rehearsal for approximately 2 hours
- Participate in all special services throughout the year
- Purchase and maintain choir outfit. Cost is approximately $40 (one time)
- Maintain your choir folder, making sure you have all music for rehearsals and presentations

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Instrumentalist
Reports to: Minister of Music
Time Commitment: Wednesdays, 5:45-7:00 and Sundays, 8:30-9:10 plus two services.
Job Location: Main Sanctuary
Age Ranges: All ages are welcome, but must have a minimum of 2 years band or orchestra experience or equivalent private instruction.

Job Responsibilities:
- All keyboard, string, woodwinds, percussion, and brass instruments. Acoustic, electric, and/or bass guitar players as well
- Attend weekly rehearsals
- Accompany congregational singing each week for both services (It is expected that you would attend the service of one in its entirety.)
- Play for choir anthems as needed
- Maintain orchestra music for each week
- Practice outside of rehearsal as needed to play with excellence
- Play solo instruments for offertories or preludes as needed and desired

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Sound/Media Technician
Reports to: Audio/Media Director
Time Commitment: Wednesdays, 5:45-7:00 pm and Sundays, 8:30 am -12:30 pm,
                              possibly two Sundays per month
Job Location: Main Sanctuary
Age Ranges: 18+ for Sound Technicians; 12+ for Media Technicians
Job Responsibilities:

- Should have some computer systems knowledge
- Attend Wednesday praise team rehearsals when you are scheduled to operate sound on following Sunday to run through words with praise team
- Make sure all words, announcement slides, etc. are correct and spelling/formatting is correct.
- Operate media for services
- Be willing to operate for special services as needed

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Men's Ministry

Volunteer Job Title: Teams Coordinator
Reports to: Men's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: TBD
Job Location: TBD
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Serve as a single point of contact for all team leads and team members
- Establish guidelines for team leaders and team members
- Establish new teams as needed
- Develop and modify, as necessary, annual team cooking schedules and forward to ICBC website administrator for posting
- Communicate with the ministry team leads to coordinate and respond to ministry service opportunities

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Outreach Coordinator
Reports to: Men's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: TBD
Job Location: TBD
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:
- Seek volunteers from the Men's Ministry to perform outreach functions
- Call Men's Ministry members when hardships occur to offer prayer and assistance when possible
- Communicate prayer needs as requested to the Men's Ministry Prayer and Praise Coordinator

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Special Event & Fellowship Coordinator
Reports to: Men's Ministry Director
Time Commitment: TBD
Job Location: TBD
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:
- Plan and establish special events where the Men's Ministry fosters growth within our church fellowship
- Establish fellowship and social activities where Men's Ministry members can meet for fun and deeper fellowship
- Communicate planned activities to the Men's Ministry Director and ICBC website administrator

Contact info: [Removed for Publication]

Women's Ministry

Volunteer Job Title: Women's Ministry Evening Bible Study Leader
Reports to: Women's Ministry Co-Leaders
Time Commitment: Every Other Tuesday, 6:30pm – 8:00pm
Job Location: Ivy Creek Fellowship Building
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Coordinate with Morning Women's Ministry Bible Study Leader on selection of appropriate Bible study that can be completed in six weeks
- Obtain DVD and Leader Guide
- Coordinate with Women's Ministry Co-Leaders to reserve Fellowship Building
- Prepare flyer/announcement, coordinate with Office Admin to print and include in the church bulletin for two – three weeks prior to beginning of new study
- Have Bible study participants complete contact cards
- Maintain a current list of participants
- Appoint a prayer time leader
- Appoint a hospitality coordinator
- Ensure a hospitable environment working with the hospitality coordinator
- Make announcements of upcoming women's events at Bible study

Contact Info: [Removed for Publication]

Miscellaneous Ministry Opportunities

Volunteer Job Title: Parking Lot / Golf Cart Ministry Assistant
Reports to: Parking Lot / Golf Cart Ministry Leader
Time Commitment: One Sunday per quarter, 9:00am – 12:30pm
Job Location: Ivy Creek Parking Lots
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Manage the flow of traffic by ushering cars into spaces in a safe and feasible manner
- Protect the safety of our attenders
- Welcome people with a warm, friendly greeting
- Shuttle attenders via golf carts from their cars to the various buildings on our church campus before services, and return them to their cars after services are completed
- Be aware of surroundings and reporting any suspicious behavior
- Identify potential problem areas in the parking lots and inform appropriate church officials

Contact Info: [Removed for Publication]

Volunteer Job Title: Campus Security Volunteer
Reports to: Campus Security Coordinator
Time Commitment: One Sunday per month, 9:00am – 12:30pm
Job Location: Ivy Creek Church Campus
Age Requirement: 18+
Job Responsibilities:

- Protect the safety of our attenders
- Coordinate duties with assigned Law Enforcement Officer
- Be aware of surroundings and report any suspicious behavior to Law Enforcement Officer
- Assist golf cart transportation volunteers by overseeing safety of children during transportation between buildings

Contact Info: [Removed for Publication]

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ABSTRACT

STRATEGICALLY INCREASING INTER-GENERATIONAL
INVOLVEMENT AMONG THE MEMBERSHIP OF IVY
CREEK BAPTIST CHURCH IN BUFORD, GEORGIA

Craig Darryl Dale, D.Min.
The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2015
Faculty Supervisor: Dr. John David Trentham

This project describes the strategic process used to increase inter-generational involvement of the adult members of the church through the application of the teachings of Paul's letter to the church in Philippi.

Chapter 1 provides the purpose, goals, rationale, definitions, limitations, delimitations, and research methodology. It also includes the context and history of Ivy Creek Baptist Church in Buford, Georgia.

Chapter 2 presents the biblical and theological foundation for inter-generational ministry partnerships and involvement.

Chapter 3 examines the various characteristics of the five current adult generations. It also discusses the major differences between the generations as well as their similarities.

Chapter 4 describes the implementation of the project through each of the three phases, to include pre- and post-sermon series surveys, expository sermon series through Philippians, and the development of volunteer/participant ministry opportunities.

Chapter 5 presents an evaluation of the project, to include an evaluation of the project's goals. This chapter also discusses the strengths and weaknesses of the project, as well as theological and personal reflections.

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Craig Darryl Dale

PERSONAL
        Born: September 12, 1969, Gainesville, Georgia

EDUCATION
        B.A. in Bible, Bryan College, Dayton, Tennessee, 1997
        M.Div., Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, Texas, 2006

MINISTERIAL EMPLOYMENT
        Associate Pastor, North Athens Baptist Church, Athens, Tennessee, 1995-1997
        Worship Pastor, Celebration Church, Hoschton, Georgia, 1997-2004
        Missions Pastor, Celebration Church, Hoschton, Georgia, 2006-2007
        Senior Pastor, First Baptist Church, Decatur, Tennessee, 2008-2010
        Senior Pastor, Ivy Creek Baptist Church, Buford, Georgia, 2010-