

RELEVANT or RELIC?

Same Sex Attraction, Transgender, LGBTQ& Gender ID

Loneliness

Losing Its Moral Footing

Secular Worldview - Antagonistic Culture

Critical Race Theory – Social Justice

A Porn Saturated Clientele

Is Christianity Good?

Emotional Truth

Mental Illness

Lack of Intellectual Process or Integrity

10
Challenges
to the
Church

The Loneliness Crisis on U.S. College Campuses

by

Varun Soni

Dean of Religious Life

at

University of So. California

LA Times Op Ed July 14, 2019

M.T.S. from Harvard Divinity School; M.A. from The University of California, Santa Barbara; J.D. from the University of California, Los Angeles; PhD from the University of Cape Town

“When I arrived at USC 11 years ago as dean of religious life, my pastoral conversations with students mostly focused on their quests for meaning and purpose. They were striving to translate values into action, cultivate joy and gratitude, live extraordinary lives.

“But over the last several years, these conversations have taken a devastating turn. Whereas students used to ask, ‘How should I live?’ they are now more likely to ask, ‘Why should I live?’ Where they used to talk about hope and meaning, now they grapple with hopelessness and meaninglessness. Every year, it seems, I encounter more stress, anxiety and depression, and more students in crisis on campus.

“My colleagues at other universities say they are seeing the same distressing trend, and research backs up our observations.

“According to the Center for Collegiate Mental Health, the increase in utilization rates for counseling centers across the country over the last five years has greatly outpaced the increase in student enrollment, and as a result, schools have trouble hiring enough mental health counselors to keep up with growing demand.

“The most recent Healthy Minds Survey, an annual report on mental health on college and university campuses, found that one-third of undergraduate

students in the United States wrestle with some kind of mental health issue, while more than 10% struggle with thoughts of suicide.

“The Cooperative Institutional Research Program’s large annual survey of college freshmen has noted a marked and steady downward trend in the self-reported emotional health of students along with a large uptick in self-reported feelings of being overwhelmed.

“What I have noticed in my work with students is that many of them face the same hidden root challenge: loneliness. According to a recent survey by the global health service company Cigna, the loneliest generation in the United States today is not the oldest Americans but the youngest, specifically young adults between 18 and 22 years old.

“I never got the question in my first five years at USC that I now get almost daily from students: ‘How do I make friends?’ Students may have thousands of friends online, but few in real life; they may be experts at talking with their thumbs, but not so much with their tongues. As a result, many feel as though they don’t have a tribe or a sense of belonging. They feel disconnected from what it means to be human.

“While it is now fashionable to refer to this cohort of college and university students as a coddled generation of ‘snowflakes,’ the reality is they face unprecedented challenges and circumstances.

“They are entering a world in which many of the career paths of their parents’ generation no longer exist or have changed drastically. They face escalating tuition costs with little sense of whether their future opportunities justify the outlay. They have participated in active-shooter trainings and campus lockdown drills for most of their lives.

“And according to the Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion and Public Life, more than one-third of young adults are now disaffiliated with religion, marking a dramatic generational shift away from religion and from the comfort and community that it can provide.

“The convergence of these factors and realities has directly contributed to a crippling sense of anxiety and alienation in students across the country.

“But today’s students are also creative and courageous, engaged and empathetic, diverse and inclusive. They are hardworking and goal-oriented. It needs to be the job of colleges and universities to help students develop resources that enable them to thrive and flourish mentally, emotionally and spiritually, so that they may fulfill their academic aspirations and achieve their professional goals.

“At USC, we’re trying a variety of things, including a dedicated mindfulness training app and free mindfulness programs that reach more than 7,000 people a year. A new, for-credit freshman course called Thrive focuses on emotional intelligence, healthy relationships, self-care, resiliency and human flourishing. In the fall, we will debut our new artificial intelligence well-being assistant, named Ari , which will guide students to appropriate support resources and communities on campus.

“We also offer and host yoga classes, drum circles, friendship courses, community teas, coloring sessions, laughing groups, sleep classes, connection workshops, meditation retreats, campfire conversations and primal scream opportunities. We’ve recently appointed our first director of belonging , while our full-time wellness dog, Professor Beauregard Tirebiter (affectionately known as ‘Beau’) strolls the campus daily.

“Colleges and universities have always had a responsibility to develop the whole student so that our young people are able to make not just a living, but a life. Today, that means examining a new range of challenges that students face and developing a new approach to well-being on campus. By doing so, colleges and universities can help empower students to transform the world by transforming themselves.

“Varun Soni is dean of religious life at USC, where he also serves as vice provost of campus wellness and crisis intervention.”

(Varun Soni, “There’s a loneliness crisis on college campuses”, *LA Times*, July 14, 2019, <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-soni-campus-student-loneliness-20190714-story.html>)

The Church, Culture and Evangelism
(Josh McDowell's Research)
by
Josh D. McDowell

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10 Challenges to the Church **(and every Believer)**

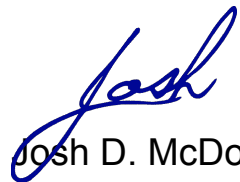
I Chronicles 12:32 says “men of Issachar understood the times in order to know what Israel should do.” If ever there has been a need to apply this to the “Church”, it is now. After 55 years of working with young people and 1,000s of hours of research, I’ve concluded these are ten major challenges confronting the Church, para-church organizations and believers today.

It’s that important to understand that these are not faults of the Church but rather external challenges over the next 5-10 years that churches, para-churches, mission groups and individual believers will face. Success or failure just might depend on how we face these opportunities.

This document contains my research notes. It is not a formal article. It is my prayer and hope that my research will serve you to be better equipped to make a difference.

If believers are going to be relevant in the 21st century, we need to grasp the culture in which we labor and address the critical issues ... NOW.

My father once taught me, “Son, a problem well-defined is half-solved.” That is so true for these 10 challenges the Church and others are facing in the 21st century.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Josh".

Josh D. McDowell

1. LONELINESS (BROKEN AND SHATTERED RELATIONSHIPS)

The growth of social media and waning person-to-person contact [caused] former Surgeon General Vivek Murthy to label “loneliness a worldwide epidemic” and said, “it could be lethal.”

(Chris Weller, “5 Things That Are Almost as Deadly as Smoking, According to Science”, *Science Alert*, July 24, 2018, <https://www.sciencealert.com/5-little-known-things-that-are-deadly-as-smoking-lonely-sitting-tanning-science>)

- “A 2014 report by Canada’s National Seniors Council, ... half of people over the age of 80 report feeling lonely.”
(Kerry Banks, “Loneliness: the silent killer”, *University Affairs*, February 27, 2019, <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/loneliness-the-silent-killer/>)
- “A 2016 survey by the American College Health Association of Canadian cohort of 44,000 postsecondary students revealed that two-thirds of them reported feeling ‘very lonely’ at some point in the previous 12 months.”
(Kerry Banks, “Loneliness: the silent killer”, *University Affairs*, February 27, 2019, <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/loneliness-the-silent-killer/>)
- “An online U.S. survey of 20,000 adults conducted in 2018 by the health insurer Cigna revealed that 40 percent of Americans said they lacked a meaningful relationship and felt isolated from others.”
(Kerry Banks, “Loneliness: the silent killer”, *University Affairs*, February 27, 2019, <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/loneliness-the-silent-killer/>)
- “A 2018 survey of 55,000 British citizens conducted for the BBC found that a third of respondents often feel lonely.”
(Kerry Banks, “Loneliness: the silent killer”, *University Affairs*, February 27, 2019, <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/loneliness-the-silent-killer/>)

Julianne Holt-Lunstad, a professor of psychology at Brigham Young University, has discovered in her research “that loneliness reduces people's life spans by the equivalent of smoking 15 cigarettes a day.”

