

**ACTS SEMINARY PRESENTS:  
MINISTRY LIFT  
DISCIPLE MAKING 2015 CONFERENCE  
(FEBRUARY 27 and 28)**

**FRIDAY**

***HEMORRHAGING FAITH STUDY INSIGHTS***

**SATURDAY**

***WORKING WITH MILLENIALS and GENERATION Z***

***With James & Claire Penner, Bonnie Quinn and Jordan Erendson***



Discipleship is not the same as making disciples. The first usually describes activities like Bible reading and prayer; our focus today is on making disciples. This includes Bible study and prayer, but focuses more on the end results – reproducible maturity !

**A “HIGH TRUST – LOW EGO” RESEARCH INITIATIVE  
of EFC’s Youth & Young Adult Ministry Roundtable**

- JP Associates 72 Canada wide young adult interviews
- Angus Reid (2,049 respondent) panel survey



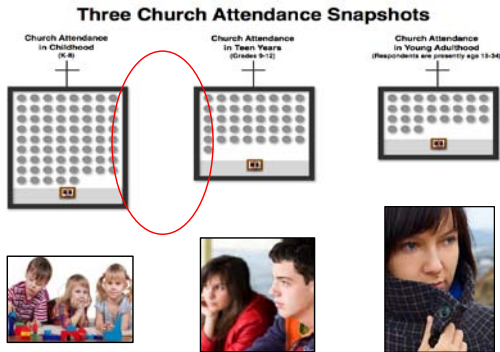
Downloadable Report at [www.hemorrhagingfaith.com](http://www.hemorrhagingfaith.com)

# FRIDAY: HEMORRHAGING FAITH RESEARCH INSIGHTS

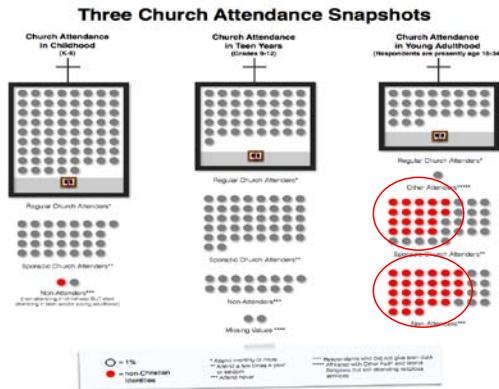
## HEMORRHAGING FAITH: Project Review (session 1)

Ah Ha 1 -- More young people leave before high school graduation than after.

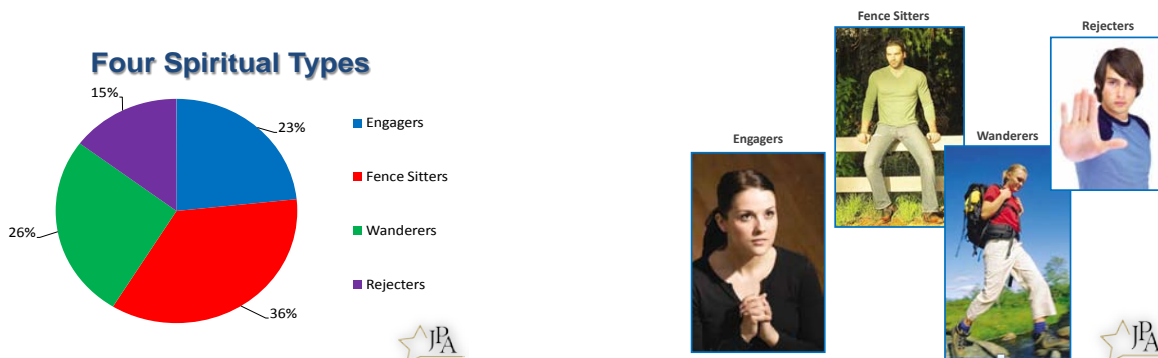
Ah Ha 2 – Transitions are a key source of loss.



Ah Ha 3 -- As people leave church they also drop religious affiliation... and faith.



“Worldview hangs on the thin thread of conversation.” Peter Berger



How do we attach deeply to our engagers...and re-attach to our fence sitters, wanderers and rejecters?

