

Barna: Millennials Share Christ More Than Any Other Generation

A Barna study is revealing the truth about U.S. Millennials, the generation born after 1980. Skeptics argue that Millennials put social justice above their faith and are leaving the church in droves.

But Barna's study shows Millennials are sharing the gospel more than any other generation.

"By a previous generation's standards, they seem low-key, a little disengaged or disinterested," notes Greg Jao with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship. "But when you actually watch their behavior, you begin to see the Millennial generation ... is highly engaged with their faith."

In August, InterVarsity's Jim Lundgren discussed another Millennials study with Mission News Network. He shared that understanding Millennials is key to gospel growth. InterVarsity's ministry consists of 909 chapters on 590 campuses and more than 38,000 "core" students and faculty (those who participate in more than 50 percent of all activities).

"Nearly one out of every 10 students involved with InterVarsity came to faith while they were at college," Jao says. "And, there are over 10,000 students involved with InterVarsity who are not yet Christians but who come to our activities more than 50 percent of the time."

Jao says InterVarsity students are creating an environment on campus "where people are hearing about the faith, are being introduced to Jesus."

"We've watched a level of excitement about evangelism [rise] that we've not seen in recent history," he says. "The number of conversions that we've been able to identify over the last 10 years has doubled."

According to Jao, Millennials are embracing a message known by the missions community all along, based in James 2:14-18.

"An authentic Christian witness in this era requires both word—the proclamation of the gospel and an invitation to receive Jesus Christ—as well as the need to live out the implications of the gospel, both personally and socially," he says. "Even in the microcosm of what we saw in New York City at the beginning of October, you see the broader way Millennials are engaging both evangelism and justice at the same time."

The InterVarsity-sponsored Price of Life conference took place Oct. 1-12 on 17 campuses across NYC and Long Island. Students hosted more than 100 events.

"Over the course of the Price of Life campaign, we saw about 250 or 260 students come to faith," Jao says. "We also engaged with 12,000 students and faculty around the issues of human trafficking."

In the end, Jao says Barna's report is cause for jubilation.

"The current generation loves Jesus and wants to share who He is [with] the world; let's celebrate that truth," he says.

Pray that older believers will equip and affirm this generation's efforts.

At the same time, Jao observes, church leaders need to investigate the needs of middle-income, middle-age believers. This demographic had the greatest drop in evangelistic efforts.

"We need to listen carefully to why that middle group in our

churches, both in income and by age, feels so insecure,” Jao says.

Pray for courage and boldness for those who are hesitant to share Christ with others.

This article originally appeared on .