

Keys to Create Multigenerational Missional Family Legacies

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The scriptures demonstrate that it is clearly God's heart to extend his relationship and calling from generation to generation. He does not wish for his blessings and favor to die with one individual. Rather, his intent is that there would be a multigenerational covenantal relationship, which would reflect who he is and affect the spheres of society from generation to generation.

This paper is based on a Master's thesis investigating keys that will enable families to create multigenerational missional legacies. The use of the term "missional" is intended to include service in roles beyond those of the traditional ecclesiastical, pastoral or missionary career.

A proper understanding of *missional* begins with recovering a missionary understanding of God. By his very nature God is a "sent one" who takes the initiative to redeem his creation. This doctrine, known as *missio Dei*—the sending of God—is causing many to redefine their understanding of the church. Because we are the "sent" people of God, the church is the instrument of God's mission in the world.¹

The Church in its purest form is not an institution. If you are a Jesus follower, you are the church. To be missional means to have an understanding that one is God's agent of reconciliation to the world. This can and should apply to every sphere of society, and is not determined by how one earns his or her income.

Considering God

It is God's desire that faith and a kingdom of heaven missional mindset be passed on from generation to generation. The book of Deuteronomy is a template that shows us God's intentions for society. Speaking on the sphere of the family, Deuteronomy 6:1-3 says, "These are the commands, decrees, and regulations that the Lord your God commanded me to teach you. You must obey them in the land you are about to enter and occupy, and you and your children and grandchildren must fear the Lord your God as long as you live. If you obey all his decrees and commands, you will enjoy a long life."²

God does not see the discipling of the family as a one-time event or as something to be delegated. He does not want parents to take a passive stance in raising children. As God continues his instructions, the words come with a particular tone and urgency. "Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on

¹ Alan Hirsh, "Defining Missional," *Christianity Today, Leadership Journal*, 2008, <http://www.christianitytoday.com/le/2008/fall/17.20.html>.

² Deuteronomy 6:1-3, Note: All verses are in the New Living Translation (NLT) unless otherwise indicated.

the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up."³ This is not something accomplished simply by sending children to Sunday school or doing an occasional family devotion together. God is commanding his people to be intentional, proactive parents. He is calling parents to live, demonstrate, and talk about his Kingdom principles throughout all we do.

As God was giving Moses and the people of Israel the template for how to form a society, his intention was to establish a multigenerational covenant. An example of this can be seen in the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, a legacy of four generations. Sadly this legacy ends with Joseph.

God prophetically declares through King David, "Let each generation tell its children of your mighty acts; let them proclaim your power. I will meditate on your majestic, glorious splendor and your wonderful miracles. Your awe-inspiring deeds will be on every tongue; I will proclaim your greatness. Everyone will share the story of your wonderful goodness; they will sing with joy about your righteousness."⁴

It is a well-known admonition, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it."⁵ The New Living Translation gives this verse fresh insight. "Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it."⁶ It is true that children have a free will and will ultimately make their own choices, but parents and grandparents have been given a place of tremendous influence. It is not only God's heart, but it is his plan for parents to impart his values and direct their children onto his unique kingdom path for their lives.

History and Background

The problem is as old as mankind itself. From Adam on we see a constant breaking of the family missional legacy. Even though God's instructions to parents to pass their faith onto the next generations are clear, biblical examples are very few. The Old Testament details the well-known aforementioned family faith legacy of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. This is also reconfirmed in Hebrews 11:17-22.

Additionally, the biblical narrative includes the priestly family legacy of Aaron, his son Eleazar and his grandson Phinehas. "Phinehas son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron the priest has turned my anger away from the Israelites by being as zealous among them as I was. So I stopped destroying all Israel as I had intended to do in my zealous anger."⁷ "Then our ancestors joined in the worship of Baal at Peor; they even ate sacrifices offered to the dead! They angered the Lord with all these things, so a plague broke out among them. But Phinehas had the courage to intervene, and the plague was stopped. So he has been regarded as a

³ Deuteronomy 6:7

⁴ Psalms 145:4-7

⁵ Proverbs 22:6 (KJV)

⁶ Proverbs 22:6

⁷ Numbers 25:11

righteous man ever since that time."⁸

The New Testament recounts the story of Timothy, his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois.⁹ You would think there would be more, but I could find none.

