#RELIGION @OMG FAITH

DB8 IN 21ST CENTURY

DR DAVID COWAN
AGENDA

I. MODERN COMMUNICATION
II. CHURCH COMMUNICATION
III. OUTLINE OF THEOLOGICAL RESEARCH
# 21st Century Communication: The Modern Babel

## Trends
- Globalization
- Technology
- Transparency

## Challenges
- Culture and Diversity
- Management of Content
- Transmission of Ideas
OUTCOMES

- CRISIS OF AUTHORITY: WHO AUTHORIZES?
- MINORITY VIEWS AND ACCESS
- COMMUNICATION NOISE AND GETTING OUR ATTENTION
- NEED FOR DIALOGUE

**Millennials: Unmoored from Institutions**

- Percent who consider themselves political independents
- Percent of adults in each generation who are religiously unaffiliated

*Age ranges are for 2014

Source: Data points represent totals based on all Pew Research surveys of the general public conducted in that calendar year.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
GETTING OUR ATTENTION
HOW CHURCH COMMUNICATES

TRENDS
• SECULARIZATION & RELIGION’S “COMEBACK”
• SEARCH FOR RELEVANCE

CHALLENGES
• CONTENT OF FAITH: DOCTRINE
• CONTROL OF LANGUAGE: A FOREIGN COUNTRY
• CHANGES IN DEBATE: SPIRITUALITY, ETHICS, LEGALISM
• FINDING A BASIS FOR DIALOGUE BETWEEN FAITHS
A CHRISTIAN PUBLIC SQUARE?
AN IMAGE PROBLEM?
BRAND PROMISE & EXPERIENCE

Body Piercing?
Jesus had his done 2,000 years ago
## THE BIBLICAL NARRATIVE JOURNEY

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### PROPHECY
- SPEAKING TO OUR SITUATION
- COUNTER-CULTURAL NARRATIVE
- DEALING WITH DISSONANCE
- INSPIRING THE IMAGINATION
SOME HISTORICAL REMINDERS

- ORAL TRADITION
- USE OF PAGAN FORMS OF COMMUNICATION, E.G. RHETORIC
- COMMUNICATION AS NEUTRAL (AUGUSTINE)
- PROHIBITION ON USE OF IMAGES
- PRINT REVOLUTION IN THE REFORMATION
- MODERN MASS COMMUNICATION: TELEVANGELISTS, LIFE OF BRIAN, NEW MEDIA ATTACKS
EXPLORING A THEOLOGICAL AGENDA

• UNDERSTANDING GOD AS A COMMUNICATIVE GOD
• A RETURN TO DOCTRINE, ALBEIT MODERNIZED
• WHAT WE TRYING TO DO WHEN WE COMMUNICATE? NEED TO CREATE DIALOGUE SPACE & HEALING
• INTERFAITH: BASED ON THE FACT WE DISAGREE, RATHER THAN PRETENDING WE AGREE, CREATING CONNECTED COMMUNITY RATHER THAN DISCONNECTED AND SUPERFICIAL AGREEMENT
• PREPARE FOR THE PUBLIC SQUARE, PERHAPS “THE CHRISTIAN ‘LEFT’ AND CHRISTIAN ‘RIGHT’ NEED TO ENGAGE WITH EACH OTHER TO SEEK A BETTER CHRISTIANITY BEFORE TRYING TO TEACH THE BODY POLITIC A BETTER SECULARITY.”
THANK YOU!
A HUMAN WEEK IN AUGUST 1997

Algerian Massacres

28–29 August 1997
Rais 98–375,
News report august 30
A MEDIA WEEK IN AUGUST 1997

Death of Princess Diana
August 31, 1997, Paris, France
A COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

- Define what it is we are communicating
- Create the message
- Locate and analyse our stakeholders
- Match message to stakeholders: internal & external
- Select our channels and mix
- Make our announcement, present our message or leak?
- A persuasive follow-up, pursuing the faithless
- Measuring our success, adjust the message
- Build the narrative
- The next big thing...or fad

- Doctrine
- Gospel
- Christian, other faiths & secular; political, media, cultural
- Emphasis on teaching & language
- Problem of channel: secular channels, church, liturgy, sacrament
- Proclamation, inspirational
- A persuasive follow-up, pursuing the faithless
- Church as beacon & timeless message
- Maintain the narrative, salvation, eschatology
- Avoid the next big thing...or fad