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THE NONES. These religiously unaffiliated people have always been with us, but their new classification and the vast numbers who have flocked to their non-label label in just a few short years have been breathtaking, and they have become the fastest-growing religious group in America.

A new mentality and approach is needed to connect with the **Nones**, to reach them for Christ and involve them in the life of the church.

NOT RETURNING. **Nones** are often former church attenders. A long-held view is that young people raised in the church may sow a few wild oats, drift away from the compulsory attendance inflicted by their parents, but then return once they marry and begin having children.

That's the way it used to work but not the way it's working now.

The new reality is that most don't come back.

INDIFFERENT. The real mark of a **None** is not the rejection of God but the rejection of any specific religion. They've gone from 'I believe' to 'Maybe' to 'Who knows?'

The Nones are religiously indifferent. They don't care to practice religion, nor oppose it. It just doesn't matter to them.

As detailed in [Briefing 9](#), the **Nones** are squeezing out Evangelicals in the Twin Cities population. **The Rise of the Nones** explains who they are, how they think and why they have no interest in religion. Here are some excerpts from the book:

NONES (no religious affiliation)

All things '**seeker**' came onto the scene during the late seventies and were vibrant until the mid-nineties.

Generally, the term **seeker** has become irrelevant at best and terribly misleading at worst. **Dones** are not thinking about religion and rejecting it; they're not thinking about it at all.

The detrimental effect for the church could not be more complete. It's akin to having a world full of people open and even interested in coffee, but purposefully driving past Starbucks with complete disinterest.

In our effort to be *like them*, we've become less of who we actually are. The middle-aged pastor trying to look like his twentysomething audience isn't relevant. Dress him up in skinny jeans and hand him a latte, it doesn't matter. It's not relevant, it's comically cliché.

SPIRITUAL. When pressed about what they do hold to, they collectively answer, 'Nothing in particular.' **Simply put, they are spiritual but not religious.**

Spirituality has become anything an individual desires it to be – a private affair to be developed as one sees fit.

SYNCRETISM. Individuals are confronted with a staggering number of ideologies and faith options competing for their attention. It is precisely this context that has caused so many to move into the **Nones**.

The technical term is *syncretism* for the mix-and-match mentality of pulling together different threads in various religions in order to create a personal religion that suits our individual taste.

Christianity becomes one of many competing boutique worldviews, no better or worse than another, that have set up

shop in society's mall for people to sample as a matter of personal preference.

SIN. Once you get rid of true and false, you also get rid of right and wrong.

The theological notion of sin became the legal idea of crime, and then slid further from its true meaning and became nothing more than a psychological category of sickness.

Now it's gone even further. **We're not sinners anymore [so who needs a savior?], we're just mistakers.**

And lately we don't even want to call it a mistake. We want to turn everything we do into a virtue. So lust becomes *sensuality*, and anger means being *honest with your emotions*. Even when we apologize, we say things like, *I'm sorry you were offended by what I said or did*. No admitting that we did anything wrong – just sorry that the other person wasn't mature enough to handle it.

Morals are seen as almost entirely relative. There are no absolutes when it comes to right or wrong. If it doesn't hurt anybody else and it makes you happy, than it's okay.

TRUTH. So while the definition of **Nones** is that they believe nothing in particular, in truth they believe something very particular. It isn't a belief in truth. Instead it is belief in themselves.

MISSION. The mission of the church cannot be simply to keep Christians happy and growing. Nor can it be about attempting to lure believers from other churches by having glitzier services and better programs.

The **Nones** will increasingly dominate the American religious landscape.

Our mission will have to target the **Nones**.

–There are approximately 992,000 Nones in the Twin Cities metro –

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