Even modern Church history is quite barren of examples. Some of us know of the missionary kid (MK) or pastors kid (PK) who follows in their parents footsteps, but far too often, we are more familiar with the MK or PK who only demonstrates a mediocre Christian faith, or in some cases has even left his or her parent's faith.

In 2012, the George Barna Research Group conducted a nationwide, random sample of 603 senior pastors of Protestant churches throughout the continental United States. Questions related to parenting were asked of the 456 pastors in the study who have children 15 years of age or older. In the survey, researcher Ken Kinnaman states,

When it comes to the children of the clergy, stereotypes abound. First, there's the model child, who lives by the rulebook and follows in the footsteps of his or her minister parent. In many churches, this is an expectation as much as it is a stereotype. Yet perhaps the dominant stereotype of the pastor's kid is the prodigal—the wayward child, the rebel who has fallen away from the faith, the backslidden, who'd rather strike out on their own than live in the shadow of the steeple.¹⁰

What do the results of the survey show? Pastors with children fifteen years or older say the following is accurate of their child: 40% went through a period where they significantly doubted their faith, 33% are no longer actively involved in church and 7% no longer consider him or herself to be a Christian.¹¹

What about the MK? Robin Marie Keitzman examines the experience of sixteen Adult Missionary Kids (AMKs) who said they left their parents' traditional faith and who were willing to talk about their MK experiences. The 16 participants had a mean age of 47, came from 13 evangelical missions, and lived on three different continents. In her study three patterns emerged.

"The first was a benign disengagement or passive neglect of the children by the parents. The second was the effect of significant stressors on the MK, such as frequent moves; stress related to schooling, global traumas related to the host country, and more personal traumas such as deaths in the family or abuse. The third described incongruities or questions that arose from their experiences."¹² These incongruities involved three areas:

⁸ Psalms 106:28-31

⁹ 2 Timothy 1:5

¹⁰ David Kinnaman, "Prodigal Pastor Kids: Fact or Fiction?," *Barna Family Update*, accessed June 8, 2015, <https://www.barna.org/barna-update/family-kids/644-prodigal-pastor-kids-fact-or-fiction#.VXX1s-uKzwz>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid.

- (a) The inconsistency between the participants' experience of their parents' commitment to their work at the expense of their children's welfare. From this arose questions about God's love and care when they were feeling abandoned.
- (b) The inconsistency that arose from feeling judged by the mission and the church at large. They felt pressure to conform to other's expectations while often feeling unheard and uncared for. They expressed this to be a result of not being allowed to question their beliefs and were reprimanded upon doing so. This eventually evolved into resentment and anger toward God.
- (c) The participants struggled with the disparity between host and home countries, chiefly regarding economic standards. This created a certain inner tension for the MK in reconciling their assumed, Christian worldview with what they experienced on a daily basis.¹³

Referring to Third Culture Kids (TCK) and MKs in particular, Pollock and Van Reken (1999) identified two primary realities of missionary life that affect the MK: the transcultural upbringing and the high mobility of the family.¹⁴

In responding to the high level of stress often occasioned in the missionary family and the direct connection to the parents entering missions in obedience to God's will, the MK may attribute his or her emotional stress and struggle to God. In Van Reken's study he states, "...whereas a military kid can blame the commanding officer for any negative experiences, and a business kid can blame the company's CEO.... for an MK, who, ultimately is to blame for whatever happens besides God? For MKs, God and the system easily become one."¹⁵ As you can see, we have a problem. How can we prevent the loss of MKs and PKs to the world system and how can we best enhance multigenerational missional family legacies?

Empirical Study

The empirical study portion of the thesis used a qualitative approach. The qualifying candidate for participation in this study needed to be an adult working in full-time Christian missional service. The key criterion for this study was, each candidate had to be part of at least a three generational missional family.

Most of the research and literature reviewed for this study focused primarily on the failure of Christian leaders, missionaries and pastors to pass a missional or ministerial legacy onto the next generation, and the struggles of MKs and PKs in general. The goal in this empirical study was not to identify the struggles, but rather to identify keys that have helped families to successfully transmit their missional inheritance to their children and proceeding generations.

In order to receive results that would span beyond the context of one denomination,

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Van Reken, R, "Healing the Wounded Among Adult MKs". *The Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, (1995), 31(4), 428-435.

