

“INTERGENERATIONAL MINISTRY” TEACHING NOTES  
NICIPHC LEADERSHIP SUMMITS WINTER 2017

I want to take a look at generational and cultural trends. Do you realize that you are not quite like your parents and your parents are not quite like their grandkids. There may be some similarities, but there are some glaring differences. I want us to take a look at things that shape and mold generations. We want to take a quick glance at these for the purpose of awareness and challenging us to understand one another for the purpose of building God’s Kingdom.

The world has changed. It is very important to seek to understand generations to be more effective.

Silent Generation      1925-1945

- Significant Events – Great Depression, WWII
- Significant Characteristics – Raised by parents that enforced discipline, conformity, and obedience. They value tradition, security, hard work, and respect.

Baby Boomers      1946-1964

- Significant Events – Born during a period of relative prosperity and peace.
- Significant Characteristics - Entered adulthood with optimism and drive. They were the largest generation at the time and forced culture, government, and industry to cater to them.

Generation X      1965-1979

- Significant Events – Explosive increase in divorce and daycare.
- Significant Characteristics – They are often skeptical, independent, and pragmatic. They live in the shadows of larger generations preceding and following them. Many Xer’s have learned to adapt and work effectively with Boomers and are realistic, balanced, and competent with technology.

Millennials      1980-1995

- Significant Events – Society embraced the self-esteem movement hoping that building children’s confidence would help negate a number of social issues.
- Significant Characteristics – They were protected and supervised closely which has emerged a generation that is protected, narcissistic, driven, and confident. At the same time they are team players, willing to serve, and respectful. They view career as a place to serve and find meaning.

Generation Z      1995 -

- They are still developing their identity. They are the first generation to completely exposed to technology and to have all adults around them engrossed by technology.

The world is rapidly changing. Millennials and Generation Z are truly different from older generations. We must seek to understand them to be more effective.

What contributes to generational differences? What makes generations different from one another?

There are Life Cycle Effects. Are Generation Z and Millennials really that different from other generations at the same age? Millennials (young adults) and Generation Z (teens) represent a new period. There are some things that are similar. Young people are more idealistic and get more realistic the older they get. Life happens.

There are Period Effects: major events affect people differently depending on where they are in their life cycle. 9/11 could have possibly shaped you and affected you differently than it did me.

What really makes generations different is the Cohort effects.

There are Cohort Effects: these are patterns, trends, values that influence young adults in the prime of their development of core values.

Cohort effects are what truly sets the Millennials and Generation Z apart from the older generations.

Let's look at a few significant cohort effects.

#### - Technology

They have access to technology at a very young age. Eg. Small children playing with their parents cell phone. Then the child is showing the parent certain features on their phone.

#### - Globalization

This is how they view the world around them. They can see the other side of the world in their home.

#### - Post Modernism

This really speaks to why the difference is so great. Post modernism informs

values/worldviews and speaks to why we are having a huge gap between worldviews and perspectives of older and younger generations today.

Historical and Cultural experts will speak of cycles of change in society. These experts tell you that society will go through major changes every 200 years or so.

Look at Western Civilization the past 500-600 years and you can see these cycles of change.

In the 1700-1800's we see the Age of Enlightenment or Reason and the Industrial Revolution. These upheavals in society and ways of thinking have informed Western Civilization the last couple hundred of years. What makes this time period truly significant is it was about the same time period that America as a country was born.

So America which was born out of that cultural upheaval in Europe has never seen the cultural changes and shifts to the size and extent that we are experiencing now. It is very disorienting as we are determining who/what is America. Who we are as a people?

We are having an Identity Crisis.

We are undergoing an identity crisis as we experience a cultural shift from the Modern Era to the Post Modern Era.

A couple of hundred years before the Age of Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution or approximately 500 years before now was the European Renaissance and the Protestant Reformation, which propelled us out of the Middle Ages to the Modern Age/ Era.

The significance about that cultural upheaval was the invention of the printing press. Suddenly information that had only been available to the elite or scholars was now available to everyone. It changed the way that people thought and interacted. People dreamed and pursued life goals.

Now we have – the Internet. It has had significant impact to the same extent or greater than the printing press upon how people think.

The printing press taught us to be linear thinkers. People built ideas with an introduction, argument based on reason and logic, and then a conclusion.

Experts are telling us that the Internet is developing our brain differently now. We are taking information in short bursts in rapid succession.

Think about the shift occurring from Modern To Post Modern Era. Often these differences represented are not just between generations but, between eras.

