ABATS CONFERENCE
Norman, Oklahoma

BRIDGING THE GAP WITH OUR STUDENTS
INTRODUCTION
First, I want to go back fifty-sixty years ago when I was a student in one of our schools. It seems to me that most of the men came to the seminary because they knew they needed help in their English, Speech and certainly in Bible interpretation. It may be that most thought only of their Bible education but when they were made aware of the deficiencies in their language skills; they knew they need help and most applied themselves to the task that was before them. Many had left their homes in other states to come to school and they left their jobs, family and church family to get help. They took their calling from God seriously, seriously enough to make great sacrifices.
Second, I will admit that some evidently came to be a pastor and when they were called to a church; they left school. There one objective was to become a pastor and schooling was forgotten or postponed until a later time. Some when they were call continued to
travel to school, some fifty, sixty miles. Even though they had become a pastor of a church, education continued to be a priority.

Third, the school in Little Rock had two avenues which allowed student to pursue their education based on their present abilities. You need to understand some men had an eighth, ninth, tenth grade secular education. Please understand, these men were not ignorant but for various reasons didn’t graduate from High School. These men took what was called “The English Bible” route. Men who had a High School, some college or a degree from college took the Seminary route, which meant they studied the Bible language, Hebrew and Greek. It may not have been a perfect system but it did fit the times and allowed the men to progress in their secular and Bible education. Please understand the men who enrolled in the “English Bible” program often advanced beyond the one in the “Seminary” route. They became outstanding pastors, evangelist, soul-winners and leaders in our associational work. It could be said of them what was said of Peter and John when they spoke before the Sanhedrin, “…they knowledge of they that they had been with Jesus.” These men as well as the others who took Bible languages continued to advance in their secular and Bible education.

Fourth, men did drop out of school for various reasons. Some realized they were not called of God for the ministry. Some of these went to college and became faithful men in the Lord’s churches. I know of some that earned their music degree and taught in schools and work with a church. By the way, some of our school offered studies in music which filled great void in our churches. The ones with music degrees often became the Music and Youth Director. Some dropped out of school because of financial reasons, moral problems, illnesses, etc. The point is our schools have sought to supply our churches with qualified men but we have always had some men fall beside the wayside.

**BODY OF THE LECTURE**

If we break-up our problems in five year spans, possible we can better understand the old and new problem we face with our students. Some of the things I said earlier continue to exist but
having said that; we are facing new problem in educating men to be better equip as servant of our Lord.
Working in administration, I found that even curriculums have to be adjusted from time to time with more emphasis in one area such as doctrine or language. Understand there were times when over adjustment were made and after five years we would need to tweak the curriculum again. These kinds of changes are normal and I suppose have always existed.
Technology has advanced to the point that many are using it in the realm of education with on-line courses which serve a wonderful purpose but decreases the enrollment in classes. Even though it is great for men to receive a Bible Education and also take secular classes; it does rob them from the fellowship, companionship of other class mates. From person experience, the time making friends, learning from classmates, know others have problems is lost with on-line courses. Skype and other programs like it allow the student to see and hear the teacher and participate in classroom discussions but even this isn’t the same as being present. There isn’t that time of fellowship, getting acquainted and building friendships which should or could last for a lifetime. Our schools know they need to stay abreast of technology benefits but progress sometimes create problem. To make my point a pastor of a large congregation had the technology of power point and would put his main and sub-point along with the scripture on the screen. He noticed his people stop bring their Bible to church. They simple watch the screen and read the scriptures. He felt that the power point presentation was robbing his member from carrying their Bibles to church, locating scriptures, learning the books of the Bible and reading their Bible. He had the power-point technology removed. I am not advocating the removal of technology but this is one area where a pastor thought it was a hinderence. The simple point is advancements are not always best in learning, for they can come with creating problems.
The technology of cell phones, the internet has brought on new issues some good and some bad. Libraries have become less important than they once were. Students use their cell phones in class to look
up data, sometimes even in the Hebrew and Greek Languages. I once was challenged about the promise God made to Abraham that his seed would be as the stars. The student look on his cell phone and it was estimated at the time of Abraham there was estimated 1,200 stars. But when I went on the internet, it stated that presently there is an estimate of sextillion stars with more being discovered with each more powerful telescope. It is good to be challenged once in a while but this wasn’t a challenge thirty, forty years ago. It is a new problem in bridging the gap in teacher student teaching and in the general education system.