¹⁵ Ibid, 432.

organization or mission agency, twenty-five candidates were selected from diverse backgrounds. The interviewed group comprises of eight women and seventeen men ranging from nineteen to eighty years old. They come from five nationalities: eighteen Americans, two Canadians, one Brazilian, one Australian and three New Zealanders. The candidates are serving or have served within over twenty denominations or missionary agencies. The time of service ranges from one to fifty five years. Some grew up as minister's kids in Canada or rural USA. Others grew up as MKs in the jungles and mountains of South and Central America. Many of the younger candidates grew up as Youth With A Mission (YWAM) Kids serving in different parts of the world, in locations as diverse as Northern Texas, Panama City to Mercy Ships sailing in distant seas.

The nineteen questions were designed to acquire substantiated answers that would indicate the key formulating factors as to why the candidate chose a missional path. The desired outcome was to determine the primary family dynamics and influences that played a role in passing God's missional heart from the parents to the children and proceeding generations.

The participants' responses were recorded, transcribed, and subjected to analysis. The data abstracted from the interviews was categorized to identify the predominant family and environmental elements or key factors that influenced the transmission of the missional values, DNA, inheritance and calling from the parents to the children and in some cases the grandchildren.

Survey Results: Seven Key Factors

Even though there was a uniqueness to each interviewee's call and missional story, seven key factors or influences were identified for the passing on of the family missional values and call. **Authenticity, Positivity, Inclusion, Prayer, Demonstration, Individuality and Remembrance.** There was a consistent uniformity of all seven key factors in the interviews, with no major difference in frequency of the keys mentioned apart from "authenticity" and "inclusion" being foundational to the others. The keys listed are not in any particular order of importance.

1. Authenticity: The parents demonstrated to the children a love for God in a genuine, consistent, transparent Christian faith and missional call. The focus was on authentic and consistent, not perfect and definitely not legalistic.

This was a recurring theme with every candidate interviewed. In the interview, when asked about his parents, David Hamilton, who grew up as an MK in Chile, captured the key of authenticity very well. *"...between dad and mom they embodied an incredible love for people, an incredible love for God and they included us, so we were just drawn in, that was, I mean, why would you want to live differently?"*¹⁶

¹⁶ David Hamilton, 2nd missional generation of 3, currently serving as Vice President of Strategic Innovation, University of the Nations, Youth With A Mission (YWAM), Kona Hawaii, interview by author, February 24, 2015, YWAM, San Antonio Del Mar, voice recording, (emphasis mine).

When asked what his father communicated to him concerning missions and ministry, YWAM Denver Director Peter Warren responded, “If I had to say it in one word it would just be consistency... at ninety years old my dad is still with YWAM. *A great example of consistency and never retiring from his calling.*”¹⁷

When asked what he felt was the key for any family to pass on a missional legacy from one generation to the other D. Leland Paris, Director of YWAM Tyler with over 50 years of ministry experience gave these thoughts of wisdom. “I think the key is for you to love the Lord as much as you possibly can and demonstrate that love for the Lord in front of your family and be consistent.”¹⁸

Darlene Cunningham, Co-founder of YWAM, shared the following, my parents were very wise with me; they let me feel, very much, that I was part of the team. *The reality of my parents’ faith was great.*”¹⁹

As Joy Dawson has expressed, “Pursuing God with intensity is contagious. When the children see that we are genuinely ruined for the ordinary, that becomes a strong incentive for them to follow suit.” Whereas adults may be more given to putting on airs, children and youth are very intuitive to a lack of authenticity and inconsistency in others.

2. Positivity: Parents spoke positively concerning missions, the ministry, the host culture and did not complain or project a “poor me, we are suffering” attitude. The mother's attitude was especially key here.

Cunningham expressed it this way, “I believe what my parents passed on to me was a love for God and a great enormous sense of the privilege of working for the Kingdom of God. I never grew up feeling poor. *I grew up feeling privileged*, because I was getting to do one of the most important things in the world.”²⁰

Warren also shared the importance of positivity. “*I think for anyone who’s in missions you got to show your kids it’s fun, make it very positive, never talk about the sacrifices, emphasize God’s character, his provision.* I think that’s huge you know. For our kids, then now our grandkids, you know YWAM is the norm as far as they’re concerned.”²¹

As an MK Abie Jewell exhorts, “Be Positive! One of the easiest things you can do is be negative. It’s like breathing air. It just flows out of us. It takes a lot of character though to be positive. You have no idea how being positive on the mission field can

¹⁷ Peter Warren, 3rd missional generation of 4, currently serving as Director of Youth With A Mission Denver, interview by author, February 24, 2015, YWAM, San Antonio Del Mar, voice recording, (emphasis mine).

