

NEXT GENERATION CONVERSATION EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

March 19-20, 2009

April 16-17, 2009

May 7-8, 2009

PROCESS

From March to May 2009, conversations were held in Los Angeles, Dallas and Washington, D.C. At each location, the participants were divided into groups that had a mixed voice of college/youth, next gen leaders, ethnic diversity, and senior/cutting edge leaders.

The groups were given four questions to discuss. In rounds, each group answered a question and then presented their perspectives to the others. Answers were compiled from all three venues in hopes of identifying trends and emerging perspectives.

The focus group approach was filmed and will be edited in time for the Joint Tracks (Leaders, Scholars and Next Gen) meeting in October.

A social community Ning site (<http://se21century.ning.com>) linked to the SE21 site has been established to encourage ongoing conversation, relationship building, and promotion of the Commission's objectives.



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Q1: What are you seeing and hearing that indicates the direction of the Holy Spirit's work and how is He moving today amongst the next generation?

SUMMARY

There is hunger for formal and informal learning and mentorship – they are aware of their lack of knowledge – but, not just for the sake of learning, but also for action. True Holy Spirit empowerment must extend beyond knowledge and experience into social justice, the arts, and contemporary forms of evangelism and discipleship. They recognize dysfunctional aspects of their culture that can be used for good, such as brokenness. They are real, raw, and hate anything 'fake.' They want to live and give their all for something real.

Q2: What is producing fruit and what is no longer producing fruit in the Spirit-filled movement? What must stop, start and continue? What language is being used that embodies these realities?

SUMMARY

Regarding fruit, they identified both good and spoiled fruit. Legalism, titles, heavy-handed leadership were bad and 'Do as I do' leadership, authenticity, character, and community were good. Legalism, politics, credentialing, and rituals were to be stopped. To be started were diversity, ethnicity, experiential preaching and engagement. To be continued were simple grace and forgiveness. Lastly, language was characterized by power, presence and relationship to God, openness to spirituality and the prophetic, I feel God, and having a relationship with God. No more cliché, sub-cultural language that broad culture can't understand. Hardly any label themselves as Pentecostal or Charismatic, too much stigma and baggage to be relevant.



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Q3: What trends are now affecting the next gen as it relates to their being empowered by the Holy Spirit?

SUMMARY

Some of what was considered negative trends was also looked upon as being positive and vice versa. For example, technology has negative impact because it creates superficial, shallow relationships, but it can be used to connect and spread genuine truth. The brokenness of this generation is overwhelming, but there is a keen awareness that the Holy Spirit is using a broken vessel to pour out His glory. A hunger for deep spirituality offers a unique opportunity at this time in history. Biblical illiteracy is a negative trend.

Q4: If we, the Church, were at our best, what would we be doing right now that would attract and enhance Spirit-empowered living for the next generation?

SUMMARY

We would get the next generation ready to lead. We would father them and support them until they are ready to take the reins on their own. We would be relational, transparent, and flexible and have Spirit-encountered services. Create a level of expectancy, different than, “waiting on the Holy Spirit.” Don’t tell me what’s right; teach me the Word and live it. Allow the Holy Spirit to minister without proctor. Death to apathy. The Spirit would engage culture in the streets and the underground and not be relegated to the four walls of the church.