How do we encourage our students to study outside the classroom? It seems that there is a lack of motivation in the lives of many who say they are called to preach. All of us know what II Timothy 2:15 says: “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” And, Solomon said, “...and much study is a weariness of the flesh” (Eccl. 12:12).

But, we face a day, a time when it seems people think when they are called of God, somehow, someway, spiritual knowledge will come. Sure, there have always been some who felt this way but for us it is greater than in the past.

One of our educators in another state said he had received a phone call asking for a student to come and preach, for they were without a pastor. He went to a number of students and they wanted to know how far away it was and how much they paid. Each one declined to go. Back in my day in school, we never asked how much they paid, for we would have and often did pay them to preach and unless we had a car that was in bad need of repair, we never questioned the distance. Some students want to begin pasturing a church with a salary of $50,000.00 or $60,000.00 yearly. Has our society brought this into the minds of God-called-men?

We are facing a time in small school where some students are greatly lacking in formal education and their English and Speech skills are deficient. We have so few students, we cannot have a special class for one or two students; therefore they are thrown-in with other students
with greater skills is secular education and the ones who are deficient often drop out of school. Is there a way to fix this problem?

Our secular school seems to be ignoring the need for grammar. Even the ones who have a college degree cannot identify a gerund, participle or an infinite. And some would be surprised to know that they cannot identify subject, predicates, prepositional phrases, adjectives, adverbs and noun clauses. In short they are very deficient in English. In college they may have English Composition. We offer English and require most to take it but with just one class; it is difficult to bring them up to a standard to prepare they for Hebrew or Greek Classes. To be honest, some will never be able to take the language classes or even speak or write correct English.

Give me a good and quick resolution to this problem.

Commitment to a Bible education, commitment to study, and commitment to be a better minister for the Lord seems to be greater problem today than in the past.

Some seem to think that the Lord will fill them with godly knowledge of the Bible without any effort on their part. That surrendering to preach is an automatic accumulation of knowledge of what God would have them know and the ability to preach His message effectively. Some seem to think that Seminary work is like Sunday School or V.B.S. You come and listen and that is all that there is to it. It is like, here I am; you pour knowledge into me and I don’t have to do anything.

I have notice in grading on-line test the answers are often so exact that it is obvious they were taken out of the text book. When you ask for specific thoughts or answers to a passage of scripture; you are fortunate if you have two or three sentences when there should be a paragraph of five or six sentence or two or three paragraphs. The same problems exist in the classroom with discussion questions. Even when you tell the student or usually students that you require more; they continue to give only what they think they can get-by-with. In other words, the least amount of work they can do. Sure, I can lower their grade but if they make a passing grade; that is sufficient.
The process of growing in the knowledge of our Savior as admonished by Peter often seems to fall on deaf ears (II Peter 3:18). We emphasize the ministry is a lifetime of study; always seeking to improve not only Bible knowledge but the presentation of the knowledge with good English and a lifetime of commitment of speech improvement. I have told the students in the classes I teach, I want to be a better teacher-preacher next year than I have been in the past year. And each year it is my desire to grow spiritually; hoping to challenge them to do likewise.

What can we do to keep students from dropping out of school after one semester or two years? It would seem that some come to school to find a church to pastor, and once they are called to the church, they drop out of school. This isn’t a new problem but an old one. Have we as educators missed something? Have we failed? Can we do something to drive home the point that the few years of education, formal education is very little in time compared to the many years of service to the Lord and His church. I know some after a year or two or possibly ten years will return but most never return.

I am told that some ministers obtain their sermons from off the internet. Sure, there have been sermon outline books for many years and most preachers have used them in the earlier part of the Lord’s ministry but as they grew in Bible knowledge and should they begin to preach expository; it drives them to study the Word. I was taught only topical or subject sermonizing but in covering books of the Bible; I was forced to switch to expositor preaching. Even though in Homiletics all forms of preaching should be covered; possible greater emphasis should be placed on expositor type of preaching to force the minister to study. And again, there is a need for topic or subject preaching but one shouldn’t limit himself to just this type of preaching.