¹⁸ D. Leland Paris, 11th missional generation of 12, Founder and Director of Youth With A Mission Tyler, interview by author, January 12, 2015, YWAM, Tyler Texas, voice recording, (emphasis mine).

¹⁹ Darlene Cunningham, 5th missional generation of 6, Co-founder of Youth With A Mission, interview by author, February 25, 2015, YWAM, San Antonio Del Mar, voice recording, (emphasis mine).

²⁰ Darlene Cunningham interview, (emphasis mine).

²¹ Peter Warren interview, (emphasis mine).

impact your children's view of the Mission Field and other things in life"²²

Speaking on future outcomes in parenting our children, author Olivia Shupe says, "The trust you want to see when they are older is established when they are young. Children will seek to be like the person who attracts them the most. If our lives attract our children, we will most likely never have a rebellious child..."²³

3. Prayer: Prayer played a regular part in the family, both in praying for the children and in the children praying with the parents and other team members concerning the family, ministry, work and call.

Although many mentioned prayer in their interviews, David Hamilton articulated well the importance of seeking God.

*"Inclusion, and that primarily starts with praying together, making decisions together. I never went on a mission trip or teaching trip... without coming to Christine and Joel and say "Let's pray together." We would wait on God, teach them the principles of listening to God's voice and so, when we were sent out as missionaries from the rest of the family, it was just part of our life... The key is hearing God and obeying God, He's the only absolute and then family and ministry work together."*²⁴

Pat Robinson, YWAM Tyler accountant expressed it this way, "When our children were young, very young we had family altar...*it was the family altar where they started to be able to pray and learn about God.*"²⁵

Christians know the importance of prayer. God is looking for a genuine relationship. 1Thessalonians 5:16-18 indicates that God's desire is to have a constant relationship with us. "Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus."

4. Inclusion: The children were included as valid team members and were regularly involved in serving, ministry and mission trips.

When asked, how did you influence your children toward a missional mindset, YWAM San Diego Baja Director Sean Lambert had this to say, "I think it's what you see, when you look at your kids, what do you see? Do you see extra baggage? We just included them in

²² Jewell, Abie. "Parenting Missionary Kids from the Missionary Kid's Point of View." *Abiejewell*. Accessed May 14, 2015. <http://abiejewell.com/2014/08/09/parenting-missionary-kids-from-the-missionary-kids-point-of-view/>.

²³ Shupe, Olivia J. *Renaissance Kids: Preparing Your Children to Thrive in a Rapidly Changing World*, (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012)

²⁴ David Hamilton interview, (emphasis mine).

²⁵ Pat Robinson, 1st missional generation of 3, Executive Accountant of Youth With A Mission Tyler Texas, interview by author, January 12, 2015, YWAM, Tyler Texas, voice recording, (emphasis mine).

everything...they felt like they were partners... I think that was probably our greatest thing, is to see, the kids, what they will be."²⁶

Todd Robinson, second generation missionary echoed these same sentiments. "We consider our whole family to be YWAMers, it's not just Dad's a YWAMer or Dad and Mom are YWAMers and we we're just the kids. *The whole family, we're all YWAMers and we go on outreaches together.*"²⁷

It would be hard to over emphasize how emphatic the candidates interviewed were on this point. One must see the family as a team, and serve together as a team. Shupe argues:

"Your family is a powerful team that can accomplish all kinds of amazing feats for God. I am convinced, that it is one of the enemy's biggest schemes to get the family to live under the same roof while being totally independent and disconnected from each other — the kind of family where everyone is doing their own thing. Instead, the ideal family culture is the one in which the family has some common dreams and goals that are attained by working together."²⁸

The Lambert family is a great example of working as a team. All three of their adult girls are in ministry with them. When individually interviewed, father Sean, mother Janet and daughter Tiffany, commented respectively, "We just saw our kids as part of the team."²⁹ "Out of necessity they did everything with us..."³⁰ "We were always doing missions together. Being a part of that ministry has shaped who I am today."³¹

This does not mean only doing fun activities together. Even though it is not necessary to expose children to the harsher realities of life, if they are part of the team, depending on their age, they need to be included in real life challenges. Darlene Cunningham expressed, "The whole family is called and we should not always shelter our children from the sacrifice and difficulties of following God."³² Living and serving as a team requires us to go through hardships together.

