

BILLY GRAHAM

"Anchored To Rock...
Geared To The Times"





Anchored to the Rock... Geared to the Times

- This is basic missiology...
- What about OUR times?
- What is new and different?



The New Atheism

- What is “new” about something so ancient?
 - They condemn not just belief in God, but respect for belief in God.
 - Religion is not just wrong it is evil; thus atheistic evangelism is a moral imperative
 - Atheism is virtuous—like anti-slavery
 - Atheism seeks to deliver our children from God-based manifest falsehoods--like previous generations did with slavery and flat-earth: “bad ideas foisted on children are moral wrongs.



The New Atheism

- The war on terror shows that all religion is bad: the fatwas of Muslim Clerics and the decrees of the Pope regarding condoms are equally bad
- Everyone who does not join the atheist revolution is an ally of the Taliban.”
- Unless we renounce faith, religious violence will soon bring civilization to an end.



In God's Name The Economist

- A succession of bestselling books have torn into religion:
 - Sam Harris's "The End of Faith"
 - Richard Dawkins's "The God Delusion"
 - Christopher Hitchens' "God is not Great – How Religion Poisons Everything".



In God's Name The Economist

- When historians look back at this century, they will probably see religion as “the prime animating and destructive force in human affairs.



New Research On The Religious Attitudes Of Young People

- *Un-Christian* by David Kinnaman
 - Research shows that many of those outside of Christianity, especially younger adults, have little trust in the Christian faith, and esteem for the lifestyle of Christ followers is quickly fading among outsiders.
 - The most common reaction to the faith: they think Christians no longer represent what Jesus had in mind, that Christianity in our society is not what is was meant to be. They admit they have a hard time actually seeing Jesus because of all the negative baggage that now surround him.



Un-Christian Continued

- Young people engage in nearly constant search for fresh experiences and new sources of motivation. They want to try things out themselves, disdaining self-proclaimed experts and “talking head” presentations. If something doesn’t work for them, or if they are not permitted to participate in the process, they quickly move on to something that grabs them. They prefer casual and comfortable to stuffy and stilted. They view life in a nonlinear, chaotic way, which means they don’t mind contradiction and ambiguity.



Un-Christian...

- One of the generational differences is a growing tide of hostility and resentment toward Christianity. In 1996 – 85% were favorable toward Christianity’s role in society.
- Now a decade later, they have lost much of their respect for the Christian Faith. These days nearly two out of every five young outsiders (38%) claim to have a “bad impression of present-day Christianity”. Beyond this, one-third of young outsiders said that Christianity represents a negative image with which they would not want to be associated. Furthermore, one out of every six young outsiders (17%) indicates that he or she maintains “very bad” perceptions of the Christian faith.



Un-Christian...

- Outsiders express the most opposition toward evangelicals. Disdain for evangelicals among the younger set is overwhelming and definitive.
- The primary reason outsiders feel hostile toward Christians, and especially conservative Christians, is not because of any specific theological perspective. What they react negatively to is our “swagger,” how we go about things and the sense of self-importance we project.
- One of the surprising insights from our research is that the growing hostility toward Christians is very much a reflection of what outsiders feel they receive from believers. They say their aggression simply matches the oversized opinions and egos of Christians. One outsider put it this way: “Most people I meet assume that Christian means very conservative, entrenched in their thinking, antigay, anti-choice, angry, violent, illogical, empire builders; they want to convert everyone, and they generally cannot live peacefully with anyone who doesn’t believe what they believe.”



Un-Christian...

- Anti-homosexual, judgmental and hypocritical. Old fashioned, too involved in politics, out of touch with reality, insensitive to others, boring, not accepting of other faiths, and confusing. When they think of the Christian faith, these are the images that come to mind. This is what a new generation really thinks about Christianity.



Un-Christian

- Like a corrupted computer file or a bad photocopy, Christianity, they say is no longer in pure form, and so they reject it. One-quarter of outsiders say that their foremost perception of Christianity is that the faith has changed for the worse.



Un-Christian: The Predicament we are in...

- Most Mosaics and Busters in America have an enormous amount of firsthand experience with Christians and the Christian Faith.
- The vast majority of outsiders within the Mosaic and Buster generations have been to churches before; most have attended at least one church for several months; and nearly nine out of ten say they know Christians personally, having about five friends who are believers.
- They formed their views of Christians based on conversations with others, often with Christians.
- It is important to realize that young outsiders attribute their image of Christianity primarily to conversations and firsthand experiences.
- Painful encounters with the faith also have a strong influence on what a person thinks of Christianity.
- Being hurt by Christianity is far more common among the young than the older outsiders. Such hurtful experiences are part of the stories of nearly one out of every two young people who are atheists, agnostics, or some other faith.