(Chris Weller, “5 Things That Are Almost as Deadly as Smoking, According to Science”, *Science Alert*, July 24, 2018, <https://www.sciencealert.com/5-little-known-things-that-are-deadly-as-smoking-lonely-sitting-tanning-science>)

“A 2012 study by researchers at the University of California, San Francisco found that, among nearly 700 Americans over age of 60 who described themselves as lonely, 63 percent were married. ‘That is the most painful loneliness of all, relationships where there is no emotional intimacy,’ says Dr. Rokach.”

(Kerry Banks, “Loneliness: the silent killer”, *University Affairs*, February 27, 2019, <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/loneliness-the-silent-killer/>)

Why loneliness is so dangerous to your health: Studies show that “nearly half of Americans say that they are lonely some or all the time. Social isolation has been linked to higher risks of death and diseases like heart disease and life-threatening events like strokes.”

(Natalie Rahhal, “Why loneliness is so dangerous for your health: Harvard doctor explains the links and urges that ‘people are a medicine’”, *Daily Mail*, September 19, 2018, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-6185391/Loneliness-bad-health-Harvard-doctor-explains-urging-treat-people-medicine.html>)

Dr. Waldinger explained further “what loneliness does to the brain and hormonal systems - and why we need to spend time together.”

(Natalie Rahhal, “Why loneliness is so dangerous for your health: Harvard doctor explains the links and urges that ‘people are a medicine’”, *Daily Mail*, September 19, 2018, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-6185391/Loneliness-bad-health-Harvard-doctor-explains-urging-treat-people-medicine.html>)

“Loneliness isn't just a detriment to their social lives and happiness; loneliness is bad for their health.”

(Natalie Rahhal, “Why loneliness is so dangerous for your health: Harvard doctor explains the links and urges that ‘people are a medicine’”, *Daily Mail*, September 19, 2018, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-6185391/Loneliness-bad-health-Harvard-doctor-explains-urging-treat-people-medicine.html>)

“The health dangers of loneliness are not new. A review of studies conducted back in 1988 identified higher rates of mortality, illness, injury, smoking, obesity and high blood pressure in lonely people, marking social isolation a risk factor for all of the above.”

(Natalie Rahhal, “Why loneliness is so dangerous for your health: Harvard doctor explains the links and urges that ‘people are a medicine’”, *Daily Mail*, September 19, 2018, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-6185391/Loneliness-bad-health-Harvard-doctor-explains-urging-treat-people-medicine.html>)

“Despite all of our online connections the average person has 338 Facebook ‘friends’ – [yet] we are only getting lonelier.”

(Natalie Rahhal, "Why loneliness is so dangerous for your health: Harvard doctor explains the links and urges that 'people are a medicine'", *Daily Mail*, September 19, 2018, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-6185391/Loneliness-bad-health-Harvard-doctor-explains-urging-treat-people-medicine.html>)

Murthy wrote in the *Harvard Business Review* that "we live in the most technologically connected age in the history of civilization, yet rates of loneliness have doubled since the 1980s."

(Natalie Rahhal, "Why loneliness is so dangerous for your health: Harvard doctor explains the links and urges that 'people are a medicine'", *Daily Mail*, September 19, 2018, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-6185391/Loneliness-bad-health-Harvard-doctor-explains-urging-treat-people-medicine.html>)

"Recently in Great Britain, loneliness became so widespread that the British government created a cabinet level position, a 'Minister of Loneliness'."

(Peter Walker, "May appoints minister to tackle loneliness issues raised by Jo Cox ", *LA Times*, July 14, 2019, <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2018/jan/16/may-appoints-minister-tackle-loneliness-issues-raised-jo-cox>)

"The University of Southern California in the last several years has seen such wide spread loneliness and depression on campus that they established a 'Director of Belonging' and has full-time wellness dogs that roam the campus (these are for University students)."

(Varun Soni, "There's a loneliness crisis on college campuses", *The Guardian*, January 16, 2018, <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-oe-soni-campus-student-loneliness-20190714-story.html>)

2. INCREASE IN DEPRESSION, ANXIETY, SUICIDE AND MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS

TIME magazine reports that, "There is a mental health crisis among American teens and young adults."

(Markham Heid, "Depression and Suicide Rates Are Rising Sharply in Young Americans, New Report Says. This May Be One Reason Why", *TIME*, March 14, 2019, <http://time.com/5550803/depression-suicide-rates-youth/>)

"An excess of anxiety, abuse and depression is why Gen Z [8 – 25 years] scores the highest ever on the mental illness scale. In fact, four large studies of teens from the U.S. and U.K. all show the same thing: happiness and mental health are highest at a half-hour to two hours of

extracurricular digital media use a day; well-being then steadily decreases, with those who spend the most time online being the worst off. Twice as many heavy users of electronic devices are unhappy, depressed or distressed as light users.”

(Jean M. Twenge, “Stop Debating Whether Too Much Smartphone Time Can Hurt Teens, and Start Protecting Them”, *TIME*, March 21, 2019, <http://time.com/5555737/smartphone-mental-health-teens/>)

A study published in *The Journal of Abnormal Psychology* reports that “between 2009 and 2017 rates of depression among kids ages 14 to 17 increased by more than 60%. The increases were nearly as steep among those ages 12 to 13 (47%) and 18 to 21 (46%), and rates roughly doubled among those ages 20 to 21 ... more than one in eight Americans ages 12 to 25 experienced a major depressive episode.”

(Jean M. Twenge, Thomas E. Joiner, Mary E. Duffy, A. Bell Cooper and Sarah G. Binau, “Age, Period and Cohort Trends in Mood Disorder Indicators and Suicide-Related Outcomes in a Nationally Representative Dataset, 2005-2017”, *American Psychological Association*, 2019, <https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/releases/abn-abn0000410.pdf>)

“The relationship between technology use and well-being is even more important in light of the increasing amount of evidence that teens are suffering. From 2009 to 2017, rates of depression and emergency-room visits for self-harm and suicidal thoughts in this age group also increased sharply. According to the CDC, suicide rates among teen girls are at 40-year highs. ‘Among young people, rates of suicidal thoughts, plans, attempts all increased significantly, in some cases more than doubled, between 2008 and 2017.’”

(Jean M. Twenge, “Stop Debating Whether Too Much Smartphone Time Can Hurt Teens, and Start Protecting Them”, *TIME*, March 21, 2019, <http://time.com/5555737/smartphone-mental-health-teens/>)

A study of 600,000 people by the National Survey on Drug Use and Health and also research by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and other research show that “[There are] more mental health issues among American young people, says Jean Twenge, a professor of psychology at San Diego State University.”

(Jean M. Twenge, Thomas E. Joiner, Mary E. Duffy, A. Bell Cooper and Sarah G. Binau, “Age, Period and Cohort Trends in Mood Disorder Indicators and Suicide-Related Outcomes in a Nationally Representative Dataset, 2005-2017”, *American*

Psychological Association, 2019, <https://www.apa.org/pubs/journals/releases/abn-abn0000410.pdf>)

A study reported in *The Atlantic* magazine states that “70 percent of teens see mental health as a major struggle for their peers and that this may be the survey’s most alarming result. About 20 percent of American adolescents struggle with some kind of mental-health disorder, most commonly depression or anxiety.”

