

Informed Intercession for the Next Generation

A Prayer Guide to Issues Facing Gen Z

By Aaron Custalow

There I was, lying on the floor, the carpet drenched with my snot and tears. I was completely undone. It all started when I asked God to give me a greater desire for prayer.

Suddenly, He gave me a glimpse of something I hadn't seen before—His burning heart for Generation Z. I had been praying for youth for many years and had spent a decade in full-time ministry at a house of prayer (and much of that time as a youth pastor, too). I felt like I had prayed just about everything there was to pray for God's purposes in the next generation.

But this day was different. As I wept before the Lord, I realized my prayers barely scratched the surface of what God truly felt in His heart for Gen Z.

From God's Perspective

"Generation Z is Mine!"

Those are the words that thundered into my spirit during this encounter. "Mine," I heard Him say.

I would have used a lot of other words to fill in the blank: Gen Z is—lost, rebellious, broken. But that's not what the Father said. He declared this generation belongs to Him! And I needed to start aligning my prayer life with what He desired,

instead of continuing to pray my sad, negative prayers that usually went like, “Oh, God, this generation is so lost and messed up! Do something!”

I’m not saying it’s wrong to be desperate in prayer or to be a realist either. After all, statistics do show some very negative trends in Gen Z. But God is inviting His people to know His heart and to pray from that perspective.

Before I offer ideas for prayer, I want you to understand the *why* behind what we pray. The starting point for informed intercession is to know the heart of the One we are praying to. As we dive into these key issues facing youth today, it’s paramount that we have the Father’s perspective. Without it, these topics can be depressing and discouraging (and so could our prayers).

Having Jesus’ heart for this generation is far more important than having the right words or topics to pray. Remember in Luke 8:49–56 when Jesus had to kick all the mourners and professional weepers out of the house before He raised the 12-year-old dead girl back to life? They seemed to have the right words, emotions, and realistic response to the tragedy playing out before their eyes, but they didn’t have Jesus’ heart. Jesus sent them outside because they were just causing a commotion. Only the father and mother and Jesus’ closest disciples were invited inside to be part of this miraculous resurrection.

Embrace the Father’s Heart

When I caught a glimpse that day of how God feels about Generation Z, I realized that I could either embrace the heart of the Father with faith and be invited in to see awakening in this generation, or I could stay on the outside, continuing to cause commotion and miss what Jesus was about to do.

I chose to agree with His heart the best I can. This young

generation is in desperate need of fathers and mothers who carry God's heart for them.

So, before you start praying through these prayer points, carve out some time to ask God about His heart for Gen Z—and see what He says.

A Prayer Guide to Issues Facing Gen Z

1. Knowing Jesus

This generation desperately needs to know Jesus and see Him with the eyes of their heart. Jesus is the answer to every issue facing Gen Z. They must see Him. They need what Paul prayed for the church of Ephesus: “that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you. . . .” (Eph. 1:17–18).

- Pray for the veil to be removed from the hearts of Gen Z, for them to see the glory of Jesus (2 Cor. 3:16).
- Gen Z is constantly distracted with phones, social media, TV streaming, etc. Pray for their eyes to behold Jesus.
- Most youth want what's real. Hearing concepts about Jesus is great, but they want to see it for themselves. Pray for real encounters with Jesus (1 John 1:1–3).
- Pray for them to know the fear of the Lord (Prov. 1:7, 9:10).
- There is so much deception and false teaching spreading across the Internet. Pray that they will have a spirit of wisdom, discernment, and knowledge of the Word (2 Tim. 2:15).
- Gen Z is hungry for the supernatural. Many are looking in the wrong places like witchcraft, spiritual readings, and various occult practices. Pray for deliverance from

demonic oppression and for supernatural encounters with God.

2. Identity

Generation Z is perhaps the most confused generation when it comes to identity. They are coming of age in a day when people are encouraged to choose their own gender, identify according to various sexual orientations, and define themselves as whoever they want to be.

Gen Z is desperately searching for meaning and to discover who they truly are. But they aren't turning to the traditional structures that have historically contributed to identity and that sense of belonging they crave. The traditional idea of family is being obliterated by the entertainment and media they constantly digest, leaving many youth wondering where to go for acceptance, love, and to safely discuss their deepest questions.

Many Gen Zers also live under the pressure of other people's opinions every time they open apps on their phones. With all the likes and comments pouring in from friends and strangers on social media, there's an unrelenting barrage of content telling them who to be, how they should live, and how they should think (and it's typically not in the direction of Christ).

- Pray for youth to understand that they are made by God, and He is the One who defines them. "Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you" (Jer. 1:5).
- Pray for youth to catch the revelation that God writes their stories and that discovering their true purpose means discovering what God says about them (Ps. 139:16).
- Pray for youth to walk in the spirit of adoption as sons and daughters of the Father (Rom. 8:14–17).
- Pray for families to be restored, and for God to raise up fathers and mothers who carry His heart for their

children and for the next generation (Mal. 4:5–6).

- Pray for healing and deliverance from sexual brokenness and wounding in young people's lives that so often open the door to deception and confusion.
- Pray for this generation to understand and submit to God's intentional design for gender and biblical marriage (Gen. 1:27).

3. Mental Health

Whether it's from growing up during a worldwide pandemic, the disconnectedness of digital relationships, the confusion of sexual identity, financial uncertainty, social media pressure—or all the above—Generation Z is one of the most plagued generations when it comes to mental health. Anxiety, depression, suicide, insomnia, and mental health disorders are rampant in Gen Z.

We know God cares about this, and He has the peace and deliverance they are looking for.

- Pray for God to deliver youth from a spirit of fear, and for them to receive the “sound mind” that only God gives (2 Tim. 1:7).
- Pray for youth to know God's peace (John 14:27).
- Pray for youth to come to God with their mental health issues—and not try to hide it.
- Pray for safe spaces in the church and in Christian communities for youth to be vulnerable about their mental health struggles.
- Pray for young deliverers to be raised up who walk in the anointing of the Holy Spirit to break oppression off their peers (Isa. 61:1–3).

4. Leaders and Messengers to Arise

Gen Z is a bold generation. I believe God is raising them up to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. As I look at this generation, I believe we could see the fulfillment of the

Great Commission in their lifetime.

Right now, our Gen Z For Jesus and Jesus Clubs teams are seeing young people all over the earth rising up to proclaim the gospel, walk in the power of the Holy Spirit, do miracles, pray, fast, and lift up the name of Jesus. This is a revival generation!

- Pray for God to raise up the next generation of prophets, messengers, and “Nazarites” (Amos 2:11).
- Pray for God to send laborers into the harvest who carry His heart of compassion (Matt. 9:36–38).
- Pray for God to raise up fathers and mothers who will shepherd and empower the next generation—and not quench their fire or discourage their consecration (Amos 2:12, Mal. 4:5–6).
- Pray for a spiritual awakening in the youth and for God to pour out His Spirit (Joel 2:28–29).
- Pray for boldness, miracles, healing, signs and wonders to accompany these young messengers as they proclaim the gospel (Acts 4:29–31).
- Pray for these young leaders to be rooted in their identity as sons and daughters of the Father and for their roots to go deep in the Word and in His love (Eph. 3:14–19).

Thank you for praying for Generation Z and for gaining Jesus’ heart for them. They need spiritual fathers and mothers like you. Your prayers are such a key to God’s purposes in the youth.

Don’t lose heart over this generation. Keep praying!

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