

Ministry to Generation Z 2021 International Conference



Workshop

I. Getting to know Generation Z

- A. Identified by Barna Research as those born 1999-2015
- B. Described as “digital natives”
- C. Largest and most diverse generation
- D. Disturbed by insecurity
- E. Immersed in a post-Christian culture

II. Generational worldview shift

“The percentage of people whose beliefs qualify them for a biblical worldview declines in each successively younger generation:

10% of Boomers,

7% of Gen X, and

6% of Millennials have a biblical worldview, compared to only

4% of Gen Z.”¹

¹Barna Group and Impact 360 Institute. *Gen Z: The Culture, Beliefs and Motivations Shaping the*

III. God's generational plan

- A. Covenant established (Genesis 17:9; 18:19)
- B. Command given (Deuteronomy 6:4-7)
- C. Command broken (Judges 2:10)
- D. Command repeated (Psalm 78:1-8)

IV. Culture and communication

A. Definition of culture

“Culture encompasses the behavior patterns, beliefs, and all other products of a particular group of people that are passed on from generation to generation. Culture results from the interaction of people over many years.”²

B. Context of culture

“Culture is the comprehensive, penetrating context that encompasses life and thought, art and speech, entertainment and sensibility, values and faith. It cannot be reduced to that which is simply economic or political, demographic or technological....It doesn't simply give a context for our values; it *shapes* our values in and of itself. It doesn't just provide the atmosphere for something such as communication; it forms what communication *is* and how it is achieved. Culture alters not only what is said but also what is heard—and how.”³

C. Challenges of communicating the Gospel in a post-Christian culture

1. Eight-second filters

Because of the massive amount of digital information now available, those in the Generation Z cohort are conditioned to pass over any information that does not grab their attention within eight seconds.⁴

² John W. Santrock, *A Topical Approach to Life-Span Development: Eighth Edition* (New York: McGraw-Hill Education, 2016), 7.

³ James Emery White. *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2017), 79-80.

⁴ Jeremy Finch, "What is Generation Z, and What Does it Want?," *Fast Company*, released May 4, 2015, <https://www.fastcompany.com/3045317/what-is-generation-z-and-what-does-it-want>.
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2. Spiritual void

A spiritual void exists that longs to be filled, and the lure of the occult and other non-biblical spiritual phenomena grab for their attention. "They believe in the supernatural—nothing stirs them more than the cosmos in terms of awe and wonder—which makes them open to supernatural explanations of the universe."⁵

3. Biblical illiteracy

Generation Z children are, for the most part, biblically illiterate.

"They are more than post-Christian. They don't even have a memory of the Gospel."⁶

4. Necessity of loving apologetics

Apologetics is not new. But Sean McDowell argues that apologetics must be done differently within a post-Christian culture. The new kind of apologist that McDowell describes must be humble, relational, studious, and an authentic practitioner of the truth proclaimed.⁷

V. Engaging unsaved Generation Z children

- A. Pray for divine intervention on behalf of the Generation Z cohort
- B. Live authentically
- C. Share the Gospel clearly
- D. Build genuine relationships
- E. Become a humble apologist

⁵ White. *Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World*, 143.

⁶Ibid., 131.

⁷ Sean McDowell, ed. *A New Kind of Apologist* (Eugene: Harvest House Publishers, 2016), 15-16.
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VI. Growing saved Generation Z children

A. Teach discernment

B. Apply the “Three Rs of Worldview Transformation”

1. Reasons (1 Peter 3:15)

2. Relationships (Proverbs 13:20)

3. Rhythms (Hebrews 5:14)

C. Trust God for wisdom to impart wisdom

“He who calls you is faithful; he will surely do it.”
(1 Thessalonians 5:24, ESV)