

CHRISTIANITY AS THE ALTERNATIVE

LIVING IN A POST CHRISTIAN WORLD

IT'S HARD TO NOT BE IN THE COOL CROWD ANYMORE



SAME SAME BUT DIFFERENT

WESTLOCK AND CCA

OUR SIMILARITIES AS LOCAL BODIES OF CHRIST

¹³ And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

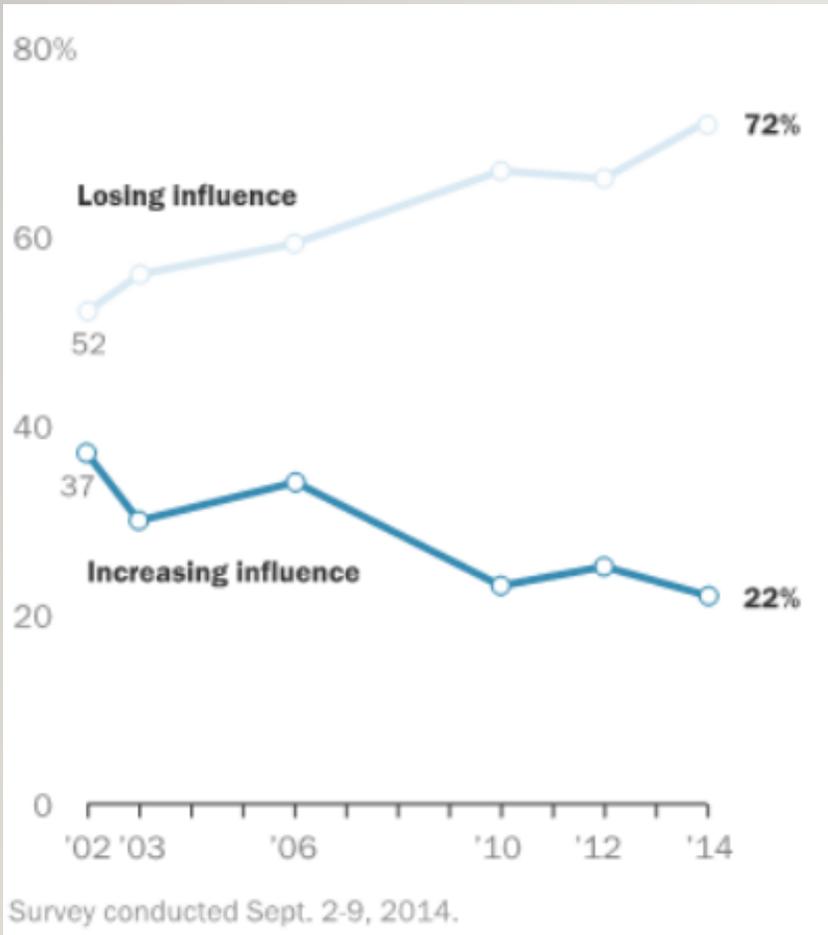
¹⁵ For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.” - Eph. 1:13-17



Where we are headed today:

