

MILLENNIALS *and* MISSION

Engaging with Millennials

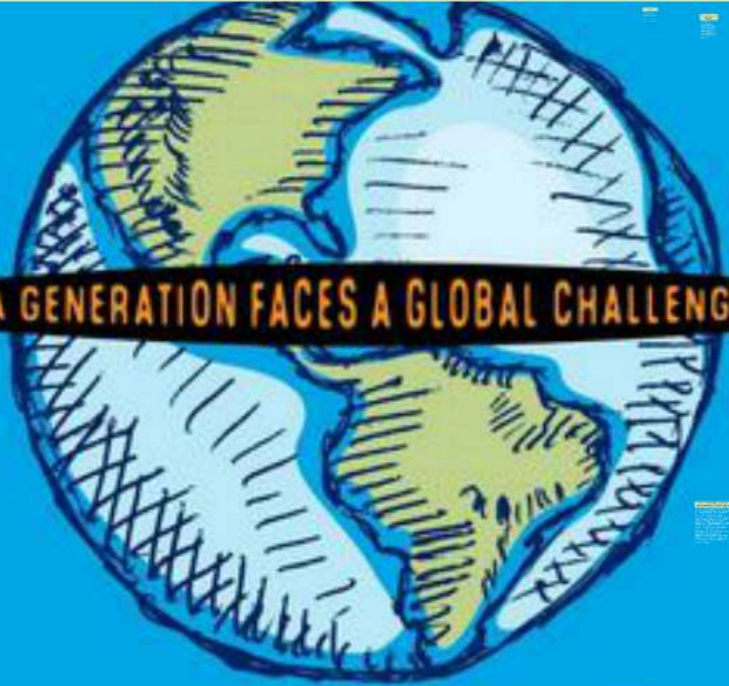


A GENERATION FACES A GLOBAL CHALLENGE

JIM *and* JUDY RAYMO

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From "Christian Missions in the Third Millennium, by Albert Mohler

This generation demonstrates a readiness to take on new challenges and to go where no previous generation has yet taken the gospel. They have been born into a culturally diverse world, and they are gifted with skills in intercultural communication. They are impatient with the cultural isolationism of previous generations. They see no political boundaries to the Gospel. They are ready to cross political borders and see no limitations on the Great Commission. Where previous generations wanted to support missions, this generation is determined to do missions. Incubated in an experience-driven culture, these young Christians are not interested in missions by proxy

This new generation holds great promise, but it also demands urgent attention. The church needs to mobilize the energy of these younger Christians and deploy their gifts in cultural translation and adaptation. Nevertheless, this generation has inherited a dwindling deposit of doctrinal and theological understanding. Our churches and seminaries must quickly be about the business of grounding this generation in biblical truth, even as they are mobilizing for world missions.

In all likelihood, these new generations will establish a missiological pattern of long duration. We may well see a tidal wave of participatory missions unlike anything seen by the Christian church since the first century. Finally, it is up to the church both to release their energy and to ground their convictions.

"Baby boomers came of age during the confusion of the '60s and '70s and learned vicariously to "Have it your way" and "You deserve a break today." This previously record-setting demographic segment has influenced missions methods and procedures for the past several decades with their way-of-doing-things mentality. It's important to note that aging boomers, once the largest and most dominant generation in history, and generation X, the generation that followed, will significantly lose their cultural influence very soon to the looming millennials. It will be critical for ministry leaders to anticipate and prepare for this coming change in modus operandi."

“It’s a mistake to assume that young employees will just grow up and take on old-fashioned attitudes and behavior that older generations exhibit.”

Not Everyone Gets a Trophy: How to Manage Generation Y, by Bruce Tulgan, p. 123

Because they are relational...

- *Involve parents in the relationship from the beginning*
- *Recruit relationally - Individuals (not organizations or programs) recruit individuals*
- *Help them network within your organization and beyond*

“Millennials have been taught since they were toddlers that the best way to solve a societal problem is to act upon it locally, directly, and as part of a larger group.”

Millennial Momentum: How a New Generation Is Remaking America, by Morley Winograd and Michael Hais, p. 226.

