

UNDERSTANDING OUR CAMPERS' MINDSET FOR MORE EFFECTIVE MINISTRY

CCCA NATIONALS 2010
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We know that peers, parents, teachers and the media affect how campers interpret our Christian worldview. So, when we share the gospel or any biblical story, it's important that we consider the filters that campers use to decipher our message. This discussion-based seminar will look at three "camper influence" scenarios, while discussing effective tools we can use in teaching God's Word.

OVERVIEW

What's the point?

How authors hone their writing towards their audience:

Why/how this method will help your camp:

INFLUENCED CAMPERS

Camper "A"

*5th Grade Boy - Nerdy - Affluent Family - Dad Teaches College Biology - Mom's a Lawyer -
"Dawkins Family Discussions" - Grandparents sent him to camp - Very intelligent*

Teaching from Chapel Session on: God's Love (John 15:9-17)

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit—fruit that will last—and so that whatever you ask in my name the Father will give you. This is my command: Love each other.

Said: "We need to love, like God loves. When we do we are blessed."

We Think-

He Hears-

His week at Camp?

Camper "B"

*7th grade Girl - Single Mom (working hard) - No Dad - very sensitive girl - overweight
Mom got scholarship for camp to get a "week off" - Mom poorly hides that she sleeps around*

Teaching during cabin devotion on: Woman at the Well (John 4:1-26)

He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true."

Said: "Even though this woman had been so sinful! Jesus still loved her."

We Think-

She Hears-

Her week at camp?

Camper "C"

*2nd Grade Boy - cabin "favorite" - Mom warned about salvation invitation
Catholic-light upbringing - came with friend from school ("pushy" parents) - hidden cell phone*

Teaching in morning devotional in prep of: Salvation Night/Campfire (I Cor. 15:1-6)

Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain.

For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that he appeared to Cephas, and then to the Twelve. ⁶ After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers and sisters at the same time...

Written: "When is the first time you heard the Gospel?"

We Think-

He Hears-

His week at Camp?

THE BIG QUESTIONS!?

What is your curriculum/teaching saying?

Are you teaching history, narrative, tales, life-application?

Who is your curriculum/teaching speaking to? Who is listening, who is turning your voice off?

Do you know your audience? How? How many sub-groups do you have?

What is your teaching goal (*in what "voice" are you speaking*)?

What is your point, who are you pointing to, how and with what are you pointing?

How do you get your campers to "the end of your book?"

Are you writing - speaking - teaching w/that purpose in mind?

What kinds of "mindsets" do your campers hear with?

Positive? Negative? Culturally related? Influence related? Age related?

What "mindsets" are ok to ignore and just let God do His thing?

What is your camp going to say or do no matter what?

What are you teaching/demanding of your staff, speakers, and volunteers?

What is the Bible? What is Salvation? How do we relate these things to our campers?

What are you reading?

unChristian, Already Gone, Jim and Casper go to Church, USA Today, other...

How do you understand your audience and their culture? (5 yr. Generations?)

Youth Group, Volunteering at School, Hanging out w/staff and campers, other...

How are you praying (*living*)?

II Thessalonians 3:1 – *Spread rapidly, honored*

Remember, God can move hearts no matter what!!

Ephesians 3:20

NOTES / QUESTIONS!?

NEW YORK TIMES ONLINE, FEB. 4, 2010

***HEAR THE RUMBLE OF CHRISTIAN HYPOCRISY
THE EVANGELIST WHO SAYS THE HAITI EARTHQUAKE IS
RETRIBUTION FOR SIN IS AT LEAST TRUE TO HIS RELIGION.
-RICHARD DAWKINS**

We know what caused the catastrophe in Haiti. It was the bumping and grinding of the Caribbean Plate rubbing up against the North American Plate: a force of nature, *sin-free and indifferent to sin, unpremeditated, unmotivated, supremely unconcerned with human affairs or human misery.*

The religious mind, however, hubristically appropriates the blind happenings of physics for petty moralistic purposes. As with the Indonesian tsunami, which was blamed on loose sexual morals in tourist nightclubs; as with Hurricane Katrina, which was attributed to divine revenge on the entire city of New Orleans for organizing a gay rally; and as with other disasters going back to the famous Lisbon earthquake and beyond, *so Haiti's tragedy must be payback for human "sin".*

The Rev Pat Robertson, infamous American televangelist, sees the hand of God in the earthquake, wreaking terrible retribution for a 1791 pact that the Haitians made with the Devil, to help to rid them of their French masters. 1791? Ah, but don't forget "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me". <misquote!>

Needless to say, milder-mannered faith-heads fell over themselves to disown Robertson, just as they disowned those other pastors, evangelists, missionaries and mullahs at the time of the earlier disasters.

