

How God's People Address Changes

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Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[0:00] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. And as a result of that, they're kind of under the rug and somewhere around the corner. And I don't see that in Scripture. I see that the Word of God brings us to the table and says, here are things for us to work on. And as a result of that, when there's a challenge, it's appropriate for us to do what it says here.

Speak, O Lord. We want to hear what God has to say. Because when we are listening to what God has to say, the church is built and the earth is filled with His glory.

[2:46] Now think with me just for a moment. A passage in Titus chapter 2 says this, that the behavior of believers is something that should adorn the doctrine of God.

Do you understand what that means? It means that the way in which God's people act can bring glory to Him.

Now what's the reverse side of that? Sadly, sometimes when people don't act according to the Word of God and the direction of His counsel, they end up dishonoring God and not glorifying Him. I have to tell you, from the outset, it would be honoring to God for this family of believers to always have the nursery cared for without question and without a lot of nagging and wheedling and pleading and Megan doing little skits that we giggle at.

It should just happen. And God's people said, that was very, very encouraging. In other words, I understand that you get the memo and I can move on, right?

[4:08] I want you to recognize this morning that as we come to this issue of facing the challenge of staffing the nursery completely and appropriately and not actually having to have our nursery coordinators run around and kind of gang press, you know, kind of Shanghai people into doing it.

And we have willing people that help. But I want you to recognize there's a fair percentage of people that really do not participate consistently. And that's the only reason the problem's here. And so my challenge is to trust the reliability of the Word of God that we profess is profoundly significant, reliable, and use it to encourage you in doing your part as a believer.

If you're here today and you don't know Jesus, I am not talking to you about the nursery. The one thing I would love to talk to you about is the fact that the Lord Jesus is the only one who can solve the need of your heart.

Not happy to do that any time. But this morning I'm talking primarily to you who are part of our family of believers and have an opportunity of serving for the testimony and glory of Christ.

[5:18] So let's start by really actually sizing up the need that we have. The Bible has a great deal to say about children, and it tells us that they're a blessing and an inheritance from the Lord.

Psalms 127, verse 4 and 5, it says, As arrows are in the hands of a mighty man, so are the children of one's youth. And I've got to tell you, if you were to go to China, or you were to go to Japan, or you were to go to Russia, or you were to go to Germany, you would find population that is shrinking, and as a result of it, older people are finding it very difficult to care for their basic needs.

Culture collapses in the absence of children. I don't mean just music and drama and poetry. I'm talking about the well-being of a culture collapses when children aren't in the mix.

And the Bible says, hey, you're blessed to have them. And I've got to tell you, we are blessed in our fellowship by having many well-stocked quivers. It's a good thing. It's a good thing.

It's also a gift that I don't take lightly, that our congregation is atypical in its demographics. What I mean by that is that if you were to go to the website and Google, so what is the average senior pastor's age and what is the average congregation's age, what you would find is that in most cases, there is a little band that kind of directly correlates to the age of the senior pastor.

[6:54] I happen to be 67, will be 68, and it is atypical that when you look around this congregation, most of you aren't gray-headed. And mine's not colored.

It's a blessing. You are a congregation that is younger than your pastor by a long shot. And with that comes the fact that we, as we come together as God's people, we have lots of kids.

And I'm thankful for that. I am always blessed to see what God is doing in our fellowship. But having said that, when we're blessed with many kids, it also means that we need more help in our fellowship to take care of them.

That's what goes with it. If you have more children, guess what happens? You need more people to help. And we actually have 67 people that are volunteers on volgistics.

Would you write that word down? It's not a Bible word, but it's a word to hold on to. Volgistics. In other words, it comes from two Greek and Latin words. I don't care which. Volunteer, vol, gistics, logistics.

[8:07] The idea is we have a software program that puts together people with need. Got that? And Pastor Andrew, would you stand up just for a moment and wave at everybody so we know who?

He will be in the lobby, right? And all you have to do is if you are convicted by the Holy Spirit, and I hope that's who does the work, if you're convicted by the Holy Spirit, that you could play a more significant, more consistent part, stand in line, because I know there's going to be about 15 or 20 people, I mean, convicted, and so I'm here, Pastor.

