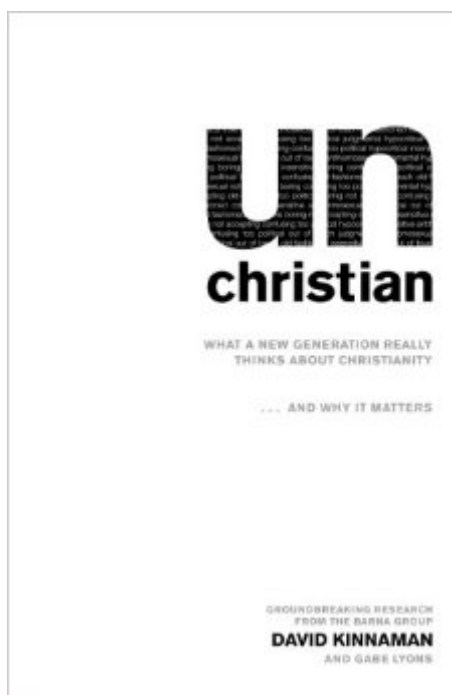


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UnChristian: What A New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity...and Why It Matters



Synopsis

Based on groundbreaking Barna Group research, unChristian uncovers the negative perceptions young people have of Christianity and explores what can be done to reverse them. Now in paper.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

unChristian: What a New Generation Really Thinks about Christianity...and Why It Matters David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons ISBN: 978-0-8010-1300-3 ISBN-10: 0-8010-1300-3 unChristian is not your typical Christian book. It did not need to be. Neither should one expect it to be. unChristian is unSettling. unChristian will either humble or anger the Christian reader. Research has shown that Busters and Mosaics (Terms that are used to specify young people aged 16-29) do not have a good opinion of Christians. That should not really be surprising. I'm a pastor and I know that I don't have a good opinion of Christians in general. Oh, people are nice to me and I enjoy the ministry. I pastor a group of people who treat me as family. My experience has shown me, however, that Christians can be very unChristian. This book tells us that people on the outside of the church see us that way, too. Having read the book, I don't have a very good opinion of myself. I have a long way to go in learning to show grace, mercy, and compassion. Many of those who were interviewed were not always on the outside of the church. Their experiences on the inside drove them out, however. It is commonly known that the Christian church is the army that shoots its wounded. As a pastor I have battled legalism. I am all for grace. I did not realize how much legalism was still in me, however. In seeking to stand for righteousness I have been less than gracious and accepting of people who sin. We Christians are unChristian because we are a self-righteous, arrogant group of people who do not

listen because we are convinced that we (though we say that the Bible does, we act as if we do) have all the answers. We give advice where it is not requested.

In his book *The Heart of Christianity* (2003) Marcus Borg of Oregon State University describes how his university students have a uniformly negative image of Christianity. "When I ask them to write a short essay on their impression of Christianity," says Borg, "they consistently use five adjectives: Christians are literalistic, anti-intellectual, self-righteous, judgmental, and bigoted." Christians might object, rather defensively, that it's unfair to draw sweeping conclusions based upon the report of one person. If you think that way, you'd be right in your logic but wrong in your conclusion. A new book called *unChristian* (2007) by David Kinnaman of the Barna Group presents objective research that supports Borg's subjective anecdote. Kinnaman's three-year study documents how an overwhelming percentage of sixteen to twenty-nine year olds view Christians with hostility, resentment and disdain. These broadly and deeply negative views of Christians aren't just superficial stereotypes with no basis in reality, says Kinnaman. Nor are the critics people who've had no contact with churches or Christians. It would be a tragic mistake, he argues, for believers to protest that outsider outrage at Christians is a misperception. Rather, it's based upon their real experiences with today's Christians. In addition to their statistical research, the book includes anecdotes from people who were interviewed, follow-on comments at the end of each chapter by some 30 Christian leaders, and reflections about why we've come to such a place and how we might make it better.

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