

A.E. Cidoal

I'd like for you (or your group) to create a hypothetical person. I'd like you to determine a composite of the average person in your denomination.

If you actually do this you will reveal, to a great degree, the challenges your denomination is facing.

To keep the canvas completely clean we'll just use the name "A.E. Cidoal" and not call this person Allen or Arthur or Ashley or Annabelle. You'll have to decide on those kinds of things...

Where does A.E. live? City/urban? Suburban? Rural?

How old is your friend?

What about the family? Married? Single? Divorced? Children?

What about their secular lifestyle? What type of housing? What would be their dreams and plans? Occupation?

Tell me about their finances... Income? Debts? Tithing? Stewardship?

How much and how often does A.E. read the Bible? What about prayer?

What of their church involvement... attendance? Responsibilities and offices? Reputation in the church?

What does A.E. do on Friday? Saturday? Sunday? Prayer meeting night? Lord's Supper events?

What is A.E. most afraid of? (List several things...)

What does A.E. most want to happen?

How does A.E. feel about the Bible's discussions of the events of "the end time."

What does A.E. most need?

CLOSEOUT THOUGHTS: First of all, I've used this construct with scores and scores of youth and young adult groups through the years. I've learned a few things along the way...

- 1) If the responses don't come across as really positive and growing and attractive we have a problem. It doesn't matter whether or not you are accurate. If your vision is less than positive we already have a problem.
- 2) I remember the High School senior who said that A. E. most wanted the time to do all the things he knew he should be doing now. (Pretty provocative!)
- 3) The response of another young adult caused me to think... "What does A.E. most need?" The stunning answer was, "A healthy dose of persecution."

Oh, by the way: You already caught it, but A.E. Cidoal is only the word Laodicea spelled backward.