

“Something Has Got to Give!”

Matthews 14:22-32

Book: “*Black Millennials and the Church: Meet Me Where I Am*” by Rev. Dr. Joshua L. Mitchell

Set the Scene: Here is a pastor of a prominent church who is within his first couple of years. Before his pastorate the church was booming, pews filled, best choir in the area and the offering was good. The glory days have passed and the new pastor gets the church that consist of majority senior citizens and his family. The church wants to survive but don't want to make any changes to the church from the glory days. The pastor is at his crossroad and utter the phrase, “Something has got to give!” He realizes that his church was a ghost town.

- *Have you ever gotten to the something has got to give moment with the church?*

“Despite our best programming and outreach efforts many churches have been unable to attract, retain, and spiritually develop a substantial number of this generation.”¹

- *Can our church survive and thrive for the next 60 years, or have we already become “the walking dead”?*

Mountain-top vs. Mountainside

“Mountain-side moments are periods of time when we reflect upon the grief that has gripped us in the course of our ministry works.”

Conventional Grief – Normal process of mourning after losing something important to us.

“When so and so was here, ministry was booming?” “When Pastor Right lead the children, we went everywhere?” “I ain’t going to church because Jimmy is not there anymore?”

Anticipatory Grief – Mourning that occurs when expecting death (or a loss)

“Man, this church is not like it was.” “The young adults will leave if we change.” The pastor is leaving, this church will never be the same.”

¹ Joshua L. Mitchell, *Black Millennials and the Church* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 2018), 2.

“WE FACE A SCARY REALITY”

***If we don't connect with Young Adult and Youth and Children, we face a scary reality of losing our local assemblies as the older generation transition!

“Taking time for mountainside moments is necessary and transformative.”

“Like most water-walking experiences, the process of engagement can cause **fear and discomfort**. At times we may even feel like we are drowning in our attempts to connect, but the results that our efforts will yield for our congregations and the kingdom of God are well worth the attempts.”

- In what ways are you experiencing a conventional or anticipatory grief surrounding your church or organization's engagement with the young adults? What are your fears and concerns for the future?

Action Plan

- Scan your church congregation and take a survey. Look at the regular attendees, look at ages of the attendees, and write down (or take a mental note) of what you observe.
- Take some time (have a mountainside moment) and identify where is the disconnect.
- Pray
 - Pray for your pastor and leaders
 - Pray for God to connect those disconnects
 - Pray for your church
 - Pray for this YA bible study as we engage in study and conversation for the millennials
- Write down and bring some right and relevant topics to discuss in our bible study!

Generation R.E.A.L.