

Kingdom Perspectives in Proverbs: Youth

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[0 : 0 0] Today's scripture reading comes from Proverbs 4, 1 through 9. Please follow along in your bulletin. Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive that you may gain insight.

For I give you good precepts. Do not forsake my teaching. When I was a son with my father, tender, the only one in the sight of my mother, he taught me and said to me, Let your heart hold fast my words.

Keep my commandments and live. Get wisdom. Get insight. Do not forgive and do not turn away from the words of my mouth. Do not forsake her and she will keep you.

Love her and she will guard you. The beginning of wisdom is this. Get wisdom. And whatever you get, get insight. Prize her highly and she will exalt you.

She will honor you if you embrace her. She will place on your head a graceful garland. She will bestow on you a beautiful crown. Train up a child in the way he should go.

[1 : 0 8] Even when he is old, he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22, 6. This is the reading of God's word. How's it going?

I am Eric Scott. I'm the youth guy here at Watermark Community Church. And although I have spoken and preached other places, this is my first time preaching at Watermark. And so Millen, being the great friend that he is, had two important pieces of advice for me when I walked in today.

His first piece of advice, don't puke on stage. And his second one, just remember, any mistakes that you make will end up on YouTube. I'm glad to know that I have great friends who are looking out for me as I come and share God's word with us today.

So I am the youth guy. And as you look at your bulletin and you see that I'm speaking on youth today, you probably think, well, that kind of makes sense as we go throughout our series of Proverbs.

But there's actually a bigger reason that I'm speaking on youth than just the fact that I am the youth guy. That is a major part of it. But also, if you think about it, on the whole spectrum of life, I'm actually, this may surprise some of you, closer to a 13-year-old than to a 35-year-old.

[2 : 3 1] At least in age, possibly in maturity sometimes. But I think that the way that the church approaches youth and the attitude that it has towards the youth, not just what we classify as youth in terms of middle schoolers and high schoolers, but in terms of people younger than us, the generation that's coming up, has an impact not just on them, but on me as well, and on the generation that I am a part of.

And so as I come today, I'm not just saying, this is how we should approach them. But I'm a part of that group. I'm a part of this youth that needs to be constantly trained and taught what it means to follow God, what it means to seek Him and to know Him.

And so, like I said, today we're continuing our series on Proverbs. And just in case you haven't been here, I want to review a couple things about the series of Proverbs that have been something we've been coming back to every week of this series.

The first thing is that as we look at the book of Proverbs, it's not just a collection of teachings, do this, do that, do this, do that. But it's actually more about who we are, about being people who love and fear God, rather than just people who do the right things.

And so as we look at the book of Proverbs, we're trying to look at it not just from the perspective of what are we supposed to do, but also the perspective of who are we supposed to be in light of who God is and what He has revealed to us of Himself.

[3 : 59] And the second thing is that throughout this series of Proverbs, we've been talking about an oriental rug. Do we have the picture? And we've talked about how when you look at the back of an oriental rug, you see knots and you see loose threads dangling down.

And you see that there's something, but you're not quite sure of what the full, clear picture is. And the front of the rug has that full, clear picture.

And we've sort of compared this to the way that we are able to see the world versus the way that God sees the world. When we look at the world, we can see, similar to the back of the rug, we see this jumbled mess.

We see knots, we see loose strings hanging around, and we see enough to know that there's something of a picture being worked out there, but we can't see the full picture. But God from the other side sees this full picture, and he's working in light of this full picture.

And so as we try to live in this world and get this understanding of the picture, ultimately, we don't do that through doing the right things, but through God revealing it to us.

[5 : 10] And so as we look at the book of Proverbs, we want to see in this book, not just what kind of broken picture from the world's perspective can we get from it, but also how does God's word and how does who God is help us to understand the more full picture so that we can live in the truth of what this book is revealing to us.

And like I said, today we are talking on the book of Proverbs. We're talking on youth. And so one thing I want to really look at is according to the book of Proverbs, what should shape our interaction with the youth?

And I think there's a lot that the book of Proverbs has to say on our interaction with youth, with whether it's our own kids or just the younger generation in general. It has a lot of advice that it gives to people.