The Un-Christian Bottom Line

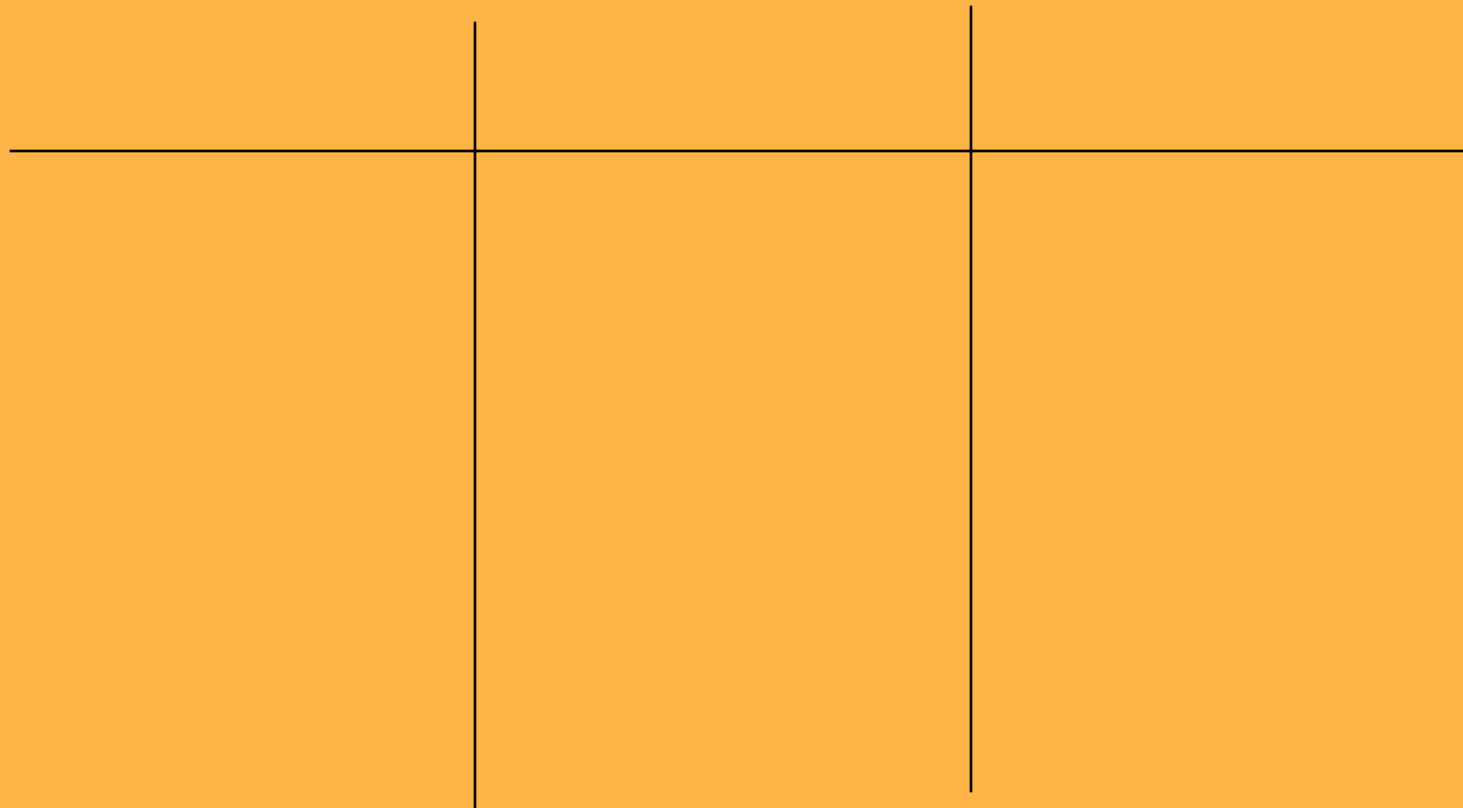
- Many of these young people actually went through a time when they were searching for faith. They were probing the Christian faith, trying it on for size, but they couldn't get past some of the mental, emotional, or spiritual barriers – often heightened by their experience of an un-Christian faith – so they gave up. This should be a major wake-up call for us.

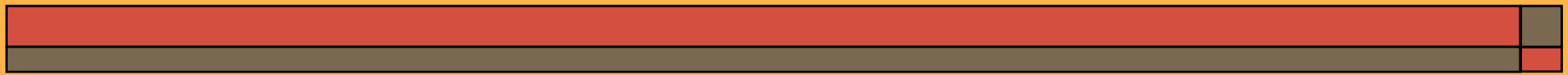
Things Have Changed..





