

# MOBILIZING MILLENNIALS + GEN Z

## | Speakers |



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## | Notes |

### FIRST THINGS FIRST

As we begin this discussion, we need to lay aside negative stereotypes. We've all heard that Millennials and Gen Z are non-committal, entitled, narcissistic, and a host of other less-than-desirable traits. But that's only part of the story. If we genuinely want to reach these generations – discipling and mentoring them to their fullest potential – we need to be positive, open-minded, and excited about the things they bring to the table.

### THE COMMON BOND

Before we talk about the distinctions between Millennials and Gen Z, we want to highlight one very important commonality they have: **the desire for authenticity.**

Think about it: Millennials and Gen Z have been marketed to from birth. This radical consumerism deeply impacts the way they think and feel, and the result is that they not only see everything around them as a product to be consumed, but they themselves feel like a product to be consumed. **We can't come to them with an agenda, trying to peddle our organizational opportunities.** We need to be sincere, genuine, and consistent with our vision and our message.

**Practical Tip:** embrace and embody Kingdom-mindedness within your organization or church's culture. Don't try to "sell" your brand, or "out market" others who are doing similar work. We want what's best for these individuals, and that might be a different organization or church. Network with others and seek to have a good grasp on how Jesus is building His Kingdom globally.

## MILLENNIALS: SEEKING SIGNIFICANCE

Millennials put a high priority on doing what they are passionate about and they long to be a part of something significant. Where previous generations put a lot of priority on being loyal to specific organizations, companies, churches, etc., Millennials prioritize loyalty to their vision and passion, and will do whatever needed to pursue that.

**Practical Tip:** we have to be presenting Millennials with a big vision, talking about our big God and inviting them to take part in the big mission that He has for His church. Don't shy away from challenging them to step up and be a part of this vision that is bigger than themselves. And as we cast vision for God's work in this world, it's essential that we ground that in Scripture.

**“As a community of faith, we sometimes miss opportunities to propel young people into the mission of Jesus. Millennials and Gen Z are often more willing to be challenged than we are willing to challenge them.”**

**| David Kinnaman |**

## MILLENNIALS: SEEKING MENTORSHIP

Barna research shows that “only one out of every three 18- to 35-year-olds feel like they have someone in their life that deeply cares about them.” They are seeking mentorship, and they crave genuine connectedness. The last thing they need in their life is one more person who only cares about them if they get involved in a specific organization or church.

**Practical Tip:** the biggest thing you can offer Millennials isn't your wisdom or your experiences, it's simply your availability. Be a person they know they can count on – not just for information about your organization or church, but as a trustworthy sounding board for all of life. Remember: you're working with people here, and you can't expect them to fit neatly into a 9-5 schedule. Branch out of typical email communications, which are seen as a very formal way of communication. Try to incorporate more phone calls, text messages, or engage with them on social media platforms.

**“Poor listening diminishes the other person, while good listening invites them to exist, and to matter.”**

**| David Mathis |**

Along these same lines, take into consideration Millennials needs for relational consistency. Within your organization or your church, try to avoid structural and departmental breakdowns that could make individuals feel like a hot potato getting passed from one person to another with no sense of relational stability.

## GEN Z: SEEKING CONNECTIVITY

Gen Zer's were basically born with a screen in their hand, and they've never known life without Wi-Fi. They are hyper-connected with the world through online platforms which is where they spend the bulk of their time and where they make the majority of their connections.

**Practical Tip:** begin thinking outside the box and consider ways you can meet Gen Zer's where they're at. Begin to include links to your social media in initial emails or messages with them, and give them the chance to connect with you further on those platforms. Be creative, and don't hesitate to include them in the process and ask them how to best connect with them.

## GEN Z: SEEKING CLARITY

This is a generation who grew up hearing statements like, “You can be whatever you want to be” and “You can do whatever you want to do.” The options seem endless, and it’s a cause of great anxiety for these young people. Just think about it: there are over 1,800 college degree options!

**Practical Tip:** be prepared to walk alongside individuals as they seek to discern God’s will for their life. We need to have a deep understanding of how the gospel informs decision making and what the Bible says about calling so that we can answer questions, listen well, and pray with Gen Zer’s as they’re wrestling through these things. Gently combat their anxiety about decision making with consistent reminders of God’s character and His goodness.

**“The man or woman who is wholly or joyously  
surrendered to Christ can’t make a wrong choice -  
any choice will be the right one.”**

**| A.W. Tozer |**

## ONE FINAL PIECE OF ADVICE

If we had to summarize this entire session up in one piece of advice that would serve you well as you seek to mobilize Millennials and Gen Z, it would be this: **have the mindset of a learner**. If you get nothing else out of this time, we hope you’ll walk away with a renewed conviction that humility is crucial for mobilizers and church leaders seeking to engage the next generation.

In the same way that we tell missionaries on the field to be learners within their new geographical context, we need to be learners of the new generational context that we find ourselves in. How do we contextualize our message so that it makes sense to Millennials and Gen Z?

That is the hard, but very worthwhile work we have before us as we seek to effectively mobilize and engage Millennials and Gen Z with the Great Commission that Jesus has given us. May we be faithful in stewarding these generations in the cultural moment we find ourselves in!

## *| Resources |*

### **LINKS:**

[Barna Group](#)  
[The Connected Generation](#)  
[Growing Leaders](#)  
[Missions 101 Whiteboard Videos](#)

### **BOOKS:**

[The New Copernicans](#)  
( David John Seel, Jr. )  
[Faith for Exiles](#)  
( David Kinnaman + Mark Matlock )  
[Eschatological Discipleship](#)  
( Trevin Wax )