



Business Leadership Group Discussion & Application Guide

George Barna, Making Every Day Count—Culture—Session 1 of 3

George Barna states that his interest in research is sparked by the fact that things are constantly changing. On a 1 to 10 scale, rate how Christianity in general is doing, in terms of influencing our culture _____. How do you think we could do a better job in our workplaces?

Barna: “In order to overcome the challenges you face in pursuing your purpose, you have to [as the Bible tells us: ‘Understand the times and know what to do... You and your business play a significant role in the healing of America’] How do you see your own role...your business’s role in healing America?

Barna spends lots of time, energy and resources tracking changes in America’s world view. He said that in just a few years there has been a dramatic shift away from a Biblical world view. He states that **currently, only 1 of 10 Americans believe that there is absolute truth and that it can be found in the Bible.** Do you find that surprising? How should that impact the way you share your faith in Christ? [46:18]

Select an idea or concept from today’s talk that would make the most impact or warrants immediate attention and answer the following questions:

1. Should I apply this concept or practice to my business or personal life?
2. Can I commit to a schedule to implement this application? [explain and discuss with the group, if necessary]

Comment:



Development Objectives:

Life, Leadership, Excellence, Kingdom

“From the tribe of Issachar, there were 200 leaders of the tribe with their relatives. All these men **understood the signs of the times** and **knew the best course for Israel to take.**” 1Chronicles 12:43 NASB



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George Barna, Making Every Day Count—Culture –Session 2of3

Barna states that one of Post-Modernism’s tenets is that “No one can determine right & wrong...there are no moral absolutes.” How do you think you are most effective to influence employees, peers and others that there must be absolutes and that Christ Himself is the author of these absolutes?

Ravi Zacharias once debated an agnostic who argued that “There cannot be any absolutes.” Ravi asked him if he was sure. He said “Yes.” Then Ravi asked “Are you absolutely sure?” The agnostic sat in silence, then conceded the point. Pointing people to truth is necessary; but we don’t necessarily win someone over by winning debates. *Whose influence was instrumental in leading you* to the point where you saw absolute truth as being embodied in Jesus Christ?

What did they do that influenced you most?

Barna states that the vast majority of conservative Christians want to be equipped and encouraged to become effective influences on our culture, yet the vast majority of churches are not doing so. What training has been most helpful to you as a Christian business leader?

What more would you like to have?

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For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. Proverbs 23:7a NKJV



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George Barna, Making Every Day Count—Culture—Session 3 of 3

Barna explores the concept of “7 Mountains of Culture” [Arts & Entertainment, Business, Education, Government, Family, Media & Religion.] In some regards, “business and faith are the two cogs around which the others turn.” Yet, Barna states that business and religion [Christian faith] have very little influence on culture. Why do you think this is the case?

Barna states that we have a best chance of influencing culture if we have a clear Vision [a snapshot of a better future, inspired by God. He states that 3 Of 4 Americans long to add more meaning to their lives and essentially don’t know where they are going. Vision defines both purpose and direction. Do you have a clear, God inspired vision?

If so, how do you make it known? If not, would you like to pursue developing one?

George Barna: “We don’t experience personal transformation because we don’t allow God to break us of sin, self & society...The way that people get transformed is that they have that crisis and they are coached through the journey by one who is a little further in the journey—coaching is absolutely critical in this.” In Barna’s coaching model, asking questions is critical to leading others into a Biblical world view and to personal transformation. *“Are you helping people develop a world view that honors God and advances His purposes?”*

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Comment:

The person who tells one side of a story seems right, until someone else comes and asks questions. Proverbs 18:17 New Century Bible



Development Objectives:
Life, Leadership, Excellence, Kingdom

The Essence of Postmodernism

- Random experiences provide meaning, expression
- Feelings, relationships provide context, identity, purpose
- Truth is relative to the person and circumstances
- Everyone is on a unique, independent journey
- No grand and unified meaning or purpose
- Value comes from unrestrained choice
- Tolerance, not righteousness, is a virtue
- Imposing authority, order and limits is improper
- Process trumps product; ends never justify means



Shift in Values

Early American Values

- Hard work
- Civic duty
- Humility
- Moderation
- Family
- Faith
- Rule of Law
- Frugality
- Simplicity

Current American Values

- Comfort
- Experiences
- Expression
- Happiness
- Independence
- Entertainment
- Control
- Acceptance
- Freedom

We Are Losing Confidence in Institutions

<u>Spiritual Indicator</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2015</u>
Military	64%	74%	72%
Police	58	63	52
Churches/organized religion	57	53	42
Medical system	41	42	37
Presidency	45	44	33
US Supreme Court	44	41	32
Public schools	40	37	31
Banks	43	49	28
Newspapers	30	28	24
Big business	21	22	21
Congress	22	11	8

