



S O U T H E R N U N I O N M I N I S T E R I A L

LEADERSHIP. EVANGELISM. ACCOUNTABILITY. DIVERSITY.

Lead!



4- Diversity



“Change will come, when the pain of losing our children is greater than the desire to do things the same way we have always done them.”



A modern day tragedy: 1,000
Adventist churches with no youth
or young adults.



Our problem is a disciple making
problem. We are not producing
disciples.



What used to be...what is.

Marriage

Jobs

Living arrangements

Loyalty



Two important facts

1. Teens are among the most religiously active people in America.
2. Young adults are among the least active.




**Three characteristics of this generation:
Access, alienation, authority.**



Access




- 
- 34 Gigabytes of data a day.
 - Visual more than written.
 - Interpret reality through a screen.
 - Expectation of flattened structures of hierarchy.






Alienation

- 
- 41% unwed mothers.
 - 3 years at job.
 - Peer consultation.
 - Skeptic about talking heads.
 - Entrepreneurialism beats company loyalty.




Authority



- 
- “I am an expert. I read it on the internet”
 - Consult internet more than authority figures.
 - Spirituality in their own terms.
 - Least likely to name Bible as sacred Scripture.





Words different
generations use to
describe themselves



1. Elders

- smarter,
- honest,
- work ethic,
- values,
- morals.



2. Boomers

- work ethic,
- respectful,
- values,
- morals,
- smarter.



3. Busters

- technology use,
- work ethic,
- conservative/traditional,
- smarter,
- respectful.



4. Millennials/Mosaics

- technology use,
- music and pop culture,
- liberal/tolerant,
- smarter,
- clothes.





Three types of
Mosaics that leave the
church

1. Nomads

- OK with Christ
- Disconnected from church
- See Christianity as optional
- 2 out of 5
- Experimenting
- Not angry



2. Prodigals

- No longer Christian
- Hurt
- Feel bad for parents
- Happy to leave constraints
- One in nine.



3. Exiles

- Stuck between church and culture
- Not looking to be separate
- Skeptical
- Interested in impact outside church walls
- Struggle with connection between faith and vocation (examples are arts, music, Hollywood, science, military).





“Your children are going to
break your heart.

Somehow, somewhere.
Maybe more than once. To
become a parent is to
promise to love prodigals”
(James K. A. Smith)





Six Points of Disconnection



1. Overprotective

- Helicopter
- Demonize
- Afraid
- False separation
- Complexity



2. Shallow

- What happens in church stays in church.
- No deep connections.
- The ideal and the real.



3. Anti-science

- Enemies.
- Incompatible.
- Daniel 1:4 the language and the literature of Babylon.



4. Repressive

- The most access to sex of any generation.
- The most tolerant of sexual preferences.



Three Views on Sex

a. Traditionalism- shame.
Procreation. Just say no.

b. Individualism- it's about me.

c. Selflessness- sex is good, and
it's about us, with God's blessing.
Thriving relationships not sexual
repression.



5. Exclusive

- Multicultural America. $\frac{1}{2}$ are white. $\frac{4}{5}$ were white 50 years ago.
- Great agreement generation.






6. Doubtless

“Doubt is the ants in
the pants of faith”

Frederich Buchner






Three types of doubt

1. Intellectual doubt.
2. Institutional doubt.
3. Unexpressed doubt.






Seven practical applications



1. Change your vision of the purpose of church. The church doesn't exist to **prepare** the next generation. It is a **partnership** of generations that are fulfilling God's purposes in this time.

2. Be intentional about connecting job and faith. It's a vocation. Adventist education is essential.






3. Give young adults real power.
Not “junior” deacons, real power.
Boards, elders, real leadership.


4. Stand in the gap. Protect them.
Give them permission to fail.





5. Strive for deep, long-lasting relationships, not just number of attendees. Measure discipleship by the ability to mentor a young disciple.






6. Turn doubt into doing. Service doesn't only benefit the people we serve, it benefits the people we serve with.

7. Listen. They are under a constant barrage of information, but hardly anyone to listen to them. First listen. Then guide.





Three Biblical Conclusions



1. We need spiritual, gifted, young people, in key positions of influence.



Daniel 1:4 (NLT)


“Select only strong, healthy, and good-looking young men,” he said. “Make sure they are well versed in every branch of learning, are gifted with knowledge and good judgment, and are suited to serve in the royal palace. Train these young men in the language and literature of Babylon.”






2. We need to understand that God speaks to young people too.






1 Samuel 3:4 Suddenly the LORD called out, “Samuel!”
“Yes?” Samuel replied.
“What is it?” ⁵ He got up and ran to Eli. “Here I am. Did you call me?”






3. We need to value, appreciate and encourage men and women that are bold enough to finish God's work.





Esther 4:14 If you keep quiet at a time like this, deliverance and relief for the Jews will arise from some other place, but you and your relatives will die. Who knows if perhaps you were made queen for just such a time as this?”





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