# Faith Drivers of “Raised Christian” Millennials

## #1. Personal Intimacy With God

### Experienced

- Answered prayers
- Felt God

### Un-experienced

- Unanswered prayers
- Unfelt God

## #2. Spiritually Engaged Parents

### Engaged

- Modelled
- Instructed

### Disengaged

- Faith not Modelled
- Just for Appearance

## #3. Empowering Teaching & Beliefs

### Empowering

- Content
  - Depth
  - Tough topics
- Delivery
  - Application
  - Opportunity to ask questions

### Dis-empowering

- Haphazard
  - Lacking Depth
  - Inconsistent
  - Fixated on Morality
- Perceived as Restrictive
  - Premarital sex
  - Partying
  - Homosexuality
  - Gender roles
  - Ultimate truth

## #4. A Vibrant Local Faith Community

### Vibrant

- Helping in Hardship
- Experiencing Emotional Healing
- Christ-like Maturity
- Working as a Body
- Making a Difference in Community
- Cross-generational
- Authentic
- Inclusive

### Stagnant

- Lacking in Community, Mission and Maturity
- Contaminated with Toxins
  - hypocrisy
  - judgment
  - exclusivity
  - inability to handle failure
  - unappreciated talents

“If I am honest with myself, what I really need from the church is not another yes-man entity enabling my hubris and giving me what I want. Rather, what I need is something bigger than me, older than me, bound by a truth that transcends me and a story that will outlast me; basically something that doesn’t change to fit me and my whims, but changes me to be the Christ-like person I was created to be.” Brent McCracken – millennial blogger

# FAITH DRIVER #1: Vibrant Community (session 2)



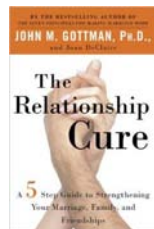
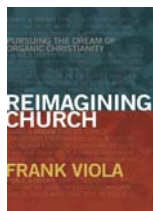
## Reflection Question

What needs to go (and what needs to stay) so that millennials experience YOUR church as a family rather than an organization?



1. Embrace Trinitarian DNA – the trinity (roots) is all about relationship, that’s why the trees need to be all about relationship (think family, body, bride – relational)
2. Focus more on “elder brother” ministries (high support/high expectations), so that they can disciple the younger.
3. The medium is the message.
4. Address structural constructs that inhibit community (not homogenous, not hierarchical, not theatre style). Church cannot be “bottle-necking at the pastor level. It cannot be age-stratified. It must not be once a week.
5. Think ESSENCE. Places we inhabit have to be human places (authentic, inclusive, intergenerational).
6. Create a culture in which no one is aborted.
7. Create a culture of emotionally healthy spirituality – it starts with you.
8. Think cross generational whenever programming.
9. Trust millennials with big stuff – our ceiling is their floor. For this to happen, we will have to adopt them and let things get messy.
10. Be open to new congregations, new growth and new ways God is now doing things. New paradigms come not from the centre but from the edges.
11. Friendship is huge. (Google John Gottman’s, Making Relationships Work – Youtube.)
12. Therefore commit wholeheartedly to a local congregation that shows millennials the gospel at work. Have a culture of devotion to one another. Covenant with this particular nasty group of local people. Challenge millennials to love a broken church. No congregational porn.

## Books

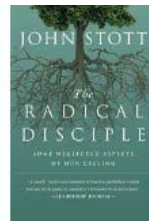
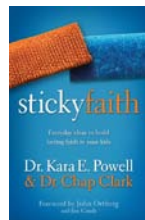
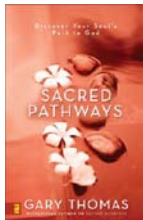


Reimagining Church: by Frank Viola  
Called to Stay, Caleb Breakey  
The Relationship Cure, Gottman  
Behold I Do a New Thing, Hadaway

