

Theme: We are called to live for that which endures - things which have been passed down for generations, and which should be passed on to generations to come. But we live in a world of perpetual novelty, which is dominated by the trendy and the trivial, and is often disdainful of that which has gone before.

I. Intro – Chinese Students in Annapolis

- A. Hosting Chinese students a few years back
- B. Asked at last minute to take on a tour of Annapolis and USNA
- C. Talking about the history of Annapolis - how old it is
- D. Their culture goes back over 5,000 years! Different idea of old!
- E. Microcosm of the iWorld - where old is in nanoseconds - not years
- F. Does the enduring matter? Or is newer always better?

II. Called To A Long Term Perspective

- A. Called to be rooted in what has gone before
O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. ² I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, **things from of old — ³ what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us.**
Psalms 78:1–3
 - 1. This teaching is something that has lasted
 - 2. It was handed down from generations before
- B. Called to pass on to future generations
We will not hide them from **their children; we will tell the next generation** the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. ⁵ He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel,

which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, ⁶ so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. Psalms 78:4–6

- 1. The Psalmist said he would tell next generation
 - 2. God commands the children to be taught
 - 3. Three or four generations in view - multigenerational perspective
- C. The goal - hearts and minds turned towards God
Then they would **put their trust in God** and would **not forget his deeds** but would keep his commands. ⁸ They would not be like their forefathers — a stubborn and rebellious generation, **whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him.** Psalms 78:7–8
 - 1. The goal is not just keeping tradition - but hearts and minds turned towards God
 - 2. But if we are not rooted in that which endures - we repeat the mistakes of the past
 - D. This is an enduring rooted life
I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, **things from of old — ³ what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us.** ⁴ We will not hide them from their **children**; we will tell the **next generation** the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. ⁵ He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, ⁶ so the next generation would know them, **even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children.**
Psalms 78:2–6

1. A life of enduring, rooted relationships - generations
2. A life of enduring, rooted beliefs - godly tradition
 - a. Traditionalism - the dead faith of the living
 - b. Tradition - the living faith of the dead
3. A life focused on that which endures, rooted in what is truly important

- c. We are threatened by information overload - so things are dropped off and forgotten
- d. Formerly we committed these things to memory
- e. We now look them up on the web - and forfeit how memorization shapes our hearts and minds
- f. Formerly information lasted for generations - now it is disposable

III. The iWorld - Transient, Trendy, and Trivial

A. The iWorld is inherently transient - not enduring

1. Relationships are more transient than ever before
 - a. Historically you were born, lived, died within a few miles
 - b. This is true of fewer and fewer people
 - c. Historically we worked, lived near, worshipped with the same small group of people
 - d. Now these are all different groups - and often never come together
 - e. We move often, change jobs often, even change churches - making relationships transient
 - f. The result - hiring wedding planners, Rent a Grandma, etc. (from *The Outsourced Self* by Arlie Russell Hochschild)
 - g. Contrast this with the picture in Psalm 78 of generational relationships in community
2. Information is more transient than ever before
 - a. Historically cultures had information passed through generations
 - b. Now we are a conglomeration of cultures

B. The iWorld is inherently trendy - not enduring

1. Increasingly what matters is what is trendy, hip, new
2. In a time of informational overload, what gets noticed is the new and chic
3. This values the new and untested - and devalues that which has endured for generations
4. What is trendy today - is stale and out of fashion tomorrow
5. To stay current everything needs to constantly change
6. Example: Old Spice deodorant label - same stuff, new look
7. Contrast all of this with Psalm 78 - important information that endures without change
8. Because our nature has not changed - nor have our real needs
9. We have a faith once for all given to us - no change needed!

