



Summer Song
Part 6 – Psalm 78
Pastor Dan Seaborn

As I watched this little video, I remembered the stages when my kids would graduate from one particular class to another. That's a big deal for these kids. So as they hit that next phase, don't you dare miss out on the opportunity to influence their life and be a part of their life. And this morning, I'm going to talk about that.

I've been at Kanakuk Kamp all week. Jane and I spoke there all week long. Ted asked me to stay over and preach on Sunday and I said absolutely. Again, I was here just a few weeks ago, but I love to be here especially when he told me he wanted me to preach from the Book of Psalm. I was very excited to get to talk again about family because I can find a family passage everywhere.

So I get to talk about how to take care of your family and I want to do that by just kind of reminiscing a little bit. I want you to think about your life growing up. I want you to think about where you came from. Let all those images kind of flow through your mind and then imagine you had none of that history and you were just an alien and you were dropped onto Earth, right into Branson. You got dropped on the 76 highway on Saturday night at 6:30. What would you think about our world? What would be your thoughts about this place?

Jane and I are staying over at the Chateau and I imagined yesterday... I got the USA Today; you get it free at the hotel. I thought to myself what would I think about this Earth if I were dropped in from another planet. I could read English and I could understand it all. What would I think about this world?

The first thing I saw when I looked at the USA Today was a new planet found outside... I would think *Oh, they found me*. But I just started reading through it. "Caitlyn Jenner helped me to love me." There's a picture here. I would be going *Wow that's a pretty lady*. "Summer is so bad here that cops are now arresting weather men." Living here, I'd be thinking *It's about time*, but just being dropped in, I would think that's weird.

Looking through it state by state, I would go *What is a state*. Donald Trump... *The dude's got some weird hair*. Then right below that "I feel sad about my thinning hair." It's an ad about thinning hair from Walgreens. Personally I would be like "Dude, I gotta take that pill; what is that?"

"Does Planned Parenthood deserve to be defunded?" "The battle is not over for disabled Americans." If I read through this, what would I think? Here's the bigger question. What would I think the children of this generation are being taught? What's in here that's going to really keep my kids growing?

I do this little thing in my family where I have this traveling stick. We've moved a lot and so I couldn't just do it on the wall. As a kid growing up, my mom just did it against the back door. Every year, she would stand us up against the back door and she would draw a little mark and she would put the age of the person she was measuring. Maybe some of you do this. I do it with a traveling stick. I take the stick and I'll have my kids... especially when they were little. We would line them up and then they could see how tall they were compared to the other ones. You guys have probably done something like this. We even measure our dogs. We would stretch them out and put a mark. I put my dad on the stick and now he's going down.

We are really good in our society about making sure that our children grow. For example, when my oldest child was 12, if I put a line on the stick right here and then when he was 13, I put a line in the same place and then at 14, I put a line in the same place, I would look at my wife and say "Honey, something is wrong." They are supposed to keep growing up to a certain age. We are really good in our society at making sure our children physically grow. The question I've come to ask you today is are we doing that spiritually? Can you take your own stick today at the age of 60... Your height hasn't changed. If anything, it might have gone down a hair. But can you spiritually take a stick and go "I'm deeper than I was when I was 59. I'm growing in the Lord. My foundation is better. And those who are following me are seeing my example."

That's exactly what happens in Psalms 78. God Almighty left a passage for us that has us make sure that we check on our children. I know you are in this series on Psalms, so I want to share with you what Psalms 78 says. Now you have to get this. Psalms 78 is a maskil of Asaph. Maskil just means wise teaching. So Asaph, the Chief Musician of David... That's who this guy was that wrote this. He was David's right-hand man. He was Matt, the main worship leader here. I love to hear him sing. He is a very talented man. If I were king, I might pick Matt to be my guy because he's talented. So Asaph was talented. David looked at all his musicians and he said "I want that guy to be my chief musician." Asaph would put these wise sayings to music. So this Psalms was most likely sung.

Now I'm not going to do that today, but I'm going to show you what that might be like. Asaph would look at the king and the surrounding court and sing "*Oh, my people, hear my teaching...*" And he would start singing it. So he would have sung this. Why? So we could memorize it better.