Train up a child in the way that he should go. Again, like we said, it's not this strict promise that if you do the right thing as a parent, your kids are going to turn out okay. But it's a general rule that generally, parents who train up their child correctly have children who turn out the right way.

There are exceptions to that. There are parents who are amazing parents and whose kids totally turn away from God. There are parents who are terrible parents who have kids that end up following God wholeheartedly.

[6 : 28] But as a general rule, parents who train up their children in the way that they should go have kids who follow God. And so we have a collection of these teachings saying things like discipline your kids.

Don't withhold discipline from them. It'll help them to grow into the person that they're supposed to be. But the overwhelming majority of the teaching that the book of Proverbs gives on our interaction with youth is given by example rather than by speaking it.

And here's what I mean by that. The book of Proverbs is a collection of teachings that a father gives to his son. The father basically sits down with his son.

He says, Hey kid, you don't get the world. You don't know how it works. And I'm not just going to abandon you to live in this messed up understanding of reality, but I'm going to take you under my wing.

I'm going to teach you. I'm going to tell you, here's how things work. And so we have a collection of these teachings from this father who loves his son, who takes him under his wings, and who teaches him how the world should work.

[7 : 32] And this, I think, gives us an example of how our interaction with the youth around us should be. It's not just a distance thing, but it's something where we come in, we get involved in their lives, and Solomon is modeling this to us throughout the book of Proverbs.

And as we look at that, what exactly is it that he's saying we're supposed to do with the youth? How is it that we're supposed to instruct them? And so let's jump in and look at that. The first thing that Solomon teaches us about our interaction with youth and how it's supposed to be is that ultimately our training, our instruction of youth should be training and instruction in wisdom, which has its root in the fear of the Lord.

This stand spins a lot. Can we lock that down some more? That is much better.

Sorry about that. That ultimately, our instruction of youth is that we instruct them and train them in wisdom and not just in the right things to do.

Ultimately, the goal of the church is not to raise good kids who stay in school, don't do drugs, stay out of prison, grow up, probably get married and have a nice spouse and good kids of their own.

[8 : 56] The goal of the church is to produce disciples of Christ, people who know Jesus, who love Jesus, who follow him with all that they have and all that they are.

And ultimately, the book of Proverbs points us towards this. The book of Proverbs, when Solomon is teaching his son, he says, the beginning of wisdom is this, get wisdom. He doesn't say, the beginning of wisdom is this, go out and be a good person, be nice to the people around you.

He says, ultimately, the beginning of wisdom is get wisdom. And he teaches his son that wisdom starts in the fear of the Lord. Here at Watermark, we have this phrase that we use that says, the gospel changes everything.

The gospel, this good news that we have that although we were sinners, although we were rebels against God, he came down as a man, as Jesus.

He came down, lived the perfect life that we could never live and died to pay a price that we could never pay so that we can have a new relationship with God. This is the good news that we believe that unites us as Christians.

[10 : 08] And this changes everything about who we are. Because ultimately, it says that our standing with God, the way to be the right people, is not by doing the right things, is not by going out and volunteering at the elderly home or feeding the poor, but ultimately, the thing that marks the difference is our standing with Christ, whether we have trusted in him or not.

And yes, this does lead to a change in our actions. Yes, this does lead to what society would label as more moral behavior. But ultimately, this change in our behavior is based not in what we've done, but in who we are.

And once who we are has been transformed, that leads to a change in what we do. And so, in Proverbs, we see this, that Solomon is constantly going back to the fact that at the core of training up a child must be this instruction in wisdom and fear of the Lord and shaping him or her into the right person that is seeking God and desiring to know him rather than just doing the right things.

And just as a youth worker, I see this occasionally in terms of parents who come into the church and they bring their kids because they want their kids to learn good morals.

They come into the church and they bring their little kids and send them off to Sunday school because they want them to learn to not do drugs, to stay in school, to stay out of prison probably, and probably be like a few steps higher on the whole moral chart than just good enough to stay out of prison.

[11 : 50] But they come in not because they want their kids to know Christ, but because they want their kids to be good people. And this is a recipe for disaster because the kids see right through that.

