

0 (1s):

One day you will be forgotten. Everything that you've done, every accomplishment that you've had, every success, every failure, every joy, every celebration, the pain and the mountain tops will be forgotten. Takes about a hundred years or so they say. But in about two to three generations, the significant details of your life will go by the wayside. You soon become only a list in maybe an ancestry.com. They discover that you're their great-great, great great grandfather or grandmother and then you are forgotten.

0 (41s):

And that's the message. No, I'm just kidding. No, it's great to be with you this morning. My name is Sawyer Trap. I'm one of our pastors here and normally we go to church to be encouraged, right? We like, man I that worship was great and then you just dropped that bomb on me. But that's true, right? It it's tough. We fight against it. We pretend like it's not true. We pretend like death isn't coming, but it is. All of us one day will be forgotten. And that's actually what this whole series is about. Because we are not gonna pretend like that isn't true. We're actually gonna pretend like that is. And if that is true, then every single thing we do actually has, believe it or not, more significance because we will be forgotten because the significant parts of our life will go by the wayside.

0 (1m 29s):

Then the question we have to ask ourselves is what are we doing to leave a legacy? This series is called multiplied and it's all about the impact that we're having right now in order to make an investment in the future. That the choices, the decisions, the way we do things, the impact that we have today, can actually create a legacy and invest in the future to outlast us that long after we have forgotten like we have gone. The way of the worms are legacy, are impact, the choices and decisions that we've made right now can make an investment in the future.

0 (2m 12s):

And if that sounds captivating to you, even if it doesn't, I encourage you to commit to this whole series. This will lead us into Easter and it's all about the small decisions that we can make now to make an impact tomorrow. And so commit to this series. If you can't make it here in person, if you can't join us here online as well, listen to the message. Because I truly believe if we make these decisions now, we're gonna make small actions. It'll not only change our lives, make them better, make them more fulfilling, more purpose-filled, but it'll actually make an impact long beyond our ability to be remembered long beyond our kids even remember us or a grandkids. But our legacy will continue on.

0 (2m 53s):

And so today we're diving into a do a topic that I'm truly passionate about. It's about investing in the next generation. And it's not just because I'm the the youth pastor of our church. It's not just because one of our core values is next-gen investment. I truly believe it is what God calls us to do. So if you're a follower of Jesus listening to my voice this morning, this is not only something nice to do, it's actually an obligation. If we're going to see more and more people follow Jesus, if the church isn't going to go the way of being

forgotten, then it is an obligation that we must pick up and carry with us a responsibility that is not just for all for fun, for some of us, excuse me, but for all of us, whether you're a parent, whether you're a grandparent, whether you have no children, if you are a follower of Jesus, it is all of our responsibilities.

0 (3m 44s):

Because if I wanna leave any legacy for my life, it's this a legacy of faith. So this morning that's what we're gonna talk about because I truly believe if we do this, if we make decisions now to impact our future, to invest in the next generation, then long after we are forgotten, our legacy of faith will continue on. And if you're invested, if you're a parent, if you're a teacher, if you at any way interact with the next generations, the realities that they're facing are tougher and more difficult and more challenging than maybe any other generation before. Here's some information about 'em.

0 (4m 24s):

They're more radically ethnically and sexually diverse than any generation before them. They're more culturally and politically aware. My students on Wednesday nights have discussions about politics and global affairs. They know what's happening in the world. They have the world at their fingertips, and yet they're still regular teenagers though still trying to figure out their lives, figure out their identity, figuring out if people care about them, if they're valued, if they're loved, and they're doing all that in an environment in which they have all information, not just some, but a fire hose of information at their fingertips every single day. In fact, according to a 2018 study, which admittedly it's five years ago now, 60% of teenagers said they're on a device nearly all of the time.