And all he has to do is take your name down. He'll take it from there. And he will get you signed up. We have plenty of gaps in the calendar. Pastor Andrew is going to help you with volgistics, and the reason that we're using volgistics is because along with that program is the fact that people who are registered on it will get an email.

Do they do texting as well? Oh, you can have a text and an email telling you that you're due on next week, Sunday morning? Isn't that exciting? I mean, in other words, there's no excuse once you sign up for not knowing it's your turn.

Ta-da! That'll work. Well, I do want you to understand that some churches actually come to grips with this by hiring people from outside their fellowship.

[9:38] Some churches completely avoid the issue and just slog along and continue to have trouble that eventually ends up in heartache.

But, you know, I am fully persuaded that the Word of God speaks explicitly to our responsibility, and it's appropriate for me to open up the Word and say, hey, we have a part to play together for the glory of Christ.

I do want you to understand that, as I said earlier, this lesson on the matter of our nursery and our care together is one that relies upon some basic biblical principles that we're going to look at together.

Now, we all believe what it says in 2 Timothy 3, verse 16 and 17, that the Word of God is what? It's inspired by God, and it gives to us everything we need.

That the man of God can be completely furnished for all good works. Over in the passage in 2 Peter, it says that we have all that we need for life and godliness.

[10:39] And so I want you to recognize that as we look today into the Word of God and come to grips with the fact we all have a part to play in dealing with the need we have for consistent, willing service in the nursery, we can look to the Word of God and understand what our part is.

Now, having said that, I want you to take a moment and turn over, if you would, to Ephesians and remind ourselves that we're together in this as a body of believers.

Look at Ephesians chapter 4, verse 11 through 16. I'm not going to read the entire passage to you, but I just want you to focus on the outcome here that flows from verse 11.

First of all, it says that he gave, and last week in our preaching regarding Pastor Shearer coming to us, we recognize that God is the one who gives pastors to a congregation.

And part of a pastor's responsibility is to teach the Word of God so God's people are actively involved in doing what needs to be done for the glory of Christ. Now, I want you to look there at Ephesians chapter 4, verse 16 in particular.

[11:51] It says, from whom the whole body, talking about Jesus Christ, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part, would you think about that, when each part is working properly.

Now, what does working properly mean? It means all the parts are doing their part. And when some of the parts do not decide that it's their part to play, they cause challenges to the rest of the body and to the testimony of Christ.

They're held together by every joint with which it is equipped. When each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. I've got to tell you something.

If we, by God's grace, respond with humility to the clear teaching of the Word of God, we're convicted that this is our challenge and one that we will meet for the glory of Christ, here's what will happen.

Not only will you be blessed by your obedience, but I'll be doing seminars in other churches on how to help other people do the nursery deal. One of the things that I've done as I've been preparing for this is I've been asking other churches, so how do you do this?

[13:06] How do you do this? Guess what I come back with? We don't have a problem. Don't talk about that much. There's a problem there. And the problem is that God's people together are not all working together equally.

Guess what? When I looked at the statistics, I found out that more of older people who no longer have children in the nursery, they're the ones who do most of the care in that area.

There are some younger couples that are consistent in working in Sunday school or music, and I appreciate, John, the fact that when you come in, you're in here before 8.30, 8 o'clock, whatever it is, and there are people that work in different parts of the ministry, but there are a number of younger families where they do not participate in ministry other than dropping their kids off.

By the way, that doesn't work in Little League, and it doesn't work in recreational soccer, and it shouldn't work in the church.

And all God's people said, amen. Okay, we're moving in the right direction. Well, I want you to understand that God is most honored when the body works together to meet its own needs, and there are some things that we honestly do pretty well.

[14:40] I get excited when I think about the spring tea because it's going to be a bang-up job. I am praying about the gospel ministry, and one of the things that I enjoy watching is how all of God's people get into this.

It is an all-hands-on-deck. There will be lots of work that will be done in short order, and it's impressive. When we do VBS, it is phenomenal.

It goes off well. When we have a Maranatha moving moment, you know, that's on a Saturday or whenever, I can't tell you how many times I've ended up at one of your homes, and there have been 12, 15, 20 people loading a truck, and all the neighbors are keep on looking out and saying, what is that?