Psalms 78 says **1 My people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth.** So imagine that being sung. **2 I will open my mouth with a parable; I will utter hidden things, things from of old—3 things we have heard and known, things our ancestors have told us.** I want to stop there for just a second because Dads, we are responsible, by God's Word, to teach our children.

Out at camp this week, we had several single moms there. I apologized to them on behalf of all the men who have not been faithful to their commitments. Certainly, there are some men who have been faithful and women who have been unfaithful, absolutely. But this morning, for any single moms here, I want to say to you, for a man who has failed you, that I, on behalf of all the men in our society who are trying to be godly men, am sorry. I'm sorry your kids haven't had a father. Thank God for our Heavenly Father who says he is a father to the fatherless.

So you be encouraged today to know that we are proud of you. I told those single moms at camp this week that I'm so stinking proud of them because they have been faithful to teach their children.

This passage very clearly says "things our fathers have told us." Dads in this room, we are responsible to pass on the truths of God to the next generation and I'm going to prove it. **4 We will not hide them from their descendants; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done. 5 He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach their children, 6 so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born...** There's a message right there about abortion. Even the children yet to be born are to know this message. **...and they in turn would tell their children. 7 Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.**

Do you remember, going back to high school or even earlier than that, when y'all did that dissecting the frog thing? When you did that, there was this thing the teacher showed you: the life cycle of a frog. One of the reasons we did that dissection was we were going to cut it open so we could see those eggs. According to that life cycle, there was a little egg and then that little egg... Remember there was a little arrow and it went down to a little tadpole and then that little tadpole became a little frog? And then that frog became another momma frog and the cycle kept going.

This morning, I'm going to present to you the life cycle of a family, spiritually. I call this message *The Family Circle* from Psalms 78. I'm going to put something at 12:00 and at 3:00 and at 6:00 and 9:00 and I want to show you the life cycle of a family, how the faith is supposed to be carried on.

We Know

The first thing we notice is up top at 12:00 we are going to put the words *We Know*. What do we know? We know that there was a man named Jesus who came a couple thousand years ago and he died to give us hope of salvation. Ladies and gentlemen, sometimes I don't even get this. Do you guys realize what a privilege it is that we have the ability to know that piece of information right there? We live in a world that is dying to know that.

My grandpa passed it on to me. I stand here today because my grandpa took me hunting and took me fishing. You've heard me talk about him. He was my hero of the faith. He was what I call the living Bible. He brought it alive for me and the reason I know what I know today is because I had a grandpa – my father's father – who told me about Jesus. And I'm guessing, sitting in this room today, most of us know the name of Jesus because of somebody in our heritage who knew it and passed it on to us. You may say they didn't pass it on the right way. I don't always either. You don't always either. But today, we know this thing called faith in Jesus Christ and I'm telling you I could stop right here with this message: We are a privileged people to know about a redeemer named Jesus.

I get we are in Branson and you hear it all the time. I have people tell me how you can go to a show here and they actually mention Jesus. I get it, but don't you ever forget the privilege it is to know the name of

Jesus Christ. I am blessed. And I am blessed today to know the name of Jesus and according to God's word, according to this little passage in Psalms 78, because I know it, I've got to teach it.

Teach it

When we know, we teach. I want to camp on this one because this is where most of us sitting in this room are at right now. We are teachers. We are at the age where our life is supposed to be an open book and an open example. We are to teach our children – the next generation – the things of the Lord. How does that happen? It just happens in everyday life. It's not just supposed to be a Sunday thing; it's supposed to be an all week long thing. Your kids see how you act and go "Wow you handled that good."

"Well it's not to my glory; it's because the Lord has made me that way. That car that pulled out in front of me? If it was up to me, they would have gotten some waving at them, but I'm not going to do that because I'm a follower of Jesus and I'm going to try to teach you something different."

We are to teach by the way we live. I remember when my kids were really little. My two daughters... I don't know what it was about these girls, but they loved to what they call "twace" me. So when I would arrive home from work, it was almost immediately many times. "Daddy, Daddy, get on the driveway." They would make me. I would get out of the car... "Daddy, Daddy, lay down!" And they would run get their chalk.

I would yell to my wife "I'll see you in a minute. I've got to lay here and get twaced."

They loved me just lying down so they could twace me. They would start twacing me. They made my legs way bigger than they were. They made my head way bigger than it was. They loved to trace me. In fact, if you came to our house on a typical day, you would have thought it was a crime scene. There were tracings... it looked like somebody had been murdered.