0 (5m 13s):

And if you've interacted with a teenager or a or a kid or a student recently, I don't have to tell you that it hasn't gone down, it's actually gone up that the pandemic has only made that worse. Where our entire reality was on a screen from school to connection with friends, to video games, to tv to movies, all of their entertainment, their schoolwork, their connection with other people was through a device. And now we're seeing just a small impact of that that's only gonna snowball throughout their entire lives. They're more aware of the world and yet they don't have the maturity level to reckon with that. In fact, they face more anxiety and depressions and loneliness than any other generation before.

0 (5m 59s):

In fact, according to an article in Psychology Today, that the average high schooler faces the same level of anxiety as the psychiatric patient did in the 1950s, that on an everyday basis the next generation's, generation Z, generation alpha and ones after them are facing more questions, more doubts, more worries, more loneliness than any generation in history. To sum it up when article said this, they're overstimulated, overwhelmed, over connected, and they're over the status quo.

0 (6m 40s):

If you've interacted with any kids or teenagers recently that might describe how you, you're experiencing them and yet God has not given up on them, God has not given up on them. And I truly believe that we can do a lot better than what we're doing right now. Because if that is the reality that they are facing, if that is the world that they have at their fingertips, if that is their school lives, their family lives, their friend life, then we can and we must do better. If we're going to leave a legacy of faith, it has to start right now. Yes. And it isn't just my opinion as our student pastor of our church actually God's opinion and I wanna show you that today from His word.

0 (7m 25s):

So we're gonna jump into the book of Psalms and in Psalm 78 it walks us through what that looks like because this isn't just a problem that we face today, passing our faith in the next generations. This is the mantle that God has called all believers throughout history to do so. If you wanna turn with me in your Bibles or open up your phone or you can also use the you version Bible app. If you click the menu and click events, you can also do it up there as well and follow along with me in Psalm 78. It starts off like this. My people hear my teaching, listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth with a parable. I will utter hidden things, things of old things we have heard and known things our ancestors have told us.

0 (8m 5s):

And then verse four, we will not hide them from their descendants. We will tell the next generation his praiseworthy deeds of the Lord his powers and the wonders that he has done, you see is our responsibility as followers of Jesus, as believers in God, as people of faith, to pass our beliefs down to the next generation. That it's not our our job to hide our beliefs, to hold them back, but to actually tell our descendants, our next generation, the generations after about what the deeds of the Lord, the way that God has moved throughout history and in our lives. His power, who he is, his character traits and the wonders that he has done.

0 (8m 51s):

You see, we're only one generation away from the church ending. Have you ever thought about that? That if we don't pass down our faith one day we will be forgotten. We'll no longer be here. And if the next generation doesn't say, Hey, I'm for Jesus, then our church, the church will end. And so if we're going to leave a legacy of faith, this is true that we can't give up. So don't give up instead pass it down. It's very easy when we look at the realities that our kids and our students face when we feel unequipped to deal with what they're facing on a daily basis.

0 (9m 35s):

Or we watch the news and we just see all that's going on and we're like, what can I do? I'm only one person. I can't go out there and fix the world. No you can't. Somebody just said it, actually, I just heard it. But you can fix one person's world, right? You may not be able to fix the structural problems and the institutions, you may not be able to get teenagers off their phones, but you can invest in one teenager's life. You can make

choices for your family to make church a priority. You can say, you know what? We could have a lot of other things going on, but we are going to go to church as a family. You may not be able to make a difference in the lives of all kids, but you know what?

0 (10m 17s):

You can serve and arise kids right now weekly and make a difference in the lives of kids every other week, weekly, whatever you wanna do. But we can't just give up. The stakes are too high. The opportunity is actually too great because I truly believe this is true. I love other lords of Billy Graham. He had this to say. He says, there's a great identity crisis among students today. Who am I? What is the purpose of life? Where did I come from? Where am I going? He continues on, he says, and the less God seals the vacuum among youth today than some other ideology will because young people must have a faith.

