Americans: Reaching an Unreached People Group
Derek Archer – CTK Bellingham
Arrows Out 2009

Christianity is ranked as the largest religion in the world today with approximately 2 billion adherents. 33% of the world's population is considered to be Christian.

USA - 224,457,000 (85%)
Brazil - 139,000,000 (93%)
Mexico - 86,120,000 (99%)

There are approximately 38,000 Christian denominations in the world.

Roman Catholic - The Roman Catholic Church denomination is the largest Christian group in the world today with more than a billion followers constituting about half of the world's Christian population.
Eastern Orthodox - Approximately 225 million people worldwide are Orthodox Christians.
Protestant - There are approximately 500 million Protestants in the world.

About 75% of adults in America identify themselves as Christian. In comparison, the next largest religions in America are Islam and Judaism. Combined they represent only about one to two percent of the United States population.

Of the approximate 2 billion Christians in the world today, 648 million (11% of the world's population) are Evangelicals or Bible believing Christians. Evangelicals have grown from only 3 million in AD 1500, to 648 million worldwide, with 54% being Non-Whites.

An average of 171,000 Christians worldwide are martyred for their faith per year.

There has been a 92% increase in the number of unchurched Americans in the last thirteen years. In 1991 there were 39 million unchurched Americans compared with 75 million currently. (2004)

- Although they comprise slightly less than half of the national population, men constitute 55% of the unchurched. (2006)
- The average unchurched person is 41, which is younger than the national norm of 45. (2006)
- One-fifth of American adults (21%) are single-never-married, whereas nearly one-half of the unchurched fit that definition (48%). (2006)
- The highest concentration of unchurched adults is in the West where 43% of adults are unchurched and the Northeast (40%), compared to 28% residents in the South and Midwest who are unchurched. (2006)
- 64% of the unchurched say that Satan is not a living being but is a symbol of evil. (2006)
- 63% of unchurched adults state that a good person can earn his or her way into Heaven. (2006)
- Slightly less than half (48%) of the unchurched define God as the perfect, all-powerful, all-knowing Creator of the universe who continues to rule His creation today. (2006)
- 51% of the unchurched assert that when Jesus Christ lived on earth, He committed sins. (2006)

- 27% of the unchurched firmly believe that the Bible is totally accurate in all that it teaches. (2006)

(statistics from the Barna Group, www.Barna.org and from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary 2006)

Americans: Reaching an Unreached People Group

Because of these statistics, most missionary efforts are sent outside of the United States. However for the first time in history, more missionaries are being sent to the US, than from the US.

ALSO- of the churched population: less are believing in the authority of scripture, virgin birth, physical resurrection, and the reality of Hell or Satan.

Americans are an unreached group- because while they ascribe to Christian culture and practices, they are not submitted to a Christ centered worldview.

Identifying the target:

The Mission statement at CTK clearly identifies our target, unchurched people.

Our mission: To create an authentic Christian community that effectively reaches out to **unchurched** people in love, acceptance and forgiveness so that they may experience the joy of salvation and a purposeful life of discipleship.

The target is unchurched people. How will they be reached?

Who: those who Jesus has called by His name.
What: reach those who don't know Jesus with the message of Christ
Where: wherever he places us
Why: we have been commanded to, and given a great opportunity for a purposeful life in Christ helping others
How: the purpose of this seminar

Question for discussion: If we were to move to an unreached people group in Africa, what would we need to do in order to show and share Christ with them?
Answers:

To develop a missional mindset, we must see our backyard as our mission field, and do the same things.

How do we help a person develop a Christ centered worldview, and what does that look like lived out?

If a person is reached with the gospel- what will they do?

1. Love God more than anything
2. Be part of an incredible community of faith known as the church

3. Participate in Christ's mission

Our goal is not to make converts to a religion, or participants in a club- our goal is to help a person surrender to the love of Christ, share that with others, and reach those around them.
How do we do that?

1. Know your audience: who are you presenting the Gospel to?

    -What are the cultural groups?
    -What are the community values?
    -How and what do they celebrate?
    -What if being offered for parents, children, marriages?

2. Know their needs: what are their real and perceived needs?

    -Americans often want to belong before they believe. How can you create a sense of belonging?
    -What social services are needed in your area?
    -Where would the people like to improve?

3. What is their perception of the church?
    -According to Barna, 4 out of 5 Americans would attend a church If invited by someone they trust
    -How can you increase trust?

Simple strategy:

1. Pray
    -Who around you needs the transforming work of Jesus in their lives? Pray specifically by name, and generally for opportunities.

2. Show that you care
    -What are practical ways you can show you care not about the persons attendance, or weekly activities- but about them as a person?

3. Invite to a meaningful experience
    -If you get one shot, what would most impact or effect their life; a small group, parenting class, church service?

4. Continue the relationship regardless of response

If a person has spent 50 years developing a worldview, they are not going to change it overnight. God can change them instantly, but we must work prayerfully to get them in a place where they will be open to a move of God.