

Developmental Tasks in the Adult Life Cycle

**Preparing for and Overcoming the
Challenges of Each Stage of Life**

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Developmental Tasks in the Adult Life Cycle

Preparing for and Overcoming the Challenges of Each Stage of Life

As adults grow older they engage certain aspects of life in which they want, and need, to be involved. In order to do so they need to develop required competencies, abilities and other, especially spiritual, maturity, in order to perform the responsibilities, tasks, that equip them and others with whom they'll be involved (e.g., family and work) for successfully moving into, meeting the challenges of, and experiencing the benefits offered in that new stage of life. Accomplishing the tasks associated with the next stage of life enables one to move into that stage.

Developmental Tasks in the Adult Life Cycle

Preparing for and Overcoming the Challenges of Each Stage of Life

This scientific basis of this program is the social science research that studies human behavior all over the world. Other research has also been done, but these are classic studies, and with the adaptations here included, they are highly useful for ministry to people going through the stages of the adult life cycle. This program is presented with the warm encouragement of the participants to engage in evaluating the research over against the context in which they are living and working AND especially over against the most important standard of God's Word, which is also included. As the research suggests, it is able to describe the situation across cultures, but it observes and recognizes variance within cultures. To be most helpful to their ministry for Christ, the participants must discern the degree to which the research applies to them and to the realities unique to their and their people's lives and make appropriate modifications.

Defining and Distinguishing Contemporary Generations

A **generation** is "all of the people born and living at about the same time, regarded collectively." It can also be described as, "the average period, generally considered to be about thirty years, during which children are born and grow up, become adults, and begin to have children of their own."* Some scholars use 20-year periods and less. If the historic meaning of the word generation (> L. *generāre* "to bring into being," referring to procreation) is to be maintained and make sense, it should not refer to humans less than 18, the beginning of adulthood and the earliest desirable age for marriage and procreation, especially in those developed countries with an economy based on required skills, experience, and education.

It is important to keep in mind that the sociological concept of generations, especially in the West, is largely conditioned by cultural circumstances and their associated values. Further, considerable differences exist among researchers pertaining to the naming, timeframe, causes shaping, and characteristics of the generations.

*(<https://www.google.com/search?q=generational+cohorts+according+to+barna+research&oeq=Genera&aqs=chrome.2.69i57j0j35i39j0l3.10720j0j8&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>; Accessed 10/24/19)

Contemporary Generations

- **Gen Z/iGen/Centennials:** Born between 1999 and 2015
- **Millennial/Generation Y:** Born between 1984 and 1998
- **Buster/Gen-X:** Born between 1965 and 1983
- **Boomer/Me Generation:** Born between 1946 and 1964
- **Elder/Maturist/Silent/Builder Generation:** Born between 1925 and 1945
- **G.I. Generation/Greatest Generation:** Born between 1901 and 1924

This schema of contemporary generations is based on and largely from the Barna Group, widely considered to be a leading research organization focused on the intersection of faith and culture, a private, non-partisan, for-profit organization under the umbrella of the Issachar Companies. Located in Ventura, California, Barna Group has been conducting and analyzing primary research to understand cultural trends related to values, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors since 1984. Other social science researchers use somewhat, but not often significantly, different terms and dates with admitted imprecision, some terms of which are indicated along with Barna's designations. Barna doesn't include the first (the oldest) generation.

Naming Generations Outside the United States

“...the concept of social generations like these [on the preceding slide] is largely a Western notion and...generational names are often influenced by local or regional events. In South Africa, for example, people born after the [end of apartheid](#) in 1994 are referred to as the Born-Free Generation. Romanians born after the [collapse of communism](#) in 1989 are sometimes called the Revolution Generation.” (<https://www.thoughtco.com/names-of-generations-1435472>; Accessed 10/24/19)

In the West, these sociological generation designations are largely driven by business attempts to identify the differences across, and similarities within, age cohorts. Businesses and other organizations hire researchers to help them identify the similar desires and other characteristics within each age group in order to more effectively focus their marketing strategies to the target groups they are trying to reach. For example, the youngest, the Gen Z/iGen/Centennials, are called iGen, because a common characteristic of them is that most are pervasively “glued” to their digital devices and connected (but, very significantly, not usually in relationship) with each other and the world through the (i)nternet.

Naming Generations Outside the United States

Churches and church organizations, called by Christ Jesus to reach out to all people for him, also sense the value of such information. This research indicates some felt needs of, as well as terms that resonate with, each age group that enable pastors, teachers, staff members, evangelists, church members, and others (e.g., denominational leaders and seminary professors) to communicate more effectively, e.g., in sermons, classes, specific programming, witnessing, and advertising the church.