And the kids see that ultimately their parents aren't concerned with Christ. Their parents are concerned with them being good people. And they see that the primary thing is missing.

And so what happens so many times is these parents come in and they come in hoping for their kids to become these good people except for that the parents don't have any interest in knowing Christ.

And the parents drop their kids off on Sunday morning and then maybe go to church, maybe just go home and relax for a couple hours and then come pick up their kids. And they're hoping to get this moral change without getting the primary thing which is a relationship with Christ.

They're hoping to get this secondary thing without getting the primary thing that leads to it. And C.S. Lewis, the guy who wrote The Chronicles of Narnia, says that that is a recipe for disaster.

[12 : 59] That people who seek secondary things without first getting the primary things that lead to those, they lose not only the primary thing but the secondary thing that they're seeking as well.

That ultimately, even if they did turn out great and have the best behavior ever and, you know, go into school and get stickers on a chart for great behavior every day, if they don't get the part about knowing Christ, then we lose.

Because ultimately, their good works don't make them better in God's sight. But their good works still leave them falling short. And ultimately, Christ is what they need to be this new person that they're supposed to be, the person that we're supposed to be training them to be.

The second thing that Proverbs tells us about our interaction with youth is that youth will not train themselves in wisdom and godliness. It tells us, train up a child in the way that he should go.

This isn't a passive command to sit back and let him go and, hey, have fun, see ya. Because ultimately, there's this understanding that they will be trained, they will be sent in a certain direction, and if we're not pointing them in the right direction and showing them, hey, this is the way that we're supposed to go, this is the God that we're supposed to serve, this is how we're supposed to serve them, they're going to seek out other ways.

[14 : 20] Like, I don't know if you guys get this, but teenagers understand that they don't get the world. They understand that it's a confusing and messed up place, and they're like, I don't understand how this works or how I'm supposed to fit into it.

They put on a face that says, I've got this all figured out, I'm in control. But when you sit down with them and they're honest with you, they'll admit, I'm totally confused. They'll admit, I don't get what's going on.

And they'll admit that I need someone who I can talk to who has a better grasp on this thing than I do. And they go out and they will seek people who can be that mentor, that guide, that uncle, aunt, big brother, parent figure in their lives.

And the Bible says that we need to be there for them to be that figure, to train them up in the way of the Lord because if Christians and the church aren't there for them, they're going to still seek out wisdom, they're going to still seek out advice and training on how to live in the world, but they're going to seek it from other sources.

They're going to seek it from the media. They're going to seek it from their friends at school because their friends at school are just as good at pretending they have everything all together as they are, only they believe that their friends actually have it all together.

[15 : 42] And if we are not intentional in actively pursuing training them up in the knowledge and fear of the Lord, they're going to be trained up in other ways.

And so, we as a church need to intentionally pursue training them up in the wisdom and knowledge of the Lord. And just a side note, this doesn't mean that we pretend to be perfect so that they'll come to us because they see that we have it all together.

Like I said, they know that the world is a messed up place. They know that they can't figure it out on their own and they know that it's a messed up enough place that probably other people don't have it all figured out either.

And so, a lot of times what I've seen is that parents or youth workers or adults in their lives, when they see kids who are having problems and questions and don't get it, their response is, I have to be perfect for them so that they'll know that I have it all together and that I can help them through this time.

The problem with that is either the kid knows that you're a liar because they know that you're actually messed up or they believe that you're actually perfect and the fear of talking to someone who's so much better than them scares them away.

[17 : 01] And so, repeatedly, what I've seen in my life is these people who set themselves up as examples, as this perfect person that you should look up to and respect and aren't real with people that they're trying to work with end up alienating people rather than drawing them in.

And what youth are looking for is people who will be real with them, who will show them that, no, I don't have it all figured out, no, I'm not perfect, but I'm learning and I'm trusting God and he is drawing me closer to him every day.

And I think this is something that is especially true for parents. There's a guy named Reggie Joyner. He's a specialist in family ministry and he has a quote. He says, kids need to see their parents struggle with answers face their weaknesses, deal with real problems, admit when they're wrong, fight for their marriage and resolve personal conflict.