Sometimes, when I was lying there... This is no lie. We had these trees in our yard at this stage in our family's life and I would lay there and sometimes I would see a squirrel in the tree. I would lean up and point "Girls, girls, look right there; there's a squirrel."

"Daddy, lay back down."

"Look, girls, do you see that squirrel?"

They would stop and they would look up and this is really what I would do. "Girls, who made that squirrel?"

They would say "Daddy, you always say this; you know who made it."

"I know girls, but who made the squirrels?"

They would say “Daddy, God made them.”

Is that really a big deal? Yep! I don’t know if y’all have checked lately, but most of the major colleges in the United States don’t teach that. They try to tell them life just kind of happened through certain cells, etc. No, God went “Boom!” and there was a squirrel. You can call me foolish if you want, but I just believe God is the Creator and I wanted my little girls to get that. If you can get that in their mind when they are young, it will stick in there. They might go to those colleges and wonder for a while, but they’ll come back to a stinking daddy lying on the ground, getting twaced.

Ladies and gentlemen, I would much rather have this Bible than this newspaper. And I want to make sure my kids know the truth is in the Bible. This newspaper is mostly opinion. The Bible wins. Teach it by the way you live. Our day to day life must be an open book. Some of you have the privilege of having those little kids around your house right now. You may be worn out, but we just saw that little video. It’s a phase; it will pass and you’ll be glad you taught them God made that squirrel.

Secondly, under this layer of teaching, we must teach it at all ages and stages of family development. I want you to notice in this passage it doesn’t say “Fathers, when you’re between the ages of 25 and 43, you must teach...” No, it just says we will teach. We will always be teaching. Grandmas and Grandpas, listen to me for a second. You will never stop teaching. In fact, I want to say to you Grandmas and Grandpas that you are in the most influential time of teaching in your life. Your grandkids look to you as a hero. This is your opportunity.

I told you my grandfather was my hero of the faith and I have to tell you of my last visit with him. My grandpa was really aging. I had four young kids and I was pastoring full time in Michigan. It was before I started the ministry of Winning at Home, so I just had a church there that I was at all the time. We didn’t get to leave very often.

One particular trip down to South Carolina which about a 12 hour drive, I loaded all the kids up and drove down to visit my mom and dad. When I was down there, I made a little trek up to see my grandfather. He was in a nursing home and one of my favorite things to do was to get to go see him because he was the man to me; he was my hero. So I took my whole family... We had a little red van. We drove up in this little red van and we got all the kids out and we walked into the nursing home. Of course, the smell of the nursing home for the children is always a little tough.

We got to my grandfather’s room and we walked into his room. He was lying back on his bed. He was a big man, probably 6’3” or 6’4”. He was a way bigger than me. He was lying back on his bed with his hands behind his head. He had his glasses lying over on the little counter there. He didn’t have his teeth in.

I said “Grandpa!”

He said “Who is it?”

“Grandpa, it’s Danny. I came with my family. I wanted to see you.”

“Oh, Danny, Danny, Danny!” He grabbed his glasses and then shook his hands above his head. “Danny boy!” He sat on the edge of the bed. Remember, I’m talking to you about teaching. He sat up on the edge of the bed and said “Come here, come here.” He loved my wife, Jane. “Janie, Janie! Come here!” He gave her a big hug. Then he said “Who’s all these kids here?”

I said, “Grandpa, these are my children.” He asks me again and I said “Grandpa, these are my kids.” I’m thinking he’s getting a little senile. I said “Grandpa, that’s Alan, Josh, Christina... they’re my children.”

He looked at them for a minute and he said “Them ain’t your kids.”

I said, “Yeah, Grandpa, these are my kids.”

“No, they’re not. Them’s my kids. Do you think them kids would be here if it wasn’t for me?”

I said “No sir, Grandpa, those are your kids.”

“Come here kids, I want to give you a hug.”

He’s scaring them to death. He’s huge. Especial my little girls... They want to go twace. He’s giving them big hugs and then... Do you know that peppermint candy you get at Christmas, the sticks? He had a box of that stuff. He always kept it on his night stand because that was his favorite candy. He would go to offer it to the children and what he couldn’t see was he had already sucked half of the end off of every one of them. He couldn’t see that so he was like “You children want candy?”