Unfelt needs of the generations are also expressed in the research that leads to these designations. For example, current studies are linking the obsession of the iGen cohort to their digital devices with loneliness and depression that has other worse effects, such as an increasing number of suicides. That obsession is concerning: I was in a restaurant recently having a conversation with my youngest granddaughter, and I noticed that at all the other tables, iGens were focused on their devices and failing to communicate with the human beings sitting alongside them!

Naming Generations Outside the United States

In an insightful report, *Washington Post* columnist, Michael Gerson, writes: “The highest prevalence of major depressive disorder is among people aged 18-25. The suicide rate for people 18-19 increased 56% between 2008 and 2017...nearly half of Americans say they are often lonely. About 20% of millennials report that they have no friends at all. Many of us have grown rusty in the task of social connection...Isolation is a growth medium for severe depression and suicidal thoughts. Without hearing some other, kinder voice, the echoes of self-condemnation can grow louder and louder. Without outside intervention, a downward spiral can be rapid, uninterrupted and deadly. People who struggle with depression need someone who is willing to say, ‘You may not want to hear this, but I care about you and I’m [concerned] about you. Please tell me how you are hurting and allow me to help.’”^{*} That voice can and should come especially from the church.

Is it necessary, or at least desirable, for churches and church organizations in non-Western countries to identify such age cohort differences? That question can best be answered by the churches in each country. Yet, to the degree that certain countries and subcultures look to the West and adopt specific Western worldviews and ways, it could be helpful to know about these research findings in order to reach and teach those who are influenced by these socio-cultural factors.

^{*}Michael Gerson, “The downward spirals of depression can be deadly,” *Reporter-Herald*, September 9, 2019, p. 4A.

Defining and Distinguishing Contemporary Generations

While the church and church organizations need to know this sociological generation information for the above reasons, the main focus of this program will be on the required tasks throughout the stages of human life that are largely driven by normal, healthy, biology and the natural order that God has built into his creation, which, therefore, are common throughout the world. Characteristics of the stages will be given, some of which, involving tasks, parallel and interface with the generational designations. Also included are Biblical references and implications and applications, largely pertaining to and for the church and our work, which the Lord has called us to do.

The careful scientific research findings pertaining to these life stages, which roughly parallel the sociological generational distinctions, are task-oriented rather than value oriented as with the emphasis on generations. Thus, it is to these vital tasks, which are essential in each age group that we now turn our attention.

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Characteristics

**Leaving Home
(18-22)/**

Young Adulthood (19-40)* /

**Early Adulthood
(19-29)****

1. Break psychological ties.
2. Choose careers.
3. Enter work.
4. Handle peer relationships.
5. Manage home.
6. Manage time.
7. Adjust to life on own.
8. Problem solve.
9. Manage stress accompanying change.

Vivian McCoy's research is the scientific basis of this program, and her Life Stage labels are listed first. Asterisks indicate the additional important findings of Erikson and Havighurst.

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Characteristics

Leaving Home

(18-22)/

Young Adulthood

(19-40)* /

Early Adulthood

(19-29)**

10. Intimacy vs. Isolation:*

Young adults need to form intimate, loving relationships with other people. Success at this stage leads to healthy and strong relationships and personal well-being, but failure leads to loneliness and isolation. Relate to the obsession many in this age have with their digital devices. Consider the implications, including for the church.

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Leaving Home (18-22)/
Young Adulthood
(19-40)* /
Early Adulthood (19-
29)****

1. "...a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh...they are no longer two, but one." (Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:4-6)
2. "But Rehoboam rejected the advice the elders gave him and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were serving him. (2 Chronicles 10:8)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Leaving Home
(18-22)/**

**Young Adulthood
(19-40)* /**

**Early Adulthood (19-
29)****

3. “Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come and the years approach when you will say, ‘I find no pleasure in them’” (Ecclesiastes 12:1)
4. “Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.” (Colossians 4:5)
5. “...do not worry” (Matthew 6:25-34); “do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, presents your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6)

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage

Implications/Applications

Leaving Home

(18-22)/

Young Adulthood

(19-40)* /

Early Adulthood

(19-29)**

1. Hire a professional or select a volunteer to maintain contact with these young adults and conduct programs for those who remain in or visit their families.
2. Facilitate connecting younger people with older mentors. Help them develop healthy relationships with peers and others and to see the difference vis-à-vis being connected to but not in relationship with other humans, especially fellow believers in Christ.
3. Teach a minicourse on “Biblical Guidelines for Selecting a Marriage Partner.”
4. Ask people if they have a church home. If they don’t, urge them to find one that faithfully proclaims God’s Word.
5. Suggest and encourage each young adult to relate to an older person maturing in Christ who could be a mentor.

