

The Thriving Church, Part 3: Empathy

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The Thriving Church / John 1:14

John 1:14 CEB

The Word became flesh and made his home among us. We have seen his glory, glory like that of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

Core Commitment: Empathize with Today's Young People

Empathizing is... "the work you do to understand people. . . . It is your effort to understand the way they do things and why, their physical and emotional needs, how they think about the world, and what is meaningful to them." - Stanford University Design School

Empathy Seeks to Understand Today's Young People

Jesus Is the Greatest Empathizer

Jesus became one of us. John 1:14

Jesus is acquainted with us. Isa 53:14-15

Jesus was tempted in every way that we are. Heb 4:14-15

Observations from Churches That Are Thriving and Growing Young

Empathy is Contagious

To empathize with young people we have to explore Three Ultimate Questions:

Who am I?

Where do I fit in?

What difference do I make?

Young people's journey to identity, belonging, and purpose ends later.

Young people's journey to identity, belonging, and purpose starts earlier.

Today's culture creates pervasive stress.

Over eighty percent of young people connected to a church agree that their involvement decreases their stress.

Churches that are growing young empathize with young people and become a place that decreases stress.

American teenagers are not hostile toward religion because they don't care about it much.

Churches that are growing young empathize with young people and become a place that offers a compelling faith community.

Churches growing young appreciate and empathize with how technology is a double-edged sword for young people eager to belong.

Churches that grow young recognize the absence of caring adults and healthy families in a young person's life and become a place that provides the needed support.

Ideas For Action

Pray

Respond with Grace, Love, and Mission.

Replay your own journey.

Ask why.

Stereotype no more.

Deepen relationships.