

A NEW DAY

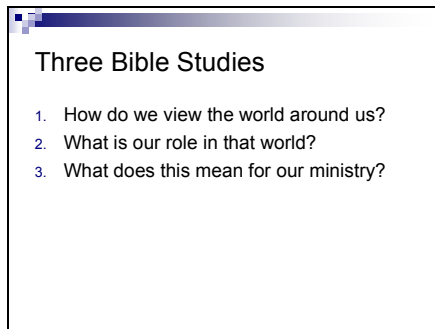
Three Bible Study/ Discussions on our mission in the post-churched context

Part 1: The World Around Us LEADER'S NOTES

Slide 1



Slide 2



There are three parts to this Bible Study

Slide 3



**First: How do we see the world around us?
So, who are we in relation to the world? Are we in a pre-churched society, a church society, or a post-church society?
We will be considering this question during this study**

Slide 4

Why does this matter?

- The most influential people are the cultural insiders
- When the church is a cultural insider, the Gospel spreads
 - *Where have you seen the truth of this?*
 - *What does this mean for the church's ministry today?*

Why does this matter? Because the most influential people are the cultural insiders. They know and speak the language, they have credibility and people listen to them. When the church is a cultural insider, the Gospel spreads.

Slide 5

Pre-Churched Society

- Traditional Mission Field
- The Church is a cultural outsider
 - Church has no identity, thus no credibility
 - Missionary is an outsider
- So the key is to grow the number of cultural insiders who speak the Gospel
 - These are lay people
 - Sometimes even the un-baptized

Pre-Churched Society
A pre churched society is the traditional mission field. A society where there are few if any believers. Like Paul going to Asia, or President Newton going to the Philippines. The church or the missionary is a cultural outsider and has no credibility with the society. Growth only starts happening when the cultural insiders, or lay converts, start speaking the gospel to their own people.

Slide 6

Pre-Churched Society

- What is the church like?
 - The Church is focused on reaching the lost
 - Lots of involvement with the unchurched
 - "Porous" boundary between churched and unchurched
 - Little Structure
 - Several Word gifts (Ephesians 4)
 - Unchurched → evangelist
 - Churched → pastor/teacher
 - Both → apostle, prophet
 - Local Outreach is the work of the laity

Discuss the question in blue

Slide 7

The Churched Society

- This is what many of us grew up with
- The church is an essential part of the community
 - The churched are the cultural insiders
 - The church has great credibility, and is central to the shared history of the culture
 - The churched are now the cultural insiders, knowing and shaping the language and the culture
 - Unchurched are attracted (cultural pull) to the church
- *What marks of a churched society can you remember from years ago?*

Slide 8

The Churched Society

- Pastor is a cultural insider
 - Holds high credibility
 - Knows the language and culture
 - Considered the guardian of the culture
 - Local outreach (Jerusalem, Judea) is the vocation of professionals
 - Respected by unchurched

Slide 9

The Churched Society

- The Unchurched are cultural outsiders
 - They share the church-influenced culture and language
 - They value the church's role
 - The unchurched are invisible (assumption that everyone is a Christian)
 - The churched are possibly suspicious of them (those who are not Christian hold something against the church or God)

Slide 10

The Churched Society

- What is the church like?
 - The Church is focused on ministering to churched people
 - Focus on structure: buildings, vocation
 - Word Gifts
 - Pastor/teacher
 - Increased professionalization of the witness (only the pastor can do this)

Slide 11

The Churched Society

- *How is the "churched society" church different from the "pre-churched society" church?*
- *Which would you prefer to be part of? Why?*

Discussion

Slide 12

The Post-Churched Society

- **Assumption:** The church (as social institution) is an essential part of the community
- **Reality:** Church has little credibility because it is considered irrelevant to the society

Now it is said that we have moved into a post-churched society. There are still some vestiges of the churched society, but they are fading. The difficulty is that many in the church have not yet come to grips with this new reality. It is as though someone picked up our congregations and dropped them in a foreign country, and we still think we're back home. But things have changed dramatically.

For the following slides, put up the assumption and allow the participants to describe the reality, encouraging specific examples.

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The Post-Churched Society

- **Assumption:** The churched are key cultural insiders
- **Reality:** The churched are now cultural outsiders

Slide 14

The Post-Churched Society

- **Assumption:** The unchurched know and share the churched influenced language and culture
- **Reality:** The unchurched do not know and share the churched-influenced language and culture.

Slide 15

The Post-Churched Society

- **Assumption:** The unchurched value the church's role in the society
- **Reality:** They unchurched do not value the church's role in society, and are in fact suspicious of it.

Slide 16

The Post-Churched Society

- **Assumption:** Unchurched are culturally attracted to the church
- **Reality:** The Unchurched are not culturally attracted to the church. (Possible exception: The church school.)

Slide 17

The Post-Churched Society

- **Decreasing assumption:** Everyone is a Christian
- **Reality:** Christians are a minority.
- **Increasing suspicion:** The world's a scary place

Slide 18

The Post-Churched Society

- **Assumption:** The pastor is a cultural insider (has high personal credibility in the community)
- **Reality:** The pastor is not a cultural insider and does not have credibility in the community as a pastor.

Slide 19

The Post-Churched Society

- Holdovers from the church culture
 - The Church is focused on ministering to church people
 - Focus on structure: buildings, vocation
 - Word Gifts
 - Pastor/teacher
 - Local outreach is the vocation of professionals (only the pastor can do this)

As mentioned before, the difficulty is that many in the church have not taken to heart the dramatically different context in which we are now living. We are on the mission field. We are the outsiders. And so despite living in a context which is more and more similar to a pre-churched context, we still function as though we are in a church society. Here are some examples

Slide 20

The Post-Churched Society

- *How is the post-churched society similar to the pre-churched society? How is it different?*
- *What does it mean for the church that we are in a post-churched society? How do we minister in a society where we have no credibility as church?*
- *What do you think is the prevailing attitude of churched people toward unchurched people? Is this a help or a hindrance?*

Discussion Questions

Slide 21

The Post-Churched Society

- *What evidence do you see in your congregation*
 - *Of "churched society" thinking?*
 - *Of "post churched society" thinking?*
- *Consider the ministries of your congregation*
 - *Where is your congregation's primary focus, inward or outward?*
 - *Which ministries are intentionally designed to minister relationally to the unchurched in your community?*

Discussion Questions

Slide 22

Ephesians 4:11-16

- *Which of the three society contexts was Paul ministering in?*
- *How is our society similar to Paul's? How is it different?*
- *Paul lists several Word Offices. Does God still gift people into these offices?*
- *What is God's intended result of giving people into these offices? What are His expectations of His people?*
- *Consider your congregation. What are its expectations of the people God has given into the Word Office? How are the expectations similar or different from those listed here?*

Discussion Questions

Slide 23

The World Around Us



Next Study:
What is our role in this world around us.