



As part of the Evangelical Alliance's *Confidence in the Gospel* initiative we are hosting a series of five national consultations to wrestle with significant and timely issues relating to the gospel.

To ensure that as many people as possible can engage with this programme, the talks are being filmed and made available online.

Why not watch some of the videos, and use the questions provided, to explore these vital subjects with your small group or leadership team?

For more information, videos and resources visit eauk.org/confidence

Kiera Phyo

is head of youth and emerging generation at Tearfund. In 2012, she won BBC Radio 2's *Pause for Thought* New Voice competition. She has been working with young people and students since university and is a regular speaker at national and regional events, such as New Wine and Spring Harvest.

Synopsis

After painting a vibrant picture of the world of church and un-church 18-30s, Kiera considers **what is the story that we're telling when it comes to the gospel?**

It's a gospel that can sound intolerant: Debates in the media about women bishops and same-sex marriage are the height of some people's gospel experience. It's a message that can be interpreted as depending on who you are you may not be wholly embraced by Christianity. For a generation for which tolerance is king, that is enough for them to reject the gospel.

It's a gospel that can seem disconnected. The words that have been used to explain the gospel have not resonated culturally, leaving 18-30s feeling that it has little to do with their lives.

It's a gospel that didn't deliver. For many of those that grew up in the Church, but have now left, it's a gospel that was made to fit the consumer mindset. When life went wrong, the consumer returned the product because it was not the gospel they had ordered.

What compelling story of hope is there for 18-30s? Kiera suggests that the gospel is a story of inclusion, of wonder, of collaboration, of justice, of the earth, of equality, and of friendship.

Who is the storyteller? For 18-30s, peers matters. Peers can do a far better job at engaging this generation than a high-skilled and experienced professional. A peer doesn't have to be culturally relevant or need to break into the group. A peer is part of the group and authentic by nature. The peer has become a powerful storyteller.

Questions

- (1) Is the number of 18-30s in our church a cause for concern? Should it be? What might some of the reasons be for the number (either high or low) of people we have in this age group?
- (2) Which part of the picture painted of the world of 18-30s particularly rang true for us? What opportunities and challenges does this present us as a church?
- (3) What is the gospel message according to the 18-30s in our church (or those who have left our church)? Do we consider that message to be a good presentation of the gospel? If not, where does it fall short?
- (4) How can we ensure that we communicate a compelling gospel to the missing generation, while remaining true to whole message?
- (5) How can we equip a generation of peer storytellers?