



ACCELERATE

Why & How

why accelerate is in our vision

OUR VISION

NXT Move exists to accelerate Jesus-following in the next generation by elevating leaders and multiplying impact.

Christianity has flatlined. This is the trajectory we have to turn as a generation.

We are growing in number and losing ground. Three things turn the line, and this is how that understanding shapes what NXT Move does, with every figure labeled and linked to the research behind it.

1

FOCUS YOUNGER

Where the next generation is, the church is not yet.

2

ACTIVATE EVERY BELIEVER

From consumer Christianity to contributor Christianity.

3

COLLABORATE

There is no lack of resource and no lack of intent. Duplication is what stops us.

WHY THIS PIECE

We are growing in number and losing ground. For 125 years the church has grown only as fast as the world, and in our lifetime we have not turned that line at all. Everyone has been making claims about whether the church is growing, and nobody had brought the evidence together. ACCELERATE does that. It names what has turned the line before and what it would take to turn it again in the generation now coming of age.

THE WHOLE PIECE IN SIX LINES

- **Christianity has flatlined. This is the trajectory we have to turn as a generation.**
- 1 Focus younger.** Where the next generation is, the church is not yet.
- 2 Activate every believer.** From consumer Christianity to contributor Christianity.
- 3 Collaborate.** There is no lack of resource and no lack of intent. Duplication is what stops us.
- **How we will know.** You can count the impact of collaboration, and we intend to.
- **What it means for NXT Move.** Everything we do turns on elevating leaders, and our strategy has turned toward the least reached.

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HOW TO READ THE NUMBERS

Every figure carries one of four labels. **COUNTED** census or survey data. **ESTIMATED** scholarly reconstruction from partial evidence. **MODELED** derived mainly from assumptions: a stake, not a prediction. **PROJECTED** a future scenario. Each one links to the section of the paper that proves it.



The living version

nxtmove.global/accelerate/why is kept current as the paper develops. The paper itself, with its sources and its own PDFs, is at nxtmove.global/accelerate.

ONE CORE IDEA

The flat line

Christianity has flatlined. This is the trajectory we have to turn as a generation.

4.8×

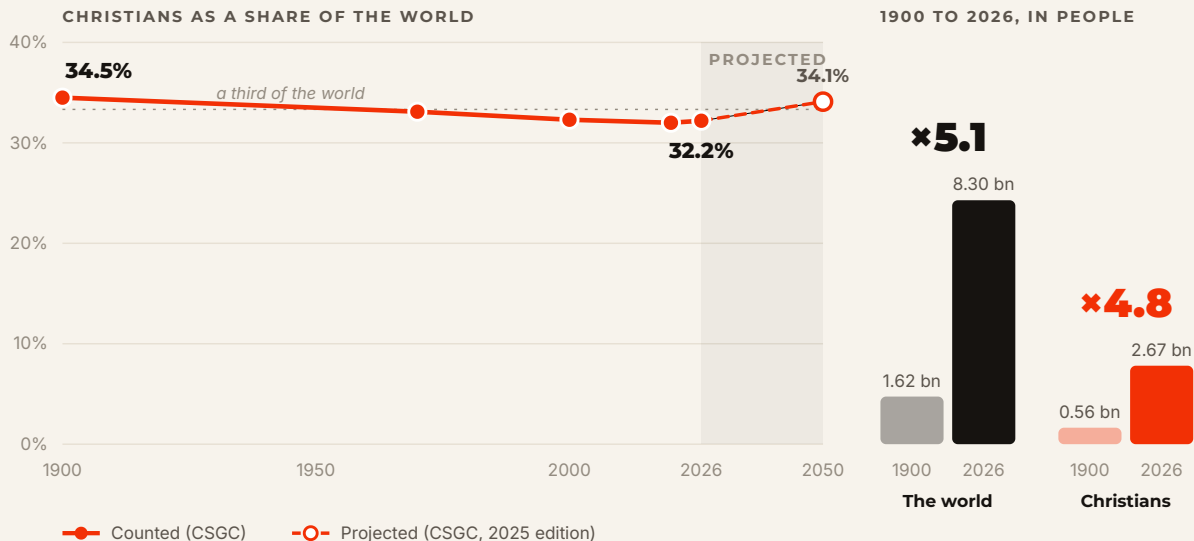
more Christians than
in 1900

5.1×

more people in the
world

There are 4.8 times more Christians today than in 1900. There are 5.1 times more people.

In 1900 Christians were 34.5% of the world. In 2026 they are 32.2%. The map has changed and the line has not: Europe and North America are losing their young, while most of the world's Christians now live in Africa, Asia and Latin America.



Christians as a share of the world, 1900 to 2026 counted, 2050 projected. Center for the Study of Global Christianity (2025 and 2026 editions), as in the paper's Table B1.

COUNTED . Center for the Study of Global Christianity, 2026. Proof in the paper, [Section 1.1](#).
nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-1-1

THE MAP HAS CHANGED AND THE LINE HAS NOT

EUROPE

95% → 74%

Christian share of the population,
1900 to 2026

NORTHERN AMERICA

97% → 70%

Christian share of the population,
1900 to 2026

AFRICA

9% → 49%

Christian share of the population,
1900 to 2026

COUNTED Center for the Study of Global Christianity. Proof in the paper, [Section 1.1](#).