And, you know, they had their uncle come from Philadelphia, and their aunt is standing there carrying out four or five pots, and they're all stuck. And here we got 20.

I remember one move we did not too long ago where after we finished moving one couple, we helped move another. Two people were moving out Kendra. That was you a while back. There was another person that was moving when we moved Kendra, and we had enough horsepower there that we divided up and helped them move, and then us got it done in how much time was that?

[15:51] Bang, it was done. We do some things great. We're good at mowing. I was studying the other day and actually trying to carry... John, are you in here so I can talk about you?

There you are. I was in there studying and, you know, and then had the phone conversation, and John goes buzzing by on that large... Just a second. You know?

We're good at some things, and I appreciate that. But let me come back and say it. God is most honored when the body works together to meet its own needs. At the same time, there are parts that each individual plays in meeting needs that go along with being part of a family.

Let me have you look at a passage just for a second in 1 Timothy. Go to 1 Timothy chapter 5. Here was an interesting case. In 1 Timothy chapter 5, let me pick up.

In verse 3, it says, Honor widows who are truly widows. Actually, beginning in verse 5 and carrying all the way down to verse 8, you find that Paul is addressing a problem that had crept into the early church.

[17:00] Guess what it was? Everybody listening? Here's the underlying truth. The benevolence and kindness of the early church ended up being used and abused by some in the family of God.

You wouldn't believe that, would you? And that's what happened. There were some in the early church who figured, Hey, since everybody is being so helpful, I'm going to let the early church take care of my own mother, and it's not all on me.

Paul turns around and says, Hey, listen. The first people who ought to take care of family needs is, guess what? Can you say it with me loudly?

Family. Okay? Okay? So, when you have children, God wants you to help with children. And saying at the door, Well, church is not where I help with my own kids because I do that 24-7.

You know, it's like, here, no. Yes, here. Participate and help us with the ministry. Now, I want you to set down several biblical principles that will help us with this.

[18:13] And just remind yourself of what it says in 2 Timothy 3. In essence, it's saying this, That the Bible completely furnishes us with what we need for godly living. And so, as we look at this issue of what do we do?

How do we go about solving this problem? Understand that the Bible calls us to work in obedience to His word. In relationship to that, there are some clear commands in Scripture that we are to follow.

And there are Bible commands such as, Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not murder. Thou shalt take care of thy own children in the nursery. That's not there. So, when you don't have a Bible command, In fact, I will tell you, Earlier in the week, as Judith and I were praying together, I commented, I said, Pray for me.

I'm working on a sermon that I'm going to preach in relationship to the nursery. And my wife's very on point. She says, Yeah, and what passage are you going to use? That was a good question, wasn't it?

And I had to say, Well, I'm going to rely on a biblical warrant. A biblical warrant. Now, a warrant is an example. It can be, I'm serving a warrant to Steve Rice. It means you're in trouble.

[19:23] That's not the deal here. A warrant can also be an example that we rely upon as a model for instruction. So, you have a biblical command that says, Thou shalt or thou shalt not.

Or you have a biblical warrant or example that says, Here's how you solve a problem. And so, when we look at the Bible problem that we have, There are several things that I want to remind you of that are clearly given to us in Scripture that we want to work together.

Number one, we're a body of believers drawn together by Christ. Fix that in your mind. We are a body of believers drawn together by Christ. Why are you here? I trust you are here for the same reason that I am here.

And for the same reason that Pastor Shearer is here. And for the same reason that Pastor Andrew is here. I'm here because Jesus sent me to be part of a family of God for the sake and testimony of Christ.

That's why. And you're here for the same reason. The body of Christ is not something like a shopping center where you drop in and drop out occasionally on the dependence of whether or not you like it.

[20:28] It's a place that you connect with. A body that you are linked together into for the sake and testimony of Christ. Over in 1 Timothy 3, verse 15, just have you look at it to fix it in your mind.

You look at 1 Timothy 3, verse 15, it says this. If I delay, you may know how one ought to behave in the household of God. What it's saying is this, is that the church of the living God is a family.

It is a family. That's one of the reasons why when you see the purpose statement of this ministry rolling out right there in the very beginning, it says, we're a family of believers. We're together because of His grace.

