

STRATEGIES FOR HELPING YOUNG PEOPLE DISCOVER AND LOVE YOUR CHURCH

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WHAT IS A MILLENNIAL?

WHO ARE MILLENNIALS?

BORN BETWEEN

1980

2000

GREW UP

ALONGSIDE TECHNOLOGY

"GEN Y"

80
MILLION
IN THE U.S.

LARGEST GENERATION YET

—O MOST
ETHNICALLY
& RACIALLY
DIVERSE

2.5 BILLION
WORLDWIDE

DOMINANCE OF SOCIAL NETWORKS

DO THEY MATTER?

% OF WORKFORCE

50%
▲ BY 2020

75%
BY 2030

IN THE COMING YEARS

**ASPIRE
TO**

**MAKE A
DIFFERENCE
W/ THEIR WORK**

CONFIDENT
HAVE HIGH
EXPECTATIONS
ACHIEVEMENT
ORIENTED

WHAT IS A MILLENNIAL?

Millennials are the generation born between 1981 and 1996.

WHAT IS A MILLENNIAL?

Characteristics of Millennial Culture

Socially Awkward

Digitally Capable

Snowflake

Echo Chamber

Filters

Slactivism



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What characteristics of millennials/young adults sticks out to you?
- What do you see as the biggest challenges and opportunities for the church associated with millennials/young adults?



GROWING YOUNG = CHURCH VITALITY

- *“Your church needs young people, and they need your church. One without the other is incomplete.” p. 2*



GROWING YOUNG = CHURCH VITALITY

Young People add to Congregations

- More Service
- More Passion
- More Innovation
- More Money
- More Overall Health



GROWING YOUNG IS NOT

- Worship or Denomination
- Size
- Location
- Age
- Facility
- Specific Ministry

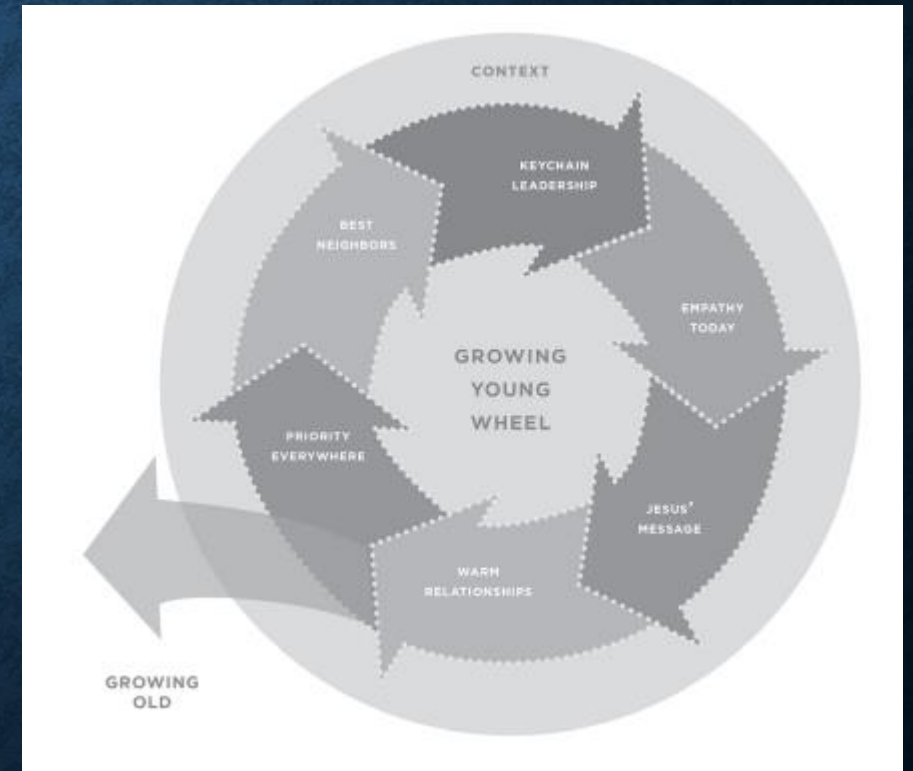


“Growing Young is not about changing youth ministry.

It is about changing church culture.”