They need to see these things because if they don't see these things, then when these issues come up in their own lives, they won't understand how to deal with them. And ultimately, this doesn't mean we, you know, take our two-year-old and explain to them every problem that's going on in terms of our struggle to stay pure in our relationship as parents or whatever.

But it means that on an age-appropriate basis, you show the people around you, the youth that you're working with, whether that's your kids or whether that's someone you're mentoring or just someone you're having a conversation with, you demonstrate to them how the gospel is shaping and transforming your life, the situations in it, and the way that you react to it.

[18 : 38] Because like I said, ultimately, our goal is not just to have kids who do the right thing and have the right behavior, but kids who realize that they are sinners who are saved only by the grace of God.

And what better way to show them this truth than to demonstrate to them that we are sinners who are in the process of being saved and transformed by God's grace and showing them what this looks like as it plays out in our actual daily lives.

And that leads into the third thing that Proverbs says about how we interact with youth, and that's that the truths that we teach must constantly be said and lived in our daily lives.

That ultimately, youth may listen to what we say, they're much more likely to live what we live. In this passage in Proverbs chapter 4, Solomon says, when I was a son to my father, Solomon's father was David, this great king in Israel.

He says, when I was a son, when he was my father, he taught me and he said these things. We just listened to that scripture being read. And then he goes on and he repeats to his own son what David, his father, taught him.

[19 : 52] Now here's what we can see from that passage. If Solomon's taking what his father taught him and passing that teaching on to his son, it presumes that he's probably been living that teaching out in his own life for a number of years because he finds it valuable enough to pass on to his own son.

And if he's been living this truth out in his life for this many years, that puts his son in this unique position to be able to look at this teaching and say, is it working? As I watch my father's life and he says that these things are true, are they true in his life?

Does the pursuit of wisdom truly lead to the good life? Is it helping him find peace and joy or is he living in fear and anxiety because of these things? Is he just completely stressed out because the things that he's telling me are way too overbearing and hard?

The son in this story has the opportunity to look at Solomon's life to see, hey, this is working for him. Hey, my dad's pursuing a relationship with God and it's actually bringing him peace.

It's bringing him joy. It's transforming his relationships. I want that. And the son is in this unique position to view what's going on in his father's life and to live in response to that.

[21 : 11] See, the truth is that a lot of times the youth around us, they'll completely ignore what we say but they'll follow everything that we teach them through our actions. It's why if you're a parent and you're in an argument with your kid and things are getting heated and escalated and you yell out to them, well, you just need to calm down.

Are they going to calm down? No, because your words say calm down but your actions say get angry, get heated, let's go. And they follow your examples or your actions rather than your words.

And that's not just something that happens in an argument but it's something that happens in every area of your lives. If you or I say to the youth around us, hey, you need to follow God and then every waking minute that we have we spend at our jobs stockpiling money and getting more and more and more stuff rather than trusting in God and relying on Him, we're going to end up with a generation of youth that we taught to follow God, we told them they need to and it's important and instead they're out there working 80, 90, 100 hours a week stockpiling as much money as they can and worshipping money as their God instead.

There's a guy named Christian Smith, he's a sociologist from Notre Dame, he's done a lot of research into youth culture and youth especially in the church and what they think about the gospel, what they believe about God and what they turn out like and what factors impact their growth and development as people and he has a quote that is, it's short, it's simple but it's incredibly deep and slightly scary.

He says, when it comes to kids' faith, parents get what they are. When it comes to kids' faith, parents get what they are. If you want your kid to be a Christ follower but instead of following Christ with our own lives, we're going out and seeking approval through wealth, approval through comfort, we shouldn't be shocked when our kids go out and seek approval through wealth and approval through comfort.

[23 : 25] If we want our kids to follow Christ, we need to be Christ followers ourselves and we need to teach them that not just through our words, although words are very important but we need to also model it for them through our actions.

and a lot of times the actions that we model for them are going to stick much better than the words that we use when we talk to them. And as I'm up here today and I'm speaking, I don't want you to think that I'm just speaking to parents and leaving everyone else off the hook because ultimately the job of training up the next generation of youth is a job that the Bible assigns to the entire church.