Remember, we are seeking to bridge the gap between the teacher our school and the student. When I attended the Missionary Baptist Seminary and Institute in Little I was surprised to see Bro. L. D. Foreman pass-me-by without speaking all the first year. I spoke to Him, “Good morning Dr. Foreman,” but he didn’t even
acknowledge I existed. By-the-way, I was a member of Antioch Missionary Baptist Church. Possible Dr. Foreman had a reason for not speaking but I am of the opinion we as teachers and administrators need to be sure and recognize or students and become acquainted with them. I am not saying we should necessarily go to lunch with them but it shouldn’t be a problem to do so. In a school with five to fifteen students; it is easy to know all the students and to become friends with most if not all. But the larger schools where you may have one hundred or two hundred students; it is more difficult. Should we take the hard line and fail students who fail to complete the assignments even after they are warned that their research papers are lacking in content or their answers on test are insufficient? Should we, dare we tell them we doubt their call to preach, to pastor? An educator, years ago said, “It is difficult to carve rotten wood.” Some students seem to be rotten wood. Some of these students are intelligent enough but are lazy when it comes to doing the work. Certainly churches do not need a lazy pastor. I know in some ways, this is an age old problem but it seem to the speaker it is more persistent than in the past. Our churches are growing smaller and it is likely that men will need to be by-vocational. I am encouraging our students to receive a bachelor degree from a college or attend a vocational school for training in a field such as auto-mechanic, auto-body-repair, heating-air-conditioning, pluming electrician, wood working such as trim-work or carpentry, etc. This isn’t to discourage them but to prepare them for what could happen. Need I remind us of former days when our pastors were primarily farmers or two centuries ago when pastors were doctors, lawyers, educators, professional men who held down a full time job and pastored. I was by-vocational when I first pastored. My background was documented with churches unable to pay the pastor a livable wage. I expected to be by-vocational but thankfully churches grew numerically and financially to place they could pay a partial salary but pastors and their family made sacrifices to remain on the field as a full-time pastor. Is it wrong to tell our students the
truth about what the future could hold for them and their family financially?

God has commanded his people and especially the spiritual leaders to stand for the truths of God’s Word. Our society is embracing homosexuality, same sex marriages, transvestites, gambling, drinking of alcoholic beverages and many other ungodly and immoral things. Religious groups are ordaining women as pastors with some Baptist groups having already ordained more than two thousand (2,000) by their own admission. Open communion, questioning the need for baptism by immersion, the need of church memberships and numerous other unscriptural practices. Don’t kid yourself, some are tempted to embrace these practices and other have already embraced them. Our schools must stand firm against such practices and acknowledge them for what they are. God judged Israel for such ungodly believes and behaviors. If our school fail to teach the Bible, for it is very narrow, as evident in God’s plan of salvation being in Jesus only. How can we show that compromising the truth isn’t the way to grow numerically and if one should grow using these things, what would a church so-called actually be? When school embrace these false teaching, their students will also embrace them.

We must consider there is a different mind-set with students today than 30-40-50-60 years ago. Our society has changed. Yes! Even potential ministerial students have a different view of what a pastor should be. My question is, “Has the Bible changed?” Is there a different approach than following what the Bible say in education, pastoral work, mission work? I don’t think so! Bible study, Bible preparation has and should always be a top priority. We build church with sound Bible doctrines, teachings and loving the people we serve, working the area God has placed us. Yes society changes but the Bible is never outdated, neither the methods of the Bible. Yet, we live in this ever-changing-society with students and yes, even some pastors thinking we must alter our approach. Yes! I am ancient! I am old! I am set in many of my ways but the Bible isn’t archaic, it isn’t outdated. How do we get past this barrier in the thinking of our students? We must realize if we change the biblical
approach, will we also change God’s plan of salvation and teachings of the Bible?

Associational loyalty is of great concern to me, for I see more and more of our churches, under the leadership of their pastor, purchasing literature from other sources than our. When I was in Little Rock, I was questioned if we taught our students to attend, support and advocate our local, state and national work. We did teach our students and actually taught from the scriptures of how churches came together to support the poor saints in Jerusalem and how Paul was supported throughout the Lord’s ministry by the Church at Philippi. Now we are entering into the time when people are saying our associations that is the formal meetings much change to entice younger minister and their families to attend. My question is what the word “associate” mean? Churches throughout church history have met to discuss the work of literature, missions, problems in doctrine and liberal teaching in some churches in other works and entering into our work. Sure, one can understand that there may be a need to change some things but shouldn’t we be aware of the true purpose of associations. What is the answer? Can we address this subject and improve loyalty to our work of churches?