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage

**Leaving Home
(18-22)/**

**Young Adulthood
(19-40)* /**

Early Adulthood (19-29)**

Implications/Applications

6. Offer a course or a one-day seminar on “Biblical Guidelines for Doing God’s Will in the Workplace.”
7. Offer a course or seminar on stewardship and financial planning.
8. Offer a course or seminar led by a nurse or physician on avoiding the health issues in society today.
9. Encourage people, and offer help for them, to daily read God’s Word and pray.

Note: The suggestions in this and the following sections labeled Implications/Applications are not listed in order of importance, nor are they exhaustive.

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage	Implications/Applications
Leaving Home (18-22)/	Other ideas from the group discussion:
Young Adulthood (19-40)* /	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• How to be good children and grandchildren.
Early Adulthood (19-29)**	

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Characteristics

Becoming Adult (23-28)/

Young Adulthood

(19-40)* /

Early Adulthood

(19-29)**

1. Select mate.
2. Learn to live with a marriage partner.**
3. Settle in work, begin career ladder.
4. Start a family;** parent—rear children.**
5. Manage a home.
6. Become involved in community. Take on civic responsibility.**
7. Consume wisely.
8. Hometown.
9. Socially interact; find a congenial social group.**
10. Achieve autonomy.
11. Problem solve.
12. Manage stress accompanying change.

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

Becoming Adult (23-28)/

**Young Adulthood
(19-40)* /**

Early Adulthood (19-29)**

1. “Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.” (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; 1 Corinthians 7:39; Genesis 24:3; 28:1; Joshua 23:12-13)
2. “A wife of noble character... provides food for her family.... considers a field and buys it; out of her earnings she plants a vineyard... She sees that her trading is profitable.” (Proverbs 31:10, 15-18)
3. “Mutually submit...wives submit to and respect your husbands... husband love your wives.” (Ephesians 5:21-33)
4. “Fathers...bring up... children in the training and instruction of the Lord.... (Ephesians 6:4) Discipline them. (Hebrews 12:9)
5. “...manage his...family....” (1 Timothy 3:5)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

Becoming Adult (23-28)/

Young Adulthood (19-40)* /

Early Adulthood (19-29)**

6. "A wife of noble character.... Her husband is respected at the city gate, where he takes his seat among the elders of the land. She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her: 'Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.' Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the LORD is to be praised. Give her the reward she has earned, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate." (Proverbs 31:10, 23, 27-31)

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage	Implications/Applications
Becoming Adult (23-28)/	1. Hire a professional or select a volunteer to maintain contact with these young adults and conduct programs for those who remain in or visit their families.
Young Adulthood (19-40)* /	2. Teach a minicourse or a seminar on “Biblical Guidelines for Selecting a Marriage Partner.”
Early Adulthood (19-29)**	3. Offer a course on “Biblical Guidelines for Parenting.” 4. Suggest and encourage each young adult and each couple to relate to an older person or couple maturing in Christ who could be (a) mentor(s).

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage

Implications/Applications

Becoming Adult (23-28)/

Young Adulthood (19-40)* /

Early Adulthood (19-29)**

5. Offer a course or a one-day seminar on “Biblical Guidelines for Doing God’s Will in the Workplace.”
6. Offer a course or seminar on stewardship and financial planning.
7. Encourage people, and offer help for them, to daily read God’s Word and pray.
8. Ask people if they have a church home. If they don’t, urge them to find one that faithfully proclaims God’s Word.

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage

Implications/Applications

Becoming Adult (23-28)/

Young Adulthood (19-40)* /

Early Adulthood (19-29)**

Other ideas from the group discussion:

- Course on how to do household work, e.g., teaching cooking, cleaning.
- After the baby is born the mother has stress. The role changes and parents may be confused, responsibility changes. To prepare them to be parents is very important.
- Parent education.
- Proverbs 31—very important for wives to manage a home.

New Change: Longer Early Adulthood

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, et al., Transition to Adult in Asia

Delayed Early Adulthood

- A new development in the West and in Asia is occurring among young adults.
- Transition to early adulthood tasks occurring 5 – 10 years later than previously if it ever occurs.

Main Characteristics in U. S.

1. Later entry into the work force.
2. Longer period of time living in the natal home.
3. Delay of marriage.
4. Delay of childbearing.
5. Transition less orderly: young adults may leave home and then return after a failed partnership or inability to live independently.
6. Decoupling of sex & marriage: increasing cohabitation & single parenthood.

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Delayed Early Adulthood

- A new development in the West and in Asia is occurring among young adults.
- Transition to early adulthood tasks occurring 5 – 10 years later than previously if it ever occurs.