DOWN & DIRTY INTELLECTUAL HISTORY





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PRE-MODERN

- OPPORTUNITIES
- THREATS



DOWN & DIRTY INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

PRE-MODERN

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MODERN

- OPPORTUNITIES
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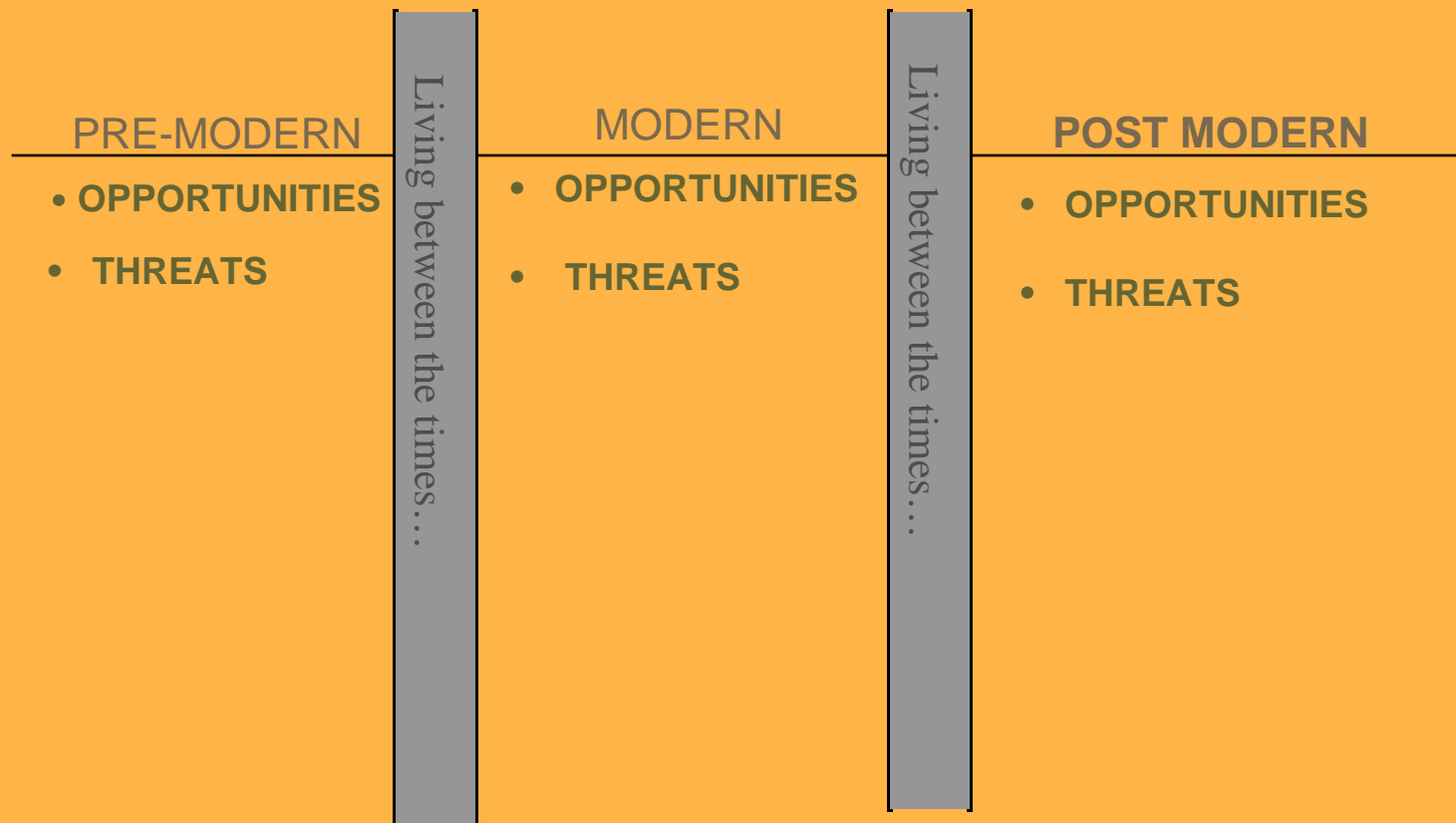


DOWN & DIRTY INTELLECTUAL HISTORY

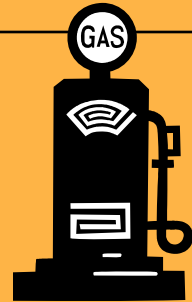
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DOWN & DIRTY INTELLECTUAL HISTORY



CHRISTENDOM WORLDVIEW





The Post-Christian Reality

- The shift in society's view of the church has resulted in the marginalization of the church and the secularization of society. Christianity has lost its place at the center of American life. Christians must learn how to live the gospel as a distinct people who no longer occupy the center of society. We must learn to build relational bridges that win a hearing” (Clegg & Bird, 2001).