SIX STRATEGIES FOR GROWING YOUNG

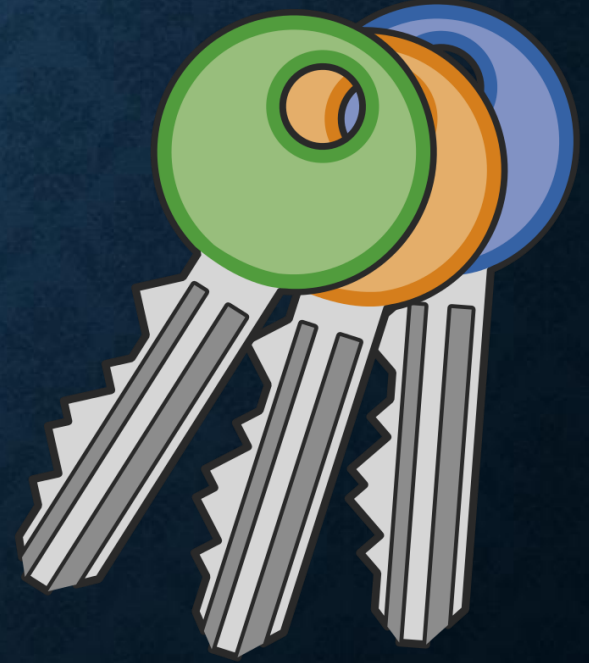
1. Unlock Keychain Leadership
2. Empathize with Today's Young People
3. Take Jesus' Message Seriously
4. Fuel a Warm Community
5. Prioritize Youth People Everywhere
6. Be the Best Neighbors



KEYCHAIN LEADERSHIP

Sharing power with the right people at the right time.

“Whoever holds the keys has the power to let people in or to keep people out. Keys provide access to physical rooms, as well as to strategic meetings, significant decisions, and central roles or places of authority. The more power you have, the more keys you tend to possess” p 30



KEYCHAIN LEADERSHIP

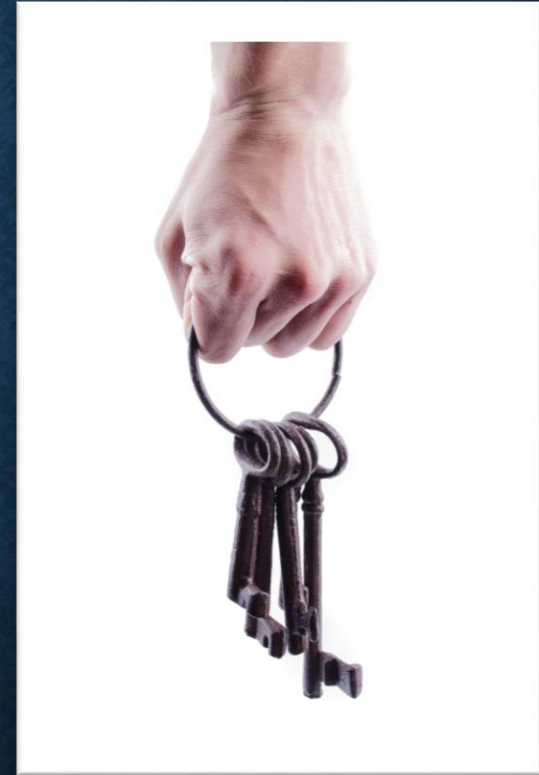
- Beyond simply launching a student leadership team.
- Keys refer to the capabilities, power and access of leaders how carry the potential to empower young people.



KEYCHAIN LEADERSHIP

Three types of key leadership in churches:

1. Key-less leaders
2. Key-hoarding leaders
3. Key-loaning leaders
4. Keychain leaders



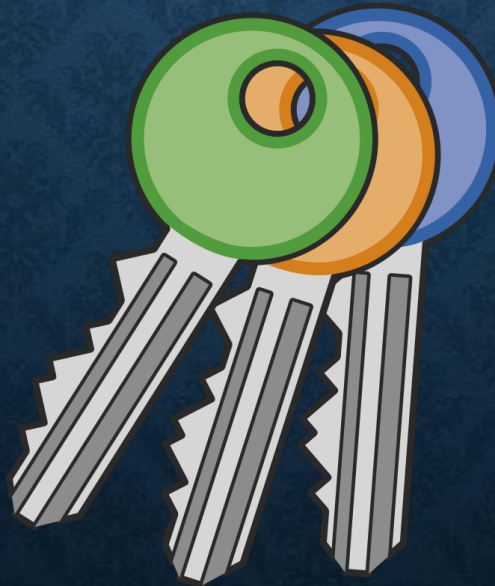
KEYCHAIN LEADERSHIP

“Churches should get older and wiser,
instead they get older dumber. More
insular” – Ron Marrs – Western Seminary



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Who holds the keys in your church?
- Share about one young person in your church who is ready for keys.