0 (10m 58s):

They must believe in something defined fulfillment in their lives. And as true as that is right now, Billy Graham said that all the way back in 1971. And so if it was true, then oh my gosh, is it so true now? Because our students, our kids are getting messages bombarded at them day after day after day. People are telling them that this is who they are. This is who you're going to be. This is what life looks like for you. This is what you should value, this is what you should belong to, whatever it is. And it's not just a problem for kids, right? These are all questions that we ask ourselves. Who am I? What am I supposed to be doing? Where do I belong?

0 (11m 39s):

But I think as we grow up, we just experience these things at a deep, deep level cuz it's not wrapped up in our work, it's not wrapped up in the things that we do, but it really gets to the value, the deep, deep level of who we are. And so if we give up, if we just say throw up our hands and say, Hey kids these days, they gotta deal with it themselves. Or if we just say, Hey, I'm just gonna pray and hope for the best and not step in ourselves that God wants to use you.

1 (12m 9s):

If we give up,

0 (12m 12s):

Then we're giving up on our kids and students to just listen to the messages that the world and their lives had to offer. And let me tell you this, it's not gonna work because the life that Jesus offers, the identity and purpose and truth found in Jesus is so, so much better. And so we can't just wash our hands and give up. We have to keep passing it down.

1 (12m 36s):

Keep passing it down.

0 (12m 39s):

If you watched the Olympics at all a couple years back in 2014, the women's relay team went through a crazy experience. These, a lot of these women might look familiar to you if you wanna pull that up. The team consisted of Alison Phoenix who just retired English gardener, Tiana Barletta and Tori Bowie. And I sometimes like to consider myself a bit of a runner, but compared to them, I'm not even walking right? These women are quick. In fact they're, they were defending gold champions in 2014 and and they return and everybody had a high expectations for them to come back and win the gold again in the women's four by 100 relay.

0 (13m 20s):

And yet tragedy struck, not even in the semis, not even in the finals, but in the qualifying heats at the Olympics. This happened. They dropped the baton when Felix was passing the gardener. In the second transition of the race, they drop the baton. And if you watch the video, if you look, if you Google this online, there's an audible gasp that you can hear in the news broadcast cuz everybody was so surprised that these women, these pinnacle athletes who had done this their whole lives, basically trained all the way up from a young age to run this race, have practiced this transitions thousands, hundreds of thousands of times that it's all muscle memory have now dropped the baton.

0 (14m 6s):

And you can see on their faces the anguish. And it only gets harder from there, right? You see them brought to tears because this is their moment to shine in what they've been given their abilities and skills. And now it's lost. But it wasn't actually, you see what happened was is the Brazilian racer next to them when they were making their transition veered so slightly into their lane and bumped Felix Gardner, excuse me, Felix, while passing the baton. And she had known this and she goes to the rules, they file a rules appeal, they review it, and now they actually have an opportunity to run again because it wasn't their fault that they had dropped the baton.

0 (14m 50s):

But now the US team has to run this race on a totally empty track by themselves with very little crowd, no excitement. It's just them and the track. And if you've ever run a race before or been in a race in any capacity, what pushes you on is the other racers behind you. That pressure that you have from the other person beside you, that you actually run faster than you do when you're by yourself. And even with all of that, even this was frustration that they never anticipated. They qualify, they have one of the highest qualifying heats, they do even better in the semi-finals and they win the gold medal in the final race.

0 (15m 33s):

You see the results were the same, right? They were expected to win the gold and they did. And yet throughout that process, they faced difficulties that they never anticipated beyond this whole baton dropping

incident. Actually in the finals, one of the woman racers had forgotten their cleats and had to borrow cleats from one of her co runners that were two sizes too big. And she cranked down those laces and yet they still had close to a world record time. I tell you all this, not because it's just amazing what humans can do, but also because I feel that's how a lot of us feel when we're trying to pass down our faith to the next generation that we're running along fine.