The most significant shift is from objective to subjective thinking. In the past decisions were based on fact, reason, and logic. We are now in the Post Modern Era where we are making decisions based on emotion, story, and experience. We have truly shifted the way we make decisions. Understanding what propels people to make a decision can be important. We moved from hierarchy to participation. The world has moved to a place where everyone has a voice and say. People aren't going to wait ten years to participate and have a voice. This comes from a move toward collaborative education in our schools and technology that allows us to comment, like and retweet on a regular basis. People are used to commenting and participating. We have moved from mechanical and structured to organic and open, from efficiency to adaptability. The world is changing rapidly and young leaders understand that. So, how do we maintain efficiency and remain adaptable? We have moved into a world that is much less certain. We have moved from a faith in human reasoning to discover truth to a faith in personal experience to discover truth. So for a post modern thinker you can present a rational logical argument for something but if it doesn't resonate with their personal experience its really not going to convince them. Personal experience has become very powerful. We also moved from a confidence in reason to help us to discover what we believe to be absolute truth that can be proven by facts to an acceptance that there are many pluralistic views/truths. A discussion of ethics of right versus wrong can become a difficult discussion with a young adult (millennial) or teen (Gen. Z) that have grown up in a cultural, educational system, society that taught them to be tolerant and accepting of many truths as all being equal.

That makes them accepting and open (POSITIVE) but it can make it very difficult to articulate a "personal conviction" because they are so accepting of so many different truths. Often older generations can be viewed as narrow or closed-minded to the younger generation.

Millennials are the first generation of "Post Modern Natives". This is what makes them so significant. What is the big fuss about "Millennials"? Why are they researched and discussed? Because it is more than a generational gap between older generations and Millennials. There is truly a cross-cultural gap. Millennials think and act out of Post Modern values. Now not all of them think the same way just like other generations may think differently. But for the most part Millennials act out Post Modern values and worldview where most older generations act out of more Modern values and Worldviews.

We must seek to understand there is more than a generational gap there is a cross-cultural gap and we must seek to understand values and worldviews behind actions and decisions. Not just judging them based on our own worldview.

There are 78 million Millennials in the world today. It is by the largest generation. There are also 5 generations living at this moment in history.

“Efficiency, once the sole icon on the hill, must make room for adaptability in structures, processes, and mind-sets that is often uncomfortable.”

General that led the war in Iraq

— Stanley McChrystal, Team of Teams: New Rules of Engagement for a Complex World

1. The burden that we feel in Conference leadership over this issue based upon several reasons...
2. Practical mandate
  - a. The strategic planning process that the Conference has been involved in for almost a year. Among demographics we discovered about clergy of our conference is that the average age is 56... In USA for Protestant (senior, solo) pastors that is 54. Other info about this... 22 of our pastors are 65 years old or older... Our appreciation for the older/retired pastor, but we sense the need for finding or developing a “leadership pipeline” strategy to address this matter, and we recognize that within your local churches such a strategy must exist for us to tap into...
3. Scriptural mandate
  - a. There are many ways to affirm this... Bible is a generational book, not only in the time span it covers, but in what it addresses...
  - b. God expresses Himself generationally... To the Israelites He is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (not just 3 patriarchs, but 3 generations... In the Godhead He is God the Father and God the Son, which is a relationship expression but also a generational concept... Jesus Christ the same yesterday (past generation), today (present generation) and forever (future generations); He transcends all generations...
  - c. The requirement of the Hebrews to think/live generationally... What they experienced and received and learned of God was to be passed on the next generation... Example of the Passover; (Exodus 12:17) they were to observe it “throughout their generations as an everlasting ordinance...” (v. 26) And when your children ask what does this service mean? You explain how the Lord passed over the houses of the Israelites while striking those of the Egyptians... (Deuteronomy 11:19) They were to communicate God’s statutes and decrees and ordinances to their children, talking about them at home and as they traveled and at the end of the day and in the morning as well... (Psalm 145:4) From one generation to another they were to shall praise (commend) His works... (Judges 2:10) Sad record of a generation of GOD’S PEOPLE dying and the one after them who did not acknowledge

the Lord nor remember His mighty acts... Indicates that one generation failed to pass down the things of God to another...

- d. The requirement of the church to be intergenerational... Paul's intergenerational mentoring and leadership in ministry... Primary example of Timothy... (2 Timothy 3:10, 14-15) Paul modelled for him those things that Timothy knew and practiced... (2 Timothy 2:2) And he told him to keep passing that on to others, so that they could in turn do the same... And likewise to Titus (2:1-5) he instructed to teach older men (and he was younger) and to have the older women invest in younger women for helping them in practical Christian living...