Whether you're a young single like me who could have an impact on the teens and the children or maybe you're a parent here whose kids have grown up and gone off and moved out, you have a unique opportunity to impact other people in the church, maybe a newly married couple or maybe a new set of parents because ultimately like I've said repeatedly but it's an important point that I don't want us to miss, the goal is not just to have good kids who get good grades get good jobs, get a good family someday of their own, stay out of prison, stay off drugs.

The goal is to create disciples of Christ and the Bible says that that is the job of every Christian. It's not specifically the job of only the parents in a family to disciple their kids.

It is specifically their job to disciple and train their own kids and they have a unique opportunity to do that within their own family. However, it is the job of every Christian to make disciples.

[25 : 04] Jesus' last recorded words in the book of Matthew are go into all the world and make disciples of all nations. He gives that command to his disciples as the last thing that he does.

He wants us to go into the world to train up people from wherever we are to follow him regardless of whether they're our own children, friends, people that we're mentoring, just other random people around us, maybe people that we work with.

our job is to make disciples and that doesn't change regardless of the generational barriers. Our job is to make disciples. And so, for those of us who aren't parents here or maybe who are parents but who have kids who have grown up and moved out already, we actually have a unique opportunity to impact the youth around us.

Because, let's face it, we've all been teenagers before. We know that teenagers will talk to people who aren't their parents about things that they won't talk to with their own parents. Yes?

I've got girl problems. I'm not talking to mom about it. I'm going to talk to someone else who actually understands the world because my parents obviously don't. I got a yeah from the youth and back.

[26 : 20] They'll talk to us about things because if we disagree with them, that's not going to make things awkward at home. Because if we tell them to do something and they really don't want to do it, they're not going to get in trouble for not doing what we tell them to do.

Although they probably will if they don't do what their parents say to do. They'll talk to us because a lot of times kids think that their parents are perfect and have it all together and couldn't understand if their own kids had problems.

And so they have this willingness and vulnerability to come to us who aren't parents and share with us things that they wouldn't share with their own parents. Or maybe they'll come to parents of their friends but not to their own parents.

And this gives us a unique opportunity to speak the gospel into the situation in their lives. To look at what's going on and say, hey, I see that you have this problem.

Here's what the Bible says about how we should approach this problem. Here's what the gospel says about how our approach to this should be different than the world's approach to this.

[27 : 28] And we have this opportunity but the question is will we be willing to step outside of our comfort zone to invest in people who otherwise we probably wouldn't want to invest in and who you know, in the end could leave us heartbroken, could just be a total pain to work with, but who we could impact amazingly for God's kingdom.

And I think for the parents in here in relation to this, for those of you who have teenagers or who have had teenagers before, you know, there comes a point where kids sort of stop talking to their parents a lot of times about certain issues.

And they are willing to talk to others about these issues. And so, I think, this is me personally, not necessarily the book of Proverbs talking, but I think one of the most amazing things that Christian parents can do is introduce their kids to other older Christians who can be a sounding board when that time comes that they're not willing to talk to their own parents.

That they can go to, you know, say that someday I'm a parent and, you know, I introduce my kids to my friends so that when my kids reach a point where they don't want to talk to me, they have my friends that they can talk to who I know will point them back to Christ, who will point them back to the gospel, who will train them in godliness.

Because, like I said, they're going to talk to someone about it. I would much rather have it be someone who I trust, someone who I know, someone who's going to point them to Christ, rather than someone who's going to point them away from him.

[29 : 05] And I think one of the greatest resources that we at Watermark have for helping parents connect their youth with other kids or connect, or, sorry, with other adults is our community groups.

Here at Watermark, our community groups are actually geographically based, not affinity based. What that means is when you join a community group, generally you're in a community group with people who live near you, rather than people who are at the same stage in life as you.

So that means for me, my group is not a group of singles, but it's a group of people who live in the Saiying Poon area. It means that my group doesn't just have people who are all in their 20s, but we have people all the way up through probably their 50s.

And it's not just singles, but we have singles and newlyweds and parents of little kids and parents of teenagers, and we have people from all different stages of life. And if you bring your kids into this environment, it introduces you, it gives you the ability to introduce them to a variety of different people who are different than you, who they may feel comfortable getting to know and talking with on issues that they may not feel as comfortable talking to you about.