1. Our cultural climate
2. What we are offering
3. Why we can offer it
4. How we can offer it

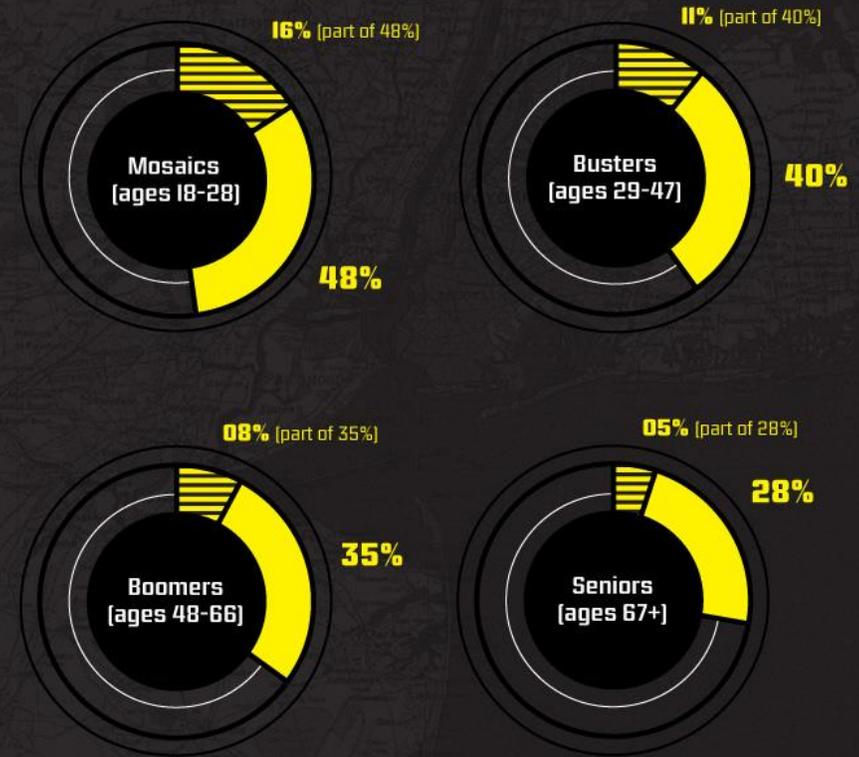
Our Cultural Climate



YOUNGER GENERATIONS ARE INCREASINGLY POST-CHRISTIAN

Based on the Barna metrics, each generation of Americans is increasingly post-Christian compared to the previous one.

☰ Highly Post-Christian ● Post-Christian



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- f. We offer a foundation to build an identity on, he has created each person as he designed.

Why we can offer it:



¹⁸ I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the confident hope he has given to those he called—his holy people who are his rich and glorious inheritance.

¹⁹ I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power ²⁰ that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. ²¹ Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. ²² God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church. ²³ And the church is his body; it is made full and complete by Christ, who fills all things everywhere with himself.

- Eph. 1:18-23



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God Promises to develop and disciple:

Proverbs 3:11-12

*My child, don't reject the Lord's discipline,
and don't be upset when he corrects you.
For the Lord corrects those he loves,
just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights.*



God Promises to develop and disciple:

John 15:1-4

“I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. ² He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn’t produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. ³ You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. ⁴ Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me.”



Promises to provide the resources needed:

2 Peter 1:3-4

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. And because of his glory and excellence, he has given us great and precious promises. These are the promises that enable you to share his divine nature and escape the world's corruption caused by human desires.



Promises to provide the resources needed:

