

# Are We Missing Something?

## Opening Thoughts

Baby Boomers—born 1946 to 1964.

Generation X—born 1965 to 1980.

Millennials—born 1981 to 2000.

Generation Z—born 2001 to 2020.

## Open versus Closed

A majority of U.S. adults (72%) are Open in their spirituality. This means approximately 188 million adults are open to exploring and experiencing a deeper life of faith.

The “Nons” Are More Open Than You’d Guess Nonpracticing Christians comprise 45 percent of U.S. adults, and 82 percent are spiritually Open. Even among non-Christians, 46 percent are Open to the spiritual life.

**Spiritual Hunger exists:** Across generations, 83 percent of Gen Z and Millennials, 82 percent of Gen X and 79 percent of Boomers say they are certain or think a spiritual / supernatural dimension exists.

**Hypocrisy and Science are the leading two causes of doubt.** Eyes are on Us All. To rile up his Christian friends, the atheist in the high school class was always looking for scientific speculation that would throw doubt on God or the Bible. Scouring the Internet he discovered research from a student at an obscure university who hypothesized that due to weather and wind patterns, the Red Sea was less than a foot deep when Moses led the Hebrews across it.

“It wasn’t even up to their knees,” the atheist sneered.

One of the Christian friends exclaimed, “It’s a miracle!”

“What miracle?” the atheist asked. “Anybody could have waded across it!”

The Christian grinned. “Simple. God drowned Pharaoh’s entire army in less than a foot of water!”

Science always depends on facts and logic to show up their statements, whereas religion depends on people's beliefs and power. Science is focused on developing experiments and observations to solve an answer. Religion addresses the questions that cannot be answered with accurate data.

**Spiritually Open:** In Search of Peace, The number one thing spiritually Open people seek is inner peace (46%), with hope a close second (41%).

**Jesus Matters,** Even to Non-Christians One in three Open non-Christians (33%) says they have made a personal commitment to Jesus that is still important to them. What separates Jesus from every other good teacher, leader or religious figure is his resurrection from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:14). Jesus made claims to be divine and fulfilled them by rising from the dead (John 14:16).

They Like Jesus, but Not So Much Christians While they tend to have a warm perspective about Jesus, Open non-Christians are especially critical of his followers—58 percent point to the hypocrisy of religious people as the main reason they’re skeptical of Christianity.

## Doubts Prevent Openness

Given the widespread openness to the spiritual aspect of life and a collective desire for inner peace, healing and growth, why are so many Americans choosing not to search for their soul's longings within a church context? The answer has a lot to do with people's doubts.

## **What Causes Doubt?** (Charles Templeton)

Topping the List: Hypocrisy of religious people, Human Suffering, Church Scandals

## **The Best Way for the Church to be Open and Inviting**

A Congregation that is Real, Genuine, Promoting Christ not Ourselves (Self dethroned)

Promote the Bible as a book to be believed more than a book to be explained. (All things are possible to him ...)

Be Full of Faith (Recognizing what God can do is not Faith)

Do We fully believe God can supply all our needs?

## **Focusing on any One Ministry is not the answer**

Changing Music Won't Make the Church More Open to Searching Souls

Creating Programs Won't Make the Church More Open to Searching Souls

## **Jesus Has a Plan for Our Church**

Maturing as Christians

Using the Gifts He Gave Us

Preaching the Entire Word of the Lord

**Text:** [Mat 6:31-34 KJV] 31 Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? 32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. **33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.** 34 Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day [is] the evil thereof.

## **Introduction**

We were created for the Lord

What's missing in our Spiritual Lives?

Where do we get inner peace, healing, and spiritual growth?

What are you seeking in your life?

Where are you looking?

What is slowing you down?

Faith in God cures Anxiety

## **We are created for the Lord**

[Col 1:16 KJV] 16 For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:

## **What's Missing in our Spiritual Lives?**

Do we know what God wants us to do in His Church?

Do we know how to use the Gifts God has Given us?

Can we love the unlovable

## **Where do we get inner peace, healing, and spiritual growth?**

### **Many people are looking for peace in their hearts**

Hobbies

Support groups

Peers and Family

Religion

### **Only One offers Inner Peace and Hope (Jesus)**

[2Co 3:15-18 KJV] 15 But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. 16 Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. 17 Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord [is], there [is] liberty. 18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, [even] as by the Spirit of the Lord.

[2Co 3:15-18 NLT] 15 Yes, even today when they read Moses' writings, their hearts are covered with that veil, and they do not understand. 16 But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17 For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord--who is the Spirit--makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image.

[Psa 33:22 KJV] 22 Let thy mercy, O LORD, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

[Psa 71:5 KJV] 5 For thou [art] my hope, O Lord GOD: [thou art] my trust from my youth.

## **What are we seeking in our life?**

Inner Peace and Hope

A Place to Belong

Something you can put your trust in

### **Seek First:**

Kingdom of God

His Righteousness

## **Where are you looking?**

## **Why not the Church?**

Contrary to what many Christians might believe, spiritually open people are not necessarily looking for all the answers. They are searching for inner peace and hope. So why aren't they searching for it at church?

## **What do We Have to Offer Those who come into the church?**

Music

Social Programs

The Holy Ghost

## **What is keeping us from Success?**

Could it be Priorities?

Could it be Distractions?

Doubt and/or Unbelief?

## **Faith in God Cures Anxiety and worry**

### **Faith Gives Confidence**

[1Co 2:5 KJV] 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

### **Faith Justifies**

[Rom 3:28 KJV] 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

### **Faith is what we live by**

[Gal 3:11 KJV] 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, [it is] evident: for, The just shall live by faith.

### **Faith in Jesus Christ Puts Us in God's Family**

[Gal 3:11, 26 KJV] 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, [it is] evident: for, The just shall live by faith. ... 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

### **Faith is a shield to Satan's evil darts.**

[Eph 6:16 KJV] 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

### **Belief in Jesus**

Among U.S. adults, 55 percent are completely certain and 25 percent are somewhat certain that Jesus was a real person. Only six percent are somewhat certain and three percent completely certain that he was not a real person. Ten percent are not sure / never thought about it.