²⁶ Sean Lambert, 1st missional generation, serving as President of Youth With A Mission Baja/San Diego, interview by author, January, 20, 2015, YWAM, San Antonio Del Mar, Mexico, 20, voice recording, (emphasis mine).

²⁷ Todd Robinson, 2nd missional generation of 3, Assistant Administrator of Youth With A Mission Tyler Texas, interview by author, January 12, 2015, YWAM, Tyler Texas, voice recording, (emphasis mine).

²⁸ Shupe, 169.

²⁹ Sean Lambert interview.

³⁰ Janet Lambert, 3rd missional generation of 4, Campus Director YWAM San Diego, Baja, San Antonio del Mar Campus, interview by author, June 13, 2015, Port YWAM, Kona Hawaii.

³¹ Tiffany Lambert, 4th missional generation of 4, Discipleship Training School Staff, University of the Nations, Kona Hawaii, interview by author, June 15, 2015, Port YWAM, Kona Hawaii.

³² Darlene Cunningham, "YWAM Mission True," (Lecture, ExecMAL, Module 3, University of the Nations, San Antonio del Mar, Mexico, February 21, 2015).

Having grown up in YWAM Lydia Tracy said, "Communication, always communicating to your children the reason for what you're doing, why you're doing things, the importance of it all and involving them in everything you can."³³

5. Demonstration: The children would serve with their parents on a regular basis. In these contexts, they would witness the demonstration of God's missional heart in their parents. The children were taught, shown and participated in hospitality and generosity to others.

Speaking of the influence of her parents, YWAM Ships missionary, Mary Jane Smith said, "It has been instilled in me from a very young child to serve. My father has always been very much a servant heart. *They have always been an example of reaching the needy and having an open home and open heart.*" She went on to say how she remembered as a young child her parents opening up their home to strangers. "Hospitality played a big part in our home."³⁴

Darlene Cunningham, concerning her parent's example and their inclusion of her in hospitality and generosity, shared this valuable lesson.

I grew up with parents that loved God. My father loved missions. He would work to get much of the church budget going towards missions. When I was just a little girl, a missionary family came through who were going to Africa and they had a daughter the same age as myself and my mother encouraged me to give their daughter my record collection, and I went through my records, I chose the ones I least used and went to give them to her and my mother came back to me, because she knew which ones I liked best, and said "Don't you think if you like those best that she might like it best too?" Now, that was a huge thing for me. I remember it very well because I did not want to give up my favorite records, but I did and that joy of giving started in my life."³⁵

Jesus led by example. As Jesus walked, ate, laughed, taught and ministered with his disciples, he lived and modeled the values of heaven, creating a kingdom culture. Jesus practiced the "do first, then teach" model. Laura Beth Jones, in the book *Master Leaders* says, "Culture is a socially transmitted way of practices. It's not about what is written down. Policy and procedure manuals are worth nothing. Leaders have to model the culture on a day-by-day basis or it will never take root"³⁶

Like Jesus this transmission of God's values and missional heart can only happen by doing life with your children. Paul Abel, second-generation church planter in Brazil says it well,

³³ Lydia Tracy, 5th of 5 missional generations, Student at Regent University, interview by author, May 16, 2015, Regent University, Virginia Beach, VA.

³⁴ Mary Jane Smith, 3rd missional generation of 4, Staff on with YWAM Ships, interview by author, June 8, 2015, Port YWAM, Kona Hawaii, (emphasis mine).

³⁵ Darlene Cunningham interview, (emphasis mine).

³⁶ George Barna, *Master Leaders*, (Carol Stream, IL: Barna Books, Tyndale Publishers, 2009) 51.

"Christianity is a lifestyle. Being a missionary is not a job, but it is who we are. Love God and His Word in first place. Love family and give special attention and love to them, encouraging them and investing in them. Make children feel they are an important part of the ministry. Do not be selfish, but share what you have and who you are with others."

When David Tracy was asked why he decided to go into ministry, he said, "The call of the Lord was definitely there from a young age. This happened, because I was in an environment that made it possible to even hear from the Lord in that area; to be open to God in that area, and I was encouraged to hear God in that area. So, I have had a distinct call to missions since I was a little boy."³⁷

6. Individuality: The children were not pressured to enter into the missional or ministerial career of their parents, but were encouraged to seek God and follow his direction in their lives.