0 (16m 19s):

We're maybe trying to live out our faith and then we drop the baton. We're trying to make the past to the next generation and it falls apart. We make mistakes, we yell, we fall short. We don't live out our faith. We maybe Ms. Church for a couple weeks or months or years, whatever it is, we all mess up. We don't give the best example of what it looks like to follow Jesus. We drop the baton and a lot of us feel, well, I was trying. I was doing my best, but I I can't do it. And I think these women and and we'll see in the next part of this passage that even if we drop the baton, keep passing it on, we are going to make mistakes.

0 (17m 7s):

But that doesn't mean that we are out of the race. Look with me in the rest of Psalm 78, starting in verse five. It says, he decrees statues for Jacob and the establishment of the law in Israel. He commanded our ancestors to teach their children. Look at who it names in this passage. Jacob, if you know anything about Jacob, Jacob was a guy that stole his brother's birthright and inheritance by deceiving his old blind father dressing up of his brother and acting like him just so he could receive his father's inheritance. And yet this is the example that the writer of this psalm tells us is how you're supposed to be like.

0 (17m 50s):

We're supposed to be like Jacob who's passing it on to his children also says his ancestors. I love this because I love the Bible because it's not filled with perfect people. It's filled with some pretty awful bad people. Actually. Think about it, Adam and Eve in the garden, they're doing great. They sin, they mess up. What happens in the next chapter? Brothers kill one another. What happens after that? God calls Abraham. Abraham lied twice. Yeah, even after that his son Isaac pretends that his wife is his sister.

0 (18m 30s):

Jacob stole a birthright. Jacob's son sell one of his brothers into slavery. Moses was a murderer. And that's just Genesis and Exodus, right? There's the whole rest of the Bible filled with imperfect people doing amazing things for God. So if those are the ancestors that God commanded to teach their children about faith and about God, then that means we can still do it too. Amen? Yes, we mess up. Yes, we make mistakes. Yes, we're not gonna be the perfect example for our kids or grandchildren. People at this church might know things about you that you don't want anybody else to know.

0 (19m 11s):

But the threshold for telling our kids for passing the baton is not perfection. It's a real authentic faith. In spite

of imperfection. It says, I may not be perfect but God is perfect. I may make mistakes but God never does. And I am just in need of salvation as you. And yet I believe, and yes, I have questions and doubts and confusions. I don't have all the answers, but I encourage you as I have to trust the God that does that meets us in our doubts and our questions. Look at what it says in verses six and seven so that the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born and they would in turn tell their children that they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds, but would keep his commands.

0 (20m 2s):

You see, the chain keeps going. It's not about passing on a perfect faith to your children. It's not about being the shining example of bright shining faces all the time. It's about a real authentic faith for our kids and for the next generation. It's about a faith that wrestles with tough questions. It's about a faith that doesn't have all the answers but trusts in the God that does. I love the way that Beth Moore puts it. She puts it like this. He says, I believe that children are by nature forgiving. Can I get an amen? Thank you. Amen. I don't think that children expect their parents to be perfect. I think they demand that their parents be real.

0 (20m 43s):

And let me tell you, after working with our students, that they just want real. In a world that is all fake and fake news and people posting and whatever and nonsense, they just want something real. They want to be seen for who they really are, not who they pretend to be. They want a God that answers real tough questions. Not just a smiley face on a Sunday morning. Please be happy on Sundays if you're happy, but if you're not, then be authentic and real to who you are. So even when you drop the baton, keep passing it on.

0 (21m 24s):

As a youth pastor, one of the numbers that keeps me up tonight up at night is 50 to 70%. Have you ever heard this statistic before that 50 to 70% of high school students when they get to their college years will drop away from church attendance and lose their faith? 50 to 70% keeps me up at night because I see your students week after week and when the moment hits me and I think about over half of them, over seven to 10 out of them losing their faith once they leave my ministry, it breaks my heart hope.

0 (22m 8s):

It breaks yours too because our students are facing a world that is more difficult and tough and complex and so many other things like never before. They need a vibrant faith that answers tough questions, that loves people, that cares for people that goes out and seeks the good of a city and justice. They need a faith like that's presented in the Bible. And as hard and as difficult as that is, it's not a unique problem. It's not a problem that we just started facing a couple years ago. Do you wanna look with me in Judges two, this is a problem that Christians and believers in God have faced all throughout history.