(Manda Mull, “A New Sign That Teens Know They Aren’t Struggling Alone”, *The Atlantic*, February 24, 2019, <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2019/02/teen-mental-health-worries/583531/>)

“*Pew Research* reports that two major problems among youth 13 to 17 years old are the following:

- 1) Anxiety disorders. ‘7% of youths ages 3 to 17 had such a condition in 2016-17’, according to the National Survey of Children’s Health

(Drew Desilver, “The concerns and challenges of being a U.S. teen: What the data show,” *Pew Research*, February 26, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/02/26/the-concerns-and-challenges-of-being-a-u-s-teen-what-the-data-show/>)

- 2) Serious depression. An ongoing study by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services shows that serious depression “has been on the rise among teens for the past several years. (the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, an ongoing project of the federal Department of Health and Human Services.)”

(Drew Desilver, “The concerns and challenges of being a U.S. teen: What the data show,” *Pew Research*, February 26, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/02/26/the-concerns-and-challenges-of-being-a-u-s-teen-what-the-data-show/>)

In 2016, “12.8% of youths ages 12 to 17 had experienced a major depressive episode in the past year, up from 8% as recently as 2010. For 9% of youths in 2016, their depression caused severe impairment.”

(Rebecca Ahrnsbrak, Jonaki Bose, Sarra L. Hedden, Rachel N. Lipari, Eunice Park-Lee and Peter Tice, “Key Substance Use and Mental Health Indicators in the United States: Results from the 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health”, *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration*, September 2017, <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUH-FFR1-2016/NSDUH-FFR1-2016.htm>)

A Pew survey says “drug addiction (51%) and alcohol consumption (45%) are major problems among their peers.”

(Drew Desilver, “The concerns and challenges of being a U.S. teen: What the data show,” *Pew Research*, February 26, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/02/26/the-concerns-and-challenges-of-being-a-u-s-teen-what-the-data-show/>)

“Last year, 30.2% of 12th-graders and 18.6% of 10th-graders had consumed alcohol in the past 30 days...22.2% reported using marijuana in the past 30 days...among 10th-graders...16.7%... Marijuana was by far the most commonly used drug among teens last year. It involved vaping, of both nicotine and marijuana. ... In 2018, 20.9% of 12th-graders and 16.1% of 10th-graders reported vaping nicotine in the past 30 days...”

(Drew Desilver, “The concerns and challenges of being a U.S. teen: What the data show,” *Pew Research*, February 26, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/02/26/the-concerns-and-challenges-of-being-a-u-s-teen-what-the-data-show/>)

Pew Research: Percentage of teens saying each of the following is a problem among people their age in the community where they live:

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----|
| 1. Anxiety and Depression | 96% |
| 2. Bullying | 90% |
| 3. Drug Addiction | 86% |
| 4. Drinking Alcohol | 84% |
| 5. Poverty | 87% |
| 6. Teen pregnancy | 78% |
| 7. Gangs | 71% |

(Juliana Menasce Horowitz, “Most U.S. Teens See Anxiety and Depression as a Major Problem Among their Peers”, *Pew Research Center*, February 20, 2019, <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2019/02/20/most-u-s-teens-see-anxiety-and-depression-as-a-major-problem-among-their-peers/>)

Another contributor of depression is bullying: “About a fifth of high school students (19% in 2017) reported being bullied on school property. 14.9% said they’d experienced ‘cyberbullying (via texts, social media or other digital means)’”

(Drew Desilver, “The concerns and challenges of being a U.S. teen: What the data show”, *Pew Research*, February 26, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/02/26/the-concerns-and-challenges-of-being-a-u-s-teen-what-the-data-show/>)

“CDC ... rates of suicide among young people jumped 56% between 2007 and 2016, after declining between 1999 and 2007.”

(Markham Heid, “Depression and Suicide Rates Are Rising Sharply in Young Americans, New Report Says. This May Be One Reason Why, *TIME*, March 14, 2019, <http://time.com/5550803/depression-suicide-rates-youth/>)

“A survey of pediatric hospitals found that hospitalizations of 5- to 17-year-olds for suicidal ideation or attempts doubled between 2008 and 2015; the CDC's research indicates that suicide has increased especially among teenage girls.”

(Holly Hedegaard, M.D., Sally C. Curtin, M.A., and Margaret Warner, Ph.D., “Suicide Mortality in the United States, 1999 – 2017”, *CDC*, November 2018, <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/databriefs/db330-h.pdf>)

“While it is challenging to determine the causes of these trends, it is difficult to think of another cultural change that has had as substantial an impact on the day-to-day lives of the largest number of teens as smartphones and digital media have.”

(Jean M. Twenge, “Stop Debating Whether Too Much Smartphone Time Can Hurt Teens, and Start Protecting Them”, *TIME*, March 21, 2019, <http://time.com/5555737/smartphone-mental-health-teens/>)

“There was one change that impacted the lives of young people more than older people, and that was the growth of smartphones and digital media like social media.”

(Markham Heid, “Depression and Suicide Rates Are Rising Sharply in Young Americans, New Report Says. This May Be One Reason Why, *TIME*, March 14, 2019, <http://time.com/5550803/depression-suicide-rates-youth/>)

“Technology is only a fraction of the problem. ‘The disconnect of the family,’ writes Lisa Tiano, ‘is the bigger issue here.’”

(Lisa Tiano, “Recovering From the Disconnect With Your Teens”, *Thrive Global*, February 21, 2019, <https://thriveworld.com/stories/recovering-from-the-disconnect-with-your-teens/>)

“These above teen issues increases ‘go hand-in-hand with a decline in teen socialization. Forty-five percent of 12th graders now say that they never go on dates, compared to 14 percent as recently as the early 1990s.’”

(Charles Fain Lehman, “Are Smartphones and Social Media Hurting Our Kids?”, *Institute for Family Studies*, February 6, 2019, <https://ifstudies.org/blog/are-smartphones-and-social-media-hurting-our-kids>)

“...survey from Common Sense Media showed 13- to 18-year-olds spend an average of nine hours a day ‘using media for their enjoyment’; kids eight to 12 spend about six hours a day on average.”

(Charles Fain Lehman, “Are Smartphones and Social Media Hurting Our Kids?”, *Institute for Family Studies*, February 6, 2019, <https://ifstudies.org/blog/are-smartphones-and-social-media-hurting-our-kids>)

“Adolescents using electronic devices 3 or more hours a day were 34 percent more likely to have at least one suicide-related outcome than those using devices 2 or fewer hours a day, and adolescents using social media sites every day were 13% more likely to report high levels of depressive symptoms than those using social media less often.”

(Charles Fain Lehman, “Are Smartphones and Social Media Hurting Our Kids?”, *IFS Institute for Family Studies*, February 6, 2019, <https://ifstudies.org/blog/are-smartphones-and-social-media-hurting-our-kids>)

“Through their social media feeds”, writer Anna Noel Taylor states, “teens have access to a constant flow of news and information. Our research suggests that this is taking a toll on them and increasing their anxiety. Here’s what we’ve found:”

(Anna Noel Taylor, “Teenage Fears”, *Insights/Viacom*, March 21, 2019, <https://insights.viacom.com/post/teenage-fears/>)

- a. “Stress is rising among teens. Teens are feeling more stressed, up 3 percentage points in 5 years. Those aged 16 to 17 are more stressed than their younger peers.”

(Anna Noel Taylor, “Teenage Fears”, *Insights/Viacom*, March 21, 2019, <https://insights.viacom.com/post/teenage-fears/>)

- b. “The mid-teen years are when stresses start to mount. Younger teens (age 12 to 15) worry most about parents, phones, and school grades. While these worries continue as they age, starting around age 16 concerns about the future also start to creep in – about their potential, having enough money, and job prospects.”