Pastors are to be leaders but can we teach leadership? Yes, we can give certain principles which are found in the Bible (I Peter 5:1-5). Pastors are under-shepherds and according to the Bible they are to lead their flock by their example. Pastors are not cowboys driving their people. It has been said some are born leaders and some are born followers. If a pastor has a loving, considering people, the task of leadership can be learned. Our schools can give lessons, principles on leadership and what to do and what not to do but some things are decided without little notice, like a problem in a business meeting. It may seem easy to given an answer without thinking or considering the consequences of such an action. Leader my think on their feet and if they don’t know the answer it is better to delay action to give time to research the problem. I have know of pastor who taught church discipline but when he sought to lead the church to begin this teaching, the people resisted and the pastor issued an ultimate either
begin this process of church discipline or I will leave. You probably know the answer; he had to leave. Some of these things can be taught in the classroom and cautions can be given but it is impossible to predict how people will react. What if someone becomes enraged in the business meeting, how is the pastor to react. Prayer is always appropriate and if the problem of rage is present, the pastor can pray or ask someone to pray that all things be done decently and according to love of our brethren. Delaying action is not always defeat, for people often need to digest what is being proposed. A pastor may present a new outreach, church disciple or a plan to raise finances for a project and to wait on the Lord to prepare the hearts of the people for this new endeavor is good leadership. Without laboring the point, all of us know of times when pastors have reacted to a problem or decision and had to leave a congregation. There is always a need to bridge the gap with our students in the leadership roll of a pastor.

No one wants to prepare students for defeat, failure. One of the problems we face is often pastors in their first or second pastorate face a difficult situation and quit. Shouldn’t we prepare our students for this kind of situation? Years ago, it was common for a pastor to arrive at the church facility to see the parking lot full of cars on business meeting night. The people hadn’t come to support the pastor or hear the message or to repent but to vacate the pulpit. Sure success is what we need to emphasize but isn’t there also defeat. I am thankful this situation doesn’t persist as it once did but failure does exist. Most might consider Jeremiah a failure, for God told him the people wouldn’t listen to God’s message but he was to continue to be faithful to God. My question is, can we or should we try to prepare students for times of failure? Possible none of us would like to admit we have failed our students at times but it is likely we have. When we have, shouldn’t we learn from our mistakes and not repeat them?

Pride continues to be a great problem with young pastors and possible it isn’t limited just to the youth. For some strange reason, churches expect their pastor to be an expert in every field: finances,
architecture, actually building, that is, knowing zoning codes, needed insurance and dozens of other things. All pastors should not be ashamed to confess their lack of knowledge in these areas and when possible seek help from older, more experience pastors or people in the various fields just mentioned. Schools cannot cover every problem which might arise but they can and should teach their students there are those who are willing to help them, if they will only ask. Just because one has been called to preach and pastor doesn’t mean he is capable in all areas. None of us know it all even though we may act like we know it all.

Who would have thought in this lecture, so many questions would be raised in “bridging the gap with our students?” But, these are real problems our schools face. Teachers and Administrators want to be their very best in serving the Master in school work. One of the purposes of these meeting should be, “How can we do a better work for our Lord.” We too will stand before the Lord and give an account of our labors (II Cor. 5:10). Yes! It is an honor to be a teacher but with honor comes responsibility and accountability.

QUESTIONS

1. Has technology created any problems for your classes, your schools?
2. Do on-line classes serve a better way of education than being in the classroom?
3. Do your students expect to receive all they need in the classroom and fail to study assignments given to them?
4. Do students today expect their first church to pay them $40,000.00, $50,000.00 yearly?
5. How do we address the problem of laziness in our students?
6. How much interaction should students and administrators have with students?
7. Should we encourage students to receive a bachelor’s degree from a college or university or go to a trade-school for two years?
8. Society and religions are embracing women as pastors, homosexuality, same-sex marriages and other unscriptural practices. How do we prepare our pastor for these ungodly practices?
9. Do you find your students deficient in the English Language?
10. Should we change our way of reaching the lost, teaching doctrine and growing churches to fit the society of today?
11. Is defeat, set-back a real thing in pasturing?
12. How do we bridge the gap with our younger men and the associational word?
13. Can leadership be taught or is it a process of learning or both?
14. Should curriculum be changed or altered because of new problems? In what way should our curriculum be changed?

Bro Don Price
Concord Baptist Institute

BRIDGING THE GAP OF PERCEPTIONS

INTRODUCTION:
A. We all have perceptions or what we think things in life will be like, but we failed to realize all that would be involved, good and bad.
   1. Marriage.
   2. Having kids.
   3. Winning souls.
   4. Pastoring churches.
B. Through the Bible we see people who perceived certain things that did not pan out.
   1. The same with the Philistines who captured the Ark, I Sam. 4.
C. Many more could be mentioned.
D. What about the perceptions that people have about seminary that may be wrong and how do we bridge that gap misperception?

