



HELPING CHURCH LEADERS MAKE THE TRANSITION FROM THE PRESENT TO THE FUTURE

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A GENERATION ON THE FAULT LINE

One of the plenary sessions at the recent Gen X forum, version 2.0, focused on the challenge of ministering as an uncompromised Christian in a postmodern world, the world of the Xer. Mark Driscoll, (marshall2@aol.com), pastor of Mars Hill Fellowship in Seattle, centered his remarks around major shifts between the two worlds and their impact on Xers and the church. What follows are brief excerpts. See the note at the end of *NetFax* to obtain a copy of the full text.

The mind of the Gen Xer has been rewired to process truth and reality in a new way that we have not experienced for 200 years and you have to address the issue of postmodernity. We live in the biggest cultural transition in 200 years and the church does not know it. My generation sits on the fault line between two worlds. Some live in yesterday, some live in today. Your church will need to determine which segment it is going for and where it will stake its claim.

Information is driving the postmodern flight. If you think that once a year you can go to a conference, take a year to ramp up your ministry and then keep doing the same thing for 15 years, forget it. Information is moving so quickly...people are having a hard time grasping the truth...people have gone back to narrative...stories are making a big comeback...our teaching needs to become narrative...we must engage the mind and the heart.

Another thing that is collapsing is logic..my generation does not believe in the law of noncontradiction..reason, science, technology and thought. Now, people can hold mutually contradictory positions and it does not bother them at all. You try and go for the intellect and you will find that people are not reasonable any more. We have gone from a western, linear, Greek world to an eastern, Hebraic, wholistic mind. Christianity is not reasonable...it is not rational...we need to recover the mystery of God. People don't process information based on reason but it is based on relationship and experience. You will need to incarnate into their context and give them experiences in which they can know God...silence... solitude...repentance...conviction...those are legitimate experiences within a community. They need to see us pray, confess our sin, repent...see brokenness and humility and the power of God demonstrated experientially in an authentic community before they are ever going to believe the facts.

Another shift is the doctrine of man...anthropology is shifting...the modern world believed that man is good, and with time man will get better. Postmodern Xers will believe in sin...the Gospel begins with our depravity...embrace the doctrine of the fallenness of man. It is not self-help any more...people know they are sinners. The modern world view had an anthropology that said man is a rugged individual. Postmodern context flips that and says man is a relational being. We have lost the concept of the trinity...the model of community.

Nationalism to globalism is another shift. Is Jesus Christ apple pie and baseball? The gospel is bigger than any single nation...this is not a theocracy...we live in a global community. God does not show favorites...we must get beyond nationalistic interests to see the world from God's perspective.

Audio tapes of the 1997 Gen X Forum's five plenary sessions, including the full text of Driscoll's remarks, are available by calling the **Mount Hermon Conference Center at (408) 335-4466** and asking for the Central Lodge Tape Ministry between the hours of noon and 4:00 pm PST, Monday through Friday. The cost is \$5.00 per tape or \$20 for the entire set.

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