(Anna Noel Taylor, “Teenage Fears”, *Insights/Viacom*, March 21, 2019, <https://insights.viacom.com/post/teenage-fears/>)

“A groundbreaking study,” reports CNN Anderson Cooper, “examines effects of screen time on kids.” They followed more than 11,000 kids for a decade and spent \$300 million doing it.

(Anderson Cooper, “Groundbreaking Study Examines Effects of Screen Time on Kids”, *CBS News*, December 9, 2018, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/groundbreaking-study-examines-effects-of-screen-time-on-kids-60-minutes/>)

“Smartphones gained widespread usage among young people by 2012. ... four years that followed, **the percentage of teens who reported drinking or having sex fell.** ... But the percentage who said they were lonely or depressed spiked ... also, **ER visits for self-harm like cutting have tripled among girls age 10 to 14.**”

(Anderson Cooper, “Groundbreaking Study Examines Effects of Screen Time on Kids”, *CBS News*, December 9, 2018, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/groundbreaking-study-examines-effects-of-screen-time-on-kids-60-minutes/>)

“Teens with religious or spiritual upbringing may be protected from ‘big 3’ risks”

“... teens who attended religious services regularly were:”

- “12 percent less likely to suffer from depression”
- “33 percent less likely to use illicit drugs”
- “18 percent more likely to report high levels of happiness”
- “87 percent more likely to have high levels of forgiveness”

“Teens who prayed or meditated frequently were:”

- “30 percent less likely to start having sex at a young age”
- “40 percent less likely to have an STD”
- “38 percent more likely to volunteer in their community”
- “47 percent more likely to have a sense of mission and purpose”

(Linda Carroll, “Teens with religious or spiritual upbringing may be protected from ‘big 3’ risks”, *Today*, September 13, 2018, <https://www.today.com/health/religious-or-spiritual-upbringing-may-protect-teens-t137350>)

An acute observation – “I think people”, writes Rob Reimer, “are going to come to faith in Christ today more because they know they are broken and in need of a healer than because they know they are sinners in need of a savior.”

(Rob Reimer, *Soul Care: 7 Transformational Principles for a Healthy Soul*)

About 15 years ago I met with Dr. Bill Bright in Orlando. I expressed to him that within 10-15 years our CRU mission statement won't be complete, “Win, Build, Send.” To be culturally relevant we would need to make it: “Win, Heal, Build, Send.” (He just chuckled.)

3. AN IMPOSING AND SECULAR WORLDVIEW i.e. FACING A MORE ANTAGONISTIC CULTURE

Barna Research reports that “A growing secularization and a waning interest in religious matters have contributed to tension in faith conversations ... almost half of practicing Christian millennials say evangelism is morally wrong.”

(“What Non-Christians Want from Faith Conversations”, Barna, February 19, 2019, <https://www.barna.com/research/non-christians-faith-conversations/>)

Many today declare that evangelism is anti-multicultural and intolerance (tolerance means that all values, beliefs, ideals to trust and all life styles are equal.). So, when you evangelize you are saying your values and beliefs are greater than theirs ... that is anathema in today's culture.

“Our society is experiencing the shrinking of nominal Christianity and the consistent growth of secularism and pluralism. This shift from being a nominally Christian society to a pluralistic, more secular society, has also profoundly affected the way people perceived evangelism in our culture. There's been a growing sense of anti-proselytization. Sharing the gospel is largely seen in our culture as an act of intolerance to people of other faith groups, no faith, or those who hold other forms of spirituality.”

(Ed Stetzer, “Headwinds in Evangelism: New Challenges Secularism and Pluralism Add to Outreach”, *Christianity Today*, April 17, 2019, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2019/april/headwinds-in-evangelism-pluralism-spirituality-mission.html>)

“Did you know,” writes Pure Flix Faith and Family Alliance, “that if a child is raised in church and attends every Sunday until they are 17 years old,

they will experience about 800 hours (33 days) of biblical teaching? Did you also know that in the same time frame, that same child will experience over 65,000 hours of media (2,708 days)? That is a staggering difference in numbers that could potentially leave a drastic impact on a child's faith."

(Rev. Franklin Santagate, "1 Impact of Digital Media" Email to Josh McDowell Dated July 17, 2019)

"*Christianity Today's* 'Headwinds in Evangelism: New Challenges Secularism and Pluralism add to Outreach', reports that, 'We've moved from a nominally Christian to a more pluralistic and secular society,' writes Ed Stetzer, 'and that's a very important shift. In a sense, we've lost our home field advantage.'"

(Ed Stetzer, "Headwinds in Evangelism: New Challenges Secularism and Pluralism Add to Outreach", *Christianity Today*, April 17, 2019, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2019/april/headwinds-in-evangelism-pluralism-spirituality-mission.html>)

The above imposing secular view has left to ambivalence ... A whatever attitude towards faith.

"This is mainly true of those 35 years and younger. A phrase so indicative of culture is 'so what!' as stated earlier when 1,000 pastors were asked what were the greatest challenges to the future of their church. Their number three answer was, 'Declining interest in matters of faith.'"

(Timothy C. Morgan, "Pastors Face Future of the Church with Optimism", *Facts and Trends, LifeWay*, February 13, 2019, <https://factsandtrends.net/2019/02/13/pastors-face-future-of-the-church-with-optimism/>)

"They know there is no "right" way to live life. Teens are coming of age in a world that rejects convention, authority, and tradition. They consider the old traditional paths to be outdated or unrealistic and see that they can create new options for themselves."

(Christian Kurz, "For American Teens, Identity is on a Spectrum", *Viacom Global Insights*, June 5, 2019, <https://insights.viacom.com/post/for-american-teens-identity-is-on-a-spectrum/>)

Fewer college age involved in Church.

“Church pews may be full of teenagers, but a new study says college students might be a much rarer sight in the future on Sunday mornings. ‘The reality is that Protestant churches continue to see the new generation walk away as young adults. Regardless of any external factors, the Protestant church is slowly shrinking from within.’”

(“Most Teenagers Drop Out of Church as Young Adults”, *LifeWay*, January 15, 2019, <https://lifewayresearch.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/>)

“The dropout rate for young adults accelerates with age: ‘While 69 percent say they were attending at age 17, that fell to 58 percent at age 18 and 40 percent at age 19. Once they reach their 20s, around 1 in 3 (i.e. 33%) say they were attending church regularly.’ Ben Trueblood, director of student ministry at *LifeWay*, said those numbers speak to the issue at hand. ‘We are seeing teenagers drop out of the church as they make the transition out of high school and student ministry,’ he said. ‘This moment of transition is often too late to act for churches.’ ‘...there was nothing about the church experience or faith foundation of those teenagers that caused them to seek out a connection to a local church once they entered a new phase of life. The time they spent with ... church was simply replaced by something else.’”

(“Most Teenagers Drop Out of Church as Young Adults”, *LifeWay*, January 15, 2019, <https://lifewayresearch.com/2019/01/15/most-teenagers-drop-out-of-church-as-young-adults/>)

“Exponential LifeWay Research found 6 in 10 Protestant churches are plateaued or declining in attendance and more than half saw fewer than 10 people become new Christians in the past 12 months.”

(Aaron Earls, “The Church Growth Gap: The Big Get Bigger While the Small Get Smaller”, *Christianity Today*, March 6, 2019, <https://www.christianitytoday.com/news/2019/march/lifeway-research-church-growth-attendance-size.html>)

A major implication of the lack of intellectual process in learning is truth without context.

