



Sharing the Good News!

Penn Northeast Conference of the United Church of Christ

THAT DIRTY LITTLE SIX LETTER WORD

HERE'S A QUIZ TO TEST YOUR TQ (*TECHNOLOGY QUOTIENT*):

1. The approximate number of people today who use a PC (personal computer) is
a. 100 thousand b. 1 million c. 10 million d. 100 million e. 1 billion
2. The approximate percentage of the world's population who have a cell phone is
a. 1/100 b. 1/10 c. 1/5 d. 1/4 e. 1/3 f. 1/2
3. The percentage of the world's population that is under 25 years of age is
a. 1/10 b. 1/8 c. 1/5 d. 1/4 e. 1/3 f. 1/2
4. The number of couples married in 2007 who met online through the internet is 1 in
a. 1000 b. 500 c. 100 d. 50 e. 25 f. 8
5. In three-quarters of an hour 363 babies will be born in the U.S., while the number of babies born in the same 45 minutes in China and India combined is approximately
a. 1000 b. 1500 c. 2000 d. 2500 e. 3000
6. The two top English language countries in the world are
a. U.S. & Canada b. U.S. & Great Britain c. U.S. & Australia d. China & India
7. The volume of technology information doubles every
a. 240 years b. 24 years c. 12 years d. 6 years e. 24 months
8. The U.S. has the world's largest economy. Numbers 2 and 3, respectively, are
a. Germany and Great Britain b. Russia and Italy
c. Canada and France d. Japan and China

These statistics (the answers are on the next page) were gleaned from an article recently published in *Mission Matters* and written by Joe Schoendort of Accel Partners (a private equity firm focusing on venture capital investments in two primary sectors: networking and software). To put it simply, Mr. Schoendort is a professional **futurist**: for him and his company, it *pays* big time to forecast what the future will bring.

Now turn the page for the startling answers → → → → → → → →

The last answer choice of every question is the correct answer:

1. 1 billion use a PC today; and the next billion is right around the corner
2. Half of the world's pop. have a cell phone number; by 2015: 5 out of 6 billion
3. Half are under 25; guess whom that puts in charge of cultural change!
4. 1 in 8 married-in-2007 couples met online, *approximately the same number as those married-in-2007 couples who met in church (ouch!)*
5. In just 45 min. China births 1,151 babies & India 1,942; this explains #6 & #8
6. About 10 years ago China began making 6 years of English mandatory for school children; now, with about 50 million Chinese kids entering high school each year ... (you do the math!)
7. W/ tech. info. doubling every 2 yrs, what a college elect. engineering student learns in her freshman year will be nearly obsolete by the time she graduates!
8. At its present rate of econ. growth China will surpass the U.S. in about 25 yrs

What do these amazing technology/demographic statistics mean for the future of the Church of Jesus Christ? **EVERYTHING.**

The local church is a covenant faith community of human beings. Human beings live in and are profoundly shaped by a worldwide cultural web. Technological innovation, as much as anything else, changes the shape of that web.

The invention of the Gutenberg Press helped to birth the Protestant Reformation, thereby changing the landscape of European Christianity. Of course, there were Christian groups that tried to squelch the revolutionary, democratizing impact of moveable type. But they lost—and they are no more.

Later some church groups railed against the use of organs and other musical instruments in worship. But they lost—and they are (almost) no more.

Church as *we* “old folks” have come to know it is the product of an earlier culture and technology that is presently being eclipsed by extraordinary changes in the way younger folk perceive reality and live life in what is rapidly becoming *their* world. *Our* church is no longer relevant to most people under 25 years of age. How many 20-somethings are active in your church?

It's that dreaded six-letter word -- **C H A N G E** -- that's the cause of it all. Blame *change* all you want. But as Mr. Schoendort points out in his article, businesses that do not adapt to global cultural change will die.

I think the same is true for churches. Toby Holleman, Associate Conference Minister

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