What hypocrisy. Loathsome as Robertson's views undoubtedly are, he is the Christian who stands squarely in the Christian tradition. The agonized theodiceans who see suffering as an intractable "mystery", or who see God in the help, money and goodwill that is now flooding into Haiti... ..It is the obnoxious Pat Robertson who is the true Christian here.

Where was God in Noah's flood? He was systematically drowning the entire world, animal as well as human, as punishment for "sin". Where was God when Sodom and Gomorrah were consumed with fire and brimstone? He was deliberately barbecuing the citizenry, lock, stock and barrel, as punishment for "sin".

"Oh but that's the Old Testament. No one believes those stories literally any more. The New Testament is all about love." Dear modern, enlightened, theologically sophisticated, gentle Christian, you cannot be serious. Your entire religion is founded on an obsession with "sin", with punishment and with atonement. Where do you find the effrontery to condemn Pat Robertson, *you who have signed up to the odious doctrine that the central purpose of Jesus' incarnation was to have himself tortured as a scapegoat for the "sins" of all mankind, past, present and future, beginning with the "sin" of Adam, who (as any modern theologian well knows) never even existed?*

Yes, I know you hate the word “scapegoat” (with good reason, because it is a barbaric idea) but what other word would you use? The only respect in which “scapegoat” falls short as a perfect epitome of Christian theology is that the Christian atonement is even more unpleasant. The goat of Jewish tradition was merely driven into the wilderness with its cargo of symbolic sin. Jesus was supposedly tortured and executed to atone for sins that, any rational person might protest, he had it in his power simply to forgive, without the agony. Among all the ideas ever to occur to a nasty human mind (Paul’s of course), the Christian “atonement” would win a prize for pointless futility as well as moral depravity.

Even without the stark heartlessness of Pat Robertson, tragedies like Haiti are meat and drink to the theological mind. To quote the president of one theological seminary, writing in the On Faith blog of the *Washington Post*: “The earthquake in Haiti, like every other earthly disaster, reminds us that creation groans under the weight of sin and the judgment of God. This is true for every cell in our bodies, even as it is for the crust of the earth at every point on the globe.”

You nice, middle-of-the-road theologians and clergymen, be-frocked and bleating in your pulpits, you disclaim Pat Robertson's suggestion that the Haitians are paying for a pact with the Devil. But you worship a god-man who — as you tell your congregations, even if you don't believe it yourself — “cast out devils”. You even believe (or you don't disabuse your flock when they believe) that Jesus cured a madman by causing the “devils” in him to fly into a herd of pigs and stampede them over a cliff. Charming story, well calculated to uplift and inspire the Sunday School and the Infant Bible Class.

Robertson may spout evil nonsense, but he is a mere amateur at that game. Just read your own New Testament. Pat Robertson is true to it. But you?

Educated apologist, how dare you weep Christian tears, when your entire theology is one long celebration of suffering: suffering as payback for “sin” — or suffering as “atonement” for it? You may weep for Haiti where Pat Robertson does not, but at least, in his hick, sub-Palinesque ignorance, he holds up an honest mirror to the ugliness of Christian theology. You are nothing but a whited sepulchre.

<whited sepulchre = outward appearance is a good person / but inward the person is evil>

Richard Dawkins's latest book is *The Greatest Show on Earth*.
His charitable foundation, RDFRS (Non-Believers Giving Aid)

****Italics and Underlining | ... skipped words ... | <added words> | via James Rock***

UNCHRISTIAN BY DAVID KINNAMAN

(BARNA GROUP)

Now, consider how this affects young people outside the faith. Youth outsiders generally do not get the impression that Christians have good intentions when it comes to trying to “convert” them. Most reject the idea that Christians show genuine interest in them as individuals. This was one of the largest gaps in our research: most Christians are convinced their efforts come across as genuine, but outsiders dispute that. When it comes to matters of faith, young outsiders are skeptical of “the Jesus shtick.” This is a key finding in our research. Only one-third of young outsiders believe that Christians genuinely care about them. (34%)

Outsiders are frustrated by the image that Christianity has...

Outsiders are not surprised by Gospel presentations-- they knew it was coming.

US CENSUS SINGLE PARENTS STAT

In 2002, the United States Census determined that three out of every ten children being raised in America are living in single parent homes. The number of single parent homes is growing. In addition to divorce, many people are choosing to have children without a partner. Our society is much more accepting of the non-traditional homes.

The Census reports that 34 percent of single moms in America live below the poverty level, of the 10 million single mothers in America. (34 Million!)

It has been predicted that half of all American children born in the 1990s will spend some part of their childhood in single-parent homes.