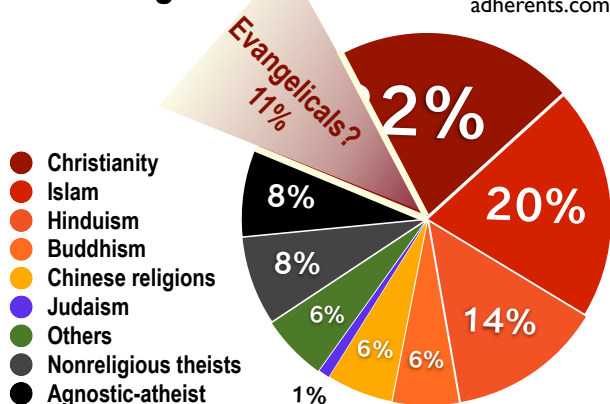


World religious beliefs

2005 Statistics
adherents.com



Three men who have challenged the church



Donald McGavran
School of World Missions
Fuller Theological
Seminary



Bill Bright
Campus Crusade
for Christ



Bill Hybels
Willow Creek
Community Church

How is the Gospel effectively spread?

What causes church's to grow?

The wisdom of

Science
Business
the Arts



Sociology

Where is the problem?

Is it the message (seed)?

(Is the Christian story
distorted, or treated as a myth?)



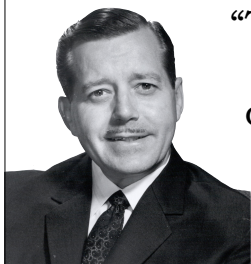
“People have not
rejected Christ so
much as a distorted
image of Him.”

Bill Bright

Where is the problem?

Is it the messenger (sower)?

(Does the Christian community
have bad breath?)



“The church has too
often reflected the
culture (present or
past) rather than
the Kingdom.”

Bill Bright

Where is the problem?

Is it the message?
Is it the messenger?

Is it the hearer?
**(Is the heart of the hearer
a key to the response?)**

Why was Jesus getting a mixed response in his day?

If he was the Messiah

he should be welcomed by all of Israel.

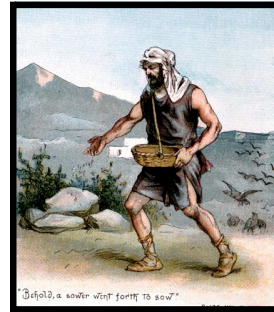
This was a big issue in Jesus' day.
Romans 9-11

This is a big issue in Judaism today.
If Jesus is Messiah why has Israel's condition in the world not changed?

It's not the seed or the sower but the soil.

Mark 4:1-20

The Parable of the soils



- ✓ **Alongside the road**
(it is timed out)
- ✓ **On the rocky places**
(it is bought out)
- ✓ **Among the thorns**
(it is crowded out)
- ✓ **On the good soil**
(it is patient, persevering, a priority, & fruitful)

Jesus calls us to be **in** but not **of** the world.

Mark 4:1-20

The response to the gospel **rests with the soil** more than the seed or the sower.

Jesus calls us to be **in** but not **of** the world.

**Example
of Jesus being IN but not OF
the world.**

**Don't be discouraged
by a lack of fruit.**

- 1. Remember that many types of soil cannot or will not receive the seed.**

Implications

- 1. Expect challenges to faith - time, trials, & temptations.**
- 2. Don't judge the seed or the sower by the soil.**
- 3. But don't assume that the soil is the only variable.**

**Example
of Jesus being IN but not OF
the world.**

**Don't be discouraged
by a lack of fruit.**

- 2. Remember that God is "seeker soil" sensitive.**

The “seeker driven” church

Find out why people don't go to church and do what you can to change the church's image.



Bill Hybels
Willow Creek
Community Church

1. It is irrelevant!
2. It is monotonous & booooooring!
3. It is obsessed with money & rullllllles!
4. It is not understandable!

The “seeker driven” church Characteristics of many seeker driven churches.

- Target a specific group (youth).
- Let the target audience define the issues - music style, sermon topics, etc.
- Make the setting as comfortable and impressive as possible to the audience.
- Do what you have to to make it exciting.
- Avoid controversial issues & demands.

The “seeker driven” church Characteristics of the seeker driven church.

The church service is for the seeker!

It gets people in the door but does it make disciples?

Did Jesus expect the gospel to be popular?

Matthew 7

“13 Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and **many are those who enter by it**. 14 For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and **few are those who find it**.”

Questions

1. Is this passage limited to Israel's response or does it refer to the whole world's response?
2. What happens when we give too much responsibility to the seed and the sower?
3. What should a good seeker sensitive church be like?
4. Should we expect the Christian church to eventually dominate the world?