“With the internet and the eight-second attention span, we are learning truth by ‘sound bites.’ Very seldom do you ever get the context of events, issues or claims to truth or fact.” It has nothing to do with not being smart,

but rather adolescents are in information overload. The average adolescent takes in more than 34GB of data per every 24 hours. The equivalent of 2,202,588 pages of 8 ½ x 11 data passes an adolescent's brain every 24 hours.

(Nick Bilton. *The New York Times*. The American Diet: 34 Gigabytes a Day. December 9, 2009. http://bits.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/12/09/the-american-diet-34-gigabytes-a-day/?_r=0. Accessed 6.6.19)

“Social media has the ability to take out a snippet of an entire presidential speech that somebody gave and give you 30 seconds to two minutes that can completely sway somebody's opinion on that candidate,’ Katy Foster, 21, a right-leaning college student in South Dakota, said.”

(Kate Taylor, “Gen Z is more conservative than many realize – but the Instagram-fluent generation will revolutionize the right”, *Business Insider*, July 2019, <https://www.businessinsider.com/gen-z-changes-political-divides-2019-7>)

“There's no time for most people in Generation Z,’ she added. ‘You're just being so caught up with everything. Especially being a college student, I don't have time to watch an hour-long debate. I will be swayed, honestly, by a two-minute video, which is sad to say.’”

(Kate Taylor, “Gen Z is more conservative than many realize – but the Instagram-fluent generation will revolutionize the right”, *Business Insider*, July 2019, <https://www.businessinsider.com/gen-z-changes-political-divides-2019-7>)

4. LACK OF INTELLECTUAL PROCESS OR INTEGRITY

“This goes hand in hand with emotions and feelings as truth. Those who advocate tolerance and diversity only tend it to those with whom they agree, i.e., ‘The freedom to tolerate the tolerable and give permission to be intolerant of the intolerable.’”

(Derek Beres, “Should we Tolerate the Intolerant?”, *Big Think*, August 22, 2017, <https://bigthink.com/21st-century-spirituality/should-we-tolerate-the-intolerant>)

“What is so crazy and inconsistent is that presidential candidate and Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who strongly advocates tolerance and diversity, verbally attacked (i.e., was intolerant of) VP Mike Pence for his Christian faith.”

(Daniel Jativa, Mike Pence accuses Buttigieg of attacking ‘my Christian faith’, *Washington Examiner*, April 12, 2019, <https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/news/mike-pence-says-mayor-pete-buttigieg-is-attacking-my-christian-faith>)

A thirteen-year-old daughter of a dear friend said to her youth pastor who was encouraging her to study more and think through issues, “Why should I study ... I can just google it.” So true for a new generation.

5. EMOTIONAL TRUTH

Years ago people would say, truth was objective ... Truth was objective...it was what you observed. Then Truth became subjective...it is what you think. Now people think of truth ... truth is emotional...it's what you feel. The same sex marriage debate had nothing to do with science or biology, let alone Truth. It was the first time I recall that ‘FEELINGS trumped science...facts...truth.’ It all had to do with feelings. Today many promote truth as emotions, i.e., how you feel. *Barna Trends 2018*, again emphasizes that “Truth is increasingly regarded as something FELT, or relative....”

(Barna Group, “*Barna Trends 2018: What's New and What's Next at the Intersection of Faith and Culture*”, Barna, December 19, 2017, <https://www.amazon.com/Barna-Trends-2018-Intersection-Culture/dp/0801018641>)

Barna Trends 2017, states “Morality ...says each person's FEELINGS are the measuring stick...” In 2016 the new word added to dictionaries was POST-TRUTH, defined as ‘Relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to EMOTIONS and personal belief.’

(Barna Group, “*Barna Trends 2017: What's New and What's Next at the Intersection of Faith and Culture*”, Barna, December 6, 2016, <https://www.amazon.com/Barna-Trends-2017-Intersection-Culture/dp/0801018633>)

Barna again admonishes that, “52% believe or suspect that the only intellectual way to live is to make the best choices you can in every situation based on your FEELINGS at the moment.”

(Barna Group, “*Barna Trends 2018: What's New and What's Next at the Intersection of Faith and Culture*”, Barna, December 19, 2017, <https://www.amazon.com/Barna-Trends-2018-Intersection-Culture/dp/0801018641>)

“Katy Tur in interviewing Michael Wolff, author of *Fire & Fury*, about the criticism he cheated on facts asked why he didn't produce the evidence ... his response was, ‘my book is the evidence ... read it.’ She responded: ‘I read it...a lot of the stuff did read as ... did FEEL true.’”

(Erik Wemple, "Michael Wolff to MSNBC: If it rings true, it is true", *The Washington Post*, January 8, 2018, https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/erik-wemple/wp/2018/01/08/michael-wolff-to-msnbc-if-it-rings-true-it-is-true/?utm_term=.c9828651a473)

George Lucas explains of Star Wars: "to understand the Universe, trust your feelings."

(Bill Moyers. George Lucas. *Time*. Of Myth and Men. <http://content.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,23298,00.html>. April 18, 1999. Accessed 9.22.17)

6. CRITICAL RACE THEORY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

Probably two of the greatest and most difficult challenges for the Church is maneuvering through these two major ideas.

A pervasive racial tension.

The sad commentary is that the term 'racial or racist' has been used so loosely that it has lost its significance and sinfulness (also the words "hatred" and "diversity"). As a nation we seem to be losing our footing on a proper understanding of equality and diversity. We need another Martin Luther King, Jr., Dr. Pauli Murray or Tom Skinner. The Church still has the opportunity to rise up and slay this evil dragon ... racism.

7. LOSING ITS MORAL FOOTING

"Morality is individual. It is personal not corporate. Scriptural morality is losing its footing. Right from wrong has been overshadowed by tolerance, diversity and political correctness." (Josh D. McDowell)

"Christian morality is being ushered out of American social structures and off the cultural main stage, leaving a vacuum ... the broader culture is attempting to fill the void. 80% express concern about the nation's moral condition (Elders 89%; Boomers 87%; Gen-Xers 75%; Millennials 74%)"

(David Kinnamen, "The End of Absolutes", Barna, May 25, 2016, <https://www.barna.com/research/the-end-of-absolutes-americas-new-moral-code/>)

“Americans pledge allegiance to the ‘morality of self-fulfillment,’ a new moral code that,” as David Kinnaman, President of Barna Research Group argues, “has replaced Christianity as the culture’s moral norm.”

(David Kinnamen, “The End of Absolutes”, Barna, May 25, 2016, <https://www.barna.com/research/the-end-of-absolutes-americas-new-moral-code/>)

“They’re open-minded about sex. A majority feel that it’s acceptable to have sex (84%), and most have no problem with same-sex hookups (69%) and open relationships (58%). Marriage is optional, with 83% agreeing that it’s fine to live together before marriage and 68% believing it’s okay to have a baby without being married.”

(Christian Kurz, “For American Teens, Identity is on a Spectrum”, *Viacom Global Insights*, June 5, 2019, <https://insights.viacom.com/post/for-american-teens-identity-is-on-a-spectrum/>)

Radical Autonomy i.e. very individualistic.

From the internet to cultural education and politics, the individual comes before the corporate. One example how culture is catering to the individual. Starbucks sells 87,000 different drinks designed to satisfy individual desires.

"This generation wants — everybody wants — to have a say. Everybody wants to be heard."