Dear friends, although I was very eager to write to you about the salvation we share, I felt I had to write

and urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints. Jude 1:3

C. The iWorld is inherently trivial - not important

1. In a world of information glut that favors the trendy, the trivial will always dominate the enduring
2. Interview with an author going on CNN to discuss how the trivial has replaced the important - and he was interrupted to cover Paris Hilton's latest escapade
3. The trivial requires minimal effort to understand, incorporate and pass on
4. We prefer things that are easy - even if they are trivial - over things that are hard - even if they are important
Like other addictive or compulsive behaviors, television seems to be a surprisingly unsatisfying experience. Both time diaries and the "beeper" studies find that for the average viewer television is about as enjoyable as housework and cooking, ranking well below other leisure activities and indeed below work itself. TV's dominance in our lives reflects not its sublime pleasures, but its minimal costs. - Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone*
5. Because of the volume and pace of life in the iWorld, we avoid that which takes time - the enduring
Alas, as a result of our lifestyles, it grows harder and harder to see why focal practices might be worthy priorities: As the pace of life increases, Americans are becoming more likely to avoid activities that require patience, learning, discipline, and total commitment. Instead, they choose activities . . . that lend themselves to their hurried

lives and to the endless parade of new technology. - John P. Robinson and Geoffrey Godbey, *Time for Life*.

6. Contrast this with Psalm 78 - a life centered around faith, family, friends - all of which take real commitment over long periods of time.
7. Contrast this with Psalm 78 - a life centered around that which is most important - God and the faith once for all delivered to us.

D. The deep problem - the impoverished life of the transient, trendy, and trivial

1. A life dominated by the transient, trendy, and trivial is an impoverished life. It is shallow and thin.
2. But if not carefully thought through, the iWorld leads to just this sort of impoverished life
Despite its staggering achievements in raising our standard of living, our technology-dominated society is impoverishing far too many lives. The good life, the generous life, the abundant life has obviously eluded technology - Eugene Peterson, foreword to Arthur Boers, *Living Into Focus - Choosing What Matters In An Age of Distractions*
3. A rich life is not determined by possessions, but by embracing that which endures
So we learn to distinguish between standard of living and wealth. Standard of living simply means more money, faster cars, and bigger houses. Wealth comprises living well, having friends, exercising compassion, enjoying and celebrating goodness and beauty, and worshiping God. - Eugene Peterson, foreword to Arthur Boers, *Living Into Focus - Choosing What Matters In An Age of Distractions*

IV. Applying the Word In the iWorld

- A. Is my life dominated by that which endures - or the transient?
1. The iWorld encourages the transient, trendy, and trivial
 2. It can develop a habit and taste for this in us
 3. It makes all of this so easy - and that which endures seems so hard
 4. How much of my time is given to that which is utterly trivial - which I will not even remember weeks or months from now?
 5. Is my life rooted God's truth and community - is it dominated by less important things?
- B. What is my plan for controlling the trivial in my life?
1. The iWorld forces the trivial upon us constantly
 2. To make room for the enduring requires controlling the intake of the trivial
 3. Do I make space in my life for God's truth - or does it get leftovers?
 4. Do I make space in my life for community - or does it get leftovers?
 5. I encourage you - purposefully plan for intake of God's truth and building community - and make other things fit around that
 6. Once again - consider taking a fast from the iWorld - you might be surprised how that will renew you

C. Communion - focusing on that which endures

1. Our enduring need for salvation
2. God's enduring provision in Christ
3. Our enduring inheritance in heaven

Enduring In A Transient World

Psalm 78:1-8
September 29, 2013
Communion
Psalm 128:5-6

May the Lord bless you from Zion all the days of your life; may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem, ⁶ and may you live to see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel. Psalms 128:5-6

1 O my people, hear my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth. 2 I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter hidden things, things from of old — 3 what we have heard and known, what our fathers have told us. 4 We will not hide them from their children; we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. 5 He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their children, 6 so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children. 7 Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands. 8 They would not be like their forefathers — a stubborn and rebellious generation, whose hearts were not loyal to God, whose spirits were not faithful to him. Psalms 78:1-8