

What Makes a church postmodern?
Stanely Grenz <http://www.stanleyjgrenz.com>
Wednesday, March 10, 2004

1 Chronicles 12:32

I want to be a person of Isaachar

What does it mean that the times have changed and what does that mean for us?

It was the worst of times, it was the best of times....

We are no longer in an era where we can: "It was like David going up against goliath".
Or "he was a real Judas".

Notting Hill illustration – 'I just loved you in Ghost'. That is funny you knew Demi Moore was in Ghost and not Julia Roberts.

Constantine to Post Constantine: Constantine brought Christianity into the center of the empire from the fringe. Christianity was a privileged religion. And it still is today. Tax breaks, Pastor gets housing etc... Public school and Sunday school went hand in had. You could learn the same lesson than as you do today.

In Canada if you were a Christian at all you would never get a Christian especially if you were an Evangelical.

His pastor 17 years ago (first Baptist Vancouver) used to be treated with respect. He is no longer. That is a post-constantinian situation.

Only 3% of Vancouver people go to church. In the bible belt of Canada it is only 24%.

Modern or Postmodern?

The postmodern condition offers us an opportunity live out our calling as the church.
So how is it an opportunity?

Part one: Short sketch on what is postmodernism.

Part two: What is Grenz' opinion on how postmodern values intersect Christianity.

1.

1. interpreting or knowing? Agree	6 I belibve in timeless truth. Agree	11 I prefer appropraute rather inappropriate rather than right	16 im optimistic about the future of the world	21 the interest in sprituality is a good thing
--------------------------------------	---	--	--	--

		or wrong		
2. it impossible for the kobe jury to be objective. Agree	7 realism is the purest form of art. Disagree	12 we need to celebrate difference agree	17 men and women should not share the same cologne	22 the church needs to adapt to culture
3 reality is socially contructed. Agree	8 classical music is the best ever. Disagree	13 there is always another story agree	18 it is possible to know truth	
4perception is reality agree	9 meaning of most biblica text is self evident. Agree	14 think globally act locally agree	19 I am the same person I was yesterday	
5 MTV is cool agree	10 the real I exists eperate from my body. disagree	15 identity crisis or passé	20 knowledge is values free	
Point for agree	Point for disagree	Point for agree	Point for disagree	Point for agree

0-5 you have never heard of the matrix

6-10 like neal you have taken a few steps out of the virtual relm

11-15 you are modern postmodern

16-20 You are fighting for Zion

21-22 You should audtion for a part.

This is a very modern thing to do. You have been reduced to a number.

Mathmatcis used to be the most true truth. If you could reduce things to math you can have real knowledge.

I. Intellectual background: From modernity to the postmodern ethos

Housing projects began to get destroyed. Projects were modern thoughts on how to best house peeps in the ghetto. They began to get destroyed in 1972 in St. Louis. This was important because it was metaphor that they way we used to thing was going to bring about a utopian world. Of course it hasn't. The postmodern era is a critique of the whole suggestion that knowledge and social engineers would solve the problems of modernity.

Pomo cant be defined in a short definition. This is a broad cultural phenomenon.

Descontruction: The theory of knowledge is social contructions. → We do not live in the world as it really is. An objective world that is there. Rather we live in a world that comes from out there but it is mediated to us through language. If there is linguistic way to talk about it we have hard time experiencing it.

Who constructs this world? It is constructed for us by the community in which we live. Who determines the social structure? The people in power do. This is what soc. Contrutionists say. If that is the case than we must subvert the powerful, by subverting the reality that they created so they can be powerful.

Great illustration: stick it to the man

Descruntioniist are the subversive ones who want to change the reality that people created.

Postmoderns want to desconstruct the modern

POMO says that modernism has been destructive. Enviroment, mystery, race.

Postmoderinsm is the 90's.

Emerging positive demesion of the pomo condition: a transition in values.

1. transition from ratio-centricity to wholeism
2. transition from the normative center to the celebration of difference
3. transition from autonomy to community or person in relationship
4. transition from air tight explanations to a sense of mystery
5. transition from the hegemony of science to the quest for spirituality

What if god was one of us? Beauty is not to be defined.

What does this mean for the church?

What does it mean to be a postmodern church.

Is it the right kind of music?

Worship style?

Multisensory

Where you meet?

A church that is guininely postmodern and genuine. We need to view the postmodern condtion as the occasion to be Biblical Christians. A church that allows the shaking of the foundations of Christianity. So we can discover dimensions of the gospel that have been submerged in the modern era. What is authentically Christian. A church that wants to be the embodiement of the church. It is a church that says God likes contexts. God has placed us in this context.

What are the dimensions? What is the interface.

1. the value of wholeism.
2. The value of diversity. The postmodern church values diversity.
 - a. Youth or genX is not the goal.

- b. Truly generation multiethnic
- 3. values relationships
 - a. we often miss is to draw each local relationship with Christ to the broader context of church.
- 4. value of spirituality
 - a. fostering spirituality
- 5. value of community
 - a. we have been brought into society as consumers which is sure fire way to not experience community.
 - b. How do we help people to experience community

I wish it had not happened in my time... said Frodo.

Q&A

Are we already seeing the end of postmodernism?

That idea in part misrepresents what postmodernism is all about. The negative side of the postmodern is going more positive.

Is postmodernism a fad?

I don't care. The lasting value is what is important.