And we have a familial relationship with one another. Can you imagine Thanksgiving dinner in which you decided you just weren't going to take care of your kids because you'd been doing it all the time and it was time to take a break in Thanksgiving?

How would that go over with some of the older ones? Mary Ellen, how would that go with you? It wouldn't go well. Well, you'd probably get a hold of Jeffrey afterwards and say, honey, go talk to your daddy.

[21:40] He's the one who, you know, there we go. We work together because we're a family. Now, there's another thing that I want you to understand. Secondly, we are a body that honors Christ by caring for one another's needs.

Yes, we're a family, and family cares for their own needs, but we also help each other with them. And I am excited when I look at the statistics, and I recognize there's part of it that's encouraging, and that is there are a lot of you that are older and no longer have kids that are actively and consistently involved in helping in the nursery.

Amen. But there... Yes! Yes! Draw a pint and pass it around.

Okay. But there are also a number of you that have children that I want to challenge you to think carefully about the fact that you have a part to play in meeting the needs of this family of believers. And we're here to honor Christ by caring for one another's needs. Now, I admit that serving the Lord together takes many different paths.

[22:56] For example, it would be inappropriate at the moment for me to quit preaching and go into the nursery and help, right? But I can tell you, when I am not in the pulpit on a consistent basis, I will be actively serving somewhere.

Why? Because I'm part of the body. And I've been called to do that. And so when some of our people are singing in the praise team or playing an instrument or...

There are times that you can't be actively involved. But I've got to tell you, there are many times where people who could be actively involved just simply say no. And I do want you to understand that the way in which we take care of our children willingly and voluntarily is a great testament to Christ.

Isn't that right? Isn't that right? So you ask yourself the question at this point, Am I a reliable, consistent helper in the nursery?

That's a fair question, right? Am I a consistent helper in the nursery? That's a starting question. If you are not, it's a fair question.

[24:05] Why not? Well, because I'm 85 and I no longer can pick up children. There are some of you that that's true. Do you follow that? As people get older, it becomes a little harder to take care of some of the little ones that they're way down there.

I remember yesterday in the funeral, someone dropped their bulletin. And I looked at it and I thought, okay, I'm a man. I've got to pick that up. And I thought, I don't want to. I thought, well, suck it up, Tim.

It is there. And it was a woman who dropped that. And she was waiting for me to be a gentleman.

And I went for it. Okay. So there are times when, do you understand?

There are times when some can't. And I respect that. But I do want you to understand that it's fair to ask yourself the question, am I a reliable, consistent helper in the nursery?

Or are there good Bible reasons why I ought not to be involved? Well, that brings us to a passage that kind of gives us a very interesting picture of how people work together. Turn in your Bible to Nehemiah chapter 3.

[25:15] Go way back into the Old Testament. And we're going to go to Nehemiah chapter 3. And look at an account of people that were brought together by the glory of God.

And I want you to have this clearly fixed in your mind. At the end of the day, the way in which we respond to the need in the nursery is reflective of what we think about God. Can I say that slowly?

The way we respond to the need in the nursery is reflective of what we think about God.

That won't pop up on the screen, but it's a keeper. At the end of the day, all of our behavior reflects favorably or unfavorably on Christ.

Isn't that right? If you act like an absolute troll at work, Please, don't let anybody know you're a Christian.

Because it harms the testimony of Christ. The way in which you act should cause other people to come up and say, Hey, I've watched you just getting beat up day after day.

[26:23] And in the midst of all of this, you're a person who is calm and joyful and at peace. Right? What's it say in Scripture? It says that they will ask you a reason for the hope that lies within you.

And so the way in which we handle problems always gives an opportunity to display our view of God. And that's what's at risk here. Or that's what's on the table. So we look at Nehemiah chapter 3. I'm going to give you a little bit of background just for a second. In Nehemiah chapter 1, we find that here is Nehemiah. He is the cupbearer for the king. He's in a tremendously responsible position.

And he is doing his job.

And he finds out that the people in Israel are living in a pretty desperate condition. And his heart is deeply burdened for that need.