THE MODERN CHRISTIAN EXPERT



David Kinnaman: *Un-Christian*

- “Mass evangelism”: often these measures create three to ten times as much negative response as positive

THE CONTEMPORARY INCARNATIONALIST

Coming down from High places...Sit at table for Conversation



Un-Christian: David Kinnaman

- Young outsiders want to have discussions, but they perceive Christians as unwilling to engage in genuine dialogue.
- Outsiders told us that the underlying concern of Christians often seems more about being right than about listening. There is an undercurrent of arrogance that outsiders perceive.

Un-Christian: David Kinnaman

- Mosaics and Busters are the ultimate “conversation generations.” They want to discuss, debate, and question everything.
- This means they need conversation partners
- “Persuasive listening”
- *Jay Walking*

Jay walking



Un-Christian

- “Christians like to hear themselves talk. They are arrogant about their beliefs, but they never bother figuring out what other people actually think. They don’t seem to be very compassionate, especially when they feel strongly about something.”
- True respect for people is a key factor in effective evangelism.
 - Listening to others is a prime way to demonstrate genuine respect for others

Un-Christian: Lack of respect & Love

- Only one out of five outsiders said they perceive Christian churches to be loving environments, places where people are unconditionally loved and accepted regardless of how they look or what they do.
- You don't really know me. You have no idea about my life, what I have been through. You are not really interested in me.
- "Christians talk about love, but it doesn't feel like love. I get the sense they believe they are better than me, even though their life seems about the same as mine."

Un-Christian

On the other hand...

- Human beings are attracted to acceptance and genuine respect...
- But...they are repelled by rejection and an air of superiority.

Christian Camps and Conferences *Mission Critical*

The research, Jesus' mission to make apprentices and our guts all tell us...

Genuine Christian spirituality—while always *right*—has now become *strategic*

**Spiritual formation in the way of
Jesus is the new model of
evangelism**

Mission Critical

- Christian Camps and Conferences are uniquely positioned to be key players in this new reality
 - Spiritual experiences: a new way of knowing: “Is it real?”
 - Caution: not like sugar at breakfast...later worse off
 - Spiritual disciplines: i.e. silence, solitude, worship, study
 - Learn a conversational relationship with God

Mission Critical

- Re-tell the Christian story: heaven is the destination not the goal...
- Rather a journey of faith...journey implies spiritual experiences
- the goal of Christianity is spiritual transformation into Christlikeness
- In this life...in one's *actual* life...

Romans 12: 1-2 (The Message)

So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering... Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God.

