

## Dissertation Review

Dissertation Title: ***Developing a New Boomer-Mandated Ministry Paradigm for Adults Over Fifty*** by Daniel R. Massey, D.Min., Azusa Pacific University, 2013, 155 pages.

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### **As 78 Million Baby Boomers Grow Older, So Do Many Church Congregations, calling For a New Ministry Paradigm**

In his D.Min. dissertation, Daniel Massey has researched and developed a new 50+ ministry paradigm to help church leaders “navigate the waves of the silver tsunami,” which officially began in 2011. Nearly a third of all Americans living today – about 78 million people – were born between 1946 and 1964, the so-called Baby Boomer Generation. Over the years this group, the “single greatest demographic event in U.S. history,” has impacted all aspects of U.S. life, from schools and education to the housing market and health care services.

This generation has begun turning 65 at a rate of some 10,000 a day. By 2030, experts say, the number of Americans over age 65 will double from today’s 35 million to some 70 million. The “silver tsunami,” termed by Daniel Massey now begins to impact all the goods and services important to older adulthood and aging – including the church.

Massey states, “Led by the baby boomer generation, the growing number of older adults within churches represents the beginning of a special ministry program and challenge for many churches. The youthful-thinking boomers, who don’t think of themselves as seniors, have very little interest in the current design of most older adult ministries. The church can respond to this problem and challenge through a new ministry paradigm” wrote Massey in his D.Min.

dissertation, *Developing a New Boomer-Mandated Ministry Paradigm for Adults Over Fifty* (2013).

Massey has proposed a two-part ministry model. The first part is tailored for those aged 55 to 65, and the second part for those 66 and older. Massey believes that to be effective, this ministry should have both age-specific and intergenerational components. The first will give people “a sense of identity and belonging,” and the second will help people “engage in relationships that cross generational lines,” to provide a “balanced ministry.”

This new paradigm must also include a service component, he said, such as a mentoring ministry. Referring to Psalm 71:17-18, Massey argues that there is a biblical mandate for mentoring: “Since my youth, God, you have taught me, and to this day I declare your marvelous deeds. Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, my God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your mighty acts to all who are to come.”

Note: You can purchase your copy of Dr. Massey’s dissertation by accessing [Google](#) and entering the title of the dissertation. For more information about spiritual gerontology and 50+ ministry, go to his website, [www.50plusministry.org](http://www.50plusministry.org).