I. First, let us think about the perspective student to Seminary and his perception of what it will be.

A. What is his thinking about seminary?
   1. I have to look back and remember my own thoughts as I considered seminary.

B. I perceived that I needed training in how to study.
1. I did—I could read but I really didn’t know how to study.
2. I needed instruction in what the Scriptures taught, not just my own ideas, and not just what I had heard.
3. I perceived that I would get that in faithful attendance in seminary.
4. I was right.
5. But at first I perceived that I had learned little after that 1st year.

C. I perceived that attendance and study would be easy and that I would have no problems staying with it.

1. I was wrong.
   a. Going to classes 5 days a week, working a full-time job, having a wife and son, teaching a Sunday School class, I was a youth director, being a visitation partner with my pastor, along with school work **etc. would not be easy.
   b. Driving 40 miles to school each day through LA rush hour traffic, most of the time by myself, got to be a drag.
2. But, in time, I found out that all I went through was worth it
   a. I gained a great respect for men who knew the Word of God and taught me.
   b. I learned to love my brethren with whom I went to classes and formed life-long friendships.
   c. I learned that the sacrifices made were nothing compared to what I received.
   d. I drew closer to my wife for putting up with all of this with me.
   e. I appreciated the work that pastors do, having been through similar situations.
3. I learned that there is no place to quit.
4. A Gospel song I love says, “He never promised that cross would not be heavy and the hill would not be hard to climb. He never offered victory without fighting, but He said help would always come in time.”

D. I tend to think that some students in seminary today think the same Way
1. I know there are those who think they can’t give up one day a week to attend because they have family and they have to work.
   a. I believe this is a wrong perception if they have been called to the ministry.
2. Some perceive they don’t need seminary to be a preacher.
   a. We are preachers because God called us to be not because we have gone to seminary.
   b. Seminary is just a “leg up” in preparation to preach and pastor a church.

II. There are also wrong perceptions on the part of some churches.

A. Many people are not concerned about things that do not affect them.
   1. Seminary is not important because they don’t have a son, grandson or someone close to them attending one.
   2. They do not see seminary as needing support as a mission does.
   3. It is just a school for preacher boys.

B. They do not perceive that one day one of these young men could become their pastor or that of a loved one.
   1. Certainly they want to be knowledgeable of the Word of God and be sound in the faith.
   2. They don’t think about us older guys having had to start when we were younger.
   3. Many do not see the need for training—“God will give them what they need to know.”
   4. We gather that Paul was in the Arabian desert being taught of the Lord Himself for 3 years.
   5. The 12 were taught by Him for about 3 years as well.
   6. If they needed such teaching by the Lord Himself, how much more do we preachers need training today.

C. Churches do not perceive about seminaries costing money.
   1. It is only fair that teachers be paid for their time and expenses, utilities must be paid, books must be bought, records must be kept, reports must be mailed, promotions must be made, etc.
2. Churches seems not to perceive that young men are surrendering their lives to the preaching of the Gospel and should be supported by helping seminaries that are helping them.

3. If seminaries are to be supported, pastors must take the lead to get their churches to help.
a. Some churches cannot do very much because of limited finances, but any offering can help, just like with missions.
b. Pastors who have benefitted from seminary training can also be an example of giving and supporting seminaries.
c. They can talk about their own seminary experiences and how thankful they are for those who supported while they were going.

D. Besides regular monthly support, special offerings for students, the pantry, gift cards at Christmas, etc. can be of great benefit.

1. Too often churches just don’t think of these things that are of great help to the seminary and students.
2. Because it has not been spoken of enough by pastors there is a wrong perception that seminary is just not that important.

III. Some pastors have a wrong perception of seminary also.

A. There are those who, in arrogance, say they can teach the young man all he needs to know rather than him going to seminary.

1. Most of these pastors who say such have not attended seminary themselves.
   a. Many of these tend to go to seed on some matter that is not of great importance but try to make is such.
2. Why would they have such an attitude about seminary?
   a. Could it be they don’t want a young man to become more intelligent in God’s Word than they are?

B. Some pastors do not see the success of seminary, even when they know of many young men who are pastoring who attended seminary.
1. In our own state we have a number of young men who are pastoring who have attended seminary here at CBI.
Ben McDaniel, Matt Wyatt, Terry Colwell, Tim Bass, Ryan Miller, Daniel Smith, Daniel Branscum, just to name a few.

2. There are others who are serving as Associates in churches, youth leaders, etc.
3. We also have young men who are preaching almost every week in churches who need a fill-in, often travelling long distances to preach.
4. All of these show a benefit of the seminary to churches in our state.