#### 4. The Prophetic Mandate

- a. Prayer time in September 2015 with leadership of IPHC, God gave a prophetic word through Lee Grady out of 4 of the miracles of Elisha's ministry that the IPHC needs to experience... One of those being that of "the miracle of the boy's resurrection" (2 Kings 4:32-35).
- b. "We need a miracle of resurrection in the IPHC today. Many of our churches are languishing when it comes to youth ministry. Many of our youth leave church when they reach college age... Notice that in the story Elisha does not stand at a distance to raise the boy to life. He lays on top of him—mouth to mouth, eyes to eyes, hands to hands. This speaks of relational mentoring. The younger generation today will not be raised to life simply by sermons or denominational programs. We cannot solve this problem from an office in Oklahoma City. Mentors who care about the next generation must get serious about investing their time and effort into training young leaders: taking them on trips, meeting weekly for coffee, staying up late with them to pray about their problems. Only a relational approach to ministry will trigger the youth revival we desperately need." Lee Grady

- 5. We understand that just having a session like this will not make this happen in our churches, but it would do us well to talk about the "how" of intergenerational ministry... [These are issues that culture in general is dealing with... Majority of work force today is Millennials; 91% of them will stay on average 3 years in same job... Question being asked there applies to the church: how do we engage them to do the Lord's work...] Some keys/priorities [from the resource we will provide you...]

- a. "EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE": Capacity to be aware of self and others' feelings... [Millennials want feel personally valued... Appreciate supervisor as coach instead of "boss"... At the same time this trait encourages them to be very aware of value of older generations and display a respect for such]
- b. RELATIONSHIP... Prioritizing relationship building [In education the emphasize on team building and cooperative learning...]

- c. APPRECIATION... Sincere interest in the personal... Want us to desire to know about personal passions and interests and accommodating personal and professional development for those; ask good questions; listen [Millennials were raised in the time of the self-esteem movement and in the technological world of social media where they have a venue for self-expression... They place priority on caring for one another, and how they can be personally developed]
  - d. PATIENCE... Patience in taking time to earn respect, the right to be followed, regardless of title and position... Talent and competency are more important than position or title
  - e. AUTHENTICITY... The genuinely authentic, personable leader is more effective... For the church leader, L Giglio, “We must live in awe of the gospel.”
  - f. COMMUNICATION... Sufficient (Over) communication that will anticipate generational needs and empower the individual to contribute one’s strengths to a team... Constant feedback... (the prevalence of this in their environment...)
  - g. PURPOSE... “A clearly articulated vision, lived out visibly accomplishes much in winning the hearts of this generation and empowering them as they join more experienced leaders in ministry.” [Desire to accomplish a meaningful cause or purpose; they ask “why”, regarding policies and structure... which can provide accountability]
6. Encouraging trends for reaching millennials, summary of interview with Louie Giglio (pastor of Passion City Church, located in Atlanta, Georgia; founder of the Passion Movement)
- a. **You don’t have to be like a millennial to have a millennial’s respect.** You don’t have to be the coolest or hippest to reach millennials... Think about John Piper and Charles Stanley. They have thousands of young people listening to their sermons, going to their book signings and attending conferences to hear them speak. [Story of seeing Charles Stanley years ago at a book signing, majority of crowd was middle aged women... Recent similar gathering, first impressed by the crowd and then the demographic... Mainly young adult men... Giglio’s commentary on that: “not only are young men looking for spiritual fathers, but spiritual grandfathers”] There is nothing wrong with dressing like a millennial or consuming the same media as them, but it’s not the most important connection you can build with them. They care about finding a leader who can help them connect with God.
  - b. **Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever.** . . . so the story of Jesus will always be relevant. If you want your preaching to connect with a younger audience, it’s simple: Tell them about Jesus. Yes, there can be a place for pop culture stories or jokes, but those things alone aren’t what moves the hearts of the next generation. It’s the story of their Father’s love for them. Tell them that story...

- c. **Successful church leaders live in awe of the Gospel.** This passion for the Gospel is what fuels their ability to preach to every generation (and will help keep us transparent). Keep your heart open to Jesus and in awe of the Gospel. One researcher who interviewed hundreds of Millennials for the Barna group, “Millennials are not disillusioned with tradition; they are frustrated with slick or shallow expressions of religion.”

Prayer time: Time to honor and a time to bless...