EMPATHIZING WITH TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE

Why 25 is the new 15 and 15 is the new 25

“When we talk about empathy, we mean feeling with young people.” p.55



EMPATHIZING WITH TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE

Emerging Adulthood's Three Questions:

1. Identity
2. Belonging
3. Purpose



EMPATHIZING WITH TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE

Emerging Adulthood's Three Questions:

1. Identity – shame
2. Belonging – conditional acceptance
3. Purpose – self fulfillment



EMPATHIZING WITH TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE

Emerging Adulthood's Three Questions:

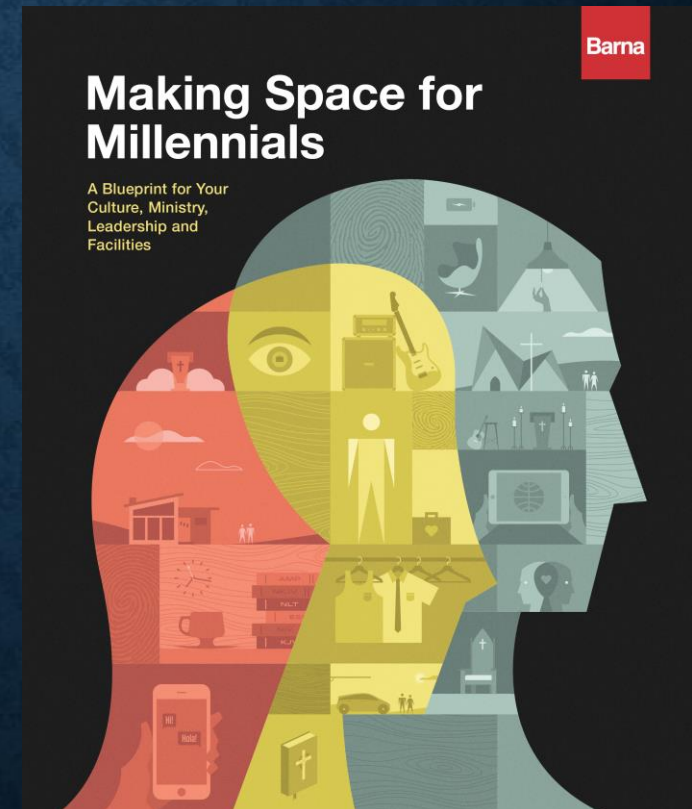
1. Identity – shame - GRACE
2. Belonging – conditional acceptance - LOVE
3. Purpose – self fulfillment - MISSION



EMPATHIZING WITH TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE

From Making Space for Millennials

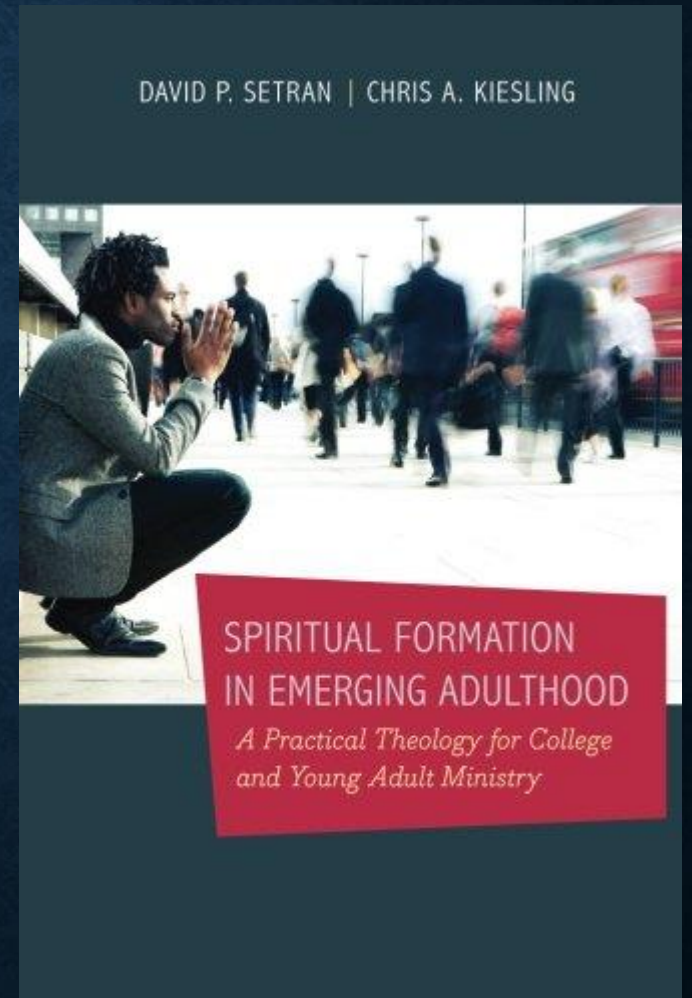
- Limitless Access
- Broken Institutions, American Dream Families
- Questions Authority
- Modular
- Far from Home



EMPATHIZING WITH TODAY'S YOUNG PEOPLE

From Spiritual Formation in Emerging Adulthood

- Actively engaged in identity formation
- Live lives marked by instability
- Tend to be very focused on themselves
- Feel “in between”
- See this time period as an “age of possibilities”



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How do you see the 15 is 25 and the new 25 is 15 paradigm at work in the millennials/young people you know?
- Why is empathy with millennials/young people difficult for older generations?



