

Weekly Encouragement

www.gracefortheday.org

Incorporated non-profit in New Jersey, USA

Hope for Our Generation

By Rev. Peter Eng



Photo courtesy of Flowerpictures

"We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; / we sang a dirge, and you did not weep." (Luke 7:32)

Some call it Gen X, Gen Y, Gen I, or some other name. Those who are critical of the young people of America call it the "Whatever Generation." This generation seems to feel powerless about what is going on. The only time I see the Whatever Generation fired up was in the Presidential Elections two years ago. Now with unemployment at record highs for two years, the Whatever Generation is disillusioned with the president they voted in.

It is back to whatever.

This is not unique to America. From the 1990s, Japan greeted its young people with a housing market bubble that burst, and a Stock Market that tanked and has not even recovered to this day. I don't know what Japanese sociologists might label Japanese young people, but the sentiment I read about is no different from America's Whatever Generation.

People who cannot hope to change their circumstances and feel powerless to live for a higher purpose simply withdraw. They have no reason to live beyond their personal interests. A Whatever Generation is invariably a Me Generation. What else can such a generation do?

America is doing just as poorly on the spiritual front as she is on the economic front. America has been driving the character of Christianity for at least half a century. But it is on the verge of becoming a spiritual shell, going the way of Europe. Young American Christians are increasingly complacent and disconnected from their Christian faith. With the exception of a few churches, Christianity is clearly losing its momentum in growth and vigor. In some instances, it is considered a success just to be able to stop the decline.

There are many possible reasons why this is so, and I suspect opinions will differ. What we need to be clear about is that the economy does not drive the church. There are just too many instances of the advance of the Gospel in bad economic times to justify and blame our spiritual malaise on a poor economy. In fact, a poor economy is the best time to see if the nation has been idolatrous in worshipping the god of wealth.

The mood of the Whatever Generation is virtually identical to Jesus' generation.

This mood was so oppressive that there was a quip about it in the market place: "We played the flute for you, and you did not dance; / we sang a dirge, and you did not weep." This was an indifference. Nothing moved them. Jesus' ministry occurred in a Whatever Generation.

Jesus and his disciples would be the same age as America's Whatever Generation. Jesus was about 30 years old. Peter might be a few years older. The rest were probably in their 20s. That generation had its own reason to be without hope. I suspect that generation was in an even worse shape than our own.

Then came Jesus.

Jesus turned an indifferent generation into a world-changing generation through his disciples. He chose, equipped, and sent out a small band of disciples who turned their world upside down – with the Gospel.

The Roman Empire that persecuted Christians eventually embraced the Gospel. Infanticide ceased everywhere the Gospel went. Marriages were strengthened. Lives were changed. Crucifixion was abolished. The list goes on.

God brought Jesus into the world at a time when roads connected the entire Roman Empire and the Gospel became unstoppable. Today, there is a new highway: the information highway. Is God raising up another Power Generation from a Whatever Generation? Will the Gospel now reach where it could not reach before and renew our world again?

There is hope for our Generation.

God uses the foolish things of this world to accomplish his purpose. When a Whatever Generation is turned into a Power Generation, we renew our trust in God. We will again see the transforming power of the Gospel. No, not the insipid and lifeless brand of Christianity we see today. That brand of Christianity does not meet the needs of the soul, and can breed only indifference. We are talking about the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel that brings forgiveness, peace, and joy. The Gospel that transforms lives, not the shadow of the Gospel we often see today.

And the people who will bring this true Gospel to the world will be the young people of today. Perhaps it will be the young people of America. Perhaps it will be the young people of China. Perhaps it will be the young people from tiny Singapore. But it will be the young people of today. There is great hope for the young people of today to bring the Gospel to where it has not

gone before. The world stage is set for a new advance of the Gospel.

"O God let us be, a generation that seeks, that seeks your face, O God of Jacob." So cries out a contemporary Christian song writer.

Yes, that is the need today. When the Whatever Generation is touched by the true Gospel, and empowered by the Holy Spirit, it becomes the Power Generation.

This generation gives us Google, Facebook, Twitter, and all the creative ways of communication. When this generation turns its energy to communicating the Gospel, the gates of hell shall not stand against it.

There is great hope for this generation of Christians. It should be the Whatever Generation in a different way. It can become the generation of Christians able to handle whatever the Prince of this World throws at it. It can become the generation that takes whatever indifference in our world and turns it to passionate love for God.

Note: The ESV is used unless indicated otherwise.

20101108



Please pass this on
so that many more can be blessed.

Want a **FREE** subscription?
Send an email to subscribe@gracefortheDay.org
with Subject: SUBSCRIBE

Listen to Rev. Peter's **sermons** and find **other articles**
in www.gracefortheDay.org

Wish to support this ministry? Have any questions?
Write to: admin@gracefortheDay.org

Rev. Peter Eng is an ordained minister from the Reformed Tradition, but he is truly global in perspective. He served the Lord in various capacities starting from his teenage years in the 70s. His undergrad studies were done in Singapore, his grad studies in the USA, and post-grad studies in the United Kingdom, with additional post-grad research in Germany.