

The State of Religious Participation in American Life with Alan Cooperman of Pew Research Center - Episode 360

New data, same headlines. The surveys and studies always seem to repeat the same refrain: Church attendance is in decline. Religious participation is phasing out of American life.

Except...our data shows the opposite. In our most recent edition of The Unstuck Church Report, the average year-over-year attendance increase was 17% across churches of all sizes. There's clearly something different about the churches engaging with our surveys.

In this series, we're going to try to explain what's so different about *unstuck* churches and give you some practical ways to make sense of the things contributing to church growth or decline.

We have our own data and observations from the work we do that we will share in the next two episodes, but we wanted to start out with an exploration of recent data and trends from an authority on religion in American life. So, we invited Alan Cooperman from Pew Research Center to join us for a conversation about the broader trends happening in the U.S.

Key Quotes

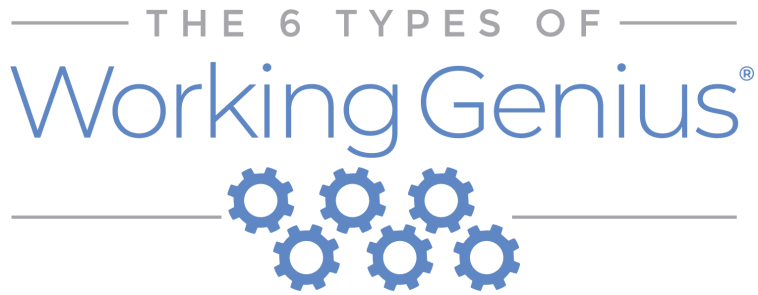
1. ALAN: "The unaffiliated, as a whole, are not anti-religious."
2. ALAN: "One of the things to think about is whether this group is disengaged not because they're not religious. It may be that they're not religious because they're disengaged."
3. ALAN: "Eight in 10 Americans now tell us that they think that religion is losing influence in American society...I find it fascinating where people think religion is declining in influence but they don't think that's a good thing."

Self-Assessment: How Are We Doing?

1. How are we holding onto older ideas or incorrect stereotypes about atheists, agnostics and the "nothing-in-particulars?" Are we making assumptions that are no longer pervasive?
2. How are we currently trying to reach the "Nones" in our community? Are these strategies proving to be successful? Why or why not?
3. What are some new ways we can reach those who may be interested but are disengaged?

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