CONCLUSION:

Maybe we need to answer some questions to help us bridge the gap in perception verses reality.

1. What can we do to prepare the student for Seminary life?
   a. Orientation class.
   b. Give light to seminary by our own experiences.

2. What can we do to cause our churches to understand that seminary is important and needs to be supported?
   a. Invite seminary students to come preach.
   b. Encourage churches to adopt a student. Send them a card and offering on their birthday, Christmas, pay their tuition and buy books, etc.

3. What can we do to cause pastors to see how beneficial seminary can be?
   a. Point out those who have attended seminary, or are attending seminary, and the work they are doing for our churches now.

Bro Mack Peercy
Concord Baptist Institute

Bridging the Gap from Generation to Generation

To be honest I feel inadequate and unqualified to be standing here before you to give a lecture on an aspect of “Why Seminary?” Some have known me from childhood, some I have sat under during my
time at Texas Baptist Institute & Seminary and The Missionary Baptist Seminary (Little Rock). Since coming Oklahoma, God has seen fit to allow me to be part of the faculty of Concord Baptist Institute serving along side of men like Bro. Don Price, Bro. Mack Peercy, and Bro. R.L. Clark. What an honor it has been!

My topic for this lecture at the ABATS meeting is, Bridging the Gap from Generation to Generation. The Perception and Reality of the need for Seminary.

What can Seminary do?
Every seminary envisions itself as a servant of the churches, assisting local churches in the making and molding men who will become pastors. The seminary serves the church. The paradigm for the education of a pastor in the New Testament is Timothy under the teaching and mentoring of the apostle Paul.

Albert Mohler Jr. president of the Southern Seminary stated, “a good seminary can add immeasurably to a pastor’s ministry, and the rigorous study involved in a quality seminary education should be expected of any preacher of the Word of God. The theological disciplines are of crucial importance, and though a faithful pastor will be more than a scholar, the church learned long ago the necessity of a learned ministry.”

In preparing for this lecture, I kept going back to what does it take to bridge the gap. The key word being “bridge:

The definition for a Bridge: a structure carrying a road, path, railroad, or canal across, or river, ravine road, railroad or another obstacle.

B. a time, place, means of connection or transition. Example: a bridge between cultures. A bridge between generations.

The thing about bridges is that they get used. They are walked on. They are run on. Some thoughts concerning bridges...

1. Bridges get dirty. Bridges get walked and ran on. Bridges experience pain. (Golden gate bridge SF-1937 to 2018 more than 1700 have jumped off. 25 are known to have survived)

2. Every bridge has Master designer with a specific purpose of what two things need bridged… and how.
3. Proper Foundations are paramount to a bridge surviving everyday stresses and occasional natural disasters. If it remains standing...people’s confidence is boosted in the bridges ability to serve its purpose. Both sides are needed in locking the foundation of the bridge in.
4. A bridge is useless when it is closed from both sides
5. A bridge is useless if all stay on one side without any movement

The Need: Bridging the gap of generations through seminary.
When you think of the generations some interesting thoughts come to mind…

TO ALL THE KIDS WHO WERE BORN IN THE 1930's 40's, 50's, 60's and 70's!
First, we survived being born to mothers who smoked and/or drank while they carried us.
They took aspirin, ate blue cheese dressing, tuna from a can, and didn't get tested for diabetes.
Then after that trauma, our baby cribs were covered with bright colored lead-based paints.
We had no childproof lids on medicine bottles, doors or cabinets and when we rode our bikes, we had no helmets, not to mention, the risks we took hitchhiking.
As children, we would ride in cars with no seat belts or air bags.
Riding in the back of a pick up on a warm day was always a special treat.
We drank water from the garden hose and NOT from a bottle.
We shared one soft drink with four friends, from one bottle and NO ONE died from this.
We ate cupcakes, white bread and real butter and drank soda pop with sugar in it, but we weren't overweight because WE WERE ALWAYS OUTSIDE PLAYING!
We would leave home in the morning and play all day, as long as we were back when the streetlights came on.
No one was able to reach us all day. And we were O.K.
We would spend hours building our go-carts out of scraps and then ride down the hill, only to find out we forgot the brakes. After running into the bushes a few times, we learned to solve the problem.
We did not have Play stations, Nintendo's, X-boxes, no video games at all, no 99 channels on cable, no video tape movies, no surround sound, no cell phones, no personal computers, no Internet or Internet chat
rooms.........WE HAD FRIENDS and we went outside and found them!
We fell out of trees, got cut, broke bones and teeth and there were no
lawsuits from these accidents.
We ate worms and mud pies made from dirt, and the worms did not live in us
forever.
We were given BB guns for our 10th birthdays, made up games with sticks
and tennis balls and although we were told it would happen, we did not put
out very many eyes.
We rode bikes or walked to a friend's house and knocked on the door or rang
the bell, or just yelled for them!
Little League had tryouts and not everyone made the team. Those who didn't
had to learn to deal with disappointment. Imagine that!!
The idea of a parent bailing us out if we broke the law was unheard of. They
actually sided with the law!
This generation has produced some of the best risk-takers, problem solvers
and inventors ever!
The past 50 years have been an explosion of innovation and new ideas.
We had freedom, failure, success and responsibility, and we learned
HOW TO DEAL WITH IT ALL!

