

News and Current Events :: Christian Priorities**Christian Priorities - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/2/16 17:55**

Here is a very interesting article...Make a note of where prayer is on this list and see where it is on your list.. :cry::cry:

Barna Inquires of Churches' 'Top Priorities for 2005'
Jody Brown
Agape Press

February 15, 2005

A recent survey of Protestant pastors reveals there is no consensus across denominational and racial lines as to what American churches' top priorities are likely to be in 2005.

In December, George Barna's research team asked more than 600 senior Protestant pastors to review a list of 12 different ministry emphases, then to pick the top three ministry priorities for their church in the coming year. While it was revealing to discover the two emphases at the extremes -- most frequently mentioned was discipleship and spiritual development; lowest priority was prayer -- what Barna found most surprising was the degree of differences between black and white churches.

Following discipleship and spiritual development were (in order): evangelism and outreach; preaching; visitation and counseling; worship, ministry to teens and young adults; missions; community service; ministry to children; congregational fellowship; ministry to families; and finally, prayer.

The responses, Barna says, confirm previous findings that indicate most congregations operate independently of the ideas and efforts of other churches. He also observes that of the dozen possibilities offered the pastors, not a single ministry emphasis was listed by more than half of them. Discipleship and spiritual development, the most frequently mentioned area of ministry, was listed by 47 percent of the church leaders.

And while it was not surprising that different types of churches ranked priorities differently, the survey indicated what Barna describes as "obvious differences" between black and white churches. For example, two-thirds of African-American church leaders placed evangelism at the top of their list for the coming year; a distant second (35 percent) was discipleship. In contrast, 50 percent of white churches placed discipleship and then evangelism in the #1 and #2 spots.

In another comparison, white churches placed "worship" in the fifth slot (23 percent). But only three percent of black churches ranked that same area of ministry as a top priority (in 11th place out of 12).

"The magnitude of differences between black and white congregations is very significant," Barna says. "Compared to white pastors, few black pastors identified worship and preaching as top priorities." That, he notes, is despite the fact that previous surveys have shown African-Americans are more likely than white church members to be satisfied with their worship experience.

"This may reflect the fact that black pastors are attempting to broaden the faith experience and depth of their people by shifting their focus onto other dimensions of spiritual growth," Barna observes.

Other demographic differences unearthed by the December 2004 survey included:

Larger churches were far more likely than smaller ones to make evangelism and outreach a priority -- "which may explain their growth," says the Barna report. But larger churches were also less likely to mention congregational care ministry as a priority.

Female pastors were twice as likely as male pastors to make community service a high priority.

Pastors under the age of 40 expressed the least support for missions (10 percent) but were twice as likely as their older counterparts to prioritize ministry to children (22 percent to 11 percent, respectively).

The entire report, "Church Priorities for 2005 Vary Considerably," is available online at the Barna Research website.

Re: Christian Priorities - posted by PreachParsly (), on: 2005/2/16 17:56

Here is the link to the whole report

(<http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?PageBarnaUpdateNarrow&BarnaUpdateID182>) <http://www.barna.org/FlexPage.aspx?Page=BarnaUpdateNarrow&BarnaUpdateID=182>

Re: Christian Priorities, on: 2005/2/16 19:01

Quote:

-----lowest priority was prayer

ouch!

there's the whole problem RIGHT there....thats it.

When I say problem, I mean ineffectiveness to witness the Kingdom to a backslidden wicked nation.

"You call for a potluck dinner, you get the whole congregation, you call for a prayer meeting, who do you get?"

well...lets pray that changes.