

KNEEL AND GET REAL



SECTION ONE

Every Decade Doubles in Speed

The success of every generation can be measured by their ability to avoid reacting to the inconsistencies of the previous generation, and to instead build on their mistakes to create a new reality for their children. If they react, they will only repackage the same insanity and arm a generation of rebellious self-governed rebels.

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Introduction to Section 1

As I sat beside my dying dad, I looked around the room. He loved wood. He owned some beautiful wood clocks and carvings — handmade masterpieces, each one with a story, created by the hands of extremely skilled craftsmen, many he knew personally.

That day, those masterpieces meant absolutely nothing to him. He was leaving this world, and the only thing that had any value were the people he was leaving behind. Everything else was now meaningless.

I asked myself a question I should be asking every day of my life:

“Am I living for what matters most — right now?”

The only thing that will matter on our deathbed is relationships. If you read no further, make relationships your priority in every decade — and you will have chosen the most important thing in life.

Every decade builds on the one before it. Life is extremely predictable in so many ways. Especially as it relates to the question each of us must answer in each decade of our life. If we do not, we must answer in the next. How we answer the questions of our current season will greatly shape the next. We all face the same core questions — only our circumstances differ.

Life is a gift. We have no promise of tomorrow. Live to invest in others, model what matters most to those you’ll leave behind, and invest in eternity. We’ll be there a lot longer than our days on earth anyway.

Life is **EXTREMELY** simple, and then we complicate it. It is helpful to picture a timeline of our life on earth to create reality. We have a choice. Plan your life or just let life happen. A plan is stewardship of time. A plan is

rewarding. Having a plan for your life will lead you to discover your purpose. God honors noble plans. “I have plans for you...”

God created us to impact eternity. We may spend much of our life getting clarity on what all this looks like in His Kingdom on earth. Your vision, mission, and values do change with the communities we associate with and the season of life we are in. This change is often gradual and incremental. I feel it is very important to document and review as your New Year ritual. Dr Harry Reed would say “If it ain’t written down, it ain’t happenin”

We love new beginnings — a new day, a new week, a new month, a new quarter, a new year. But a new decade, that hits us. Each decade hits harder after your 40s. Our 40s are normally the most intense and challenging decade of our lives, creating more definition for the decades that follow than any other season.

In our 50s we define the life work we will carry into our 60s, the people we will best serve and invest in. These are the years we experience the greatest reward for the choices we have made and the price we have paid.

So why does every decade double in speed? At 20, that is all the life you know. At 40, most of us have lived more than half our years. Every decade after that, you have less life ahead of you than behind you. Time accelerates when urgency sets in.

The purpose of Section 1 is to establish a baseline for where you are in life and the questions you are asking in your present decade to apply to the rest of the book. I will be surprised if you do not skip ahead to that decade and read it first. I would.

Come back and read from “Beginning to End”. It will give you a better overview of life to get more value from the chapters that follow. Each decade is a gift. Steward that gift.

We are born into this world helpless. We leave this world helpless. Between helpless and helpless is a choice, a choice of discovery and fulfillment or chance and disappointment. Your life begins with why but was never God’s plan to end with why. A fulfilling life begins with surrender and ends with reward.

God allows every person and every event into our life for a reason and a season. We are the stewards of these opportunities. Every person and every event in our life can be built upon to prepare and refine us to deliver on our created purpose.

Let’s get started by getting real with the questions we all must answer in the decade we find ourselves in today.

Every Decade Doubles in Speed!

Let’s make God Smile!

Chapter 1

In the Beginning

Ages 0–5

Security, Development & Growth

Here I am, world. Who cares?

The Questions a child is asking

- *Am I loved?*
- *Am I safe?*
- *Will they take care of me?*
- *What am I rewarded for?*
- *Do they love me enough to discipline me?*

Did You Know?

- It is estimated that by age 5, 85-90% of our brain development is complete, and vocabulary reaches 2,000–5,000 words.
- It is estimated over one million new neural connections are made every second in these early years.
- The areas most impressionable at this stage are our behaviors, emotional responses, and basic perception of the world.



Ages 6–10

Transition & Adaptation

The Questions of This Season

- *Am I liked by my friends?*
- *Who are my real friends?*
- *How do I look to others?*
- *Is my parents' acceptance based on my performance?*
- *Am I safe to say how I feel, or will I face rejection?*
- *Who are my authorities?*
- *Is the reward of obedience more satisfying than my peers' approval?*

Did You Know?