Because he recognizes the condition of Jerusalem and the walls was representative really of the spiritual needs of people. They were living there. They were living in the squalor and the mess. [27 : 27] And their hearts were not really connected to taking care of the need. And as a result, the testimony of God was compromised. And so, his burden led him to Jerusalem.

I don't know the exact size. I remember studying it at one point. But I don't remember the exact size this morning of how large the project was. But it is undeniably evident that it was bigger than one man could solve in his lifetime.

So, when Nehemiah got to Jerusalem, the first thing he did, if you look in chapter 2, is he kind of went around at night and estimated what the real problem was.

And then what happened after that? He brought the nation together, the people of Jerusalem. And he says, hey, listen. Here's the deal. We're in a mess. We've got a problem.

And we need to address it together. And he called all the people together. And as a result of that, what happens is this. Is they agree together to solve the problem and work on it.

[28 : 34] How does it go about? We're going to look at Nehemiah chapter 3 beginning in verse 1. Then Elisha, the high priest, rose up with his brothers, the priests, and they built the sheep gate.

Now, kind of work your way through. And I want you to notice in verse 2, it says, and next to him. Do you know what that means? That means, okay, Elisha started here. And then next to him, somebody else took off.

And if you keep on working your way down through there, next to him, next to him, next to him, next to him, next to him. Almost to the point of getting overly redundant. Next to him, next to him, next to him.

And everybody had a part to play, it seems. Later on, as you work your way through the passage, you'll find that the vocabulary switches from next to him to after him.

Okay? Next to them, after him. Now, put your finger on verse 5. I want you to read verse 5. And next to them, the Techoites repaired.

[29 : 35] But here's a little, how would you like to be included in Scripture permanently as this little reference? What's it say? Look at it. But. How many of you know that when you hit a but, it's really time to pay attention?

There's something coming important. But their nobles would not stoop to serve their Lord. Oops. But their nobles would not.

Did they have any good reason for not being part of this phenomenal project of rebuilding the city? No, they didn't. But their attitudes were self-focused. And they were full of themselves.

And they weren't ready to step up to the plate and do their part. It's encouraging to know we have 67 people that volunteer to help.

But I've got to tell you, this congregation is bigger than that. And here's kind of a sobering little statistic. And by the way, I appreciate the help that Pastor Andrew gave in bringing these things together.

[30 : 38] We have 36 families that have children. And of that, 22 are not directly involved in a consistent basis. Did I get that right? People.

People. Not families. We have 36 people that are eligible to work. 22 that don't have a part to play. So, if half of those stepped in and filled in the slots, guess what the progress would be?

We'd make significant progress. One of the things that is an ongoing challenge for those who are nursery coordinators is doing late-breaking pursuit. I appreciate Stephanie and Chris, just the newest group in helping with this.

And Judith, my wife, has been involved in this. Becky and Don involved until they took a sabbatical here for a while. We have many that have done this over the years.

But it's difficult to come in here Sunday morning and then have to chase down people. And guess who you usually chase down? Trick question. Friends.

[31 : 45] Friends. And so, the five coordinators end up keep on relying on people that they know are going to say yes. It's funny.

When you watch a nursery coordinator go into the lobby just before the morning service, here's something I've actually seen happen. People see whoever's coming. And there's kind of a, there's an aura.

The nursery coordinator carries an aura. Do you know what that aura is? Guys? It's a force field. It's kind of like zzzz, come through the door. And they have this certain level of anxiety.

