How Can We Reach Them?

*I have become all things to all men so that by all means I might win some.*

- 1 Corinthian 9:22
Why Don’t We Understand This?

- Paul knew what it meant to be a Jew
- He also knew what it meant to be a “Roman” and live amongst the pagans
- We need to know what “they” are like
- We need to know the culture, but…
- We also need to know how to adapt and contextualize
True Evangelism is Not:

- Pew stealing from the Greeks…
- Pew transfers from “up north”…
- The disaffected who don’t like the new Antiochian mission…

This is NEITHER church growth, NOR evangelism, NOR missionary expansion!
What Are We Up Against?

- Great Commission
  9% knew; 84% could not even guess
- John 3:16
  25% knew;
  63% had no clue, 12% guessed wrong
- The “gospel”
  37% knew; 31% did not
Do They Understand?

Typical Protestant literature talks about…

- “Being covered in the blood of the Lamb”
- “Being fed by the Word”
- “Possessing a broken spirit”
- “Pursuing a Christian walk”
- “Seeking the fellowship of the Holy Spirit”
- “Being slain in the Spirit”
- “Repenting of thy transgressions”
- “Not trusting in yourself”
- “Preparing for the dawn of the millenial age”
“Being exposed to information does not mean they are able to absorb it, understand it or embrace it.”

–George Barna

If they don’t see the relevance, they can’t embrace the truth!
Who’s Who?

- Seniors/Builders
- Boomers
- Busters
- Millenials
- “Gen-X”
- Post-Moderns ("PoMo’s")
Seniors/Builders

- Born between 1927 and 1945
- More likely to describe self as “religious”
- Feel “absolutely committed” to the Christian faith
- Believe the Bible is totally accurate in all that it teaches
Boomers

- Born between 1946 and 1963
- Rebel against anything that smacks of tradition, stability or the status quo
- Rejected the “established church” (usually of their parents)
- 42% of the population not aligned with a church
Busters

- Born between 1965 and 1983
- Show an inclination to reject church right from the start
- Cynical, questioning
- Empty, isolated and alone
Gen-X, Millennials, PoMo’s

- Reject absolute truth
- Reject the imposition of beliefs
- Reject the claims of Christ or Christianity on the basis of history, traditional values or the rationality of the faith (i.e., are world-class skeptics)
- Think differently (e.g., electronic media has enabled young people to absorb large amounts of data and process it in a non-linear fashion)
Non-churched, or De-churched?

- Fairly mature
- Sophisticated
- Well trained for cultural ascendancy and independence
- Not involved in a traditional family
- Upscale and unattached
- Aggressive, energetic, experimental
- Transitory
Faith of Choice Index

- Biblical Christianity
- Conventional Christianity
- Cultural Christianity
- New Age Practitioner
- Jewish
- Atheist/Agnostic
- Other
Adults are more likely to change parishes than switch denominations (76%)
Only 15% are “very likely” or “somewhat likely” to switch
At any given moment, 4-6 \textit{MILLION} Americans are seeking a new church home
Average church size in America:
~ 100

61% of adults would rather attend a church of 200 adults or less
WWJD?

- He spent time with the community
- He discerned their felt needs and addressed them
- He attracted their attention
- He provided them with something of value
- He challenged their thinking
- He gave them salvation
“Where Have You Been?”

- Too busy (42%)
- Nothing of value to offer (40%)
- Never found one of interest (38%)
- Preferred to pursue other activities on Sunday (35%)
- Unaware of any churches they would like to try (33%)
- Have yet to find churches with theology and doctrine that parallels their own (33%)
- Believe their lifestyles would be incompatible with the expectations of the church (31%)
“What Do You Want?”

- Worship: to experience God (34%).
- 71% of Americans say they have never experienced the presence of God.
- Developing relationships: A non-threatening environment in which to meet other people in the community (25%)
“What Do You Want?”

- Valuable religious teaching or training for their children
- A better and more practical understanding of the Bible
- To discover better ways to deal with their everyday problems
“What Do You Like?”

- Friendliness of people in congregation (86%)
- Care of concern of church staff (45%)
- Preaching (44%)
- Music and worship (44%)
- Building and physical plant (43%)
Turn-Off’s

- Telemarketing
- Visiting homes uninvited
- Drawing attention to them after the services (e.g., name tags, being singled out during announcements)
57% of Americans have received a brochure, flyer, etc. to attend a church they’ve never been to. Eventually, 10% will respond.
Turn-On’s

- Want church people to build honest caring relationships with non-church people (i.e., to “engage the culture”), eventually inviting them to attend
- Want church to sponsor non-religious events (Boy Scouts, VBS, community fairs, AA, etc.)
- Sending top quality brochures about the church to people’s homes to inform them about the church and invite them to come to worship
- A thank-you note from the pastor after they visit
Churches growing faster than 10% per year are spending 10-20% of their budget on evangelism

AND

a large percentage on youth ministries
Not reaching the lost is the same as telling them they can go to hell