They were like “No, no, we’re good.”

If he could see it, he wouldn’t even suck it. It was awful. He’s like “What’s wrong with these children; they don’t even like candy.”

Then as quick as he did all that stuff... I had only been in there a couple of minutes. As quick as he did all that stuff, this is what he did. It was really weird. It kind of freaked me out a little bit. My grandpa was always crazy and fun. He looked at me and said “Danny, get them out of the room.”

I said “Grandpa, we just got here.”

“Get you family out of the room.”

I looked at Jane and said, “Honey, I have no idea. Maybe it’s the early will and he’s going to give me a little money. Let’s hope for the best. Get them together and y’all head on out to the van and I’ll come out in a minute.”

Grandpa shooed everyone out except for me. He’s still sitting on the edge of the bed. He motioned for me to come over. I went over to him and I stood right in front of him. He grabbed my collar. Nobody grabs my collar like that, but grandpa can. He pulled me down really low, right into his face.

“Danny, have you told them children about Jesus Christ?”

I said “Grandpa, I have.”

“Did they pray and ask him into their life?”

I said “Grandpa, they did.”

He threw his hands in the air and shouted “Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!”

Then he grabbed me. He pulled me over on top of him. We are lying in the bed; I’m on top of my grandpa, and he’s patting me on the back, going “Praise the Lord, praise the Lord!” Then he started crying.

I remember I just started crying because it dawned on me that he was checking. He didn’t ask me what car we drove. He didn’t ask me how much I was making. He asked me “Do these kids know about Jesus?” Here’s what Grandpa knew. His turn to teach was almost over and he wanted to make sure that arrow didn’t stop at him.

I remember I got up off my grandfather and I was crying so hard because I’m a crier anyway. But I got up off my grandpa... this really happened, guys. I got up off my grandpa; he’s still lying in bed, crying. I said “Grandpa, I’ll come back and see you later on before we leave town.”

I walked to the little door that closed to his nursing home room and this is no lie. I got to the door and I stopped to look back at my grandpa for just a minute. He was just wiping his eyes. I looked out and I could see the van through the window. I could see the kids jumping everywhere. Jane was probably in there going “Lord Jesus, get him out here.” I stopped for just a second and I stood and realized I’m standing between a man who is almost done and kids who are just beginning and I’m in the middle. I get to give what he gave to me to them. I stood there and I said “Lord, help me pass this faith on.” I just stood there and cried. I looked at my grandpa. I knew it would be one of my last times to see him. And the van looked really busy, but this is what he did for me: When it was his turn to stand here, he did a darn good job of it.

They Know

Ladies and gentlemen, this is where most of us are standing today. Some of you right now have a grandma or grandpa in a nursing home and they’ve passed their faith to you. When we know, we must teach. And when we teach - watch the circle keep going – then they know. That’s it. When we begin to see our children following faith, when we begin to see them doing things that honor Jesus, we know that it’s happening.

In my home, I’ve got to tell you my kids did plenty of things that didn’t honor Jesus, just like yours. But when they did, we celebrated, man. I can remember when my kids would share a toy. Just share a toy! I would stop them and say “Whoa, whoa, what did you just do right there?”

“Dad, I was sharing a toy.”

“I know you shared a toy. That’s awesome!” Then this was the phrase I would say to them. “Do you know who that reminds me of?” They got to where they knew what was next. “When you share your toy like that, do you know who that reminds me of?”

They’d say “Who, Daddy?”

I’d say “Jesus because he shared his life for us. Y’all keep sharing. I’m proud of you kids. We’ll buy you another toy next year; you did a good job with that.”

When you see your children growing in Christ, celebrate it, be thankful for it. This morning, while I’m preaching right now, my son is preaching at a church in Michigan. That’s the same little boy that I thought would grow up to be Hitler. And he’s hailing the King today, the King Jesus. And I tell you today you be faithful when it’s your turn to teach. The scripture says pass it on so that they, in turn, would know that the next generation... Some of you today have an infant in your womb. Pass it on by the way you live, by the way you love, so that when they grow up, they will know this thing called faith.