## FAITH DRIVER #2: Experiencing God (session 3)

1. We need to see Jesus as He is. (Col 1:15-23). If we think of Jesus as a pygmy, we cannot trust him and experience Him. We are pygmy Christians because we have a pygmy “Jesus”. (John Stott)
2. We need to teach and experience what prayer is and what it is not. Prayer is not pulling the shore (God) to the boat, but pulling the boat (yourself) to the shore.
3. Experiencing Jesus is not about competency; it is about intimacy. It is not about perfection; it is about connection. John 15
4. Teach millennials (and ourselves !) to recognize God sightings. God is sovereign, creator, revealing, and acting -- but we don't see it. acts 4:24-30
5. Teach discernment of God's voice.
6. We need to tell stories of our own, and hear testimonies from local saints and those far away.
7. Take seriously the extravagance of Jesus' gospel – this is NOT about moralism!
8. Allow millennials to see God transform you. Be vulnerable.
9. Know the nine spiritual pathways
10. Emotional experiences help.
11. Worship inter-generationally.
12. Talk regularly about dark nights of the soul – when bad things happen  
(Lordship might mean it ends badly, normal faith can be bumpy, suffering is good.)

### Books



*The Radical Disciple*, by John Stott

*Sacred Pathways*: by Gary Thomas

*Sticky Faith*: by Kara Powell and Chap Clark

## FAITH DRIVER #3: Empowering Teaching & Beliefs (session 4)

1. Empowering teaching is “imitation” more than information or inspiration. They can’t be what they can’t see. We can’t give what we don’t have. We can’t give if we don’t stay.
2. Shift your definition of family - church’s children same privileges as blood children.
3. Take a millennial with you wherever you go.
4. Allow space to ask big questions. Unbelief can be a gift.  
(Great resource: Before You Say Good-bye: Keeping the Faith, by David Sawler)
5. Friendship is crucial
6. Access before apologetics, time before teaching, incarnation before information.
7. Approach it indirectly...like Jesus did (and from a young age.)
8. Evangelism and discipleship (both theirs and ours) cannot be separated.  
Understand the link between thoughts and destiny. Theology matters! And action follows.
9. Never underestimate the magnetic power of the person of Jesus.
10. Get new glasses. We are addressing the glory of the transcendent God.
11. Use imaginative subversive language.
12. Drench in Scripture. The early church took everyone through three years of faith formation, so they knew the Bible backwards and forwards. Take seriously the importance of meaty formal instruction in the faith.
13. Keep talking...even if they walk away. Worldview hangs on the thin thread of conversation.

### Books



Thomas Bergler, *The Juvenilization of American Christianity*  
Gordon Smith, *Generation to Generation: Passing on the Faith to the Children of the Church*  
David Sawler, *Before You Say Goodbye: Keeping the Faith*

# SATURDAY: WORKING WITH MILLENNIALS & GENERATION

## Five Generations

*Builders: pre 1945*

*Boomers: 1945-1964*

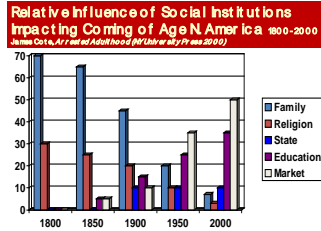
*Gen X: 1965-1981*

*Gen Y (Millennials): 1982-1999*

*Gen Z: 2000-2015*

*What would it look like if our ceiling became the rising generation's floor?*

# UNDERSTANDING MILLENNIALS (session 5)



"In the liquid modern society of consumers no identities are gifts at birth, none is 'given', let alone given once and for all and in a secure fashion. Identities are projects: tasks yet to be undertaken, diligently performed and seen through to infinitely remote completion... rather than a gift, identity is a sentence to lifelong hard labour."



Z. Bauman  
*Consuming Life*,  
 pp. 110-111.

1. 5 anti-lordship cancers in culture: materialism, individualism, credentialism, secularism, hedonism
2. Youth unemployment: a most urgent problem of the global church. Pope Francis
3. Millennials operate with a happy communal midi narrative. (They are not individualistic.)
4. Millennial defining words: uncertain, fluid, diverse, searching, tinkering. Robert Wuthnow
5. Millennial's psychological orientation: maximizing options - postponing commitments. C. Smith
6. Adolescence is prolonged. 30 is the new 20 BUT the 20's are a psychological sweet spot! Meg Jay
7. Understanding millennial identity lock box...faith remains important while tragically diminishing.
8. There is a new definition of "orphan" out there. (True religion is to take care of orphans and widows in their distress. James 1:27)



## REFLECTION

What ministry implications flow out of an understanding of Canadian millennials as uncertain, diverse, fluid, searching, "spiritual tinkerers" if our goal is their transformation into the likeness of Jesus Christ?

