

Group K:***Significant Singles*****Diversely aged singles earning mid-scale incomes supporting active city styles of living**

Resource: Mosaic 2021 by Experian.

Religious Experience in a Nutshell

Religious Perspective:

An eccentric habit with only occasional advantages

Spiritual Issues:

*Feeling trapped by circumstances, anxieties about self-esteem and guilt***Common Church Experience**

- Sceptical of religious institutions
- Broad personalized spirituality
- Progressive values
- Gravitate toward non-profits
- Quest for quality
- Mobile within a limited area

**Potential Influence**

1 st Tier Group Compatibility	Family Group K <i>Significant Singles</i>	2 nd Tier Group Compatibilities
G Young City Solos O Singles and Starters P Cultural Connections	K37 Wired for Success K38 Modern Blend K39 Metro Fusion K40 Bohemian Groove	H Bourgeois Melting Pot J Autumn Years L Blue Sky Boomers

CommunicationResource: *Mosaic E-Handbook* by Experian

Communication in Daily Living				Communication in Church Participation			
x	Broadcast/Streaming TV	Direct Mail	Radio	x	Live/Recorded Video	Print and Paper	Announcements or Visits
x	Mobile SMS	Email	Social Media	x	Text Message	Email	Social Media

General Comments:

Significant Singles don't fit the stereotype most churches have about young adult "singles". They don't connect with the church through typical lifecycle transitions regarding baptisms, weddings, and funerals. Some are divorced or widowed, and content to stay that way. Many have never married or live in less permanent relationships. Instead, they have a wide network of friends that are often cross-cultural and counter-cultural. The typical fellowship of a church is far too homogeneous and boring. The consensus of a church is too passive. They view the church as an agent of assimilation and conformism, rather social transformation, and individual empowerment.

They often have a strong appreciation for spirituality, in the broadest sense of that word. They respect the spiritual practices of all religions but are critical of all dogmatic expressions of religion. Their spirituality is personal, but rarely egotistic. Creation in all its complexity is sacred and they see themselves as just a part of a spirit-filled reality. Spiritual experience is closely tied to artistic expressions. Architecture, sculpture, painting,

music, photography, and urban graffiti can all be methods to look beyond the surface of life and discern deeper meaning. It is the more mystical elements of religion that may attract their attention.

Churches have a hard time even keeping a record of their address on a database. They tend to be mobile within a small area, changing residences and jobs, but circulating in the same entertainment scene. They communicate primarily through instant messaging. Those with a heartburst to bless people in this lifestyle group will do it best through personal contact. You might connect with them at comedy clubs, high-end bars that serve micro-brews and vintage wines, cigar stores, and bookstores that offer a wide range of magazines related to cooking, music, and entertainment. They are also in and out of educational programs in city universities and downtown community colleges.

If they connect with a church, it may be through Eucharist or Holy Communion. They would likely interpret this as an experience of Spirit rather than participation in Christ and as a mystical moment rather than divine rite. Friendship often has a more profound sense of covenant that goes beyond good times to sacred bonds. Grief for the loss of a friend can be as deep as grief for the loss of a spouse or close family member. They are comforted more by the meditative environment and presence of their friends than any special liturgy. The memorial speaker will probably not be clergy, but a close friend or colleague.

In general, *Significant Singles* consider organized religion as something to be avoided. A high proportion may have had negative experiences with religious groups in their personal history. Even talking about God may carry connotations that are too patriarchal, dogmatic, and constraining. They can feel trapped by circumstances beyond their control, and may have deep anxieties related to self-esteem, guilt, and shame. They share the burden of mistakes made by their generation. They worry about global warming, pandemics, war, and right-wing politics. They will be advocates and social reformers but are often aware of the small size of their impact. They identify with any person or group, anywhere in the world, who suffer abuse or persecution. They can be very active reforming immigration policies and in racial reconciliation. Their diverse network of friends often makes them excellent bridge-builders between the majority lifestyle segments represented in the church and the different majority represented in the neighborhood. Their spirituality is an extension of the quest for justice, vindication, equality, and reconciliation. If they are motivated to spend much time thinking about faith, it may be prompted by crises of addiction or disease, or by loneliness or a general experience of ennui. They may feel trapped by circumstances beyond their control and look for surprising grace. Life experiences may have left them with lower self-esteem and a sense of guilt over personal failure.

They tend to be iconoclasts. They challenge any “sacred cow”, in any social sector, and in any program. Quality matters, but accountability matters even more. They value quality concerts and may attend a Christmas or Easter cantata in a church, but they are quick to criticize any perceived abuse of choir members, manipulation of the audience, or hidden agenda behind the performance. The spontaneous deed and unrehearsed word of event leaders reveals the truth about the core values and convictions of the organization.

Significant Singles have progressive values. They gravitate to non-profit social service agencies or advocacy programs. They can assist churches who initiate and sustain signature outreach ministries, but they are unlikely to volunteer for committees or waste time in meetings. They may also connect with creative, pop-up, Christian communities (“Fresh Expressions”) oriented around outreach or entertainment but will drop out if there is an attempt by a denomination to institutionalize the activity or control the agenda.

Experian suggests that they have “champagne tastes on a beer budget”. They may be college educated but disinterested in climbing the corporate ladder or participating in a consumer society. Their discretionary income supports a robust nightlife: entertaining friends, sampling gourmet food and wine, building toned bodies, and modeling trendy fashions. They prefer to live downtown where the action is and are often “urban pioneers” committed to the revitalization of urban neighborhoods. They are more likely to re-purpose an unused church building that join an aging, declining congregation. Sacred space might become affordable housing, cafes and coffee houses, and community centers.

Perceptions of each other between church people and *Significant Singles* is strikingly different. Church people tend to see them in the context of the parable of the “Prodigal Child”, hoping for the day when they can celebrate the return of their wayward children. However, *Significant Singles* tend to view the church in the context of Jesus condemning the pharisees who claim to be righteous but ignore the poor, hungry, imprisoned, and abused people in the community.