(Kate Taylor, “Gen Z is more conservative than many realize – but the Instagram-fluent generation will revolutionize the right”, *Business Insider*, July 2019, <https://www.businessinsider.com/gen-z-changes-political-divides-2019-7>)

8. A PORN SATURATED CLIENTELE

“For 34-year-olds and younger, porn is normal/mainstream. It is no big deal. One major secular analysis in describing Gen Z was one word ... PORN.” (Josh D. McDowell)

“Porn consumption for young adults ... repeatedly reported to be approximately 75% for men and 30% for women ... [18+] [but new extensive research indicates] porn consumption rates for men were generally consistent (91-99%) across time frames ... women’s consumption varied more widely 60-92%).”

(Ingrid Solano, Nicholas R. Eaton and K. Daniel O’Leary, “Pornography Consumption, Modality and Function in a Large Internet Sample”, *Journal of Behavioral Addictions* (2018), *The Journal of Sex Research* (2018), <https://tandfonline.com/doi/abs/>)

Three fundamental assessment issues of pornography research in the above study were: “a) time frame-related, b) modality-related, and c) function-related. ... this study is the first to fully characterize these measurement issues in a single sample with a wide age range.”

(Ingrid Solano, Nicholas R. Eaton and K. Daniel O’Leary, “Pornography Consumption, Modality and Function in a Large Internet Sample”, *Journal of Behavioral Addictions* (2018), *The Journal of Sex Research* (2018), <https://tandfonline.com/doi/abs/>)

“I’m so puzzled,” writes a ministry director. “We are working with five young men (2 CRU staff) all between the ages of 22-25 years old. Josh, all five are into porn. These are the cream of the crop of young believers and leaders.”

“...93 percent of boys and 62 percent of girls were exposed to online pornography during their adolescence.”

(Nick Bilton, “Parenting in the Age of Online Pornography”, *The New York Times*, January 7, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/08/style/parenting-in-the-age-of-online-porn.html>)

“Josh, I am a youth pastor at a large megachurch. We have our youth leadership group of 25 students. I don’t know what to do ... 24 of the 25 leaders watch porn. Your stats about students and porn are way too low and unrealistic.” J.R.

“CHRISTIAN MEN and WOMEN who actively seek out porn on the internet.”

- “47% (ages 36-60)”
- “65% (ages 25-39)”
- “81% (ages 13-24)”
- “28% active Christians (attend church & faith is very significant in their life) of all ages seek out porn on the internet”

(David Kinnaman & Roxanne Stone, “*The Porn Phenomenon – The Impact of Pornography in the Digital Age*”, Barna Group, April 4, 2016, <http://barnaresources.myshopify.com/products/pornphenomenon>)

CHRISTIAN WOMEN who actively seek out porn on the internet

- “56% (ages 18-24)”

(David Kinnaman & Roxanne Stone, “*The Porn Phenomenon – The Impact of Pornography in the Digital Age*”, Barna Group, April 4, 2016, <http://barnaresources.myshopify.com/products/pornphenomenon>)

LEADERS:

- “57% pastors / 64% youth pastors have or are struggling with porn.”

(David Kinnaman & Roxanne Stone, “*The Porn Phenomenon – The Impact of Pornography in the Digital Age*”, Barna Group, April 4, 2016, <http://barnaresources.myshopify.com/products/pornphenomenon>)

“...90% of today’s college men and more than 60% of college women in the US saw porn before the age of 18.”

(Luke Gilkerson, “Pocket Porn: Nearly a Third of Teens Carry Portable X-Rated Theaters, *Covenant Eyes*, April 15, 2014, <http://www.covenanteyes.com/2014/04/15/porn-pocket/>)

“Representatives of four missionary-sending organizations said to me rather reluctantly that up to 90% of their staff applicants have watched porn.” (Account as told to Josh D. McDowell)

“The stupidity of culture is displayed when a child needs an ID to buy a pack of cigarettes but can freely go to the Internet and be consumed by pornography.” (Josh D. McDowell, December 2015)

“One of the greatest sins today is the pastor who does not equip parents to biblically, medically, scientifically, culturally and physically address porn with their children.” (Josh D. McDowell, November 2015)

“Pastor, help your people so that the lies of pornography will not be the legacy they leave their children...it’s up to you.” (Josh D. McDowell, April 2015)

“Josh” a pastor exclaimed, “we will be at the Set Free Summit. At our denomination’s national men’s meeting I asked the men how many of you are struggling with pornography? 90% raised their hands!” (Account as told to Josh D. McDowell)

My personal observation is reinforced by Dr. Samuel Perry who stated, “In every case, increases in pornography viewing are associated with lower levels of religiosity and more religious doubts.”

(Samuel L. Perry & George M. Hayward, “Seeing is (Not) Believing: How Viewing Pornography Shapes the Religious Lives of Young Americans”, *Social Forces/Oxford Academic*, June 2017, <https://academic.oup.com/sf/article/95/4/1757/2877697>)

“Only 7% of churches have any type of program to help parishioners struggling with porn.”

(David Kinnaman & Roxanne Stone, “*The Porn Phenomenon – The Impact of Pornography in the Digital Age*”, Barna Group, April 4, 2016, <http://barnaresources.myshopify.com/products/pornphenomenon>)

“The devastating impact of Internet pornography is a global phenomenon, and not one church or one culture in the world is isolated from its reach.” (Josh D. McDowell, December 2015)

9. IS CHRISTIANITY GOOD?

“This is critical. People want to know if Christianity is good before they wonder if it is credible. The internet has raised awareness to many negative attitudes and behaviors of a few. An attitude persists that Christians (especially evangelical) are mean-spirited, intolerant and bigoted. The internet is amplifying these attitudes.”

(J. Warner Wallace, “Why the Case for Christianity Is More Important than Ever”, *Cold-Case Christianity*, June 24, 2015, <https://coldcasechristianity.com/writings/why-the-case-for-christianity-is-more-important-than-ever/>)

A police officer emailed me, “Josh, please help me ... I am really struggling with how God can be good.” August 26, 2019

10. SAME SEX ATTRACTION (SSA), TRANSGENDER, LGBTQ+, GENDER ID

“Many do not identify as straight and most have friends who are gay or lesbian. More than 1 in 4 American teens (26%) do not identify as heterosexual. Their peers have a variety of sexual orientations – 57% have friends who are gay or lesbian, 52% have friends who are bisexual, 32% have friends who are still figuring out their sexuality, 23% have

friends who are pansexual, 18% have friends who are asexual, and 9% have friends who are polyamorous.”

(Christian Kurz, “For American Teens, Identity is on a Spectrum”, *Viacom Global Insights*, June 5, 2019, <https://insights.viacom.com/post/for-american-teens-identity-is-on-a-spectrum/>)

Can we as a “body of believers” learn to live a life of truth and compassion? This issue can become a major “downfall” for many churches and believers.

“We define a sexually faithful church this way”, writes Jim Weidenaar of Harvest USA, “A church that disciples its members in a gospel worldview of sexuality through education and redemptive ministry. The major point in this simple but far-reaching statement is this: For a church to teach, lead, model, and assist its people to live faithful lives within God’s design for sex, sexuality, and gender, discipleship is the key. Discipleship is a subset of the Great Commission, “making disciples of all nations, teaching them to obey all that I have commanded.”

(Jim Weidenaar, “Characteristics of a Sexually Faithful Church”, Harvest USA, Accessed July 17, 2019, <https://www.harvestusa.org/characteristics-of-a-sexually-faithful-church/#.XS-bEehKiUk>)

The implication of this is “individual morality.”