Because they are relational...

- *Advocate team ministry and be open to pre-formed teams*
- *Provide sufficient training time to develop family bond and strong connections.*
- *Respect their ideas and include them in decisions when possible*
- *Be prepared to spend time with them*

“This generation wants leaders who are coaches rather than directors. Their preferred style is for leaders ‘to be very involved in my life’”

Millennials and Mission: A Generation Faces a Global Challenge,
by Jim and Judy Raymo (Kindle Location 1632)

Because they love technology...

- *Use the most up to date technology available*

“Imagine if someone told you in the early 1990s that you would have to use carbon paper to keep copies of your documents. That’s what it sounds like when you tell Gen Yers you don’t want them to use the tools available to them.”

Not Everyone Gets a Trophy: How to Manage Generation Y, by Bruce Tulgan, p. 51

- *Invest in the best possible web page*

“If you are not visible and interesting and user-friendly on the Internet, you might as well not exist to Gen Yers.”

Not Everyone Gets a Trophy: How to Manage Generation Y, by Bruce Tulgan, p. 24

Because they are still developing their identity...

- *Offer them a variety of short-term experiences*
- *Expect them to develop commitment incrementally*
- *Connect them to your vision more than to your organization*
- *Shepherd, but do not attempt to stifle, their passion*
- *“The worst thing you can possibly do with Gen Yers is treat them like children, talk down to them, or make them feel disrespected.”*

Because they are anti-tradition and value biblical authenticity...

- *Be committed to contextualized ministry and indigenous leadership*
- *Consider that much of our methodology is historically based rather than biblically mandated*
- *Develop new platforms for access and presence*
- *Do not assume that they will share your perspective of church planting*

(Millennials tend to be anti-institution, but resonate with true Jesus communities)

Other Considerations

- *Present an accurate job description with expectations*
- *Be transparent about your weaknesses*
- *Develop a plan to accommodate debt*

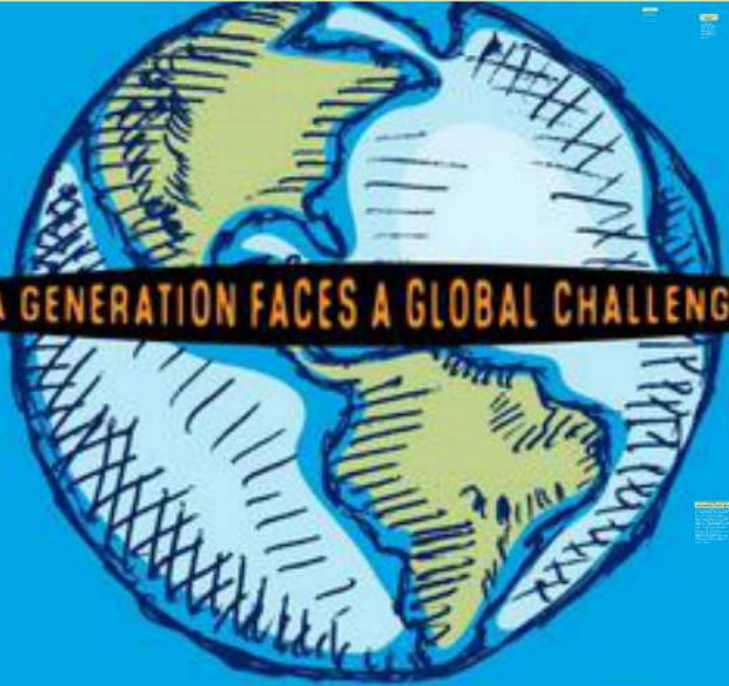
According to The Project on Student Debt, 37% of public school graduates and 55% of private school graduates start their careers with unimaginable debt.

Jim and Judy Raymo's Ministry Deal Breakers

- Unwillingness to consider the young worker's ministry aspirations
- A distorted presentation of the ministry's strengths or successes
- Instruction rather than stories
- Second-class treatment
- Lack of opportunity and scope for worship
- Immediate demand for long term commitment
- Authoritarian leaders

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