Related Bible References

1. “Be fruitful and increase in number....” (Genesis 1:28)
2. “‘I hate divorce,’ says the LORD God....” (Malachi 2:16; Matthew 19:8-10)
3. “Flee from sexual immorality. (1 Corinthians 6:13-20; Ephesians 5:3)

New Change: Longer Early Adulthood

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, et al., Transition to Adult in Asia

Delayed Early Adulthood

- A new development in the West and in Asia is occurring among young adults.
- The new development is broadly similar throughout the West but with some structural and cultural differences across regions due largely to class, ethnic, regional, and religious distinctions.

Causes of Delayed Early Adulthood in the U. S.

1. Extension of education.
2. Shifts in the labor market.
3. Emphasis on gender equality.
4. Widespread availability of effective contraception.
5. Ideological changes including growing individualism.

New Change: Longer Early Adulthood

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, et al., Transition to Adult in Asia

Delayed Early Adulthood

- A new development in Asia as well as in the West is occurring among young adults.

Main Characteristics

1. Later entry into the work force.
2. Longer period of time living in the natal home.
3. Delay of marriage.
4. Delay of childbearing.

New Change: Longer Early Adulthood

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, et al., Transition to Adult in Asia

Delayed Early Adulthood

- A new development in Asia and in the West is occurring among young adults.

Results of Lengthened Early Adulthood in Asia

1. Challenges to education and health systems and labor markets.
2. Youth unemployment rates in some nations are 3 x that of adults.
3. The above + rising housing prices = hard for youth to find financial and residential independence.

New Change: Longer Early Adulthood

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, et al., Transition to Adult in Asia

Delayed Early Adulthood

- A new development in Asia and in the West is occurring among young adults.

Asian Uniquenesses in Lengthened Early Adulthood

1. Cohabitation among couples is still uncommon but rising in China.
2. Premarital sex is increasing in China.
3. Childbearing outside marriage is rare but increasing in China.
4. Geographic migration is common for a significant percentage of the population.
5. Religion continues to strongly influence behavior of young adults.

New Change: Longer Early Adulthood

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, et al., Transition to Adult in Asia

Delayed Early Adulthood

- This is a new development in Asia and in the West among young adults.
- Where those grew up experiencing turbulent historical events, recent Chinese have transitioned to marriage and parenting sooner than their peers in the West.

Factors Affecting Transition to Adulthood in China

1. Greater emphasis on getting married than in the West.
2. Greater emphasis on having children within marriage.
 - + One-quarter of young adults prefer having sons if can have only one child.
3. Fulfilling family obligations more important than in the West.
4. Economic and political developments.

New Change: Longer Early Adulthood

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, et al., Transition to Adult in Asia

Delayed Early Adulthood

- In Asia today there is a general shift toward
 - + more schooling,
 - + later marriage, and
 - + lower fertility,but the pathways toward these transitions have become ever more diverse over time.

Factors Affecting Transition to Adulthood in China

5. Economic reforms have had a positive impact on young adults' educational attainment and economic well-being but have resulted in a wider difference between rural and urban youth's life trajectories.
6. In China only about 25% of young adults have access to higher education. Professor Tina in Beijing presents new government research: gross education enrollment was 34.5% in 2013 (higher in urban areas, lower in rural areas).

New Change: Longer Early Adulthood

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, et al., Transition to Adult in Asia

Delayed Early Adulthood

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Factors Affecting Transition to Adulthood in Asia

7. While leaving home in Asia has been affected by the rise in the age at which young people marry, the process differs significantly in countries where multigenerational households and patrilocality (living near or with the husband's parents) are still widely observed across and within nations.
8. Everywhere, rural areas practice a more traditional pattern, supported in part by the availability of housing and norms governing household arrangements.

New Change: Longer Early Adulthood

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, et al., Transition to Adult in Asia

Delayed Early Adulthood

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+ more schooling,
+ later marriage, and
+ lower fertility,
but the pathways toward these transitions have become ever more diverse over time.

Factors Affecting Transition to Adulthood in Asia

9. If premarital sexual activity can remain stigmatized, cohabitation may remain rare for the foreseeable future.
10. Low premarital sex and cohabitation means that nonmarital fertility may remain low for the foreseeable future in contrast to most Western nations.

New Change: Longer Early Adulthood

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, et al., Transition to Adult in Asia

Delayed Early Adulthood

- In Asia today there is a general shift toward
 - + more schooling,
 - + later marriage, and
 - + lower fertility,
- but the pathways toward these transitions have become ever more diverse over time.