THE CONCLUSION TO THE ABOVE 10 CHALLENGES

The above are my observations of the world we are called to work in to win, (heal) build and send laborers into the global harvest. This is just my analysis. We need to be more cutting edge in our faith and in the Church. Some of these issues were not critical just a few years ago but today are trend-setting.

These ten observations are true of the majority of all cultures in the world. The internet has changed everything. I tell leaders from around the world that their culture is irrelevant ... there is now one culture for those 35 and younger ... Social Media.

“A study of 1,000 pastors shows that when asked the question ‘What is your top concern about the future of their church? they answered,

‘Reaching the next generation.’ This had a 300% higher response than any other pastoral concern. (#2 Lack of discipleship and #3 Declining interest in matters of faith). The Body of Christ worldwide would answer the same way. The Church has a marvelous opportunity to lead the way.”

(Timothy C. Morgan, “Pastors Face Future of the Church with Optimism”, Facts and Trends, *LifeWay*, February 13, 2019, <https://factsandtrends.net/2019/02/13/pastors-face-future-of-the-church-with-optimism/>)

“*Cold-Case Christianity* explains that the case for the credibility for Christianity is more critical now, ‘nones’ have rejected their experience in the Church rather than their belief in Jesus. Most churches are still uninterested in making the case for Christianity, while more and more Christians want to know why Christianity is true.”

(J. Warner Wallace, “Why the Case for Christianity Is More Important than Ever”, *Cold-Case Christianity*, June 24, 2015, <https://coldcasechristianity.com/writings/why-the-case-for-christianity-is-more-important-than-ever/>)

“Now is the time to make the case for the reliability of the New Testament ... the reasonable, evidential case for Christianity is more important than ever”

(J. Warner Wallace, “Why the Case for Christianity is more Important than Ever”, *Cold-Case Christianity*, June 24, 2015, <https://coldcasechristianity.com/writings/why-the-case-for-christianity-is-more-important-than-ever/>)

“It is good to be reminded again of Rob Reimer’s cultural insight in *Soul Care: 7 Transformational Principles for a Healthy Soul*: ‘I think people are going to come to faith in Christ today more because they know they are broken and in need of a healer than because they know they are sinners in need of a savior.’”

(Rob Reimer, *Soul Care: 7 Transformational Principles for a Healthy Soul*)

The above 10 challenges affect how we approach evangelism and discipleship. Two major observations common to all the above issues:

- 1) Relationships are the ground level issues to start workable solutions by the Church;

Robert Waldinger, a professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and the current director of a study, states, “The people who were

the most satisfied in their relationships at age 50 were the healthiest at age 80. Strong relationships help to delay mental and physical decline. Taking care of your body is important but tending to your relationships is a form of self-care too. That, I think, is the revelation.”

(Liz Mineo, “Good genes are nice, but joy is better”, *The Harvard Gazette*, April 11, 2017, <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2017/04/over-nearly-80-years-harvard-study-has-been-showing-how-to-live-a-healthy-and-happy-life/>)

2) Knowledgeable truth and convictions need to be engrained into new leaders if we are to see a lasting change. (Truth about the Bible, Jesus, the resurrection and truth itself.) We need to not only develop believers with a solid, biblically-based belief system, but we must create true followers of Christ who have deep **convictions** why their faith is true.

No longer can the Church remain relevant by promoting **beliefs** ... we must raise up a generation with not only healthy biblically-based beliefs but also deep-rooted **convictions** that their beliefs are true. Young people are looking for the “whys” of their faith, not just the “what”, so let’s give it to them.

The above 10 challenges plus the pervasiveness of “Tolerance” throughout global cultures has had a profound effect on evangelism. The research by Barna Research Group’s data reveals that, “...few Christian Millennials today are willing to share their faith with others (and in fact think it’s wrong to do so...” (Barna Group, “A Snapshot of Faith Practice Across Age Groups”, Barna, July 23, 2019, <https://www.barna.com/research/faithview-on-faith-practice/>) It will become more notable with GenZ.

RESOURCES

- Gen Z Research Portfolio: www.josh.org/genz
- Porn Epidemic Research Portfolio: www.josh.org/epidemic
- Father Factor Research Portfolio: www.josh.org/fathers
- 7“A”s to Effective Parenting: www.josh.org/7As (Handout)
- Building relationships that transform: www.josh.org/7As (PDF)
- The Perfect Storm: www.josh.org/joshtalks

Sean McDowell’s:

- Same Sex Marriage – A Thoughtful Approach to God’s Design for Marriage: <https://www.amazon.com/Same-Sex-Marriage-Thoughtful-Approach-Response/dp/080101834X> by Sean McDowell
- So the Next Generation will know: <https://seanmcdowell.org/item/so-the-next-generation-will-know> by Sean McDowell
- Blogs:
- Sean McDowell: <https://seanmcdowell.org/blog>
- Jim Dennison: <https://www.denisonforum.org/category/columns/daily-article/>
- Chuck Colson Center: <http://www.breakpoint.org/#SignUp>
- Faithview by Barna Research Group, 2019, Digitized Data to Navigate Culture <https://access.barna.com/faithview/>

After you read my research and conclusions on Gen Z and the 10 challenges of the Church, if you think I may be an alarmist, carefully read again at the beginning of this document (pp. 2-4) the LA Times op-Ed July 14, 2019 by Dr. Varun Soni, Dean of Religious Life at University of So. California.



ALEX McLELLAN

SPEAKER | AUTHOR

Alex McLellan serves with Josh McDowell Ministry, a Cru ministry (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ). An effective communicator with international experience, Alex is passionate about engaging others with the gospel, and he has joined our team to share the truth of Christ – until the whole world hears.

For more than fifty years, Josh McDowell has been at the forefront of cultural trends and groundbreaking ministry. Alex will serve alongside Josh, writing, speaking and shining the light of Christ into the darkest places. He will help believers be prepared to share with confidence, knowing the reason why Christianity is reliable, relational and relevant to our lives.

Alex is available to speak on these topics:

You Can Handle the Truth! | How To Find The Meaning Of Life | Reasons To Believe In The Resurrection | Will The Real Jesus Please Stand Up? | How Do You Make Sense of Suffering? | Can We Trust The Bible? | Be Prepared to Share (1 Peter 3) | Be Prepared to Shine (Matthew 5)



WHO'S TALKING ABOUT ALEX?

"Alex is a winsome and effective communicator who understands how skeptics view the gospel and the questions they raise...I enthusiastically recommend his work."

—Ravi Zacharias, Ravi Zacharias International Ministry

"Alex's ministry has been immensely beneficial to the church in helping to train, equip and prepare God's people for the task of bringing the gospel to the world and the world to Christ."

—Wayne Sutton, Senior Pastor, Carrubbers Christian Centre, Edinburgh, Scotland.

"Alex is gifted in providing a strong intellectual and culturally relevant expression of the Christian faith and this has been a powerful way for our students to build their own foundation in Christ and His Word."

—Peter Thomas, National Director, Capernwray Bible School, Australia

Alex is the author of the following:

A Jigsaw Guide to Making Sense of the World (InterVarsity Press, 2012)

A Jigsaw Guide to the Meaning of Life (JG2 Publishing, 2016)

A Jigsaw Guide to Sharing Your Faith (JG2 Publishing, 2016)

Alex and Sheryl have been married for over twenty years and have three children: Sophia, Moriah and Asher. The family lived in Scotland, UK, before relocating to the USA, and they currently reside in San Diego, California.



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BEN BENNETT

SPEAKER | AUTHOR

Ben grew up in Virginia Beach, Virginia and met Jesus at an early age. After being heavily involved in Cru throughout college and developing a great desire to see students transformed by Jesus, he joined staff in 2011.