TAKE JESUS' MESSAGE SERIOUSLY

What's Young about the Good News?



TAKE JESUS' MESSAGE SERIOUSLY

“The central message of the gospel is that someone is always there for you and that there are many different paths you can take but ultimately they lead to the same thing, which is heaven. I feel like there are many good things you can do and many bad things you can do, but no matter what, you are always going to be forgiven. Even if you think something is unforgivable, God is like this magic person that can always cure it and can make it okay. And there is always going to be a happy place even when you are in your darkest of darks. There is always going to be a light that is there for you. (Alyssa, age 18)”

TAKE JESUS' MESSAGE SERIOUSLY

Moralistic Therapeutic Deism

“otherwise known as ‘divinely underwritten personal happiness and interpersonal niceness’”



TAKE JESUS' MESSAGE SERIOUSLY

Moralistic Therapeutic Deism

Moralistic: Based on doing the right things



TAKE JESUS' MESSAGE SERIOUSLY

Moralistic Therapeutic Deism

Moralistic: Based on doing the right things

Therapeutic: Focused on my and my happiness



TAKE JESUS' MESSAGE SERIOUSLY

Moralistic Therapeutic Deism

Moralistic: Based on doing the right things

Therapeutic: Focused on my and my happiness

Deism: God created, but is not present



TAKE JESUS' MESSAGE SERIOUSLY

Three Shifts in Churches Growing Young



Shift 1: Less about abstract beliefs
more about Jesus

Shift 2: Less about heaven later,
more about life now

Shift 3: Less dogmatic certainty
more authentic honesty

FUEL A WARM COMMUNITY

Warm is the New Cool

“Like Family”



FUEL A WARM COMMUNITY

What makes a church “feel warm?”



FUEL A WARM COMMUNITY

What makes a church “feel warm?”

Welcoming – Accepting – Belonging – Authentic – Hospitable – Caring



FUEL A WARM COMMUNITY

- 45% under 30 say relationships are why they are involved in church (2x higher than those over 30)
- Myth: Big budget, “Contemporary” worship services, cool quotient are what attract young people.
- Idea: Less theater, more family room.
- What are some obstacles to warmth in your own church?



PRIORITIZE YOUNG PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

“Churches growing young prioritize young people not just for the sake of making young people happy but because the whole church benefits. One pastor of over 40 years put it like this: “Everybody rises when you focus on children and teens.” Adults in another church reflected, “Young people are like salt. When they’re included, they make everything taste better.”



PRIORITIZE YOUNG PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

Prioritizing Means:

- **Intentionally Paying Attention**



PRIORITIZE YOUNG PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

Prioritizing Means:

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- **Prioritizing Families**



PRIORITIZE YOUNG PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

Prioritizing Means:

- **Intentionally Paying Attention**
- **Prioritizing Families**
- **Young People Must Play a Load-Bearing Role**



PRIORITIZE YOUNG PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

Prioritizing Means:

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- **Prioritizing Families**
- **Young People Must Play a Load-Bearing Role**



Everyone rises when we focus on young people.

PRIORITIZE YOUNG PEOPLE EVERYWHERE

“With your church leadership team, dream together about your weekend gatherings becoming what young people look forward to most throughout their week. Where could young people be more integrated? What would it take to integrate them? How much would you be willing to change in order to make that happen?”



BE THE BEST NEIGHBORS

Loving and Shaping your world well

In the past 15 years confidence that the church is helping with problems has dropped 15%.



BE THE BEST NEIGHBORS

- The best neighbors ask, “Who is my neighbor?”
- Hospitable neighbors honor what is good and make the world better
- Patient neighbors respect the journey as much as the destination
- Courageous neighbors embrace ethnic and socioeconomic diversity

“While the churches in our study landed on all “sides” of these complex issues, they were united in their commitment to informed, respectful, and thoughtful dialogue.”

BE THE BEST NEIGHBORS

- How do we become the best church FOR the community?
- What are the areas your church struggles with most when it comes to neighboring well?



GROWING YOUNG IN YOUR CONTEXT

Growing young isn't about changing your youth ministry

It is about changing your church culture

Free growing young assessment.

- Text GROW to 66866
- churchesgrowingyoung.com



RESOURCES