Factors Affecting Transition to Adulthood in Asia

11. The increasing exposure of Asian youths to Western media which promotes sexual “freedom,” results in a challenge to Asian families to constrain sexual behavior before marriage.

New Change: Longer Early Adulthood

Wei-Jun Jean Yeung, et al., Transition to Adult in Asia

Delayed Early Adulthood

- In Asia today there is a general shift toward
+ more schooling,
+ later marriage, and
+ lower fertility,
- but the pathways toward these transitions have become ever more diverse over time.

Class Discussion/Feedback

- People say that more education results in less opportunity for fertility.
- Now students who want to be married can still stay in the university, but they if they have children they have to leave the university.
- If parents, especially on husband's side, are willing to pay for their son's marriage, they are willing to take care of the children.
- If they are married that doesn't mean they are psychologically independent.
- The research is applicable to Beijing.

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Delayed Early Adulthood

- In Asia today there is a general shift toward
+ more schooling,
+ later marriage, and
+ lower fertility,
- but the pathways toward these transitions have become ever more diverse over time.

Related Bible References

1. “...do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out in to the world.” (1 John 4:1)
2. “...not everything is beneficial.” (1 Corinthians 6:12-20)
3. GOOD NEWS: God’s Word and the Holy Spirit working directly in individual’s and family’s hearts and minds and through the church can transform perspectives and facilitate sanctified lives. (Romans 12:1-2)

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage	Implications/Applications
Becoming Adult (23-28)/	Other ideas from the group discussion:
Young Adulthood (19-40)* /	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="998 668 1792 1099">• In larger cities it is very dangerous to leave children in the hands of a nursery attendant—grandparents feel constrained to help raise the children.
Early Adulthood (19-29)**	

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Characteristics

**Catch 30 (29-34)/
Young Adulthood
(19-40)* /
Early Adulthood (19-
29)****

1. Search for personal values.
2. Reappraise relationships.
3. Progress in career.
4. Accept growing children.
5. Put down roots, achieve "permanent" home.
6. Problem solve.
7. Manage stress accompanying change.

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Catch 30 (29-34)/
Young Adulthood (19-
40)*/
Early Adulthood (19-
29)****

1. "Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one." (Deuteronomy 6:4)
2. "...all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus." (Romans 3:23-24)
3. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16 NASB)
4. "...if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." (Romans 10:9)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

**Catch 30 (29-34)/
Young Adulthood
(19-40)* /
Early Adulthood (19-
29)****

Related Bible References

5. “Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. (John 14:6)
6. “Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him.” (John 14:21)
7. “...you are...chosen...holy...that you may declare.... Live such good lives....” (1 Peter 2:9-12)

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage	Implications/Applications
Catch 30 (29-34)/ Young Adulthood (19-40)* / Early Adulthood (19-29)**	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="948 496 1827 743">1. Hire a professional or select a volunteer to maintain contact with young adults and conduct programs for those who remain in or visit their families.<li data-bbox="948 765 1827 911">2. Teach a minicourse on “Biblical Guidelines for Selecting a Marriage Partner.”<li data-bbox="948 932 1827 1029">3. Offer a course on “God’s Will for Marriage.”<li data-bbox="948 1051 1827 1148">4. Offer a course on “Biblical Guidelines for Parenting.”<li data-bbox="948 1169 1827 1359">5. Suggest and encourage each young adult and each couple to relate to an older person or couple maturing in Christ who could be (a) mentor(s).

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage

Implications/Applications

**Catch 30 (29-34)/
Young Adulthood (19-40)*/
Early Adulthood (19-29)****

6. Offer a course or a one-day seminar on “Biblical Guidelines for Doing God’s Will in the Workplace.”
7. Offer a course or seminar on stewardship and financial planning.
8. Encourage people, and offer help for them, to daily read God’s Word and pray.
9. Ask people if they have a church home. If they don’t, urge them to find one that faithfully proclaims God’s Word.

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage	Implications/Applications
Catch 30 (29-34)/ Young Adulthood (19-40)* / Early Adulthood (19-29)**	Other ideas from the group discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1000 668 1277 715">• Courses<li data-bbox="1000 758 1731 958">• We should develop our personal lives to be more effective models.<li data-bbox="1000 1001 1740 1132">• Time management: how I manage my time.

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Characteristics

**Midlife Reexamination
(34-43)/**

**Middle Adulthood (40-
65)* /**

Middle Age (30-60)**

1. Search for meaning.
2. Reassess marriage.
3. Relate to teenage children; assist teenage children to become responsible adults.**
4. Relate to aging parents; adjust to aging parents.**
5. Reexamine work.
6. Reassess personal priorities and values.
7. Adjust to single life.
8. Problem solve.
9. Manage stress accompanying change.

