

6 Ways Millennials Are Shaping the Church

Every new generation influences society in profound ways. Every new generation also affects churches in America. The Millennial generation is no different.

Those adults and youth born between 1980 and 2000 are large in number, nearly 80 million. They are the largest generation in America, and they will continue to shape much of what takes place in our nation. They are also setting the tone for American churches today.

I have written about Millennials extensively, so I thought it might be helpful for me to share some key ways this generation is already shaping the church. Here are six of the most profound shifts.

1. There are fewer of them in church than previous generations. By our estimates, only 15 percent of the Millennials are Christians. No more than 20 percent of them are attending church once a month or more. While there are many Millennials in total, only one of five is in church today.

2. The Millennials' desires for relationships are affecting the churches they choose to attend. They will only go to churches where they can easily connect with others. Unlike the Boomers, they refuse to be worship-only attendees. They desire to be in more relational settings. Churches with healthy groups will be very attractive to Millennials.

3. This generation is doctrinally serious. At least the Christians among the Millennials care deeply about doctrine. More and more Millennial Christians will be in churches that are deeper in doctrine both from the preaching and within the groups of the church.

4. The Millennials are intensely community focused. They are more likely to be in a church where the leadership and the congregation care about and are involved in the community they serve. They are refusing to be a part of a church that acts largely in isolation.

5. This generation is already affecting the size of the worship gathering. As I noted in an earlier post, worship centers will be smaller. The Millennials are at the forefront of this facility revolution. They will eschew large worship services for more informal and smaller gatherings.

6. The Millennials will check the facts of church life. When the preacher states a historical fact, many Millennials will check its historical accuracy on their smartphone within seconds. They will look at church budgets with an eye for missional impact. This generation is somewhat of a doubting generation, and they have the resources to check anything said or offered by churches.

I have said on more than one occasion the Millennial Christians, although relatively small in number, will be great in influence in American congregations. We are already seeing that reality. And from my perspective, many of the changes they are bringing to churches are healthy and exciting.

What do you think about these six shaping influences? How are Millennials impacting your church?

Thom S. Rainer *is president of LifeWay Christian Resources.* For the original article, visit [.](#)