

## School of Christian Growth Open Session, Part 2

**Teacher** : Associate Pastor Steven Kum

**Topic** : Christian Witness in Postmodern Society

### 1. The reason for the study:

We need to know our cultural/social contexts so we can be effective in our plans (1 Chronicles 12:32, Acts 17)

“from Issachar, men who understood the times and knew what Israel should do— 200 chiefs, with all their relatives under their command.”

### 2. Definition of Pos-modernity

Post-modernity is a reaction to the rationalism and scientific certainty as well as absolutes in values

### 3. Characteristics of Post-modernity

- a. There is no one universal worldview that explains all
- b. Truth is not out there to be discovered, truth is personal
- c. Suspicion of authority
- d. Subjective moral values – according to local situations
- e. Tolerance is highly valued
- f. Community
- g. New meanings accorded to old words/phrases
- h. Media savvy
- i. Personal spirituality over institutionalized religion

### 4. Post-modern attitudes expressed

Generational Differences		
	Baby Boomers (1943-60)	Baby Busters (1961-81)
1	“Me” generation	“We” generation
2	Live to work	Work to live
3	Enlightenment worldview	Post-modern
4	Institutions	Relationships
5	Propositional truth	Relational truth
6	Growth	Community
7	Lonely	Alone
8	Success	Wholeness
9	Question authority	Ignore authority
10	Possessions are valuable	Integrity is valuable

Adapted from articles by Kevin Ford (“My Generation” IVP) and Dieter Xander “The Gospel for Generation X” Leadership)

### 5. Personal traits (Source George Barna “Generation Next: New Rules, New Challenges)

- a. Personal relationships count more than institutions
- b. Process is more important than the product
- c. Enjoying people and life’s opportunities is more important than productivity or achievement

- d. Change is good
- e. Express your rage
- f. Technology is a natural ally

## 6. Being a witness to post modern society

- a. Let us be rooted and grounded in our knowledge of the Lord  
(John 17:3; Colossians 2:6, 7; Jeremiah 9:23)

“Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent” (John 17:3)

“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness” (Colossians 2:6, 7)

“This is what the LORD says:

“Let not the wise boast of their wisdom or the strong boast of their strength or the rich boast of their riches ...” (Jeremiah 9:23)

- i. Not just academic but experiential and intimate
- ii. Be found “in Him” – walking and living

- b. Let us be in true fellowship with others in the Body of the Lord  
(John 13:35; Acts 2:42; 1 John 4:7, 8)

“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35)

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42)

“Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love” (1 John 4:7, 8)

- i. *Koinonia* seen-beyond biological, ethnic, gender and patriotic links
- ii. “Being like minded having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose (Philippians 2:1, 2)

“Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, 2 then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.”

- c. Let our love and compassion be genuine  
(Micah 6:8; Galatians 5:22; James 2:20)

“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God” (Micah 6:8)

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness” (Galatians 5:22)

“You foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?” (James 2:20)

- i. It is a love for all mankind
- ii. It must be demonstrated

- d. Let us be authentic – genuine in who we present ourselves to be (Ephesians 2:8-9; 2 Corinthians 12:10)

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

“That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong” (2 Corinthians 12:10)

- e. Let us know what we believe and be ready to tell our story with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15)

“But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect”

- f. Let us be willing to meet people where they are –even in cyberspace (John 4; Acts 17)

- g. Be ready to engage (Proverbs 15:1; Acts 17:18)

“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger” (Proverbs 15:1)

“A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to debate with him. Some of them asked, “What is this babblers trying to say?” Others remarked, “He seems to be advocating foreign gods.” They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection” (Acts 17:18)

- i. Be people who are not easily offended but are provoked to engage instead
- ii. Tolerate people, evaluate thoughts

- h. Be a good steward of God’s creation (Genesis 2:15)

“The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”

## Conclusion

We have a narrative ... a message to share.

Ephesians 3:7, 8 (The Message)

“This is my life work: helping people understand and respond to this **Message**. It came as a sheer gift to me, a real surprise, God handling all the details. When it came to presenting the **Message** to people who had no background in God's way, I was the least qualified of any of the available Christians. God saw to it that I was equipped, but you can be sure that it had nothing to do with my natural abilities.”