1 John 4:4&13-16 / Gal. 5:16&22

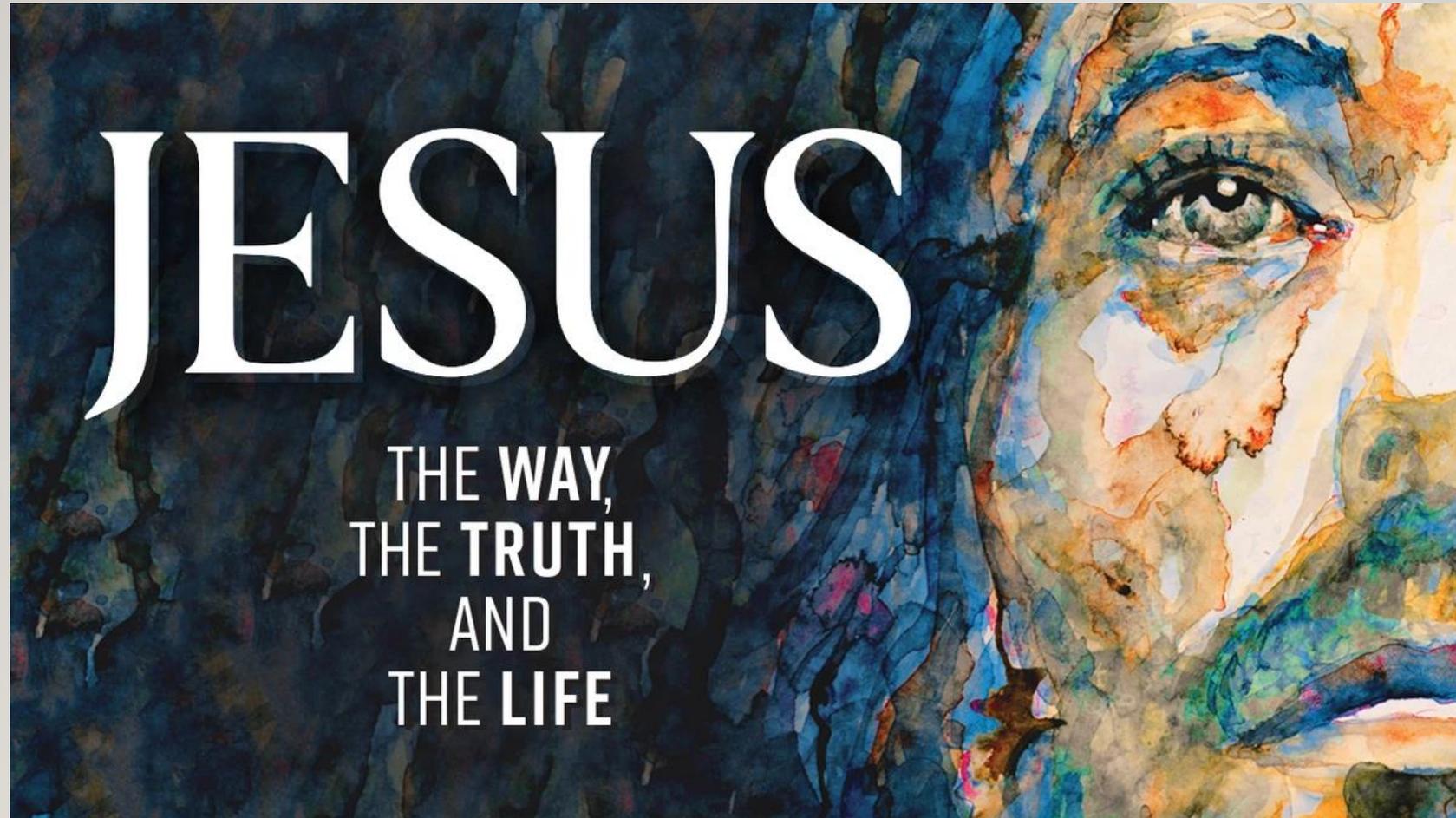
⁴ But you belong to God, my dear children. You have already won a victory over those people, because the Spirit who lives in you is greater than the spirit who lives in the world....¹³ And God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us.

¹⁴ Furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. ¹⁵ All who declare that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God. ¹⁶ We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. -----

¹⁶ So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves....²² But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!



Promises to build his church.



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Eph. 4:11-13

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.



1. He promises to develop and disciple. >> He will grow and discipline us. There will be hardship and suffering, for without it there is no growth, pruning hurts.
2. He promises to provide the resources needed. >> He will create and sustain in us the fruits of the Spirit, and a love for each other that support and encourages.
3. He promises to build his church. >> He will add to our number those he is calling to come to himself; by his Spirit working powerfully through us, and powerfully in front of us, he will build his church.



How we can offer it



1 Peter 2:11-12

Dear friends, I warn you as “temporary residents and foreigners” to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.



2 Cor. 2:14-17

¹⁴ But thank God! He has made us his captives and continues to lead us along in Christ's triumphal procession. Now he uses us to spread the knowledge of Christ everywhere, like a sweet perfume. ¹⁵ Our lives are a Christ-like fragrance rising up to God. But this fragrance is perceived differently by those who are being saved and by those who are perishing. ¹⁶ To those who are perishing, we are a dreadful smell of death and doom. But to those who are being saved, we are a life-giving perfume. And who is adequate for such a task as this?

¹⁷ You see, we are not like the many hucksters who preach for personal profit. We preach the word of God with sincerity and with Christ's authority, knowing that God is watching us.



1 Peter 5:5-11

And all of you, dress yourselves in humility as you relate to one another, for

*“God opposes the proud
but gives grace to the humble.”*

⁶ So humble yourselves under the mighty power of God, and at the right time he will lift you up in honor. ⁷ Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.

⁸ Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour. ⁹ Stand firm against him, and be strong in your faith. Remember that your family of believers all over the world is going through the same kind of suffering you are.

¹⁰ In his kindness God called you to share in his eternal glory by means of Christ Jesus. So after you have suffered a little while, he will restore, support, and strengthen you, and he will place you on a firm foundation. ¹¹ All power to him forever! Amen.

