

Description: Teaching from Keith Minier, Senior Pastor at Grace Fellowship Church in Pickerington, OH, joined with Grace Fellowship's Youth Pastor Travis Smith, about the need to **bridge the gap between the local church and the next generation** with time for discussion and strategic planning. This two-part training for church leadership and volunteer staff includes **FIVE STRATEGIC MOVES** for Grace Fellowship, **FIVE CHALLENGES** for every youth ministry, and **FIVE REALITIES** the Church must face to thrive in the next generation. **NOTE:** Plan for two to three hours for team building and discussion.

Prompt: Keith and Travis will mention the book **Good Faith** by David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons several times. The authors address our culture's two prevailing views of the church: irrelevant and extreme. [Watch the book's trailer](#) to expose our need to bridge the next generation for Christ.

Play: Video of Keith & Travis, "The Bridge" www.buildmomentum.org/resources.html

Process: Select from the following questions to help leaders **remember, rekindle** and **reengage**.

- ⏪ Review Grace Fellowship's FIVE STRATEGIC MOVES to Bridge the Next Generation, asking the questions: **What does this mean? How does this apply to us? What ONE THING can we do?**
 1. Design weekend services that resonate with the NEXT Generation.
 2. Make small groups (not large gathering) core of Youth Ministry (Grades 9-12).
 3. Involve students in church service (e.g., band, greeting, CE, AV) as early as possible.
 4. Get mentors for FAT (faithful, available, teachable) students.
 5. Put best, most talented adults in position to lead student small groups.
- ⏪ Review the FIVE CHALLENGES every Youth Ministry must Bridge, asking the questions: **What does this mean? How does this apply to us? What ONE THING can we do?**
 1. Volunteers: recruiting, training, retention, and effectiveness.
 2. Partnering with parents at various levels: busyness, brokenness, and degrees of buy-in.
 3. Lack of student ownership of Big Church: leveraging service to whole body .
 4. Discipleship model: youth ministry is no longer event-driven; must be incarnational.
 5. Perception of youth ministry as second class (i.e. JV, WNBA, really?)
- ⏪ Review the FIVE REALITIES the Church must Bridge to thrive in future generations, asking the questions: **What does this mean? How does this apply to us? What ONE THING can we do?**
 1. Ongoing hostility toward Christianity
 2. Growing biblical illiteracy
 3. Irrelevance of the local church
 4. Strong need for mentorship
 5. Social media epidemic

Additional Reflection Questions:

- ⌘ ***How has youth ministry changed in the past few generations?***
- ⌘ If you asked the average student whether or not he/she liked the Sunday morning service, ***what would he/she say? Given the opportunity, what changes would he/she make?***
- ⌘ Keith and Travis discussed the importance of honest dialogue between senior pastor and youth pastor. ***How can the youth leader speak into the main service? Why is this important? What might hinder such dialogue?*** Evaluate your communication between senior leadership and youth staff.
- ⌘ Keith and Travis talked about getting “shepherds for the shepherds” of students. ***What is the importance of this idea and what might it look like in practice?***
- ⌘ “The family as we know it is dying,” Keith proclaimed. ***What implications does this have on church ministry – youth, outreach, children’s church, main service, etc.?***
- ⌘ When redefining the youth ministry philosophy at Grace Fellowship, Keith said, “We’re going to force people to choose what they prioritize. We can challenge their priorities.” ***What priorities does your church set for students? Parents?***

Additional Resources:

- ⌘ Consider reading [Four Chair Discipling](#) by Dan Spader and [Good Faith](#) by Kinnaman/Lyons.
- ⌘ [Follow this link](#) to access Student Commit Card provided by Grace Fellowship.
- ⌘ [Follow this link](#) to access Student Leader Manual provided by Grace Fellowship.
- ⌘ Check CE National for upcoming [CELS Conference](#) to engage with experienced youth workers from various ministry contexts and tune up your leadership.

Pray: Read Psalm 24 aloud. Invite the King of Glory to raise up the next generation to seek Him. Pray for leaders with clean hands and pure hearts. Pray for God’s blessing over your student ministries.