Our task is fourfold:

1. Make tinkering work for your church by being digestible souls. Youth see images of perfect bodies everywhere – so they pursue them incessantly. They do not see images of perfect souls hence they do not long to have one.
2. Blunt the voice of market/education by upping the voice of faith community/family of God.
3. "Be imitators of God therefore, as dearly loved children, and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Eph 5:1-2
4. Do things WITH the rising generations by maintaining high expectations / high support.



# PARENTING MILLENNIALS AND POST-MILLENNIALS (session 6)



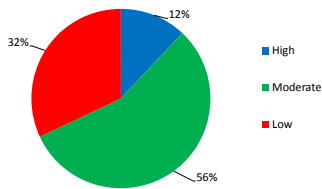
## REFLECTION

According to attachment theory who has the transformative power in child relationships – parents, other adults or peers?

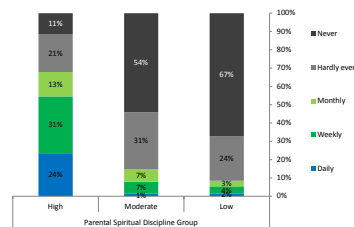
What role ought churches to play? What needs to happen for them to play this role?

Parents must know **THEY ARE IT**, both theologically and statistically.

Parent Spiritual Discipline Groups (PSDG)

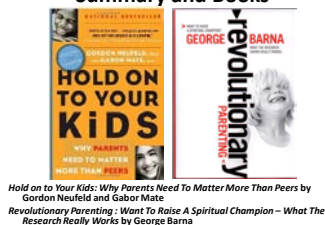


Young adult Bible reading



1. Pray—Heart transformation is accomplished by the Holy Spirit alone
2. Get a better metaphor – Is my mental picture part of the solution or part of the problem?
3. Trust and give space – you need to develop a “soft feel” (watch Buck movie); seek first to understand; hold them like soap
4. Use attachment theory – It takes an attached relationship for a child to be receptive; create a village of attachment
5. Change yourself – the best way to influence your teen is to change yourself; are you experiencing Jesus as divine and present?
6. Change what you measure – the goal is not a successful athletic or happy kid, it is one transformed by Jesus; parenting is discipleship
7. Make the time – quality time happens somewhere inside of quantity time, hidden like a needle in a haystack; be audaciously present; eat together, listen; slow down
8. Channel – to where there are more people like you; get rid of toxic voices by changing environment proactively
9. Repair – Gottman repair list – repair with your children and with your spouse
10. Have fun – generations of well-intentioned, perfectly correct, Biblically informed parents have gone to defeat because their kids figured out something vital – the joy was missing (Bill Beausay)
11. Keep your eye on the end goal – to hand your children on to God

## Summary and Books



# PASTORING FOUR TYPES OF MILLENNIALS (session 7)

## Overview:

**Engagers:** Primarily identify with a Christian tradition and generally are involved with their faith community

**Fence Sitters:** Generally still have a Christian affiliation. However, more than 25% no longer indicate an identification with an organized religion. They have not decided if they will stay or go.

**Wanderers:** Have typically unhitched their spiritual identities from their faith traditions. Wanderers generally have not been hurt by the church but have simply drifted away.

**Rejecters:** Have left their faith and Church communities, typically because of a scarring experience that they feel has forced them out.



Biggest difference \_\_\_\_\_

Biggest difference \_\_\_\_\_

Biggest difference \_\_\_\_\_

## Dropped Keys

Engagers: Mission, Vision, Comitatus.

Fence Sitters: Language, Wonder

Wanderers: Yes Before No

Rejectors: Tend Fires, Cast Vision not Behaviour

## Transfusing life to Engagers:

Don't ignore them because they seem to be doing well. Ask them what they need to grow

Be willing to be vulnerable and share your faith stories with them and encourage them to share their faith stories as well.