I've got to have people in there. And by the way, we work to have two people in each room for safety and reliability. and so the nursery quarter comes through the door with this aura and here's what happens oh no no i i did it seven months ago don't ask me i'm impressed by what happens here in nehemiah that at the end of the day what we find in the text recorded for all eternity because scripture survives forever that this generation for the most part were willing to work together for the glory of christ that's what we do and it was a rare exception one in particular where we find people that actually were full enough of themselves that they weren't willing to work and they get recorded too so here we have an example god's people saw the need were ready to work and they all worked together and accomplished much their efforts glorified god and we know that because over in nehemiah chapter 12 verse 43 they they had a party to celebrate the rebuilding of jerusalem's walls and they were so enthused with the fact that the problem had been accomplished that they were whooping it up and people a long ways away whoa they're excited well let's talk about some practical steps as we kind of wrap some things up we have reached out one of the things that pastor andrew and i have worked i shouldn't say pastor andrew and i it sounds like i was involved pastor andrew did um he reached out to our volunteers and sent them an email saying hey listen what we would like to do is is kind of populate the the calendar and so you're on this list and we have your email and so we're going to send you an email saying which day would you prefer to serve on doesn't that sound nice i mean you know which day how many of you ever do that for dinner dishes you know who would like to do the dishes okay he sent out an email saying which day would you prefer to serve on and how many people actually out of the 67 responded oh 50 that's pretty good so there are 50 of you that are on the list that still have the opportunity of letting us know what day you would prefer okay now when we have two people that prefer the same day it'll be loaded pistols at 15 feet no take that back we'll try to let you figure that out and if that doesn't work we'll go to the process that works well with us and that is we'll draw straws we'll figure it out we'll work there okay and once the nursery calendar is populated and you're on that list the expectation is this is that if you decided that you were going to show up by the way how many of you know what next sunday is besides the fact that pastor shearer begins preaching that you were thinking that i know that next sunday is may the first may the first so you will get a text you'll get an email and and we're going to let you know that you have the opportunity of serving jesus and making him look good by working in the nursery and if for some reason your mother in paducah is sick all you have to do is pick up the phone and call somebody else and say hey i can't do it today but would you to isn't that fair what do you think is that fair nod your heads nod your heads i can wait nod your heads okay in practical terms we're also going to have pastor andrew out in the lobby this afternoon right after the morning service with a calendar that has open slots and you can choose them you can talk to him you can have him help you sign up

i would admit that sometimes some of the software programs that are available are a little bit beyond my skill set that's all right that's why we have pastor andrew among other things he can solve your problems and don't let him say to you that's basic he's done that to me and in fact when my computer misbehaves i pick up the phone and call him and i say i have a basic problem he knows exactly what we're talking about i'd like to take a little hammer and hit the keyboard but he says no i'll solve it so some closing thoughts are there some that really cannot serve and the answer is yes there are and we want to respect those who either for health reasons or because other aspects of consistent ministry they cannot be actively involved in in helping on our nursery we want to respect that are there some that will forget their day on which they're to serve and yeah how many of you have walked into the room and forgot why you came it's going to happen but i want you to know that we are committed to help you remember and to do it with gentleness and with kindness we're together in this are there some that will choose simply not to serve and the answer is yes and when that happens i want you to understand that we as a body of believers are going to be humble and gracious and focus on christ and not the momentary hiccup in life we're going to make that a matter of prayer we're going to work at it to be consistent and i don't anticipate preaching another nursery sermon six months from now but i don't mind doing that do you follow that because if it is important for us as god's people to work together it is important for you to hear it from where the place from which the word of god resounds i close with this i think about something of far greater importance in practical terms you remember when moes came down from the mount and he read the ten commandments how many of you know what the nation of israel immediately said who knows i'll give it to you in king james because that's how i remember all that thou has said we will do they were saying we're with it we're going to do it we're in it we're going to obey we're

going to do what god asks us to do amen and here's the call the scripture instructs us as a family of believers to care for our little ones as a representation of our love for christ and to do so for the glory and testimony of god let's close in prayer our father god this morning as we think in practical terms of the fact that you're the one that has called us together and made us a body of believers and knit us together here on the west side for the testimony and the glory of christ we're thankful that when we face a challenge that we can come back to the word of god and rely upon the teaching of the scriptures that make it clear not only that we're the family but we have a part to play in honoring christ i pray for your convicting power in our lives together and for this challenge of how we care for our nursery to be something that is solved in such a fashion that only jesus gets credit [40 : 32] and your people's hearts are lifted together for the testimony and glory of christ i pray for those who are in our fellowship today that do not know jesus that even today as the message of the scripture has been focused primarily on the matter of what a family does together that their hearts would be convicted by your spirit to recognize that that emptiness and that lack of connectedness is nothing other than the broken and ruined relationship that sin has caused in their life that this morning by your grace you would draw them to the cross and to realizing that their only hope and their only salvation lies in what jesus did for them on the cross they would repent and believe and come to know him as their savior we ask this in jesus name amen amen