- The brain rapidly adapts as a child shifts from literal thinking to problem-solving.
- Your worldview is expanding well outside the walls of home.
- Interaction with those outside your family increases the need for acceptance.
- You begin to feel a sense of independence and self-esteem.
- You are learning to read, write, do math, plan for the future, and grasp complex rules-based logic.
- Early puberty begins — shifting hormones and physical changes can make us self-conscious and emotionally complex.
- You start testing boundaries and creating an identity outside that of your parents.

Chapter 2

Primetime

Who am I?

This is the best generation. They are the closest to the return of Christ!

Ignore the News

Ignore the Naysayers

Ignore Social Media

Watch what God is doing and be prepared for what He will do in your generation to deliver on the Great Commission

Ages 11–19

Selfies & Status

The Questions of This Season

- *Am I accepted?*
- *Whose approval do I want?*
- *How can I make myself attractive?*
- *Do I fit in?*
- *Do my parents care enough to invest in me?*
- *Who is my heavenly Father? How much does He love me?*
- *Who do I want to spend my life with?*
- *Who are the authorities I respect and trust?*
- *What will I do to experience the most reward?*

Did You Know?

- Second only to ages 0–5, this is the most impressionable period of your life.
- Identity in this season shifts from your parents to your peers, puberty, profound brain development, and the pursuit of independence.
- Complex social learning and peer acceptance dominate this season above nearly everything else.

Best Responses in This Decade

- Value the life experience of your parents. If not now, you will in your 30s — get ahead of the curve. No one in your life has the capacity to love and care for you more.
- Respect authority. Nothing will shape your spiritual success more for the rest of your life. In this order: God, parents, church, employer.
- Choose your friends carefully. Good friends in this decade can make or break you — peer pressure is a powerful force.
- Begin establishing boundaries now. This is the time.
- Be thankful. Thankfulness is godliness.
- Learn contentment. You don't need everything your friends have. Stuff won't make you happy — it will only make you want more.
- Volunteer whenever you have the opportunity.
- If you're earning income, start giving weekly. Give 10% of your gross paycheck to your church or a cause you care about.
- The intentionality of your parents will determine their ability to influence you. If you experience more acceptance outside your home than within it, your parents' influence will begin to diminish.



“Am I spending more on non-essentials for myself than I’m giving to God? If so, who is really your God?”

The 20s

Survival & the Impressionable Years

The Questions of This Season

- *Who am I?*
- *Who are my people?*
- *Can I survive in an adult world?*
- *What in my past is affecting my spiritual formation?*
- *How self-aware am I? What are my weaknesses, and how will I minimize them?*
- *Who is watching me, and what do they expect?*
- *Do my parents approve of me?*
- *Who are the authorities in my life I respect and trust?*
- *Who am I disappointing?*
- *What do I want to do with my life?*
- *If I’m in a relationship — do I want to spend my life with this person?*

Best Responses in This Decade

- This is a perfect time to volunteer. Work at a summer camp, teach at an urban school, serve on a mission trip, or volunteer at a nursing home.
- Visit a developing country. It will permanently shift your perspective on what matters most.
- Get a mentor. Having someone older who genuinely cares about you will be deeply impactful — especially in a season when many fathers are absent.

- Get serious about your tribe. Know who your people are. Bible schools and volunteer projects are a great platform to find them.
- Develop a relationship with your spiritual authorities. They will value your input. Youth do not rebel against authority. They rebel against the lack of relationship with their authority.
- Try different jobs. Give each one at least a year. If you're unsure by year three, move on. The worst mistake is not discovering what you love in your 20s, only to find yourself stuck doing what you hate in your late 30s — with five kids and a mortgage.
- Start saving now. Commit to setting aside at least 10% that you won't touch until you're fifty.
- If you are in a relationship, take it seriously. This decision will impact your destiny more than almost any other. They will be the single greatest influence on your life and your children's lives.
- Get serious about your moral health. If you are dealing with sexual sin, get serious about accountability and crush it. It will destroy you and can affect everyone around you. Get help now.
- How much are you investing for eternity? There is no better return. Give more to God than you spend on non-essentials. Then step back and watch Him smile.

Warning: Don't let your lifestyle in your 20s rob you of your financial freedom in your 30s.