0 (22m 54s):

It says after that the whole generation has been gathered up to their ancestors. Another generation grew up

who neither knew the Lord or what he had done in Israel and what happens? The Israelites did evil in the eyes of the Lord and they serve the idols. Idols were the gods of the people that were around them. You see what happens is, if we give up, if we don't pass it down to the next generation, if we say, you know what? They're facing problems that I'm not equipped to face or whatever it is, if we don't pass the baton now, then there'll be a generation that is raising up who doesn't know the Lord or what he has done. That was a problem then in judges.

0 (23m 35s):

And you look to see what happens, God sends judge after judge after judge to call his people back to the way of his living to say, I have something better for you than what the world offers. Same thing is true for the next generation. We are increasingly seeing a generation that is growing up that doesn't have any faith, That doesn't believe, that doesn't know what, who God is or what he has done. But don't

1 (24m 4s):

Lose hope. God's not done.

0 (24m 7s):

He's not done. He's working in the lives of our kids and students powerfully. And it's actually in the same way that he did then. Cuz look at what the problem was. Look at judges two verse seven right before it. It says, the people served the Lord throughout the lifetime of Joshua and the elders who outlived him who had all seen the great things the Lord had done for Israel. So that sounds all great. What happens in verse eight right after that, Joshua son of none, the servant of the Lord died at the age of 110 and with Joshua, the faith of that community died too.

0 (24m 49s):

God had to pull them back. God had to remind them of how he'd been working in their lives and their community, how he designated them as a special people to point people to him. And for so many of the next generation, our kids and our students, the same is true. Faith is dead. They don't see it vibrantly in their lives. Maybe for many of us in this room, we came to faith later in life. We didn't have good examples, good parents, good ideas of what it looks like to follow Jesus. And yet God found us anyway. But what if for our kids and our students for the next generation that they could have an example like you

1 (25m 31s):

And like me,

0 (25m 34s):

Not perfect

1 (25m 35s):

But real and following after Jesus.

0 (25m 40s):

And this is true. I want this to be true of our church. That we are the example that we wish we had. Think about as you grew up all the problems that you faced, all the difficulties and questions. What if you had somebody invested in your life who cared about you, that was maybe a few more steps ahead that said, this is what following Jesus looks like. I may not have all the answers, but I care about you.

1 (26m 6s):

I love you, I value you.

0 (26m 9s):

Actually, I was truly blessed to have examples like this in my life. The only reason why I stand before you today is because the legacy of faith that has gone before me. I look at my parents, my mom and dad who showed me what real faith looks like all throughout their lives, they still do. I look to my grandma, to Sarah's family, these examples of faith that faced difficulties I can't even imagine. And yet their faith was so important to them. My own youth pastor, the adult volunteer who helped us start a worship service that were led by high school students who looked at me as an acne field, spiky haired, punky kid with all the right answers and said, Hey, you're gonna lead worship by playing guitar, changed my life.

0 (26m 59s):

I look at my high school history teacher, I look at my campus pastor at college who said, you know what? That calling that you experienced at a young age, God is actually calling you to actually be a pastor. When I thought he wasn't, I thought that was over. The only reason why I stand here today is because of the examples that I had these people of faith that didn't have it all together and yet they followed God anyway. They invested in me when they could have done anything else. I love the way that Benjamin Franklin puts it. He says this, he says A good example is the best sermon. We can stand up here as pastors and teach God's word and encourage people. But what if they had a life, your life, an example of what it looks like to follow Jesus even when it gets hard.