Matthew David Abel, an MK born and raised in Brazil, had this to say, "My Father is the most generous, merciful and forgiving man I know. We grew up as a part of his ministry; we were all always involved. *He never told us what he wanted us to become...*"³⁸

Shannon Curtis expressed it like this, "*I think a really big thing is to not put pressure on the kid or anything, to have to go into missions.* It should ultimately be their choice, and not their parents deciding for them. And, that was really good, because my parents didn't do that to me."³⁹

Parents are not called to dictate the path children must take, but to help them know God, and follow his plan for their lives. This is done, by identifying the unique gifts and callings God has placed in the child. Once those are identified, parents are called to intentionally encourage and fan the flames of these gifts and callings. "I remember your genuine faith, for you share the faith that first filled your grandmother Lois and your mother, Eunice. And I know that same faith continues strong in you. This is why I remind you to fan into flames the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you. For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline."⁴⁰

Parents must avoid both the extreme of trying to live out their lives through their children and the other extreme of being disengaged, with a "whatever happens" attitude. God has called parents to be intentional, to literally train up or direct the child in the individual and unique path he or she should go.⁴¹

³⁷ David Tracy, 5th missional generation of 5, Director YWAM Panama City, Rep. of Panama, interview by author, June 22, 2015, YWAM Panama City.

³⁸ Matthew David Abel, 3rd missional generation of 3, ALFC World Missions, written interview by author, responses sent May 22, 2015, (emphasis mine).

³⁹ Shannon Curtis, 3rd missional generation of 3, Staff on with YWAM Ships, interview by author, June 8, 2015, Port YWAM, Kona Hawaii, voice recording, (emphasis mine).

⁴⁰ I Timothy 1:5-7

⁴¹ Proverbs 22:6 (paraphrase).

7. Remembrance: There were regular sharing times of the family's victories in ministry, faith, testimonies and the stories of what God had done in and through the family. The children were included in these times of thanksgiving and celebration for what God was doing and had done.

Missionary Elaine Orozco grew up in the jungles of Costa Rica, where her parents served as Mennonite missionaries.

I would say that I received a huge inheritance from my mom because when my Dad would go off on trips, I never heard her complaining, it wasn't the thing of oh you know "Here I am stuck out in the jungle and my husband's gone for two weeks" there was very much a sense of we are a part of it, even though we were staying at home, and when Dad came home it was obviously a happy day, *but we would gather as a family afterwards to hear what the trip had been about, to hear the stories and so in that sense they laid the foundation for me to say ministry is a good thing, you can raise a family while you do it.*⁴²

Concerning his children, Dean Lundberg also spoke of the importance of remembrance. "We exposed them to missionaries, bringing them into our home and actually letting my kids being involved and engaged with these folks, listening to their stories."⁴³

In the book *Great Souls, Six Who Changed The Century*, author David Aikman, quotes Holocaust survivor, Elie Wiesel, "My goal is always the same: to invoke the past as a shield for the future, to show the invisible world of yesterday and through it, perhaps on it, erect a moral world where men are not victims and children never starve and never run in fear."⁴⁴ As Aikman points out, Wiesel's greatness can be found in the virtue of remembrance. Wiesel is the author of over forty books, the best known of which is *Night*, a memoir that describes his experiences during the Holocaust and his imprisonment in several concentration camps.⁴⁵

Wiesel uses the remembrance of the horrors of Nazi wickedness as a safe guard against repeating these types of atrocities today. In the same way, as we tell the stories in our families of God's provision, instruction, protection and past victories we are creating safe guards to shield our family from mission drift and erecting a missional family legacy of service to God and our fellow man.

Conclusion

Other factors were identified in the individual stories, but the seven key factors expressed by almost all of the twenty-five persons interviewed were authenticity, positivity,

⁴² Elaine Orozco, 2nd missional generation of 3, Homes of Hope Youth With A Mission, Chepo Panama, interview by author, April 8, 2015, Santa Clara, Panama, voice recording, (emphasis mine).

⁴³ Dean Lundberg, 2nd missional generation of 3, Senior Leadership Council Member and Staff Trainer of Youth With A Mission Tyler Texas, interview by author, January 12, 2015, YWAM, Tyler Texas, voice recording.