And so, you know, we talk constantly about the importance of community groups and how living out the gospel in community is important, and I think this is one of the big ways where that is true. And so, I want to close with asking us how this specifically relates to us in Hong Kong.

[30 : 34] And one of the big questions I want to ask us is, as we interact with the youth around us, whether that's our own kids or other kids that we interact with on a daily basis through mentoring, through running into them on the streets, whatever, which God are we teaching them to worship as the real God?

Through our words and through our actions. Which God are we teaching them to worship as the real God? Here at Watermark, we talk a lot about the idols in our lives and in the city.

And if you look around at Hong Kong, they have a lot of different things that they tell you you should worship as God. They tell you worship money because it will satisfy you.

If you get enough in your bank account, you will be happy. They tell you that you should worship your social status, that being a member at this club is better than being a member at that club and so if you have a membership at this club, you're in.

If not, sorry. They tell you to worship education, to spend eight hours a night after school studying, studying, studying, working your hardest so you can get into the best university so that someday you can get the best job.

[31 : 47] They tell us to worship stuff. How many apartments do you have? How many cars do you have? How much more can you get? Because once you get enough, you'll be happy.

The city constantly barrages us with these messages and if we're not careful, it's easy for us to slip into the mode of just going along with what the city says and teaching our youth whether consciously or subconsciously to follow what the city tells us to follow.

To tell them that their education is truly the most important thing, not a relationship with God. To tell them that getting money truly is the most important thing, not ultimately getting a relationship with God.

And so I have some diagnostic questions that I'm going to read off that you can ask yourself on your free time or after the service or whenever just to think about what are we truly teaching our youth is the most important thing in life.

The first one is what do I demonstrate is the most important thing in my life through how I invest my time? What do I demonstrate is the most important thing in my life through how I use my time?

[32 : 59] Am I showing them that a pursuit of Christ is the most important thing spending time reading my Bible spending time praying spending time with other Christians or am I telling them that the pursuit of money is the most important thing and working 100 hour weeks so that I can build up that nest egg?

The second question what do I demonstrate is the most important thing in my life through how I invest my money? Jesus says that where our treasure is there our heart will be also.

what are we showing them that they should treasure? Should they treasure flats and just collecting real estate? Should they treasure cars, clothes or should they treasure Christ?

And what are we showing them through the way that we use our money? Next, what do I demonstrate to them is important through how I treat others? especially my spouse them our helper and the others that they see me interacting with on a daily basis.

Am I demonstrating to them that having power is the most important and so I take a domineering stance in all of my relationships? Or am I demonstrating to them that loving Christ is the most important thing and letting that transform the way that I approach conflict the way that I approach friendships?

[34 : 20] relationships. Next up, what do I say should be the most important things in the lives of my children based on how I require them to use their time? Am I requiring them to spend five hours a night doing homework after school because their education is the most important thing on earth?

Or am I encouraging them to use their time in the pursuit of Christ? And I'm not saying education or jobs or any of this is a bad thing in and of itself. But I'm saying that if it takes the place of Christ and if it replaces him, it becomes a bad thing.

Next question, what do I discipline my children for? What does this show about my values? Is my discipline an attempt to teach them in God's ways and train them to become a person who fears the Lord or is my discipline an attempt to get them to conform to societal norms?

Next up, what do I encourage the youth around me to pursue in life? In my daily conversations with them, am I telling them, hey, you go, you get lots of money, you become the best athlete ever, or am I telling them to pursue Christ?

And finally, what do I talk about the most around the youth in my life? What am I demonstrating is important by talking about these things? Again, the things that we talk about in our conversations reveal a lot about who we are and what's important to us.

[35 : 49] So what am I saying is important through my conversations? Back in ancient Israel, there was a passage of the Bible that was central to the life of the Israelites on a daily basis.

It's called the Shema. It's in Deuteronomy chapter 6. I'm going to read it quick. It says, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise.

You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates. In ancient Israel, this passage was central to their life in following Christ.

The fathers would repeat it to their families every day in an attempt to train their kids and teach them about God and who he was. And even today, this is central to the life of the Jewish faith.