Create spaces for them to ask their difficult questions. Don't freak out if these questions are hard ones, God is big enough. This allows their faith to become their own. If the Church doesn't answer their questions they will look somewhere else.

Live an authentic life that allows them to be present in your pain and your joys.

Encourage this group to feed themselves and give them the tools. This may mean nudging them into places of leadership in the Church

Be aware of their sensitivity during transitions

**WORK WITH THEM.** Be willing to let go of your pride and ideas in order to create one on one encounters with leadership where they experience high expectations and high support.

## Transfusing life to Fence Sitters:

Empower the entire congregation to reach out and develop authentic relationships with us outside of Church, getting to know our wounds and are joys. We don't want to be a project, we want you to actually want to get to know us.

Follow up with us, let us know that you care about us.

Channel us to faith growing experiences outside of the Church. Camp, missions trip and volunteering are good options. We aren't against Church we just may not be there Sunday morning.

Give us a safe and comfortable space to ask our toughest questions

Start a dialogue with us. Listen to the questions we are asking, they are probably different than you think they are. Go where young adults are and do not be afraid to engage with us.

Model for us authentic, thriving relationships with Christ as examples to follow. Show us that Christ is changing your life.

Do not tell us what to do. Instead be willing to learn and grow with us.

Do not judge us, even if you don't agree with us. We are trying to figure it out.

## Transfusing life to Wanderers:

Always take the first step. It is easier to reach down than to climb up to somewhere you have never been. Come and find us, don't just expect us to come to you

Work to make the Church a place where we will encounter God and not just learn about God

Be non-judgmental, we are going through a lot that you may not understand. True listening goes a long way

Do not throw Bible verses and the Bible in our faces, instead engage in real relationship with us

Authenticity and vulnerability are attractive to us

Do not walk away from us...we need you now more than ever

Ten percent of Wanderers said they would be willing to study the Bible if the invitation came from a friend who values them

## Transfusing life to Rejecters:

Many rejecters stated that they are gone for a reason. Instead of focusing on telling them why they should return our first step needs to be understanding what took them away in the first place.

Continuing in prayer for that person

Being willing to listen to them and their criticisms without becoming defensive. See their side, making them feel heard.

Say no to judgment, no matter how tempting

Continuing relationships with them that are not based on bringing them back to Church.

Sharing ourselves with them, inviting them into our personal lives

Taking the time to prayerfully examine the Church and ourselves are we really living Biblically?

### Ministry based on Truth Hierarchies

(Robert Gagnon)

#### The Early Church

1. Scripture
2. Philosophic Reason/Nature
3. Science
4. Experience

#### Today's Millennials

1. Experience
2. Science
3. Philosophic Reason/Nature
4. Experience

This has massive implications for ministry to millennials.  
(see quote next slide!)

### A Ministry Strategy to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Millennials

- "You as a missionary to millennials in post Christian Canada have to start with the Bible yourself but flip it when dealing with my generation. You have to give us an experience (not just a Scripture verse) which means as leaders you are called to even greater holiness than ever in the past. You can't fabricate true love. You can't fabricate Jesus. You have to be living it so that our experience of you magnetically draws us into what is important to you – Jesus and Scripture and church! We have been taught in university to deconstruct – to be critical. The only thing we can't deconstruct is a life well lived. To us it is actual truth of what is true – what is worth latching on to!" millennial engager

# MENTORING MILLENNIALS: Research to Recovery (session 8)

**Discernment → more local for a season** Mentoring young adults, in pairs twice a month, and also mentoring a young adults group and their leaders. Also making available relationship workshops, Bible school scholarships, counselling and vocational coaching.

