

THE U.S. AS A NEW MISSION FIELD

In the past few decades radical and rapid changes have occurred in the U.S.. These changes impact our mission.

THE REALITY OF THE U.S. CHURCHES :

1. CHURCHES IN THE U.S. ARE RAPIDLY DECLINING

- U.S. is the 4th largest unchurched nation in the world. Over 200 million are unchurched. - [SOURCE](#)
- In 2016 48% of Americans (**appr. 160 million**) define themselves as post-Christian (don't believe in God, do not go to church, do not believe in the Bible). - [SOURCE](#) - and that number grew 4% / year since 2013 each year.
- 2.5M leave the church every year - [SOURCE](#).
- 37M foreign born immigrants reside in the USA; 13.5% of U.S. population are from unreached people groups (UPG) + 820,000 students are studying here mainly from China.¹
- 361 UPG are in the USA, making us the nation with the 3rd largest # of UPG²
 - 378,000 Turks, 122,000 Albanians, Hundreds of thousands of Urdu, 100,000 Somalis, Tens-of-thousands of Afghans, 80,000 Punjabi Sikhs, Hundreds of thousands of Burmese, 60,000 Iraqis, etc.
- There are 10 States where 96% of the population are unreached & unchurched.³
- There are 100 counties in the U.S. where the evangelicals are less than 2% of the population⁴

¹ Unreached Peoples, Least Reached Places - An Untold Story of Lostness in America, by J.D. Payne, 2014. p.35.

² Unreached Peoples, Least Reached Places - An Untold Story of Lostness in America, by J.D. Payne, 2014. p.40

³ Unreached Peoples, Least Reached Places - An Untold Story of Lostness in America, by J.D. Payne, 2014. p.19

⁴ Unreached Peoples, Least Reached Places - An Untold Story of Lostness in America, by J.D. Payne, 2014. p.21

- There are 20 major metropolitan areas where the evangelical population is under 6%.⁵
- In order just to keep pace with the amount a people leaving the church or falling into the NONE/Post-Truth descriptors, most church planters and missiologist say we need to plant 4,000 churches a year. BUT in order to reach the currently unchurched, too, we need to plant 8,000 churches every year. One denomination plants 4,000 a year, but within two years only 300 remain due to finances, lack of fruit, leadership changes, no multiplication, etc. Sustainability is an issue among all church-planters.

“Something is missionally malignant when we are willing to make great sacrifices to travel the world to reach a people group but not willing to walk across the street... What kind of theology and missiology support going ‘over there’ and fails to advocate going ‘down the street?’” - J.D. Payne

2. MOST CHURCHES IN THE U.S. ARE RAPIDLY SECULARIZING

- 86% of Millennials consider themselves Post-Christian
- Atheism doubled in [Gen Z](#) - [SOURCE](#) . It means that 35 million in Gen Z will leave the church by 2030.
- From 2013 to 2015 the number of Americans who qualify as “post-Christian” rose from 37% to 44%. - [SOURCE](#)
- Cultural relevance, political correctness became the most important value instead of representing God’s truth. *“What we are seeing now is the result of the church raising up influencers who did not supremely value truth who have led a generation who also do not believe in the supremacy of truth”* - [SOURCE](#)

3. MOST CHURCHES IN THE U.S. ARE NOT MISSIONAL

- US churches lost their interest in mission: *“It’s becoming clear that our churches in North America... have lost their once fervent passion for missions work... many in the church are largely DISENGAGED or, worse, SIMPLY DISINTERESTED.”* Ed Stetzer - [SOURCE](#)

⁵ Unreached Peoples, Least Reached Places - An Untold Story of Lostness in America, by J.D. Payne, 2014. p.28

- 52% of church attenders are saying that their church is doing a great job on discipling people, but only 1% of the church leaders think it's true - [SOURCE](#)
- 51% of Christians don't know the Great Commission at all. Only 17% have heard the GC and knows what it means. Only 10% of the millennials church-goers have heard about the GC. - [SOURCE](#)
- Almost Half of Practicing Christian Millennials Say Evangelism Is Wrong: Almost half of Millennials (47%) agree at least somewhat that it is wrong to share one's personal beliefs with someone of a different faith in hopes that they will one day share the same faith. - [SOURCE](#)
- Millennials won't share their faith, they think it's morally wrong - [SOURCE](#)
- Non-Christians wants CHristians to listen to them in conversations. - [SOURCE](#)

There are 4 types of churches in the U.S. regarding mission expansion (from Exponential leadership *)

1. Subtracting and/or Plateauing (80% are either 1 or 2)
2. Growing by adding from other churches (16%)
3. Growing through conversion (about 3.6%)
4. Multiplying (0.4%)

(*) Bill Couchenour of Exponential writes, "The percentages were originally pieced together. There were a couple of surveys that suggested +/- 80% of churches were L1/2. There was an SBC study that suggested 4% of churches were reproducing. We had been searching for L5 and could only find a few; not statistically significant so, essentially 0%. That left 16% for Level 3. You can find that in chapter 3 of Becoming a Level 5 Multiplying Church [HERE](#)."

However, LifeWay did some research specifically related to this that they debuted at the Orlando Conference earlier this year. They looked at it a little differently in that they considered L 1, 2, and 3 churches = 100%. Then they looked at those churches to see how many exhibit Level 4 behaviors. The thinking is that some reproducing churches could, in a given year, look like they're plateaued or in decline because they just sent off a large portion of their people and money to launch a church. Their research showed that there are now 4% of churches that are L4. You can find that research [HERE](#)."

U.S. CITIES ARE BECOMING INCREASINGLY LOST - [source](#)

- 22.5 population / 21 million are lost in NYC
- 20 population / 18 million are lost in LA
- 6 population / 3 million are lost in Atlanta
- 8.8. population / 8 million are lost in Chicago
- 2.3 population / 1.5 million are lost in KC

Other Sources:

- [Church Attendance in America](#)