0 (27m 45s):

And some of you are doing that already. Here at Arise we have a grandmother that's serving in our kids' ministry who's bringing her granddaughter with her every time she comes. And now that granddaughter can chant Bible verses. We have a student who is now serving in our kids' ministry who grew up in kids' ministry, who is serving alongside the teacher that taught him. And now they're both investing in the next generation. My own daughter, a couple weeks back after coming to our rise, kids was singing a worship song as we grocery stopped at the top of our lungs. And if you know Lucy at all, it was dancing in motions, a full thing. And that led to a conversation with a woman next to us in the bread aisle where I got to invite her to church.

0 (28m 30s):

And I don't know if she's ever gonna come. I hope she does, but I would've never had that conversation. I stand here as a pastor, I'm not out there evangelizing in the bread aisle on a regular basis, I'll be honest with you. But you know what God said, I'm gonna use your daughter who loves this worship song who's singing at the top of her lung and King supers to help lead people to Jesus. That's what vibrant faith looks like. That's about your kids. You know what calling you to better faith? Cause it works that way too. I'm challenged and motivated to follow Jesus better so much by our students. I know our, our volunteers are as well. And you know what else it looks like a couple weeks back, we had a student experiencing a great crisis in their life.

0 (29m 12s):

And before I was even involved, three of our families from our church were investing in that family, caring for them, loving them before I even knew it was happening. That's what investing in the next generation looks like. It's not just one conversation, it's not just giving them the gospel. It's not just bringing them to church. You know what it is? It's daily and in every moment by moment, bringing faith into your every ordinary life, it's choosing something different than what the world offers. And saying here, God offers something so much better. It's what Jesus says. He says The the kingdom of God belongs as such as these. So don't hinder them.

0 (29m 52s):

Let the children come to Jesus. How many of us have put stumbling blocks in the way I know I have of of us coming to church? Or are kids coming to Jesus or we have to do it this way or the music has to sound this way or whatever it is. God is moving powerfully in the next generation. I think truly Generation Z is hungry for something like faith. They want purpose. They want identity more over than anything. They just want some hope. And you know who offers all of those in abundance? Jesus. So what if we could be an example of what it looks like to follow Jesus?

0 (30m 34s):

Even if we don't have the answers, even if we maybe don't have kids ourselves, it truly will take all of us if we're going to pass down our faith to the next generation. If you've been looking at the screen the whole time, you might be wondering why we put a pomegranate on there. Is anybody wondering that? Maybe just me. We chose this not just because it's pretty, not just because it has good contrast with the back of the screen, but because I think it's a really great indication of what investing in the next generation looks like. Couldn't find a pomegranate cause they're outta season. But you can't find pomegranate seeds seed that is a pomegranate seed.

0 (31m 15s):

It is very small. It is filled with juice. If you ever bought palm wonderful juice, it takes about a couple

thousand of these to make one bottle. But a pomegranate has within it on average about 613 of these little guys, anywhere between 200 and about 1400. And so that means that each fruit of a pomegranate has the opportunity to create 613 trees just from one fruit that is about this much I counted earlier. It's close. So 613, let's all just use our imagination for a second, right? A pomegranate all has about that many seeds in it.

0 (31m 58s):

And the same is true with us guys. If you are a follower of Jesus, you have an opportunity to sow seeds of the good news of Jesus in the next generation. Yeah, some of us are gonna be better. Maybe some of us are pomegranates filled with 1400 seeds, but I bet you have one. I bet you have one person in your life. Maybe it's your kids, maybe it's your neighbor's kids. Maybe you're a teacher and it's your class. Maybe you're serving in here on Sundays or on Wednesdays. Pick one. You may not be able to change the world, but if you invest powerfully in the life of that one student, that one kid, just imagine what could happen.

0 (32m 40s):

Because you know what? Pomegranates from this point, you plant this, you water it, you take care of it takes about seven months for it to sprout anything. So if you've been planting seeds, if you've been trying, if you mess up and you pick up the baton and keep investing, fruit's gonna come. It may not come in the speed that you want it to. You may not see faith in your kids and your students, but it is coming. And you know what? From the time that it sprouts, it takes about another two to three years for a tree to actually grow. And at that point it starts producing fruit. And you know what? That fruit is awful. It's sour. It's not good, but it's fruit nonetheless. And maybe some of you, you see your kids and your teenagers and they're trying, they're doing their best.