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Life Stage

**Midlife Reexamination
(34-43)/**

**Middle Adulthood (40-
65)* /**

Middle Age (30-60)**

Characteristics

10. Generativity vs. Stagnation*

Adults feel a need to produce and/or nurture what will be a legacy for them, including for many by having children or providing a significant and positive change that helps other people. Succeeding in this endeavor leads to a sense of usefulness and accomplishment, but failure results in a feeling of uselessness, frustration, and going nowhere in the world.

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Midlife Reexamination
(34-43)/**

**Middle Adulthood (40-
65)* /**

Middle Age (30-60)**

1. “Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body. Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.” (Ecclesiastes 12:12b-13)
2. “It is because of [God] that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is our righteousness, holiness and redemption.” (1 Corinthians 1:30)
3. “So guard yourself in your spirit, and do not break faith with the wife of your youth. ‘I hate divorce,’ says the LORD God...” (Malachi 2:15-16; Matthew 19:8-10)
4. “Are you married? Do not seek a divorce. Are you unmarried? Do not look for a wife.”(1 Corinthians 7:27)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage	Related Bible References
Midlife Reexamination (34-43)/	5. “...manage his...family....” (1 Timothy 3:5)
Middle Adulthood (40- 65)* /	6. “...provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family....”
Middle Age (30-60)**	(1 Timothy 5:8)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Midlife Reexamination
(34-43)/**

**Middle Adulthood (40-
65)* /**

Middle Age (30-60)**

7. “Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God. For he will not often consider the years of his life, because God keeps him occupied with the gladness of his heart. (Ecclesiastes 5:19-20 NASB) + Ecclesiastes 5:10, 1 Timothy 6:10 [No “midlife crisis” for the man and woman of God maturing in Christlikeness.]

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Midlife Reexamination
(34-43)/**

**Middle Adulthood (40-
65)* /**

Middle Age (30-60)**

8. "...seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well." (Matthew 6:33)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Midlife Reexamination
(34-43)/**

**Middle Adulthood (40-
65)* /**

Middle Age (30-60)**

9. "...any woman who is a believer and has widows in her family...should help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need." (1 Timothy 5:16. See also the whole passage: 1-16.)

10. "Now for the matters you wrote about: It is good for a man not to marry." (1 Corinthians 7:1)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Midlife Reexamination
(34-43)/**

**Middle Adulthood (40-
65)* /**

Middle Age (30-60)**

11. “Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.” (Proverbs 22:6)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Midlife Reexamination
(34-43)/**

**Middle Adulthood (40-
65)* /**

Middle Age (30-60)**

12. “Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the LORD watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. ² In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat-- for he grants sleep to those he loves. ³ Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him. ⁴ Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. ⁵ Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate. (Psalm 127:1-5)

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage

**Midlife
Reexamination(34-43)/
Middle Adulthood (40-
65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

Implications/Applications

1. Offer a course on “Biblical Guidelines for Fulfillment in Marriage.”
2. Offer a course or a one-day seminar on “Balancing Family and Work Responsibilities.”
3. Offer a course or seminar on stewardship and financial planning.
4. Encourage people maturing in Christ to relate to younger people as a possible mentor.
5. Offer a course on “How to Be a Caring Christian Friend.”

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage

**Midlife Reexamination
(34-43)/**

**Middle Adulthood (40-
65)* /**

Middle Age (30-60)**

Implications/Applications

6. Encourage people, and offer help for them, to daily read God's Word and pray.
7. Ask people if they have a church home. If they don't, urge them to find one that faithfully proclaims God's Word.

Other ideas from the group discussion:

- How to be good parents and how to be good grandparents.
- How husbands and wives should relate to each other in love.

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

**Restabilization (44-55)/
Middle Adulthood (40-65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

Characteristics

1. Adjust to realities of work; reaching and maintaining satisfactory performance in one's occupational career.**
2. Launch children.
3. Adjust to empty nest.
4. Become more deeply involved in social life.

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Characteristics

Restabilization (44-55)/

Middle Adulthood (40-65)* /

Middle Age (30-60)**

5. Participate actively in community concerns; achieve adult social and civic responsibility.**
6. Handle increased demands of older parents; adjust to aging parents.**
7. Develop adult leisure-time activities;** manage leisure time.
8. Manage budget to support college-age children and ailing parents. This is why this age group is referred to as the "sandwich generation."

