

Confused, Alone and Without Purpose: Reaching and Discipling Europe's Secularised Youth

The current urban population, connected by consumerism, social media, and the entertainment industry forms the largest global youth culture ever to exist. It spans the globe, sharing the same values, listening to the same music, watching the same movies, and sharing the same posts. They do not look to the church for answers but believe it to be a dead and empty tradition of the past. But God's heart is broken for this lost generation and we need to make the message of His love accessible to them. In this 3-part seminar, we want to spark a discussion on how to start missional, evangelistic and discipleship movements in secularised cities, sent from the local church:

Part 1: Understanding the Global Youth Culture and Its Spiritual Crisis

Today's global youth culture is the largest and most interconnected in history, yet it remains one of the most unreached by the Gospel. This session explores the characteristics of this culture—its secularism, consumerism, and spiritual hunger—and the lies it believes. We will examine the crisis of identity and relationships facing young people and discuss why traditional evangelistic efforts often fail to connect with them.

Part 2: Bridging the Gap: How the Church Can Engage the Global Youth Culture

There is a significant gap between the church and the secularized youth culture, but the Gospel remains as relevant as ever. This session will explore the cultural barriers that prevent effective evangelism and offer practical ways for believers to build relationships, engage in meaningful conversations, and communicate biblical truth in ways that resonate.

Part 3: Discipleship in a Lonely Generation: Building Authentic Relationships

Many young people feel isolated despite being more connected than ever through social media. This session will examine the crisis of loneliness and how discipleship—modeled after Jesus' own approach—can provide meaningful community. We will discuss the role of relationships in discipleship, share real-life stories, and explore how every believer can play a part in leading young people to Christ.

Luke Greenwood is British by birth, grew up in Brazil and now lives in Wroclaw, Poland, with his wife Ania and their two children. He serves as the European Director for Steiger, a mission dedicated to reaching the Global Youth Culture for Jesus. His focus and prayer is to raise up a movement with dynamic missionary teams reaching secular culture in every major European city. Luke wrote a book called *Global Youth Culture: The Spiritual Hunger of the Largest Unreached Culture Today*, which came out in 2019.

1. Statistics of the Global Youth Culture

- a. 2 billion young people in cities today (<http://www.geohive.com/earth>)
- b. In Europe, less than 2% say they have a personal relationship with Jesus (<http://www.gemission.org/mission-and-vision>)
- c. In the US approximately 56 million religiously unaffiliated (2014 Pew Research)

- d. Czech Republic: 91% of young adults have no religion. UK, France, Belgium, Spain and the Netherlands: 56% to 60% never go to church, and 63% to 66% never pray. (“Europe’s Young Adults and Religion”, Stephen Bullivant)

2. Characteristics of the Global Youth Culture

- a. Global: Is this the largest unreached group today?
- b. Consumer: Affecting identity and relationships
- c. Secularised: Leaving a gap between the church and society
- d. Four lies the GYC believe:
 - i. We can only be sure of what we see
 - ii. We are here by accident
 - iii. Everything is going to be ok
 - iv. To find God you have to be “religious”
- e. Examples from pop culture.

3. The spiritual need of the Global Youth Culture

- a. Identity crisis – leading to a lack of purpose
- b. Relationship crisis – leading to a sense of loneliness
- c. Spiritual hunger

4. Facing the issues

- a. There is a cultural gap between church and the Global Youth Culture
- b. Most of our evangelistic efforts are not reaching them

Q&A

5. Responding to the spiritual hunger of Europe

6. Exciting hope and mission opportunities

7. How can we respond?

- a. Know the scene
- b. Build relationships
- c. Ask good questions
- d. Relevant communication
- e. Partnership with the scene
- f. Speak truth into the scene
- g. Be bold
- h. Point to Jesus
- i. Preach the Cross
- j. Let them experience God's presence
- k. Make disciples in the scene
- l. Discipleship starts where you are
- m. Welcome people into a community
- n. Get people involved in the action
- o. Invest in a few
- p. Study and teach the Bible

8. A vision for change

- a. Missionary teams focused on reaching the GYC in cities
- b. Partnership with the local church

9. Discipleship relationships for a pandemic of loneliness

10. A pandemic of loneliness

- a. Identity crisis – leading to a lack of purpose
- b. Relationship crisis – leading to a sense of loneliness
- c. Social media

Various studies over the past few years have shown that higher connectivity on social media can actually have the opposite effect, leading to an increased sense of loneliness. A study of university students in the UK found that their real life social interaction decreased with excessive use of Twitter, leading to a sense of loneliness. And as one Psychology Today article puts it, “social media such as Facebook have become surrogates for seeking connectedness, and as a consequence our connections grow broader but shallower”.

11. Discipleship stories

- a. Moah
- b. Janeta
- c. Viki

12. Jesus' discipleship

- a. Jesus often taught outside of religious places
- b. Jesus taught people who didn't fit the “religious demographic”
- c. Jesus taught in community

13. Discipleship relationships

A discipleship relationship is sharing life with someone, not expecting them to come to us but going to where they are and intentionally showing them what it means to follow Jesus in their context. It means making prayer and the Bible accessible and understandable and helping them get connected with a local church community.

- a. Doesn't start the day someone commits to a local church, but the moment they meet a follower of Jesus
- b. Isn't a program that happens once a week, but a life on life relationship; Jesus taught people who didn't fit the "religious demographic"
- c. Happens in the context people come from
- d. Is the responsibility of every believer
- e. Should lead to multiplication.

14. Discipleship spaces

- a. Bible studies for the non-religious
- b. Community living

Q&A