

An Emerging Generation of Evangelists...

Firsthand Observations from Recent Travels

By Mark Slaughter (Next Generation Alliance Blogpost – April 2017)

Is God raising up a new generation of evangelists across the world, and rediscovering the biblical gift of the evangelist for the Church? It sure seems so from my recent travels. In the past 8 months of being on 3 continents plus the USA, I have met numerous men and women in their 20's and 30's who identify themselves as evangelists in various forms.

In January I participated in the Global Evangelists Forum (GEF) in France hosted by Raphael Anzenberger, a French evangelist and author of *(re)Discovering the Ministry of the Evangelist*. 320 evangelists attended, about 80% under age 35, heard Ravi Zacharias speak three times, developed rich relationships, and were further equipped in their callings.

Since the first GEF held 10 years ago, God has used this annual conference to remind the local church about the biblical gift of the evangelist, identify and train gifted evangelists, and launch mentoring communities for evangelists across French-speaking Europe. As a result, significant mentoring relationships with more experienced evangelists have been built. This has spread in similar forms to French-speaking Africa, the Caribbean, and Quebec. Local churches are identifying evangelists – and even hiring them on staff! – to train and lead in evangelism within churches in Europe!

The scope is global. For example,

- Last August at the **Lausanne Movement's** global **Younger Leader Gathering** in Indonesia, I met individually with over 30 younger leaders in mentor meetings from every continent, many identifying as evangelists.
- **Ravi Zacharias International Ministries** has intentionally developed an amazing team of over 40 speakers from all over the world – a diversity of men and women from various ethnic and religious backgrounds, many under age 40, speaking in the USA and globally.
- The **Fellowship of Evangelists in Universities of Europe (FEUER)**, led by Lindsay Brown, meets annually to raise up “university evangelists” across Europe to serve in university mission weeks. I participated in one of these mission weeks last February in England.
- **Next Generation Alliance** (Luis Palau Association) has diligently invested in emerging evangelists in America and other parts of the world over decades with “one message and many expressions!”

Perhaps God IS raising up a new wave of evangelists, with a heart for sharing the Good News of Jesus in word, deed, and power with those not yet following Jesus!



Mark Slaughter is an Evangelist with InterVarsity Christian Fellowship, and is the National Facilitator of Emerging Generations for the Mission America Coalition (US Lausanne). He speaks at evangelistic and apologetic outreach events on college campuses, conferences, and churches, and is passionate about empowering a new generation of evangelistic communicators and leaders.



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In every generation God has raised up men and women to communicate Jesus to their generation, fitting their unique context and issues of their day. What are the **common characteristics** I've seen in these emerging evangelists? They are...

- **Diverse:** men and women from a variety of ethnicities, religious backgrounds, ages, and geography all over the world... and they cherish this diversity reflecting the whole church!
- **Unique in Callings, Gifts, & Focus:** speakers & one-on-one or small group evangelists, apologists & university evangelists, justice-focused, musical. Some are full-time vocational evangelists, while others are bi-vocational or volunteers. Yet others represent Jesus in the workplace as gifted evangelists.
- **Holistic:** caring deeply about the social/physical brokenness of our world, while focusing on Jesus and his Kingdom as our hope.
- **Collaborative:** enjoying working in teams and partnerships with other evangelists and ministries, displaying Christian unity.
- **Humble & Teachable:** attending to their inner spiritual life with God, so their external mission flows from abiding in Christ.
- **Longing for Mentors:** wanting inter-generational relationships with older leaders who are safe, listen well, give counsel, and learn together mutually

The evangelist is a gift from Jesus to the Church at large, and to local churches specifically. Ephesians 4:11-12 explains that the evangelist is to not only “announce good news” but also is to “equip God’s people for ministry, so that the body of Christ may be built up...”

In North America, local churches desperately need to identify, equip, and unleash gifted evangelists to proclaim Jesus, train others in sharing their faith, and lead in evangelism alongside pastors and church leaders. And we do need public communicators of the Gospel who reflect these 6 characteristics to broader audiences. Women and men who can clearly articulate a Christian worldview with grace, humility, and compassion can bring true hope to our disillusioned and hurting world.

So, it seems God is raising up a new generation of evangelists “for such a time as this.” As evangelists, let’s recommit ourselves to abiding more deeply in Christ’s love ourselves, studying further, collaborating, and walking life together across generations. Together by God’s grace and power, let’s “do the work of an evangelist (2 Tim. 4:5)!



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