

‘He Gets Us’ Phenomenon Radiates Bold Cultural Agenda

Read Time: 7 Minutes

One of the most frequent questions members of the He Gets Us movement receive are, “who is behind this, and is there an agenda?” In a culture that has become increasingly hostile to the kingdom of God, the suspicions run deep because the “He” in that phrase just happens to be Jesus.

But Brad Hill, a spokesperson for the recent phenomenon that is sweeping not only the nation but globally as well, says He Gets Us has only a simple yet powerful mission: to point people to rediscover Jesus.

Two years ago, a group of believers who wanted to do exactly that had a question of their own about Jesus they wanted answered: “How did the world’s greatest love story become known as a hate group?” It was a question that wouldn’t leave the minds of the group’s founders, and it was a question that needed to be answered—and quickly considering the rapid deterioration of our culture.

“At the root of this project is this simple but powerful idea that Jesus is an incredible figure, and those of us who follow Him know the fullness of why He came,” Hill says. “But we also know that, in our culture today, there is a lot of misunderstanding. And, there are a lot of people that may not have ever seen a full picture of Him.

“So, from that question sprang up a fairly significant body of research. What we learned was that, and it’s no surprise to anyone, that in our culture today we have some issues in terms of the way people view the churches and Christians. We sometimes carry some baggage in the way people view us.

“But when we get to the question of Jesus, even folks who would definitely not call themselves a Jesus follower or a religious person, we have found that people might say, ‘Jesus gave us a good example to follow.’ Some people, during this research even said things like, ‘if the world followed the way Jesus taught, we’d be better off.’ We couldn’t shake that idea and we said that, if we lead with Jesus, we really believe that there is an opportunity here to reach people who may not be walking the walk but who are open spiritually enough and just curious enough to learn more about Jesus.”

☒ And the message is working. With a \$100 million advertising campaign that includes spots on national television, on billboards nationwide, online ads and matrix boards in stadiums and arenas, He Gets Us is targeting millennials and Gen Zer’s with a message that the Jesus of the Bible didn’t lean left or right. He wasn’t a Democrat or Republican.

He was someone that, during His time on earth, who struggled just like you do. He’s someone that was judged, just like you are at times. He was fed up with politics, just as you might be right now.

But Jesus is also someone that simply loves you—a God that is no respecter of persons.

Made possible by a small group of donors from wealthy anonymous families, He Gets Us is also present on YouTube. In five months, its channel has grown to more than 8,000 subscribers, but it has also been viewed more than 350 million times.

“One of my favorite illustrations is something I call the ‘water cooler moment,’” Hill says. “And this is happening every day from the stories we are receiving from people. If you’re a pastor, for example, you would imagine someone in your church who works a job Monday to Friday to maybe go in to

work on Monday and tell someone, 'Hey, I saw this Jesus commercial on the football game last night.'

"So, what illustrates the ads is that it's part of the strategy on the scale of He Gets Us, that the ads are part of the strategy to open doors to evangelize or introduce people to Jesus. The ads are helping to start that process for us. And, they are driving people toward the people who serve in your church. What I always ask pastors is, 'How do you get your people ready for those conversations when they happen?' That's a big driver for us, for a lot of the resources we have."

Many people come to He Gets Us with some tough questions, Hill says. Many have a sketchy background, and they wonder if they're even redeemable in Jesus' eyes. Some have been turned off by a negative reaction from "church" people, and they believe that they are "too far gone."

But that's where He Gets Us comes in, to dispel and debunk those naysayers.

"Some will come to us to share their story, and they may be ashamed of something they've done in their past," Hill says. "They've been made to feel bad about it. But that's far from what Jesus was about. They want to know if God still loves them, and is there a place where they can get closer to God. 'Is it too late for me to explore Jesus?' They need to know that Jesus was just like us."

"If there was one thing Jesus was clear on, it' was His love for everyone. That has no exceptions. The first thing we want to do is love on these people. Maybe it's just a simple text to say that, with Jesus, their slate gets wiped clean. The important thing is just to meet them where they are and help them know that Jesus loves them."

There are several ways in which you as an individual can engage with He Gets Us. Upon visiting the company's website,

you can chat live with team members; you can text for prayer, you can sign up to join a small group with the global ministry Alpha, or you can find a Bible reading plan on the YouVersion app.

Churches can also find resources in which to equip members of their congregations to make disciples, to “go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost (Matt. 28:19).

“We have a high view of Scripture and a high view of Jesus, and we believe in what the Bible says that we are the children of God and we have access to everything Jesus had,” Hill says. “At the same time, the strategy of the campaign is what some might call pre-evangelistic, and we are trying to reach those folks that are a little further up the scale and are just discovering Jesus. We feel like those topics are conversations best handled by ministries and churches that partner with our camp.

“That’s one of the reasons we’re eager and we’re hungry to have as many churches as are interested to join in. When people say they are ready to connect, conversations like that would be the kinds of things we think our churches and ministries would want to engage in.”

So, does He Gets Us have an agenda? There is little question about that.

“We’re very careful to point out that no single church or denomination is represented here,” Hill says. “We want to work with as many as we can. We’re not left or right. Just pointing people to Jesus, that’s our goal and our plan. There has been a gradual erosion in how people view the church and Christians. But we hold fast to Scripture and we believe that the church is a critical part of God’s plan in this campaign.

“People may not believe that Jesus was God, even if they believe He was a good person. ... We want people to take a fresh

look at Jesus. One of the things we've heard is that some people feel like to get to Jesus, they have to go through Christians. We want to offer them the chance to learn about Him and what He said and did. We want them to read about Jesus in the Bible. But we also want them to know that there is no prerequisite that you have to pray a prayer, go to church or believe certain things before you can explore Jesus."

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