For years, Ben experienced deep anger, shame, a porn addiction, and mental health issues like anxiety and depression before finding hope and healing through biblical, neuroscientific, and psychological solutions.

He currently resides in Dallas, Texas, and serves with Josh McDowell Ministry as an author, speaker, and the Director of Uprising—a new national initiative helping youth overcome hurts and unwanted struggles, and also live a thriving life.

For more than fifty years, Josh McDowell has been at the forefront of cultural trends and groundbreaking ministry. Ben serves alongside Josh, writing, speaking and shining the light of Christ into the darkest places. He is helping believers be prepared to share with confidence, knowing the reason Christianity is reliable, relational, and relevant to our lives.

Ben is available to speak on these topics:

Uprising — overcome Hurts, Struggles, & Start Thriving | Sexual Wholeness In A Pornified World | You, Me, We: Loneliness, Relationships, & Thriving | No More Figleaves: A Story About Shame & The True God



WHO'S TALKING ABOUT BEN?



"Ben speaks from personal experience of the freedom Christ offers each and every troubled heart. It is such a delight for me to hear Ben speak for his generation in such a relevant, reliable, and relational way."

-Dr. Ted Roberts // Pastor, Counselor, and Founder of Pure Desire Ministries

"Few speakers have a story of freedom to share like Ben's that renews hope, gives a roadmap to healing, and inspires next steps."

-Karl Armentrout // Cru National Conference and Events Director

"My hidden habitual sin had me imprisoned in silence, guilt, and secrets for roughly ten years. Through Ben's encouragement and passion for sharing the love of God, I was able to share my darkest sin with others and begin the journey of healing and freedom."

-Marylyn // Texas College Student

Ben is the author of the following:

Living Free (Pure Desire Ministries International, 2016)

FLESH SERIES: Sex, Lust, Porn and The Christian (Pure Desire Ministries International, 2016)

Josh and Ben are launching a movement helping youth overcome hurts and unwanted struggles, and also live a thriving life.

Through interactive speaking, small group curriculum, videos, and equipping resources, we see God raising up a generation of young people who are passionate about following Jesus wholeheartedly.



For more information or to book Ben please contact:



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JOSH McDOWELL

SPEAKER | AUTHOR

Josh McDowell has been at the forefront of cultural trends and groundbreaking ministry for more than 58 years. He shares the essentials of the Christian faith in everyday language so that people of all ages and stages can know Christ, understand what they believe and why it is true, and learn how to live, share and defend their faith.

Well-known as an articulate speaker, Josh has spoken to approximately 25.2 million people in 126 countries. Josh has written or co-authored 151 books with some translated in 128 languages. These include *More Than a Carpenter* with over 27 million copies distributed. He also authored *Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, named by *World Magazine* as one of the twentieth century's top 40 books and one of the thirteen most influential books on Christian thought of the last 50 years. *Evidence That Demands a Verdict* also won the 2018 Evangelical Christian Publishers Association award in the Bible Reference Book category.

Josh is available to speak on these topics:

Relationships | Parenting | Reliability of Scripture | My Journey
Self Image | Sexual Integrity | Truth in Today's Culture



WHO'S TALKING ABOUT JOSH?



"This has helped me more than any other kind of seminar on speaking."
-Cru Staff Member, Young Communicators Seminar

"His message spoke to all of us but certainly impacted the hearts and minds of the teens the most."
-Alpha Women's Center of Grand Rapids Staff Member

"Youth leaders and teachers spoke to us for weeks after the dinner telling us his message opened paths to discussion of needs with their groups."
-Ministry Leader

"Josh's message was a deep examination of God's truth made relevant for your contemporary, apathetic youth culture."
-Tim Rickman, High School Principal, Wesleyan Education Center

Josh is the author of the following:

- *More Than a Carpenter* (Tyndale Momentum, 2009)
- *Evidence That Demands a Verdict* (Thomas Nelson, 2017)
- *Set Free to Choose Right* (Shiloh Run Press, 2018)

Josh and his wife, Dottie, have been married 48 years. They have four children and ten grandchildren.



For more information and to book Josh please contact:



johncnettleton@gmail.com



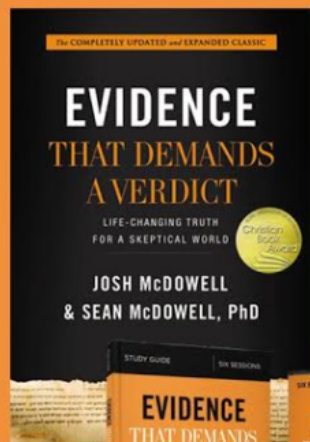
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*World Magazine

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THE PROBLEM; THE CONSEQUENCES; THE SOLUTIONS.

Research confirms that porn addiction is more powerful, demoralizing, and devastating than an addiction to alcohol or drugs because an addict's brain is literally rewired to need porn. And the addiction goes way beyond the issue of lust. It's a brain issue that may start from curiosity, but most often starts from a deep emotional wound or trauma.

With the launch of the internet and increasing popularity of smart-phones, porn has now become at least a \$5 billion worldwide industry that costs U.S. businesses \$16.8 billion in productivity per year.

One porn site was 3,110 petabytes in bandwidth. That's the equivalent of more than 2 trillion sheets of 8.5"x11" paper - which would require more than 20 billion 4-drawer file cabinets to store it. The second largest porn site on the Net gets 100 million page views a day, serving up 4,000 videos a SECOND during its peak hours.

Please access the full *Executive Summary* and more by visiting www.Josh.org/epidemic.

THE PORN
EPIDEMIC



DADS, YOU MATTER!

A 2012 study which examined the cases of more than 10,000 children from 36 states around the world revealed that a cold or distant father can damage a child's life, sometimes for decades - unless another man steps into the role.

Children with involved fathers or father figures gain a lot. They become more confident in unfair settings, are better able to deal with frustration, are more likely to mature into compassionate adults, and more are likely to have higher self-esteem and grade point averages.

Children are remarkably resilient until their trust is completely severed. The good news, parents, is that we can pro-actively work to repair, build, and deepen our relationships with our kids to prevent that - especially if we model God's unconditional love, forgiveness, and grace.

Please access the full *The Father Factor Portfolio* at www.Josh.org/fathers.

THE FATHER
FACTOR



WHO IS GEN Z?

"Generation Z" members (also called Gen Z or iGen) are independent, stubborn, pragmatic individuals roughly 7-22 years old. Their defining cause, serving as the foundation for its behaviour, is human inequality - and they'll harness technology to confront it.

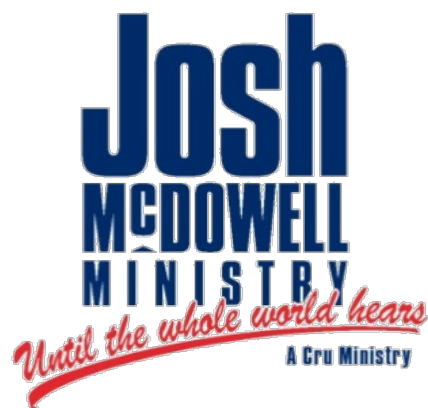
Gen Z tends to be the product of Generation X, a relatively small, jaded generation. As parents, Gen X try to give their children the safe, secure childhood they lacked. Though parenting is still the greatest trend that influences behaviours across generations, these protective moms and dads couldn't completely shelter their kids from absorbing the anxiety of 9/11 and the U.S. recession.

Please access the full *The World of Gen Z Portfolio* at www.Josh.org/GenZ.

GENERATION
Z



NOTES



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