

Article Review #1
Gen Z and Mission Field

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Article Review

What is one concept that stood out to you in this article?

For this article review, I will mention two articles that focus on Gen Z and how current church leaders can engage with this group to encourage them to be part of the mission field. One concept that stood out to me is that both articles mention that Gen Z will be the first generation to grow up outside of a Christian environment (Benner, 52) and they are unaware of the Christian values that shaped prior generations (Schepens, 22). Another concept that stood out to me in both articles is that most Gen Z are not engaged in the Church. 33% of Gen Z do not engage beyond just attending services (Benner, 52) but are passionate about social justice (Schepens, 23). One final concept that stood out to me in both of these articles is that to engage Gen Z towards Missions, the first step is discipleship, which requires developing a one-on-one brotherly love relationship with them. Both authors explain that part of discipleship is creating a safe environment for them so they can express their ideas and thoughts about the world around them (Benner, 53). Also, discipleship requires having a healthy relationship that is open, trustworthy, and honest (Schepens, 24).

What implications does this concept have for Missions?

The first concept shows that Gen Z would be unfamiliar with Christian ideals. The authors see this as a negative outcome but I see it as an opportunity to train this generation to have a missional heart toward the world around them. We can learn from our mistakes in the past and train this generation to have a solid biblical foundation and show them through our lives that having a relationship with Christ goes beyond the four walls of the church building. The second concept shows that even though Gen Z may not be motivated in their churches, they care deeply thinking about social justice. Again, here is another opportunity for church leaders to guide this generation, using their passion for social justice and gearing it toward Missions. We have a

chance now to build an environment where Gen Z can use their voice and be powerful vessels for the kingdom of God. Beforehand, it was and this is, in many church circles for the older generation to build an environment where there is no legalism, bias, etc. which most of us are this unlearning at this moment. The final concept shows that Gen Z can be engaged through discipleship and healthy relationships. In order for anyone to be missional in their lives, they would need to be surrounded by good examples that show how to be missional in this walk with Christ. How would Gen Z know if they don't have a good example? Here is an opportunity for all generations to work together and help Gen Z to be followers of Christ and spread the gospel to their communities.

What needs to change in your life as a result?

After reading this article, I realize that Gen Z is a generation that is misunderstood and that the older generations do not take them seriously. I for one was one of those individuals who didn't understand Gen Z. Working with the youths who are Gen Z'er, these articles help me understand them better. I know now that most of them are coming to the Lord with an open mind and an open heart with the willingness to learn who God is. Most of them do not have family who even served God. In my mind, this group of young people is untainted by the old Christian views of the past that are harmful. That to me is a good thing. Knowing all of this, my approach to teaching the youth group has changed. Instead of assuming that they know certain bible stories, I have learned to take a step back and explain the stories as a whole. So, they can have a foundational understanding of the scripture. I also learned to be honest and open with them which in turn they become more honest and open with me in general. Since then, my friendship with the youth group that I work with has improved which I am excited about.

References:

Benner, K. (2022). Mobilizing Gen Z: A Biblical Theology. *Evangelical Missions Quarterly*, 58(4), 51–54.

Schepens, J. (2021). Engaging gen Z: how to development the next generation to lead. *Alliance Life*, 156(2), 22-25