**Mission :** to be a wholistic suffering community that mentors and resources millennials to be fully alive and empowered by Jesus

**Vision:** Empowering millennials in the extravagance of Jesus to discover self-giving in their identity, intimacy, maturity and destiny



## Distinctives of our Community:

family-like, research-based, intergenerational / interdenominational, church based, Biblical, loving God with the mind, passion for excellence, investigative, praxis-focused (lived), truly human, WITH millennials, fresh, practical resourcing, multiplying, imitation, intentional, self-giving / suffering, non-manipulative / non powerful, subtle and humble and gentle, about constructing a post postmodern world, heavenly inspired worker bees, transparency, hospitable and generous, hopeful, always evaluating if it's working or not

## Behaviors to avoid:

being inauthentic, going through the motions, being status quo, being “blah” about Jesus, having faith as an add-on, not being changed ourselves, being quiet about faith, not inviting dialogue, cold to conversation about anything, dismissive of little things, avoiding prayer, giving wrong view of God, avoiding dark nights of soul (and lack of answer to prayer or experience of God), being afraid of experience (good and bad), hiding struggle / mess / the ugly side of your own life, avoiding stories, avoiding feelings, shoulding on people, leaving people out, ignoring someone's voice, not keeping in touch / being physically present, not adopting / valuing / loving, not helping in hard times, not having a place for people to leave their sin, no sounding boards, not speaking truth, not having resources for emotional healing of wounds, judging, not giving chances to contribute, not trusting them, not supervising, not being family, not being encouraging and supportive, shutting them down .... pressuring them to do it properly, not being flexible, not making a difference for others (in the community), just talking ( theory) being showy, asking too many questions, being plastic / fake, seeing Christianity as a barcode to get in and not struggling with the application, not reflecting God himself, not treating people the way you want to be treated, living a double life, not being open to God actually showing up, not knowing people, not friendly/inviting, not meeting people where they are at, looking down on people who are immoral or doubting, catering to one group of people but not others, defining people by their sin, focusing on sin-management, writing people off – exclusive, not being friends with one another, without stories, disengaged from every day life, rushing people with answers, stifling questions, a culture where you think things but can't say them, warm and fuzzy puppydog sunshine glitter version of gospel, easy believism, avoiding the Bible, not focusing on Jesus, being surface level ( instead of tackling things like church history, world religions, God's existence), shying away from sexuality discussions, disallowing women to lead

## What behaviour can we encourage and model:

God is not angry at us; God is not mean. He is spacious; He is good.

Relationship – opportunities for friendship to develop

Safe sharing -- Learning through sensitive participation

Demonstration of faith sharing

Living out the prompting of the Holy Spirit in everyday life

## What we have learned:

1. How badly they need it. Some orphans. Some can't talk with parents. Some never taught. Some immature. Some afraid to ask for help
2. Cannot take them where we have not gone. Identity ---> Intimacy ---> Maturity ---> Destiny
3. How difficult it is to change group culture. They tend to do things the way "we have always done it" .... with a stage, (mechanical) not really open to the Holy Spirit, (reserved) not open and vulnerable with God and with each other, unaware of people on the fringes or people being left out, happy to "attend" and be a social club, be happy with their comfortable age group.

We are now working now on "making God welcome" and on "encouraging dialogue"

4. The difference it makes to insist on "inclusion"
5. The difference that our vulnerability makes
6. The importance of being teachable (going with their ideas, even if it means more work or won't be "as effective" or will "slow us down". Letting them pray for us, and tell us that what we are doing is not working for them).
7. Importance of the entire congregation helping. Fundraiser, friendship, mentors, counsellors.
8. How easy it is for them to drop off our radar when they start missing – distracted by world, busy, afraid of 100%, don't like big groups,
9. The importance of self-awareness – (enneagram and PSI and Strengthfinders)
10. How easy it is to drift ---- (WIGS)
11. The importance of going where God is working. (if they ask for coffee or skype, do it !!) -- on their timetable if possible
12. The importance of knowing one another. Need one on ones to really find out where they are at. !!!
13. How much work it is to get them to connect intergenerationally, even though its' what they want !! (They need encouragement, opportunities, reminders, set-ups)

The new normal is ORGANIC and RELATIONAL -- It's a paradigm shift – a whole new way of being

"We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our very lives as well because you were so dear to us."

I Thess 2:8

Sharing our very lives means and growing together means:

1. understanding church as family where everyone is "blood"!
2. being visible and vulnerable in all seasons ...including our dark nights.
  3. offering the young our ministry of presence.
4. living the extravagant life of the kingdom, not just focusing on sin management!
5. intentionally pursuing our own spiritual growth - completely open to the hardest questions.
  6. being here indefinitely.
  7. slowing down.