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Characteristics

Restabilization (44-55)/

Middle Adulthood (40-65)* /

Middle Age (30-60)**

9. Adjust to single state.

10. Problem solve.

11. Manage stress accompanying change.

12. Adjust to role change—grandparent.

13. Relate oneself to one's spouse as a person.**

14. Accept and adjust to the physiological changes of middle age.**

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

**Restabilization (44-55)/
Middle Adulthood (40-
65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

Related Bible References

1. “Furthermore, as for every man to whom God has given riches and wealth, He has also empowered him to eat from them and to receive his reward and rejoice in his labor; this is the gift of God. For he will not often consider the years of his life, because God keeps him occupied with the gladness of his heart. (Ecclesiastes 5:19-20 NASB) + Ecclesiastes 5:10, 1 Timothy 6:10 [No “midlife crisis” for the man and woman of God maturing in Christlikeness.]
2. “Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it. (Proverbs 22:6)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Restabilization (44-55)/
Middle Adulthood (40-
65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

3. "...provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family..." (1 Timothy 5:8)
4. "Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote [σχολάζητε, *scholazēte*, be at leisure for devoting] yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control." (1 Corinthians 7:5)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Restabilization (44-55)/
Middle Adulthood (40-
65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

5. “Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun--all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes 9:9)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

**Restabilization (44-55)/
Middle Adulthood (40-
65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

Related Bible References

6. "...the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; those who mourn, as if they did not;" (1 Corinthians 7:29-30)
7. "An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord." (1 Corinthians 7:32b)
8. "An unmarried woman...is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. (1 Corinthians 7:34b,c)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Restabilization (44-55)/
Middle Adulthood (40-
65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

9. “Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.”
(Deuteronomy 4:9)
10. “...rejoice in the wife of your youth.” (Proverbs 5:18)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Restabilization (44-55)/
Middle Adulthood (40-
65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

11. “A wife of noble character...She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.” (Proverbs 31:10, 25-26)

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage	Implications/Applications
Restabilization (44-55)/ Middle Adulthood (40-65)*/ Middle Age (30-60)**	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1000 482 1738 644">1. Offer a course on “Biblical Guidelines for Overcoming Midlife Challenges.”<li data-bbox="1000 662 1804 823">2. Offer a course or a one-day seminar on “Balancing Family and Work Responsibilities.”<li data-bbox="1000 842 1779 1003">3. Offer a course or seminar on stewardship and financial planning.<li data-bbox="1000 1022 1818 1183">4. Encourage people maturing in Christ to relate to younger people as a possible mentor.<li data-bbox="1000 1202 1837 1319">5. Offer a course on “How to Be a Caring Christian Friend.”

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage

Restabilization (44-55)/

Middle Adulthood (40-65)* /

Middle Age (30-60)**

Implications/Applications

6. Encourage people, and offer help for them, to daily read God's Word and pray.
7. Ask people if they have a church home. If they don't, urge them to find one that faithfully proclaims God's Word.

Other ideas from the group discussion:

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Characteristics

**Preparation for Retirement (56-64)/
Middle Adulthood (40-65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

1. Adjust to health problems; accept and adjust to the physiological changes of middle age.**
2. Deepen personal relations; relating to one's spouse as a person.**
3. Prepare for retirement.
4. Expand avocational interests; developing adult leisure-time activities.**
5. Finance new leisure.
6. Adjust to loss of mate.
7. Problem solving.
8. Manage stress accompanying change.

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Preparation for
Retirement (56-64)/
Middle Adulthood (40-
65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

1. “A wife of noble character...She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.” (Proverbs 31:10, 25-26)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Preparation for
Retirement (56-64)/
Middle Adulthood (40-
65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

2. “Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun.”
(Ecclesiastes 9:9)
3. “Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it?”
(Luke 14:28 (NIV))

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Preparation for
Retirement (56-64)/
Middle Adulthood (40-
65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

4. "...the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; those who mourn, as if they did not;"
(1 Corinthians 7:29-30)
5. "An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord."
(1 Corinthians 7:32b)
6. "An unmarried woman...is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit.
(1 Corinthians 7:34b,c)

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage	Implications/Applications
Preparation for Retirement (56-64)/	1. Offer a course on “Biblical Guidelines for Overcoming Midlife Challenges.”
Middle Adulthood (40-65)* /	2. Offer a course or a one-day seminar on “Balancing Family and Work Responsibilities.”
Middle Age (30-60)**	3. Offer a course or seminar on stewardship and financial planning.
	4. Encourage people maturing in Christ to relate to younger people as a possible mentor.
	5. Offer a course on “How to Be a Caring Christian Friend.”

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage

Implications/Applications

**Preparation for Retirement (56-64)/
Middle Adulthood (40-65)*/
Middle Age (30-60)****

6. Encourage people, and offer help for them, to daily read God's Word and pray.
7. Ask people if they have a church home. If they don't, urge them to find one that faithfully proclaims God's Word.