The Millennial Generation:
• Their entertainment is found in X-boxes, play stations, and handheld
gaming systems.
• There are no winners & losers (everyone is a winner)
• In school-everyone must learn together-can’t let kids get too far ahead
and no one flunks or gets held back anymore.
• This generation does not know how to handle too much free time (can’t
entertain themselves very long) the reason, everyone is always on the go.
• Smart phones google (internet), Wikipedia have made encyclopedias
obsolete. Research and study are no longer found in a book but a click
of a button.
• Sirius XM Radio-no dead areas.
• Streaming movies on demand: no waiting time, leading to a I want it
now mentality.
So many being raised in split homes now—may kids wouldn’t know what to do with both parents in same house. (I coach a little football team. 14 boys. 2 live with both parents)

When you are young as a Christian/beginning preacher, you tend to not be taken seriously by others. Yet when you become older as a Christian/older preacher, younger people tend to not take you as seriously.

How do we change that? We come along side each other. We mentor the younger generation and provide internships for them to learn along side us. Churches partnering with seminaries and provided places. Instructor bridging the generational gap by pouring into others.

Perceptions:
1. All I need is Holy Spirit, my Bible, and myself
2. I know more than others
3. I can learn things in an instance with a push of the button
4. If I have time, I will go (Satan makes sure there is no time)
5. Relationships are not that important

In researching for this topic, an interesting observance was that every major seminary: Dallas Theological Seminary, South Eastern, South Western, Southern, Luther Seminary, Denver Seminary, Phoenix Seminary, Westminster Theological Seminary, Reformed Seminary, Northern Seminary, Gorden-Comwell Seminary all required each student to be a part of a mentorship/intern relationship. This was part of their curriculum.

Mentored Internship courses enable students to gain practical ministry experience in various areas of ministry under the supervision of a Field Mentor. The mentor and the student work together to develop a ‘personalized’ experience in the ministry organization.
The Biblical basis for mentoring relationships:

Throughout scripture we see mentoring relationships. We see it in Jethro & Moses. Moses and Joshua. One can see in Eli & Samuel. Elijah and Elisha. There is Elizabeth & Mary. It is a process. It is a learning experience. The example is the Apostle Paul, John Mark, Timothy, and Titus. It takes two to enter into a mentor type relationship

- **Acts 13:13** - Now when Paul and his company loosed from Paphos, they came to Perga in Pamphylia: and John departing from them returned to Jerusalem.

- **Acts 15:36-40** - And some days after Paul said unto Barnabas, let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do. 37 And Barnabas determined to take with them John, whose surname was Mark. 38 But Paul thought not good to take him with them, who departed from them from Pamphylia, and went not with them to the work. 39 And the contention was so sharp between them, that they departed asunder one from the other: and so Barnabas took Mark and sailed unto Cyprus; 40 And Paul chose Silas, and departed, being recommended by the brethren unto the grace of God. 41 And he went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches.

- **Acts 16:1-5** - Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek: 2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. 3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek. 4 And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem. 5 And so were the churches established in the faith and increased in number daily.

Something happened between these verses and the rest of the New Testament. Lessons were learned. It was not just John Mark learning tough life lesson about not quitting and difficulties in ministry, Paul also learned how to deal with people. I think he
learned that not all people saw ministry as he did and that was ok.
The change, God worked in both lives.