0 (33m 23s):

They're producing fruit. It's gonna get better. It's gonna get better. Keep on investing because pomegranates don't produce good fruit till they're about 10 years old. I think the same is true of our kids and students. We have to keep investing, we have to keep trying. Fruit is going to come. And once that pomegranate tree is about 10 years old, it's considered mature. And it not only can produce one good fruit a year, it produces anywhere between a hundred and 150. Each one of those pomegranates having within it about 613 seeds. And so that means a good and healthy pomegranate tree has the potential to produce over 90,000 seeds.

0 (34m 11s):

Man, what if we had kids and students and even adults that were producers of over 90,000 seeds that were having conversations and having a real faith, a vibrancy and honesty to God about their doubts and their challenges, but they were planting seeds and we'd see a harvest beyond our wildest imagination. And you know what? That's only one year. Most pomegranate seeds and trees live up to 200 years. That means that this one seed, those small, most of you probably can't even see it yet. It has the power within it to produce over 17.1 million other seeds.

0 (34m 59s):

What if the same could be said of us then after we're forgotten, after we're long dead. The legacy of our faith is continuing on the people that we've invested in. Our kids, our students, the choices that we've made, the decisions that we've made right now are continuing on in the lives of our kids and in our grandchildren and in our friends children and in the children of this community and the children of this church. On and on and on and on and on. Again, our faith might be small. Jesus says it only takes a mustard seed that's even smaller than this. You have within you the power to leave a legacy of 17.1 million people following Jesus.

0 (35m 46s):

But I think Jesus' words are so true in Matthew nine. He says this, when he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless. And does that sound like our kids and students, right? Like sheep without a shepherd. They don't have a good example. But then he says to the disciples, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. And then verse 38, ask the Lord of the harvest then to send out workers into his harvest field.

2 (36m 17s):

Friends,

0 (36m 18s):

I think the harvest is plentiful. I think God is doing something powerful. We've seen it in the revival in Asbury. We've seen it in our kids and students deciding that the life that they're offered by the world around them isn't good enough. I see it in our students on a weekly basis. They're asking questions of how do I answer this question from my other friend? How do I live like Jesus? When around me, when nobody else is? I see it. God is doing something powerful. Harvest is ready. The opportunity is there. But it takes all of us. It's not just me as the youth pastor of our church. It's not just our kids and students, volunteers.

0 (36m 60s):

It takes every single one of us parents choose to invest in your kids even when it's hard, even when it's challenging, even when you're given up and you're crying and you're overwhelmed. Pick it up. Keep passing it on. If you have an opportunity through family or through friends to invest in the life of another student, don't take that opportunity lightly. God has put you in the place and the relationships that you have for something powerful, he needs you. And right here at our church, we have opportunities to serve right now in our kids' ministry and our student ministry.

0 (37m 41s):

We're seeing more kids and students on a Sunday and Wednesday night than we have ever since I've been here. It's been amazing to see. It's exciting. We just opened our baby's classroom. We're set to open another classroom here in about a couple months. Once we open the balcony, we're gonna change the office to make another kid's classroom. Our student ministry is growing. We had more students come to winter

camps since I've been here. They're inviting their friends. They're ready. They want something more. But they need us. They need us. They need us to pass it down. You have within you the power, God's power to transform the life of our kids and students.

0 (38m 25s):

Are we gonna leave a legacy or are we gonna be forgotten?

2 (38m 30s):

Let's pray.

0 (38m 34s):

God, you're so good. We thank you for the work that you're doing that you haven't given up on the next generation. That no problem is too big for you to face God, and that you invite us to something powerful to change and transform hearts. Not that we can do it on our own, but through the power of your Holy Spirit. God, that we would pick up your calling and your purpose and radically transform the lives of our kids and our students. God that you placed us all uniquely where we are and put us on mission to follow you. That we would start to make trans decisions and transitions and changes, whatever it takes, so that the next generation will follow you.

