



NOT ON OUR WATCH

Module #1

Heart of Not on our Watch

We will not hide them from their children,
but tell to the coming generation
the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might,
and the wonders that he has done. Psalm 78:4

This verse will represent our mission and goal over the next year. It will be the commitment we are making to disciple our children and tell them about the glorious deeds of the Lord. I began reading the book of Judges in my quiet time and kept coming across the fact that it only took a generation for the Israelites to forget about the glorious deeds of the Lord. Judges 2:10 says, “And there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel.” This verse spoke to me and I began to think about my own children and the children who come to our church. I began to realize that the reason a generation arose who did not know the Lord was because the parents and teachers had failed to do what God called them to do. They did not carry out the verse in Psalm 78:4. They did not tell to the coming generation the things the Lord had done. I began to be convicted and committed that this would not happen on our watch. So the phrase “NOT ON OUR WATCH” kept playing over and over in my head. “NOT ON OUR WATCH” will a generation arise that does not know the glorious deeds of the Lord. Together we will raise up a generation who knows the Lord and the glorious things he has done. This is our commitment as volunteers, teachers, leaders, and parents at our church.

Not On Our Watch is the heartbeat by which everything you do in ministry is filtered through. To make room for intense discipleship to happen you might have to say no to other things you are doing in your ministry. This is where evaluation comes into play. What is happening in your ministry that is not serving the purpose of fulfilling what Psalm 78:4 says? What events might need to be restructured so that you can better achieve your goals of making the glorious deeds of the Lord known to the next generation? How can you get your volunteers to understand and follow the vision that you have for your ministry?

Kids ministry should be the driving force for making the glorious deeds of the Lord known to the next generation. It is the job of the parents and church leaders to pass on their faith to the next generation.

Watch Towers used to be a place for the watchman to make sure the enemy would not penetrate the walls of the city they were trying to protect. If the watchman fell asleep, looked away from his post, or was distracted in any way, the enemy would be able to get through. We are the watchmen sitting in the watchtowers of our children's lives. We can not fall asleep, because if we are not fighting to share the glorious deeds of the Lord to our children, then someone else is influencing them, and many times in negative ways. We can not look away or be distracted by the world who tells us that our children need to be the smartest, and in the most extracurricular activities to be successful, all the while we are neglecting to tell them about the glorious deeds of the Lord. They must be told, and we must be watchmen and women who will not allow the enemy into our cities. We must take our role in our watch towers seriously. Because if we are not telling our children, who will?

This is a call for all churches to take their role seriously, to declare that Not On Our Watch will a generation arise that does not know the Lord and his glorious deeds. This is our anthem, and our campaign. This is our declaration.

First Steps

This begins with church staff. This is a top down concept. If your staff is on board, then the people will catch the vision. Begin talking to your pastor about your passion to make this theme happen throughout your church. Brainstorm ideas about how to relate this concept to the people. The congregation needs to be shown that Children's ministry is so much more than babysitting. It is raising up a generation to know the Lord. Failure is not an option. Without us telling the next generation, how will they know. This is not just something they will pick up on their own. Brainstorm ideas of how you can use this theme to filter all the events and activities you currently do. Are there things you need to add? Are there things you need to take away? Do you need to change curriculum?

Launch Team

Find a core group of parents in your ministry (possibly a children's council if one exists) and create a launch team. These will be the people who are invested in the spiritual growth of their children. Include your most faithful volunteers on this team. These will be people who will cheer you on as you lead your church into this concept. Support is key, and help is always welcomed. Get these people together for lunch or dinner. At this meeting explain the Not On Our Watch concept. Go over with them the verses throughout Scripture that talk about us passing our faith on to the next generation. Explain your desire to have this concept filter everything your children's ministry does. Explain to them about how we are the watchmen and women in the watchtowers of our children's spiritual lives.

Parent Commitment

Parents often have been told they are the primary disciplers of their children. However, they often have not been given the resources to be able to do those things. They want to disciple their kids, but are not sure what to do. Parent commitment can be a time when you share your

vision with parents and then give them the resources they need to accomplish their goals. Sharing your vision could look like you explaining to them the heart of Not On Our Watch. Giving them resources could look like you having handouts available for them to take home to remind them of their goal to disciple their children. Resources could be books, curriculum take home sheets, or other available discipleship resources through Not On Our Watch (check our website for resources coming February 2020). Parent commitment can look like a parent luncheon with your current parents. This can also be done as part of the prerequisite of a baby dedication class. This can also be done as a new member class for new people joining the church. Parents should walk away from this with an understanding of your vision for the children's ministry, and they should be armed with resources to make Not On Our Watch happen in their homes. Communicate that one of your jobs as the Children's Minister is to be an available resource for them. You are in their corner, and you want them to succeed. Check in on them from time to time after you have had this time of parent commitment with them to see how things are going. Let them know they are not alone, and failing only comes from not trying. This is a beautiful partnership where parents and church leaders will not neglect the coming generation. Not On Our Watch will a generation arise that does not know the Lord.

Advertise

When we first launched this in our church we used the not on our watch logo everywhere we could. We made shirts, coffee mugs, and gifts, and gave them to my volunteers. We flooded the logo everywhere. Anytime I got the chance I talked about this with parents and leaders. I also used the verse in everything I did. I talked about Psalms 78:4 in every meeting I led, in every training I did, and with any parents I talked to. I wanted this to be constantly before us so that we would remember what we are called to do. We have all the merchandise you need to advertise this throughout your church. Check out our website, or email me at erinwoodfin@yahoo.com, for more information about ordering those items to advertise this in your church. Remember that keeping this ever before your people is the most important thing you can do as a leader.

Training

Finally it is time to train your leaders. Not On Our Watch training will be a process that we walk through over the next few months together. Because your leaders will be the hands and feet of what you are wanting to accomplish throughout this process. Training your leaders and your parents will be the only way that this will work in your church. In the next steps of the Not On Our Watch process we will talk through how to equip your small group leaders to be the best they can be. We will walk through how to create community among your volunteers, and how prayer can change your group. Then finally we will tackle the parents and how to connect with them in such a way that makes it feel like a team effort and not a tug-o-war.

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