Other ideas from the group discussion:

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Characteristics

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—Death)*/
Later Maturity (61+)****

1. Disengage from paid work.
2. Reassess finances; adjustment to retirement and reduced income.
3. Develop a mental orientation toward being in a distribution, rather than an acquisition, phase of life, i.e., giving away rather than obtaining: e.g., material goods and mentoring others.
4. Be concerned with personal health care; adjust to decreasing physical strength and health.**
5. Search for new achievement outlets.
6. Manage leisure time.
7. Adjust to more constant presence with marriage companion.

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Characteristics

Retirement (65+)/

**Maturity (65—
Death)* /**

**Later Maturity
(61+)****

8. Search for meaning.
9. Adjust to single or unmarried state.
10. Be reconciled to death; adjust to death of spouse.**
11. Problem solve.
12. Manage stress and other emotional elements accompanying change.
13. Establish an explicit affiliation with one's own age group (cohort).**
14. Adopt and adapt social roles in a flexible way.**

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Characteristics

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—
Death)*/
Later Maturity
(61+)****

15. Establish a satisfactory physical living arrangement.**

16. Ego Integrity vs. Despair*

Elderly adults need to look back on life and feel fulfilled. Success at this stage results in a sense of wisdom, but failure leads to regret, bitterness, and despair.

Vivian McCoy's Developmental Tasks

*Erik Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development

**Robert Havighurst's Adult Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—
Death)*/
Later Maturity (61+)****

1. "A wife of noble character...She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue." (Proverbs 31:10, 25-26)
2. "...the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; those who mourn, as if they did not;" (1 Corinthians 7:29-30)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—
Death)*/
Later Maturity (61+)****

Related Bible References

3. “Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote [σχολλάζητε, *scholazēte*, be at leisure for devoting] yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.”
(1 Corinthians 7:5)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—
Death)*/
Later Maturity (61+)****

4. “Enjoy life with your wife, whom you love, all the days of this meaningless life that God has given you under the sun—all your meaningless days. For this is your lot in life and in your toilsome labor under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes 9:9)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—
Death)*/
Later Maturity (61+)****

5. “When I tried to understand all this, it was oppressive to me till I entered the sanctuary of God; then I understood their final destiny.” (Psalm 73:16-17)
6. “Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body. Now all has been heard; here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.” (Ecclesiastes 12:12b-13)
7. “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16 NASB)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—
Death)*/
Later Maturity (61+)****

8. "...the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they had none; those who mourn, as if they did not;" (1 Corinthians 7:29-30)
9. "An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord." (1 Corinthians 7:32b)
10. "An unmarried woman...is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. (1 Corinthians 7:34b,c)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—
Death)*/
Later Maturity (61+)****

Related Bible References

11. “The LORD is my shepherd, I shall not be in want. ²He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me beside quiet waters, ³he restores my soul. He guides me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. ⁴Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.” (Psalm 23:1-4)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—
Death)*/
Later Maturity (61+)****

Related Bible References

12. “Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.” (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—
Death)*/
Later Maturity (61+)****

13. “I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise.” (Luke 24:43)
14. “Brothers we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.... And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.” (1 Thessalonians 4:13, 14, 17b, 18)

Biblical Guidance for the Developmental Tasks

Life Stage

Related Bible References

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—
Death)*/
Later Maturity (61+)****

15. “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth.... ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’” (Revelation 21:1, 3b-4)
16. “...provide for his relatives, and especially for his immediate family....” (1 Timothy 5:8. See the whole passage, 5:1-16.)

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage	Implications/Applications
Retirement (65+)/ Maturity (65— Death)*/ Later Maturity (61+)**	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="1000 508 1721 682">1. Offer a course on “Biblical Guidelines for Overcoming Challenges in Maturity.”<li data-bbox="1000 711 1804 885">2. Encourage people maturing in Christ to relate to younger people as a possible mentor.<li data-bbox="1000 913 1785 1025">3. Offer a course on “How to Be a Caring Christian Friend.”<li data-bbox="1000 1053 1715 1165">4. Encourage people to daily read God’s Word and pray.<li data-bbox="1000 1193 1792 1359">5. Urge people to memorize passages of God’s Word, such as those in this section.

Implications and Applications for Church Ministry

Life Stage

Implications/Applications

**Retirement (65+)/
Maturity (65—
Death)*/
Later Maturity (61+)****

6. Encourage people, and offer help for them, to daily read God's Word and pray.
7. Ask people if they have a church home. If they don't, urge them to find one that faithfully proclaims God's Word.

Other ideas from the group discussion:

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