⁴⁴ David Aikman, *Great Souls: Six Who Changed a Century*, Reprint edition (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2002), 309.

⁴⁵ Elie Wiesel, *Night*, translated by Marion Wiesel, Revised edition (New York, NY: Hill and Wang, 2006).

inclusion, prayer, demonstration, individuality and remembrance.

John Henry identifies three progressive callings from God for every human being: Salvation, Discipleship and Vocation.⁴⁶ Parents have been delegated by God to steward and encourage these three callings in their children.

1. We are called to salvation. We are called to the King. Salvation is not a call to a select few, but to all mankind. It is a call from Jesus the king to be with him. Most Christian parents get this point and are pretty proactive in seeing their children make a decision of faith in Christ.

2. We are called to discipleship. We are called to be like the King. Not only are we called to be with the King, we are called to be like the King. Again, the majority of Christian parents make some effort to teach and have their children receive training in order to obtain Christ-like character.

3. We are called to vocation. We are called to work with the King. It is in this area that many parents, and most Christians, miss their calling. King Jesus not only desires us to be with him and to emulate him, he desires for us to work with him in his kingdom. After all, he is a king of something. He has a kingdom. When Jesus taught his disciples his instruction was to pray, "...your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."⁴⁷

As defined by Henry, "Vocation is our unique call of purpose, the call to serve beyond our daily tasks. Vocation is more than discipleship. Vocation is deeper and wider than career. Vocation is our very personal response to the voice of God. Vocation is our lifework, our special gift of worship, which is the sum of all our gifts, talents, and abilities to serve God's purpose in our generation."⁴⁸

As the scripture says, "Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it."⁴⁹ Many parents make the mistake of believing this passage only applies to salvation, but in the light of other scriptures and the responsibility God has commissioned to us as parents, much more is implied in the verse. It is the responsibility for parents to seek God both for and with their children as to the unique vocation he has for them in his kingdom, to facilitate and encourage them in their unique kingdom vocation. "To you I shall give the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; everything that you will bind in the earth will have been bound in Heaven, and anything that you will release in the earth will have been released in Heaven."⁵⁰

⁴⁶ John Henry, "Conversation on Calling," in *His Kingdom Come*, ed. Jim Stier (Seattle, Washington, YWAM Publishing, 2012), 184.

⁴⁷ Matthew 6:10, (NIV)

⁴⁸ Henry, 184.

⁴⁹ Proverbs 22:6

⁵⁰ Rev David Bauscher, *The Original Aramaic New Testament in Plain English*, 2nd edition, (Cambridge, N.Y.: Lulu Publishing, 2008).

The *Aramaic New Testament in Plain English* uses the word release rather than the older English word "loose." Obviously, this passage applies to the church, but parents who are Jesus followers are the church. God has given parents the keys to close the door to the enemy, and to open the door and release a child into God's kingdom callings of salvation, discipleship and vocation.

Creating a multigenerational missional family legacy has to do with how missional parents pass God's missional heart and values on to their children, grandchildren and so on. It is about staying "mission true." In a discourse on Youth With A Mission staying mission true, Co-founder of YWAM Darlene Cunningham, defined YWAM's one non-negotiable "The covenant of the waves, young people from everywhere, going everywhere, doing new things. We welcome young people and do everything we can to equip them and release them into their destiny in God."⁵¹

It could be said that this is the calling not just of Youth With A Mission, but of every Christian parent, especially for those that understand God's missional heart. Parents are called to champion their children and do everything they can to equip them and release them into their destiny in God. Parents must not be passive about this, but must be intentional to champion children and grandchildren into their destiny in God. God has called us to raise up children that will follow him with all their hearts. He has called us to raise up world changers.

As the Psalmist says, "Children are a gift from the LORD; they are a reward from him. Children born to a young man are like arrows in a warrior's hands. How joyful is the man whose quiver is full of them! He will not be put to shame when he confronts his accusers at the city gates."⁵²

If the goal of parents is to only survive parenthood, or to somehow just have our children turn out ok, we are missing the mark. If we aim low, we will hit low. God is calling us to aim higher. Our children are not an inconvenience as the world would say and they are not just along for the ride. They are gifts given to us from God. They are gifts given to us to love, steward, train and release into flight as arrows into the destiny that God has prepared for them.

⁵¹ Cunningham, "YWAM Mission True," lecture.

⁵² Psalms 127:3-5

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