0 (39m 24s):

Cuz you've done the same for us. You didn't let our problem of sin, our pain, our hurt, our anxiety, our depression, whatever we face to stand in your way. God, no, you came to us. You came down into the mess, into the dirt,

2 (39m 41s):

Into

0 (39m 41s):

A stable, laying in hay

2 (39m 43s):

To change everything.

0 (39m 46s):

God, you showed us how to live. You called people, adults and even kids to yourself you loved radically. And despite undeserving it, you died death in our

2 (39m 57s):

Place.

0 (39m 59s):

So God, if there's somebody listening to my voice who maybe for the first time is realizing the lengths at which you go for them, if they're ready to accept that free gift of salvation, that they would say these words with us for the first time as we all say them together. Dear God, I'm a sinner. I need a savior. Save me. Forgive me in faith I declare Jesus is Lord, fill me with your spirit. Help me to follow you and to leave a legacy of faith.

0 (40m 44s):

So if you pray that for the first time, those words aren't anything special, but they reveal a heart that's ready to receive salvation from Jesus. And if you pray that prayer for the first time, then the angels are rejoicing, heaven is celebrating, and we want to celebrate with you. So on the count of three, I encourage you to raise your hand as high as you can and say, God, I'm ready to receive that gift to salvation. I wanna follow you and I'm ready to follow you on mission. 1, 2, 3. Amen. God, we thank you God, we thank you for the work that you're doing right here in this place, Scott, that you put a rise church uniquely in this neighborhood for the kids, the families, the students, The community that desperately needs you.

0 (41m 26s):

God, they need hope. God used the people of this church, the people that are listening to my voice, the people that are listening to this message years later to transform this city on fire for you, God, that the next generation will be raised up, know that they're loved, their value, and that you died for them. God in there sent out to set the next generation and on and on and on. God, we thank you and we love you. It's in your name we pray. Amen. So two things. If you're ready to serve right now, if you're joining with us here in person, we have those slips of paper there in the back. And those are immediate needs that we have right now in our kids and our student ministries. So if this message that impacts you, if you're like, Hey, I, I don't want to see this next generation forgotten.

0 (42m 9s):

I wanna leave a legacy of faith. Pick up one of those slips. We have an opportunity up right upstairs after this service to have a short kids train and get some information. Brenda's upstairs waiting for you. If you can't join us today, put that slip into the box on your way out, forgiving and we will connect with you personally. Cause our kids and our students need it. If you can serve, even if you can't, one of the reasons why you give week after week is we move into our time of giving is to make an investment in the next generation. Yes, it's up to all of us, but I think the church has a unique role to care for our families and students and kids. And so we value that. We also put finances towards it. We give a lot of money in our kids ministries, in our student ministries, the things we're doing for families.

0 (42m 54s):

So if you're passionate about the next generation, if you wanna make an investment in them, we encourage

you to give. If you're already giving, if you're making that investment, thank you so much for making that investment. It is truly changing lives and hearts in the next generation. So you can give right now by going to [aris ever.com/give](https://aris-ever.com/give). You can scan the QR code, you can do that online as well. It's in the description. And then if you're joining with us here in person, if you wanna give by cash and check, you can do that in the white boxes on your way out. I wanna pray for us again and then we'll continue to worship as we sing this song about the true blessing it is to pass it on to the next generation. God, we thank you for the work that you're doing in this place. We thank you for the gifts that are being given right now, that you use them to transform hearts and minds and communities and families with the good news of Jesus.

0 (43m 42s):

God, that you would use these gifts not for the plans that we have for them, but for the amazing things you can do when we say, God, I'm ready to serve you. I'm ready to give back just a portion of what you've given me. God, I'm excited. I look forward with hope and I'm excited that we get to be a part of it. It's the name of Jesus we pray.