

Generation Next: Raising Up The Next Generation of Worship Leaders

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I've been hearing more and more about the importance of mentoring and discipling the up an coming generation, unfortunately it's not being seen much in the church especially as it pertains to the worship ministry. The reason may be that you have an abundance of good musicians and you don't feel the need to recruit young people to help. I love to have great players on the team, I just believe were are missing the blessing and a mandate to raise up the next generation of lead worshipers.

Why should I give my time and energy to mentor a young person?

It's the biblical model.

Scripture is filled with examples of this multiplication process through mentoring relationships:

** Jethro invested into the life of Moses. Moses invested into the life of Joshua and the elders of Israel. Joshua invested into the lives of others.*

** Eli invested into the life of Samuel. Samuel invested into the life of Saul and then David. David invested into the lives of others.*

** Jesus invested into the lives of the twelve disciples who in turn invested into the lives of others.*

** Barnabas invested into the life of Saul, also called Paul. Paul invested into the life of Timothy. Timothy invested into the lives of others.*

Mentors shepherd by coming along side with counsel, consult, guidance, instruction, and challenge but primarily by modeling. The Apostle Paul depicted mentoring relationships when he said "Follow my example" (1 Cor. 4:15-17; 11:1).

1 Cor. 4:15-17

Even though you have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 16 Therefore I urge you to imitate me. 17 For this reason I am sending to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.

1 Cor. 11:1

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.

It will enable young worship leaders to go further, faster by...

- Avoiding common pitfalls
- Letting them see your authentic faith lived out
- Encouraging them in their gifts
- Teaching them to the proper Biblical foundation of worship

It is incredibly fulfilling.

What are the roadblocks to mentoring young people?

There's not an immediate payoff.

Most worship leaders I know are more concerned with the next Sunday, not 5 years from now. It's easy to fall into this way of thinking. We want instant results and Lord knows, working with teenagers is 2 steps forward and 1 step back! Many times in ministry leadership we have the mindset of "What can this person do to help me and my ministry?" We must change this to "What I can do to develop this person?"

We fall for flash instead of fulfillment.

When selecting players, everyone wants the guitar player who can mimic all the tasty licks from the recording, versus the teen who plays everything with hi-gain distortion :). At the end of the day, nobody's going to remember the great guitar riff, but you may direct a young person's destiny by giving them the opportunity to serve along side you.

Nobody wants extra baggage.

*Integrating young people into your band will cost you time, money, and a few gray hairs. There is a certain amount of hand-holding that must happen, especially at first. **Use example of set up time.***

We believe the lie that teens don't want to be involved with adults.

This is so bogus. My wife and I are both over 40 and have incredible relationships with a bunch of teens. Nobody cares that we are old enough to be their parents or that we are not cool. All they care about is that we care about them enough to invest into their lives.

We feel pressure from the pastor and/or congregation to have a professional sounding band.

We relegate our young people's service to the youth service or the once a year "Youth Sunday". That sends the message "this is big church and there's no place for you to help here". If we want to see more young people in our church services, how about giving them a place to serve?

How do I effectively mentor a young person?

Selecting the David. (King David)

David wasn't the cool kid in the youth group, but he was the one who had God's heart (we don't choose, God does)

Communicate clear goals and expectations

Lead by example

Decrease so he/she can increase

Allow room to fail

You do - They watch

You do - They Help

They do - You Help

They do - You watch

Mentoring vs. Parenting

You are a mentor, not a parent. There's a big difference.

View through the long lens.

Don't expect immediate results.

Passing the Torch

Know when to stop tilling.

The seed we sow now will yield an abundant harvest in time if we are faithful to plant and water. So get that spiky haired kid with the Flying V involved in your ministry. You will change his life and he will change yours.