- Colossians 4:10- Aristarchus my fellow prisoner saluteth you, and Marcus, sister’s son to Barnabas, (touching whom ye received commandments: if he come unto you, receive him;
- I Timothy 1:2- Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.
  - I Timothy 1:18- This charge I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare;
  - II Timothy 1:2- To Timothy, my dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.
  - II Timothy 2:1- Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.
- Titus 1:4- To Titus, mine own son after the common faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Savior.
- II Timothy 4:11- Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

Not only did Paul adopt sons in the faith, he saw in John Mark someone that was profitable in ministry. Also notice the words that Paul used in Timothy and Titus; Grace, Mercy, and Peace.

In mentoring/internship relationships—grace, mercy, and peace are greatly needed. Just in a bridge, it will be dirty, there may be some pain and discomfort, but two sides will be connecting for a common purpose.

1) Seminary provides a safe environment to develop into the man of God. Seminary must be a place where questions can be asked and answered in a non-demeaning way.

2) Seminary must provide the needed mentorship to bridge the generation gaps. To bridge the gap between generations, there must be a participation amongst each generation. How?
   A. Preach together.
   B. Share the same platform together.
   C. Evangelize together
   D. You will see a marked increase in younger-leader participation.
We preach the same gospel! It does not matter if it is the 65-year-old instructor or the 20-year-old just beginning. We believe in and preach the crucified Jesus as the Risen Lord and Savior of this world. And He is coming back. Seminary can help by showing that the gospel we preach spans the generations. Ministry is not a competition.

3) Seminary provides the renewed vigor for continued ministry. We feed off energy. The younger generations see what faithfulness in action looks like.
   - How much stronger would the church be if the younger generation would go out of their way to seek out the advice of the older generations?
   - How much stronger would the church be if the older generation would look at the energy and vigor found in much of the younger generation as inspiration to continue to fight the good fight of faith.

4) Seminary must be a place where technology connects with God’s word in the days that we live. We learn from each other. We must be willing to learn.
   - Psalm 71: 17, 18- O God, thou hast taught me from my youth: And hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and gray headed, O God, forsake me not; Until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, And thy power to everyone that is to come.

5) Seminary must not only theological but also practical.
   - Knowledge and credentials aren’t enough
   - What to do when my church is dying
   - How to shepherd my wife
   - How to pastor people who are different from me
   - How to follow my lead pastor when we disagree
   - How to lead my leaders
   - How to raise my kids to love the church
   - How to shepherd my congregation through seasons of suffering
   - When to accept a call or leave me church
   - How to handle conflict
• The need to fight for my relationship with God
• The time it takes to become a shepherd
• The temptation to make a name for myself
• The joy I can know over a long tenure
• What to do when no church hires me

Taken from the book, 15 things Seminary couldn’t teach me by Collin Hansen and Jeff Robinson

Mark Cahill, “One Thing You can’t do in Heaven,” Three hundred-million years from now, what will be the only thing that will matter? Will it matter how much money you made? Will matter what kind of car you drove? Will matter who won the NCAA football and Basketball titles this year? Will it matter who you took to the homecoming dance? Three-hundred-million years from now, the only thing that will matter is who is in heaven and who is in hell. And if that is the only thing that will matter then, that should be one of our greatest concerns now. Jesus tells us in Matthew 18:11, “The Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.” IF is of the most importance for Jesus to reach the lost, shouldn’t it be a major priority for us.

Our challenge: We need to be discipling the younger generation. The younger generation needs to be teachable and respectful of the older generation. We need to be seeking mentoring relationships to be all that God has call us to be. It is not about what use to be or what needs to change. It is a matter of life and death for thousand upon thousands that need to hear the message of Jesus Christ and seminary is the ideal place to bridge the gap of generations and to develop and equip to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ in His kingdom even in a greater way.

Mentorship Qualities:

1. Christ like Character
• The heart of leadership is the heart itself. Being or character, must always precede doing

2. Intern-focused
• Is the person interested in cultivating your God-given talents and qualities?

3. Attentive listener
• Does he act as a sounding board by asking, listening, affirming, and sharing in a timely manner?

4. Active teacher
• Has he mastered the foundations of ministry in order to share with you the art and science of ministry in a clear way?

5. Acts as a resource
• Is he willing to use their professional experience and personal network to connect you with other resources as is needed and appropriate?

6. Loves courageously
• Is he able to discern areas in which you need to improve and areas in which you are already strong?

7. Environment of trust
• Does he seek to develop a relationship with you based on mutual respect and trust?

Unwise approaches to mentor relationships
1. Unrealistic expectations on mentors’ part
2. Unrealistic expectations on mentee’s part
3. No purpose to relationship
4. The mentor feels responsible to fix the mentee’s problems
5. Lack of confidentiality
6. Mentor assumes the role of parent

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