[37 : 11] I have an uncle and aunt who are Jewish and they have a four year old daughter that they adopted from Vietnam and every night before she goes to bed, they repeat this passage to her. And they teach her, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one.

And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might. When we look at the book of Proverbs, really all that's happening is there's a father who's taking this teaching and putting a little bit more flesh and bones on it, who's teaching his son, the Lord your God, the Lord is one.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and might. And then showing them here's how that love plays out in your daily life and affects and transforms your relationships, the way that you use your money, the way that you use your time.

And I think that, that again, one of the most important things that we can do is just constantly repeating this message, to our youth. Speaking to them, living to them, the Lord your God, the Lord is one.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and might. And it seems so simple, it seems so ordinary, plain. But ultimately, God has been using ordinary, plain people, doing ordinary, plain things to impact generations that follow them for millennium.

[38 : 31] and I think that if we would take this teaching, take what he reveals to us in Deuteronomy and what he reveals to us in Proverbs and throughout the rest of the scriptures and apply that to our interaction with the youth around us, it would have an incredible impact on this next generation that is coming up.

So let's close in prayer, and the band will come back on stage and close us out. Dear Father, thank you for today, thank you for your word, for giving it to us, for teaching us about how a relationship with you should impact our relationships with others, specifically with the youth in our lives around us.

Thank you for the gospel and the fact that it changes everything, and that we can raise up this next generation, to know you, to follow you, not because of our own goodness, but because of how the gospel has changed and transformed us.

So please be with us as we approach the different youth that we come into contact with on a daily basis. Let our interaction with them be marked by your grace, and not by simply an attempt to make them become better people, but an attempt to see them truly love you.

Thank you for your love for us, and in Jesus' name, Amen. Amen. Amen. Thanks, Eric. We're going to respond with a song, and verse two of the song says, I see a generation rising up to take their place.

[40 : 05] With selfless faith, with selfless faith, I see a near revival stirring as we pray and seek. we're on our knees. And as I was just listening to the sermon, I got to confess, I probably sang the song probably close to 50 times and probably heard it close to 100 times, and it kind of just hit me.

I never really sang that second verse with much conviction. I don't know if I ever really saw a vision for a generation that would rise up to take their place. So, I don't know, my prayer is that I would really see that in my heart as I sing this and going forward.

And one thing that I really like about the word generation is that it's so all-encompassing. It's not like I see the Tam family, or I see, that's my surname, or I see the Scott family, or I see the Thomas family, or whatnot, rising up.

It's like a generation. It's a generation that crosses ethnicity, gender, race, culture. It's the universal church of God. And I think that's really powerful, because it kind of makes me see the youth, see anyone younger than me as part of that generation, that potential generation.

And we know that God no longer is bringing salvation through just the nation of Israel. Christ has come through the nation of Israel, and now salvation and the good news comes through all of the church.

[41 : 39] I think that's just amazing, incredible. So let's just sing that. Feel free to stand with me as you respond with Hosanna. I have just a couple announcements for us. As we close, you can take a seat if you want.

Here at Watermark, we don't pass an offering plate. We have boxes set up around, so we have one right there, one right there, one out that door as you leave. And we believe that our giving should be a response of worship to what God has done for us and in us.

And so we don't want to feel like we're forcing people to give. So we have these boxes that you can give as your own personal response if you feel led to after the service. Also, we have a prayer team that will be set up after service if you need prayer.

Will they be back there by that pillar? Right here? They'll be right here? So you can come up and get prayer if you need prayer for anything in your life. Also, we have VBS coming up for the children.

It will be from August 13th to 17th in the mornings, and it's for kids age 5 through 10. We will have sign up right out at the desk by the coffee after service.

[42 : 48] If you're interested, please swing by that desk or talk to Melanie or Natalie for more information about that. And community groups. If you are not a part of a Watermark community group, we would love for you to join one.

We will be having people at the desk out there if you're interested in signing up for a community group after the service. So as we close, I'd like to read Deuteronomy 6, 4 through 9 again for us.

It says, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.

You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house, and on your gates. You're dismissed.

[43 : 47] Have a great week. You're dismissed. Have a great week. Yeah. Thanks.
Of course.