Losing Faith in Government

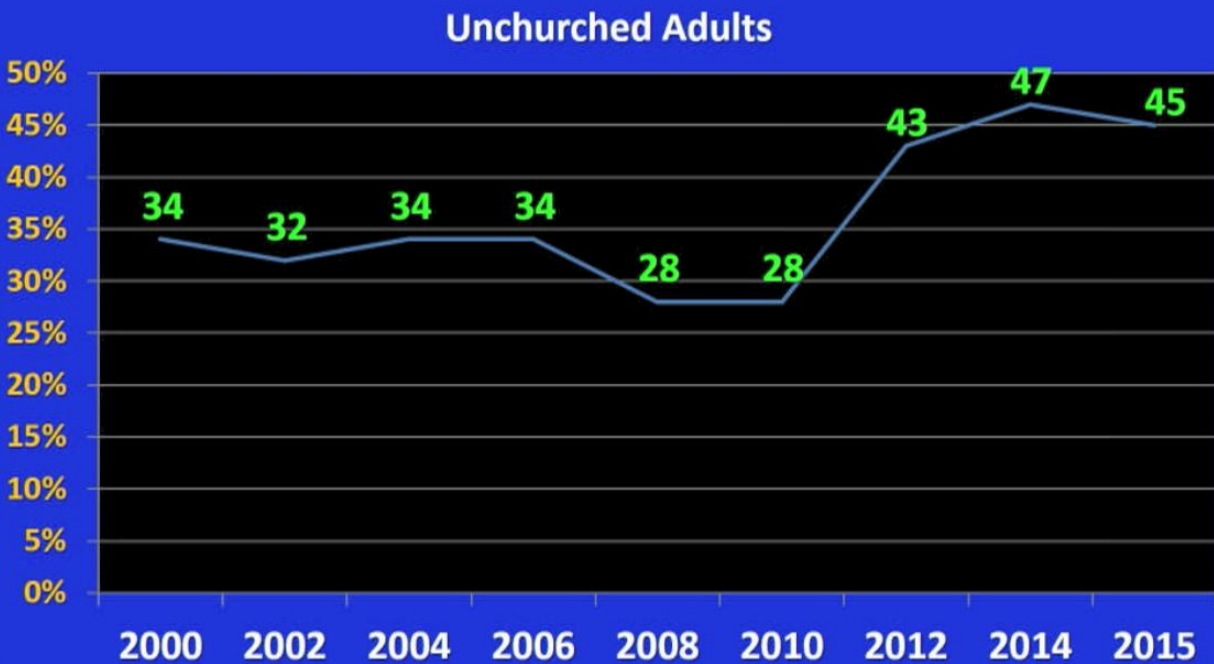
- **72%: America is more divided now than at any other time during their lifetime**
- **74%: dissatisfied with the way the nation is governed**
- **All government officials, elected bodies, and federal departments generate public disapproval**
- **85%: Congress is more interested in serving special interest groups than serving their constituents**
- **63%: usually disappointed by the people they vote for**
- **Only 6% are very certain that the government has their best interests at heart**
- **60%: federal government has too much power**



New Dream, New Values, New Morals

- 71% - getting a divorce
- 68% - sexual relationship, unmarried man, woman
- 67% - gambling
- 63% - enjoying sexual thoughts or fantasies about someone you are not married to
- 63% - gay/lesbian relations
- 63% - opposite-sex cohabitation
- 61% - an unmarried woman having a baby
- 47% - using marijuana for recreational purposes
- 44% - using profanity
- 43% - intentionally looking at pornography
- 42% - having an abortion
- 34% - getting drunk
- 32% - sex between teenagers

The Unchurched Are Increasing



Faith Is the Highest Priority in Life

All	27%
Evangelicals	82
Born Again	52
Not Born Again	13
Under 50	23
50-plus	30



<u>Spiritual Indicator</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2015</u>
Self-description: <u>deeply spiritual</u>	58%	37%
"My religious faith is <u>very important</u> to me"	68	52
Have a personal responsibility to <u>share religious beliefs</u> with nonbelievers.	34	25
<u>God</u> is the all-knowing, all-powerful creator of the universe who still rules it today	69	62
<u>Bible is totally accurate</u> in the all of the principles it teaches	45	36
Bible is neither the actual or inspired Word of God; it is <u>written by men</u> .	22	30
Have a <u>personal commitment to Jesus Christ</u> that is still important in my life	72	60

Challenges to Christianity

- Doubting that the church has their best interests in mind
- Not sensing the presence of God at the church
- Busyness or work schedules that conflict with church activities
- The absence of children among young couples
- Disinterest in or mistrust of the Bible
- A sense that the church's teachings or theology are restrictive, exclusive, stifling, shallow or irrelevant
- Attachment to relational networks that have no connection to churches or a common faith

Conservative Pastors Are Distancing Their Churches from Political Action

	<u>2014-15</u>	<u>2016</u>
Encourage voting	82%	66%
Distribute voter guides	52	42
Preach on the issues	41	23
Encourage participation	31	23
Voter registration	24	14
GOTV campaign	10	9
Invite candidates to speak	6	4
Election info on website	5	5

Source: American Culture & Faith Institute, 2016

Christian Conservatives Want To Be In the Game

10%: their church was very involved in last election cycle
(Only 8% of conservative pastors said their church had a lot of influence)

61%: want their church more involved in the election
(74% of conservative pastors agree they should be more involved in the election)

23%: their church provided a lot of issues-related teaching
(92% of conservative pastors say the Bible speaks to all of the issues addressed in the election)

67%: want more issues-related teaching from their church

Leaders Must Provide Vision

A compelling mental portrait of a preferable future, communicated by God to His chosen servants, based upon an accurate understanding of God, self and circumstances, for the purpose of advancing the kingdom.



Develop a Biblical Worldview

- A worldview is the mental, moral, emotional and spiritual filter through which we see and respond to the world
- Everyone has a worldview
- Most people's worldview develops by default
- Americans' worldviews are synthesis of Christian theism, deism, postmodernism, Secular humanism, nihilism, Eastern mysticism, and New Age
- Intentional worldview development works best through addressing questions
- You can coach people to a biblical worldview

Your Business Is God's Tool for Discipleship

- Are you casting God's vision for business and life?
- Are you recognizing and celebrating brokenness?
- Are you helping develop people's worldview?
- Are you measuring what matters, and adjusting accordingly?



The Biblical Model

**“...these men understood the signs of the times and
knew the best course (for Israel) to take.”**

1 Chronicles 12:32

**“You know how to interpret the weather signs
in the sky, but you don’t know how to interpret the
signs of the times!”**

Matthew 16:3

