

This Generation

Luke 7:31-35

This text is a description of the religious people in Jesus day (the Pharisees, Scribes and Jewish elders). It is a caution to all of us that following Christ is about the King and expanding His reign in others' lives. It's been said, "It's not about you." Let's examine this text and see if there is a caution for us at Emmanuel.

I. "This Generation" is a phrase used to describe the graceless religious.

The Pharisees, Sadducees and scribes of the Law are the people Jesus had in mind (see Luke 7:30). They were "this generation" but not His children (v. 35). There are three things true of them:

A. Nothing is satisfying to them.

Jesus uses the example of children in the marketplace to describe "this generation." You ask them to come and play, dancing with the flutes, and they refuse. Then, when you change the song and ask them to come and mourn (as would be done in funerals of the day), they refuse. In context, John speaks fit for a funeral (the Law); Jesus speaks words of hope bring joy to life.

B. Everyone else is substandard to them.

"For John has come eating no bread and drinking no wine, and you say, 'He has a demon!' (v. 33).
"The Son has come eating and drinking, and you say, 'Behold, a glutton and drunkard' (v. 34).
The Pharisees and Sadducees didn't like John and they didn't like Jesus; they attacked both men.

C. Everything is supposed to be for them.

"The Pharisees rejected God's purpose" because there wasn't anything in it for them (Lk. 7:30).
This is what Jesus says of the religious in his day; white-washed tombs who are dead inside.

II. "This Generation" is a phrase that we never want to be used to describe Emmanuel Enid.

There is another generation in the Bible, called "His generation," "the generation of thy children," "the generation of the upright," "a chosen generation" and "the children of Wisdom" (Luke 7:35). There is a key phrase we find that helps us understand "Wisdom" and becoming His children. This generation, after calling Jesus a glutton and a drunkard, said He was "*a friend to sinners.*"

A. To be His generation means we are friends to sinners His enemies constantly derided him, calling him "a friend of publicans and sinners." In fact, he is the only friend of sinners, the only friend *we have*; and the evidence that we are His generation is we befriend sinners too.

"But when Jesus heard this, He said, "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick. 13"But go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners" (Matthew 9:12-13).

B. To be His generation means church is never about us . . .

Emmanuel must have a cultural shift; a transformation of our thinking. We must come to the place of realizing church is about reaching out to others - serving, helping, ministering, etc . . . It is impossible for us to be His generation if we are more concerned with what church gives us.

C. To be His generation means we ask ourselves where we are serving.

We must be careful that we don't equate church programs to the Kingdom of God. Kingdom work takes place throughout the community - but there is kingdom work taking place here. It is the combination of the Word and the Spirit that brings forth new life (I Peter 1:23).

We are asking each member of Emmanuel Enid today to seriously consider how you are serving others in the Kingdom. We have needs of service throughout our various ministries, and we could think of no better text for an understanding of the importance of serving others than this text. Will you join us?