

The Three Chairs

Judges 2:7-12 ⁷ *And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel.* ⁸ *And Joshua the son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died, being an hundred and ten years old.* ⁹ *And they buried him in the border of his inheritance in Timnathheres, in the mount of Ephraim, on the north side of the hill Gaash.* ¹⁰ *And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel.* ¹¹ *And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD, and served Baalim:* ¹² *And they forsook the LORD God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt, and followed other gods, of the gods of the people that were round about them, and bowed themselves unto them, and provoked the LORD to anger.*

CHAIR ONE

1. Joshua
2. Experienced reality of God firsthand; saw miracles
3. Served the Lord

4. **COMMITMENT**

5. Bible - God's Revelation
6. Bible sets values
7. **SCRIPTURE / COMMANDS**
8. Dedication to God
9. **GROW**
10. What's right in God's eyes?

CHAIR TWO

1. The Elders
2. Knew about reality of God secondhand; told stories
3. Served God of fathers

4. **COMPROMISE**

5. Bible - Helpful Guide
6. Fellow Christians set values
7. **SAINTS / CHRISTIANS**
8. Dedication to Parents
9. **PLATEAU**
10. What's right in your eyes?

CHAIR THREE

1. Another Generation
2. Didn't know works of God; unfamiliar with miracles
3. Served false Gods

4. **CONFLICT**

5. Bible - Ancient Relic
6. World sets values
7. **SOCIETY / CULTURE**
8. Dedication to Self
9. **GO WITH THE FLOW**
10. What's right in my eyes?

THE COMMITMENT OF THE FIRST CHAIR

- Relationship with God spawned by a new revelation or spiritual experience
- Submitted to the will of God, even though it ostracizes them from the world
- Always on guard against the natural slide from Godliness to Godlessness
- Every new Christian sits in the First Chair just after they get saved
- It is even possible to sit in the First Chair momentarily, due to short-lived events or consecration
- JESUS HAS RESERVED A FIRST CHAIR FOR EVERY ONE OF US!
- THIS GENERATION WILL BE SAVED!

THE COMPROMISE OF THE SECOND CHAIR

- They live the lifestyle in which they were raised, not deviating on surface from parent's teaching
- They adopt convictions without understanding the depth of experience in which they developed
- They know about their faith, but it doesn't shape their lifestyle - only obey God when convenient
- They succumb to mediocrity, and build a structure emphasizing programs, properties and products
- They go through the motions of the First Chair, but live the lifestyle of the Third Chair
- COMPROMISE: Just like the tribes in Judges 1 who did not drive out the inhabitants of Canaan!
- Those who remain in the Second Chair will inevitably raise Third Chair children
- MOST CHRISTIANS LIVING TODAY SIT IN THE SECOND CHAIR!
- THIS GENERATION MAY BE SAVED! (**Illustration: Second Chair scraping across floor**)

THE CONFLICT OF THE THIRD CHAIR

- They have seen the hypocrites sitting in the Second Chair and they have unspoken questions:
 1. You tell all the stories and use the jargon, but where are the miracles in our lives?
 2. If God is so important to you, then why don't you obey His Word all of the time?
- Why the questions? Because Second-Hand faith doesn't have any First-Hand experiences!
- They reject God primarily because they do not know Him; He is not as real as the world is to them.
- God consequently must turn to other people who are open and hungry, bypassing this generation
- Greater dedication to self than God; they dismiss burdens, accept what their forefathers rejected
- They think they are okay because they sit in the first chair occasionally!
- They are usually the last generation of truth; but the cycle is not inevitable! **(Joshua 24:13-15)**
- By the year 2000, most of our leadership will be Third Generation believers.
- INDIVIDUALS IN THIS GENERATION MAY HAVE THEIR OWN FIRST CHAIR EXPERIENCE!
- THIS GENERATION WILL NOT BE SAVED!