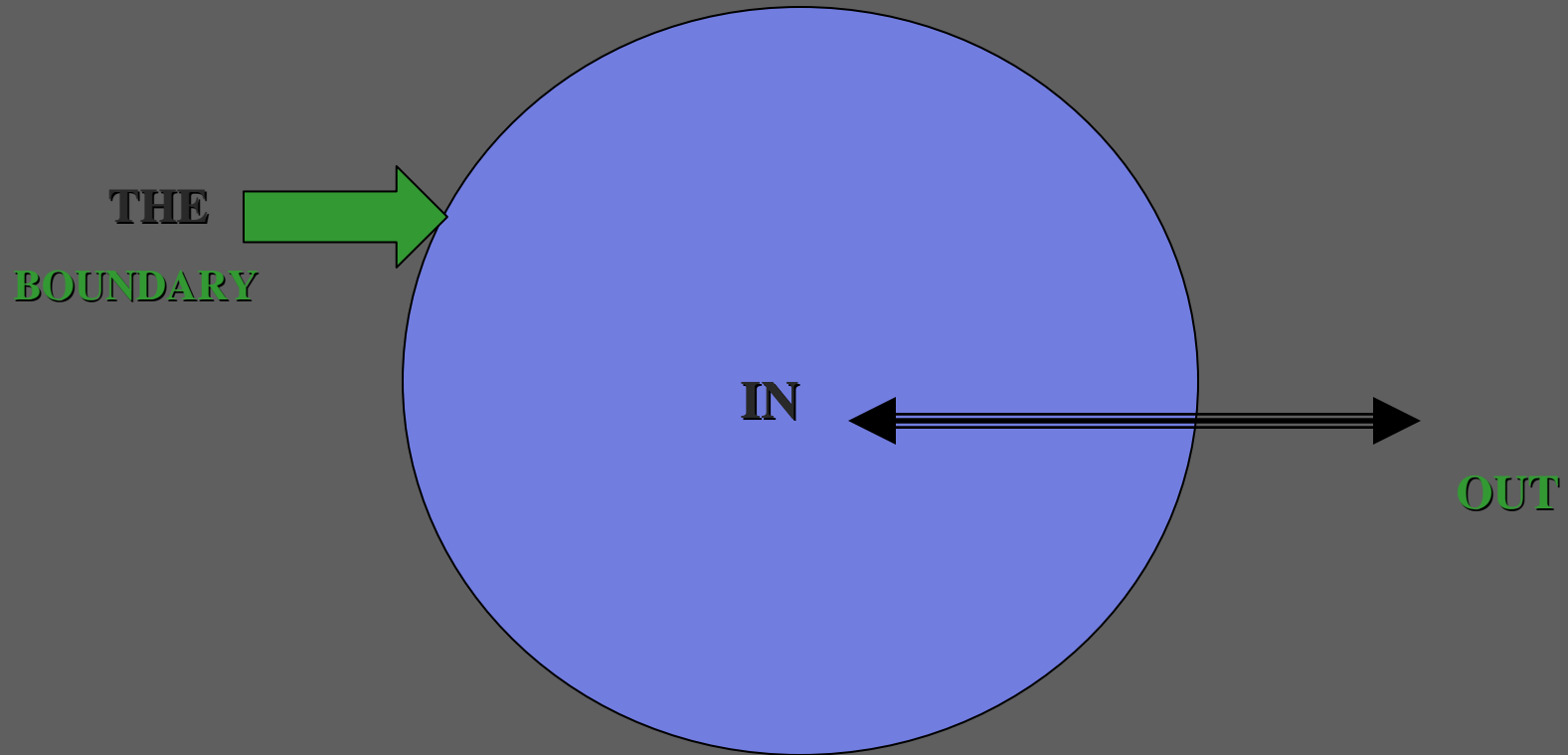
You'll be changed from the inside out.

Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you.

Camps and Conferences are particularly situated to cast a new vision for Christian life...

- As a lifelong journey:
- Journey inward...journey outward
 - The cooperative friends of Jesus
 - Seeking to live constant lives of creative goodness
 - Through the power of the Holy Spirit
 - For the sake of others

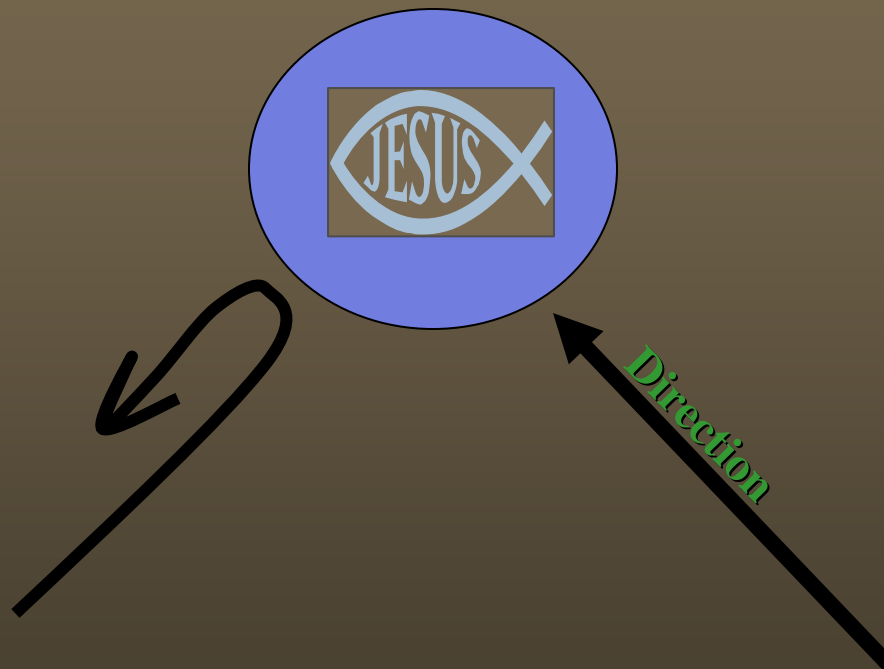
BOUNDED-SET



WHO IS IN? WHO IS OUT?

CENTER-SET

FOCUS: No longer on the Boundary



Which direction are you heading?