

Ministering to Millennials

The Millennials are now the largest generation and have surpassed the Baby Boomer generation. Now that Millennials are growing up, the church need to know how to respond to them. Does the church know how to include this next generation? Are they willing to include this next generation?

Even though most Millennials give themselves the label of “Christian,” the vast majority believes it is nothing more than a title. Only a minority of Millennials can say they know who is Jesus Christ. 20% are self-identified as “born-again” and only 6% can affirm the basic tenants of the Christian faith.* Few Millennials are antagonistic of Christianity. They simply care little about religion.

If we want to know how to minister to the Millennials, we must understand that they are an extremely relational generation. With the advancements in technology, they are used to being in constant contact with their friends and family. Highly structured church programs can feel like an interruption to a Millennial's relationship building. Thus, churches need to focus on programs that build authentic friendships with Millennials.

The average parent of the Millennial has been heavily involved in their upbringing. As a result, Millennials have a greater respect for previous generations. A significant number of Millennials are looking for mentors, but few are able to find them. Millennials are more drawn to churches that offer real mentoring relationships.

Transparency and humility are traits that the Millennials highly value. They are tired of the fighting and scandals that are prevalent among politicians and religious leaders. Millennials are looking for a community that acknowledges their own faults, and accepts others who are broken. They desperately want grace and mercy but have been turned off by legalism and judgmental attitudes.

The Millennials are passionate about serving the community. They admire people who are helping the poor and needy. They want to be involved with groups that appear to be making a positive impact. If the church is providing opportunities for community outreach, not only will they be attracting new Millennials to their church, they will also gain a group of highly devoted servants.

The things which Millennials desire are the things the church should already be doing. The approach to ministry will not look the same and may appear unorganized to some, but ministry to Millennials continues to carry out the mission of generations before. The Millennials are here and ready to make a positive difference in the world. Is the church ready to accept them?

* Rainer, Thom S., and Jess W. Rainer. *The millennials: connecting to America's largest generation*. Nashville, Tenn: B & H Pub. Group, 2011