

# Our Common Contexts

Four Bridges Ministries

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[www.fourbridges.org](http://www.fourbridges.org)

# Some Observations

- Each of these observations can be
  - investigated
  - researched
  - challenged
- Good starting point for an innovative ministry.
- Based on the web and thus within the reach of
  - all sorts of people
    - USA
    - worldwide

# Technological

- Society is changing rapidly.
- Advancing technology leads to new products and services.
- New product and services impact all areas
  - work
  - shopping
  - school
  - entertainment

# Stress Related

- People feel stressed.
- They feel there are too many demands on
  - time
  - money
  - attention
  - affections
- Excessive stress can bring
  - confusion
  - overwhelm
  - burnout

# Emotional

- Factors of the emotional pressure cooker
  - rapid changes
  - multiple pressures
  - uncertain future
- Amidst the swirling chaos people long for
  - acceptance
  - unconditional love
  - respect
  - belonging
  - purpose

# Moral

- Our society is in moral decline.
- The Bible is no longer the moral compass.
- Popular media and public schools endorse what the Bible calls sin.
- Carnal pleasures dominate short term choices.
- Long term consequences are rarely considered.

# Martial

- Divorce rate is about 50 percent.
- Divorce always hurts the children.
- Marriage is under attack in the courts.
- Many are attempting to redefine family
  - legislation
  - insurance

# Human Energy

- Many people do not have plenty of time, money or energy to do what is important to them.
- Today's parents, teachers and pastors are already stretched to the maximum.

# Youth

- Children are pressured to grow up fast.
- Children spend on average less than 15 minutes per week one-on-one with their parent.
- Teens face temptations that their parents and grandparents never knew.
- Teens are seeking spiritual answers but typically not in traditional churches.
- Today there are all kinds of alternative lifestyles and unorthodox religions that are accepted.

# Demographic

- In our cities there are people from all over the globe.
- The birth rate of these minorities is higher than Anglos.
- Elementary schools are full of children that speak all kinds of languages at home.
- Our common culture is undergoing a multi-cultural transition.

# Societal

- Improvements in communication and transportation makes this become more of a global village every year.
- Unlike previous generations we need to understand and relate well in a pluralistic and global society.
- This trend will continue and America's dominance in all areas is not guaranteed.

# Shape the Future

- The city of twenty years from now will be very different from what we see today.
  - How can we get ready?
  - How can we take constructive steps of action?
  - How can we pass along to the next generation a healthy faith in Jesus Christ that is
    - genuine
    - living
    - reproducing

# Business as Usual?

- Business as usual is no longer acceptable for
  - corporations
  - government agencies
  - secular nonprofits
  - missions agencies
  
- Why should business as usual be acceptable for
  - local churches
  - ministry leaders
  - parents

# Now is the Season

- May the Body of Christ gather to
  - pray
  - gather
  - talk & listen
  - try new methods
  - keep the biblical message

# Four Bridges

- Local and Global
  - applications
  - implications
- Easy to understand
- Easy to teach
- Easy to build and improve