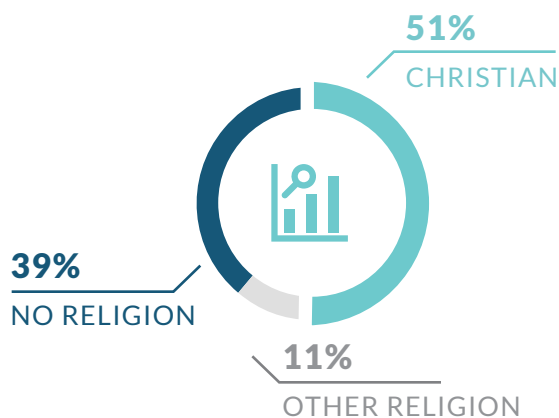


LEARNING FROM RESEARCH

Religious attitudes & Behaviors



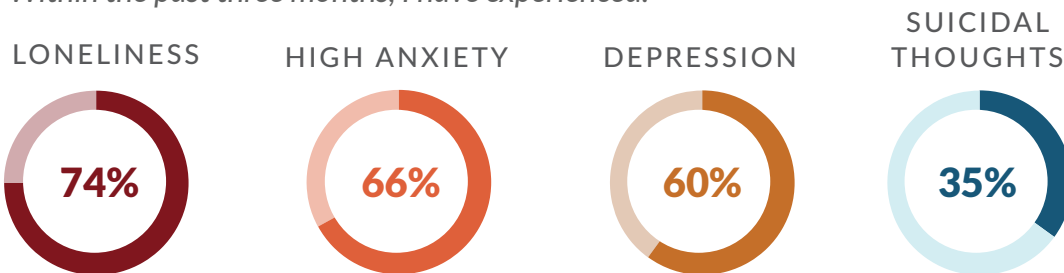
ONLY 8% OF CHRISTIAN TEENS MET THE CRITERIA FOR COMMITTED CHRISTIANS.

How should this gap inform our approach to evangelism and discipleship?

Sharing the gospel with teens is not a separate event from discipleship, but rather a part of a teen's discipleship journey.

Teens & Mental Health

Within the past three months, I have experienced:



Teens & Sexuality

Sexually active recently:



Same-sex attraction:



Viewed pornography recently



Gender is primarily based on sex at birth





THE
“HURT NONE”

Clayton

ABOUT Clayton is 19 years old. As you talk with him, he shares with you that he was raised around religion, but believes that churches treat gay people poorly and judge others hard. He is gay and experienced rejection and judgement in the church where his mom took him. He tells you that God wasn't there for him when he needed him, and that religion is controlling and is just used to hurt people.



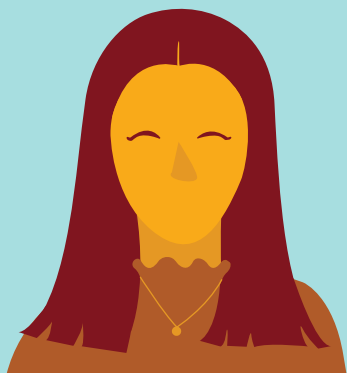
Potential entry point to a spiritual conversation:

You said that God didn't help you when you needed him. What might that look like now? What could God do in your life right now that would show you how much he loves you?

CONTEXT Clayton lives in a rough neighborhood. His dad is in prison. Multiple drug dealers live in his building, and have approached him to work for them. He wants to avoid a life of drugs and becoming like his dad, but he has few opportunities. All of the pressure causes him much anxiety.



What parts of the gospel might you emphasize to connect with Clayton's heartfelt needs?



THE
“APATHETIC NONE”

Melissa

ABOUT Melissa is 17 years old. As you talk with Melissa, she tells you she doesn't believe in God. She believes all religions basically have the same moral core, and doesn't care that people believe in God as long as they don't force their beliefs on others. She's never seen God do anything and there's nothing special about the Christians she knows. She doesn't feel any need for religion.



Potential entry point to a spiritual conversation:

I'm sorry there's nothing special about the Christians you know. Do you think there's anything special about Jesus?

CONTEXT Melissa lives with her mom and a never-ending string of her mom's live-in boyfriends. She was sexually abused by one of these boyfriends when she was five. Melissa also shares with you that she identifies more as a boy than as a girl and is considering changing her name to Mike. Her mom does not accept this change, and she struggles with loneliness and depression.



What parts of the gospel might you emphasize to connect with Melissa's heartfelt needs?



THE
“PASSIVE NOMINAL”

Matthew

ABOUT Matthew is 15 years old. During your conversation he shares with you that he considers himself a Christian. He goes to church, prays before meals, and tries not to sin. He thinks the Bible is just a book of rules which he struggles to follow. The more you talk, the more you realize that Matthew is missing a personal life-giving relationship with Jesus.



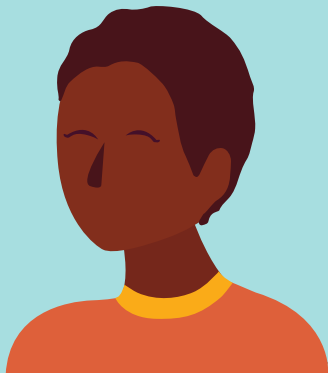
Potential entry point to a spiritual conversation:

Jesus cares way more about you as a person than in what you do for him. What do you think about this?

CONTEXT Matthew has three younger siblings, all with different fathers. He's never met his dad. Matthew often watches his younger siblings as his mom works two jobs to try to make ends meet. After he puts his siblings to bed, he stays up late trying to do his own school work. He wants to do well and to take care of his family, but is exhausted from all the responsibilities. He feels very lonely.



What parts of the gospel might you emphasize to connect with Matthew's heartfelt needs?



THE
“PROGRESSIVE
NOMINAL”

Tamikah

ABOUT Tamikah is 18 years old. As you talk with her she tells you she was raised as a Christian and is a believer, but she struggles with the church. Tamikah believes we should be tolerant of other people's beliefs and lifestyle, so she advocates for those who are judged inside the church. Christianity helps her be a more kind and loving person, but she believes other religions can do that too. She feels we need to be tolerant of other people's beliefs, since we can't really know what's true.



Potential entry point to a spiritual conversation:

Did you know that Jesus cared about the marginalized? Would you mind if I told you some examples?

CONTEXT Tamikah recently lost a friend to suicide. Her friend was being bullied by girls at school and struggling with depression. She couldn't see a way out so she took her own life. Tamikah is angry and hurting over the loss of her friend.



What parts of the gospel might you emphasize to connect with Tamikah's heartfelt needs?