

It is my issue

By [Steve Pankey](#)

August 17, 2010

I'm not sure why I've missed this list for the last 14 years, but in my newsfeed this morning came the Beloit College [Mindset List](#).

It is the compilation of two senior faculty members at Beloit College in Beloit, Wisconsin and it attempts to help professors see the generation gap between them and the incoming freshman class.

Some

of the notes on the list are funny. Some make me feel old. Some, however are quite helpful for we in the Church as we continue to evaluate where we are in relation to new and powerful generations.

10. A quarter of the class has at least one immigrant parent, and the immigration debate is not a big priority...

40. There have always been HIV positive athletes in the Olympics.

43. Russians and Americans have always been living together in space.

45. They have always had a chance to do community service with local and federal programs to earn money for college.

52. There have always been women priests in the Anglican Church.

75. Honda has always been a major competitor on Memorial Day at Indianapolis.

Jesus

healed on the sabbath, the church is an avenue for community service hours, the world is flat, and the things that were the scariest in the past two generations (Russia for the boomers, AIDS for the Xers) are now moot, and the defining issue of the administration at VTS when I studied there is unimaginable to college freshmen (even in England where they still use a prayer book dated 1662!). The only constant in life is change.

I think what this list teaches us is not how to sound hip and culturally relevant (because when we try, we sound old

and like we are trying too hard), what it teaches us is that our issues don't last forever, and when we insist on forcing to be the issue of another generation they fall on deaf ears and mostly make them feel uncomfortable. The whole healing on the sabbath thing is long gone and nobody is running around saying, "it was so hard back when we couldn't heal on Sundays." So why then are we still trying to define the world by our fear of Russia or AIDS or immigrants or the struggles of Japanese, African, or female-Americans?

Maybe what we learn from Jesus in the healing story for Sunday is that God is bigger than our issues. When we hold on to our issues and ram them down the throats of those we are given to teach and lead, we start worshiping the issue and not God. Probably a lesson worth learning.

Originally posted at [Draughting Theology](#).