I want to pause here for a moment because there are some of you, like me, that don’t have perfect children and you wonder... *I tried to be faithful. I don’t see it yet being activated in their life.* I spoke not long ago... I think I was in Alabama; I can’t remember exactly for sure. This elderly gentleman came up to me after I had finished preaching. I had shared a little bit about the struggles with some of the issues with my children. He was in his 60s or 70s. He told me “Last week, my son, who is 52, called me up and said ‘Dad, I’ve tried my way forever; I’m ready to give your Jesus a shot.’” He was 52. That dud was so happy. He said he had been praying for years and years. You say “Mine is 70.” Well that means you’re pretty old, but don’t stop praying. Don’t stop believing. You don’t get to decide when your children decide to follow Jesus; that’s between them and the Lord. You’re just supposed to teach so that they will know.

They Teach

Even right now, if you have a child who is not following after the Lord, if you’ve put it into them, they know. And what we continue to do is pray, by God’s heaven and by God’s grace, that what they will know – here it is full circle – they will teach. Isn’t that beautiful? You knew it was going to happen. I’m just saying isn’t that pretty to see it. Remember the life cycle of the frog? Now we have the life cycle of the family. What we need to do today is continue to pray that what we know gets passed onto those who are being taught.

There’s a little picture coming up on the screen right now. My daughter, Christina, and Jonathan, my son-in-law, have our only grandchild, Jackson. Christy is just about to have another baby. We were praying she wouldn’t have the baby this week. She’s due in a week or two. This is a picture of my little grandson, Jackson, kissing his soon-to-be little sister. I’m sure he won’t feel that way about her when she’s actually out of the womb.

The other day, Christy was at our house. I didn't ask any questions. I didn't say anything. You've got to understand that this girl has not always been perfect. There was a time in her life when she was a little rebellious. Church wasn't a big deal to her. Following after Jesus wasn't the first desire of her heart.

She said this to me. We were just sitting. I had cooked some burgers and we were sitting around eating. She said "Daddy, do you know what? Last night, when Jackson was saying his prayers..." I'm just listening with joy. It's in there. That girl is at church right now. That girl can't get enough of that sort of stuff. She wants the Lord deeply in her life. Can I tell you one of the reasons why? She wants to make sure that little boy and that little baby in the womb are followers of Jesus. I hope it's because she likes what she saw in her Great Grandfather Jay, my grandfather, and my father, Joe, and her daddy, Dan, and now her husband, Jonathan. What if this little bugger grew up to be a preacher? That would be awesome. What if he just grew up and decided whatever career he's going in, he's going to be a follower of Jesus. Boom! Then they know and it all starts over again. When they teach it and they know it, it keeps going.

Psalms 78 is a psalm about your life. The question is "Are you passing on your faith?"

You say "Dan, I'm here today and I'm not even a follower of Jesus." What a great Sunday for you to hear that there is good news about a man named Jesus. If you don't know Jesus Christ, there will be those who will pray for you. You will see them standing in the front after we stand in a moment and close and sing. For those of you who don't know Jesus, I would love to invite you to invite him into your heart. For those of you who maybe didn't realize, at the age of 70, what a big deal it is for you to be a teacher, oh my goodness, go teach today. Your grandkids look up to you so much. Even if you have a strained relationship with your children, you keep loving those kids and grandkids. The Lord will use your life as a testimony. My prayer is that this thing called the family circle will never be unbroken.

In fact, as a kid... Y'all are from Branson so maybe you heard it. "Will the circle be unbroken, bye and bye Lord, bye and bye." Let's pass this thing called faith on so that the next generation would know the deeds of the Lord. Jesus, I just lift my friends up before you. If there is one here this morning who doesn't know you as Lord and Savior, I pray they would confess with their lips right now that they believe you died on the cross for their sin.

Lord, I pray that you would bless and help us and guide us as a church family. We want to be faith passer oners. We want to live out Psalm 78. I pray our kids and our grandkids would know this thing of faith in Jesus because they see it in our example. May we follow after you. May today, Lord, you take this little principle I've shared and may we check the stick of our family faith and make sure we're still growing. May we never slow down. God, you are able to take whatever is in our life, whatever our struggle is, whatever our weakness is, and you're able to supersede that by your power and strength. And as we worship you right now, I pray you would remind us of that and allow your Holy Spirit to convict and lead us.

In Jesus' name we all say... Amen.