— IT IS NOT ALL DOOM AND GLOOM

It has been turned before

Twice in two thousand years the church grew faster than the world, and both times ordinary believers carried the faith.

The first was the early church. It grew by about 40% a decade for nearly three centuries, before it owned a single building, carried by households, workplaces and refugees. The second was the century from 1800 to 1900, when a church renewed by revival kept its own young people and sent them to the world. Where that sending handed the faith to local believers it took root: Africa's 10 million Christians of 1900 are 754 million today.

It is not all doom and gloom. If we apply those principles again, we can see a great revival.

AFRICA'S CHRISTIANS

10 million → **754 million**
1900 TODAY

Where sending handed the faith to local believers, it took root.

ESTIMATED (the early church) and **COUNTED** (Africa). Proof in the paper, [Section 1.2](#) · [Section 1.6](#).

nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-1-2 · nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-1-6

— TWO RISES, ONE PATTERN: ORDINARY BELIEVERS CARRIED THE FAITH

THE EARLY CHURCH · AD 33 TO 313

40%

a decade, for nearly three centuries

Before it owned a single building. Households, workplaces and refugees carried it, and almost everyone was involved. **ESTIMATED**

THE MISSIONARY CENTURY · 1800 TO 1900

Kept and sent

a church renewed by revival kept its own young people and sent them to the world

Where that sending handed the faith to local believers it took root. Africa's 10 million Christians of 1900 are 754 million today. **COUNTED**

— **THREE THINGS**

Three things turn the line

We have to focus younger, activate every believer and collaborate. Each is one statement, one finding and one link to the proof.

1

FOCUS YOUNGER

Where the next generation is, the church is not yet.

The handover between generations is where the line bends or breaks. In 41 of 106 countries, adults under 40 are less likely than their elders to identify with a religion. In only two are they more likely. The generation that decides 2050 is not yet 20, and a quarter of it is not yet born. It is in children's and youth ministry now.

COUNTED (Pew Research Center, 2018) and **PROJECTED** (United Nations, 2024). Proof in the paper, [Section 2.1](#) · [Section 5.5](#).
[nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-2-1](#) · [nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-5-5](#)

41

of 106 countries

where adults under 40 are less likely than their elders to identify with a religion

2

ACTIVATE EVERY BELIEVER

From consumer Christianity to contributor Christianity.

Every sustained rise in two thousand years began with ordinary believers sharing the faith. The early church did not grow because a few were extraordinary. It grew because almost everyone was involved. The measure is simple enough for every believer: walk with one person, invite one person, reach one person.

ESTIMATED. Proof in the paper, [Section 1.2](#) · [Section 6.5](#).
[nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-1-2](#) · [nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-6-5](#)

1 · 1 · 1

walk with one, invite one, reach one

the measure of an activated believer

3

COLLABORATE

There is no lack of resource and no lack of intent. Duplication is what stops us.

Every year the church waits to work together costs about 5 million people by 2050. That is the number of young people the church keeps or loses depending on how soon it acts as one, worked out for every continent. And a table is not enough on its own: people co-own what they co-design.

MODELED: a stake, not a prediction. Proof in the paper, [Section 5.4](#).
[nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-5-4](#)

5 million

people a year

what each year of waiting costs by 2050

— HOW WILL WE KNOW?

How we will know

You can count the impact of collaboration, and we intend to.

The Jesus Following Index (JFINDX) asks young people aged 13 to 30 three questions. Do they follow Jesus? Do they participate in His mission? Does their world look different? Each is measured across four stages: exposure, response, formation and multiplication. Twelve blocks show whether a generation, and the society around it, is being changed by the gospel, not only whether people tick a box that says Christian.

Pilots are running now, the first live data are reviewed together in January 2027, and the global launch follows in Buenos Aires in September 2027. The Index does not stop in 2033. The trends it records over the next seven years keep directing the response beyond the goal year.

NOW

Pilots running

JANUARY 2027

First live data reviewed together

SEPTEMBER 2027

Global launch, Buenos Aires

2033 AND BEYOND

The Index keeps directing the response

	EXPOSURE <i>Encountered?</i>	RESPONSE <i>Responded?</i>	FORMATION <i>Being shaped?</i>	MULTIPLICATION <i>Does it spread?</i>
Follow Do they follow Jesus?	Heard of Jesus	Believes in Jesus	Being shaped	Helps others believe
Mission Do they participate in His mission?	Aware of the call	Convinced it's theirs	Practising witness	Mobilising others
World Does their world look different?	Sees faith should matter	Believes faith matters	Choices reshaped	Changing their spheres

Twelve blocks, in the Index's own words (jfindx.org): whether a generation follows Jesus, joins His mission and changes it:

The Index: jfindx.org. Proof in the paper, [Section 4.2](#) · [Section 6.4](#).

nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-4-2 · nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-6-4

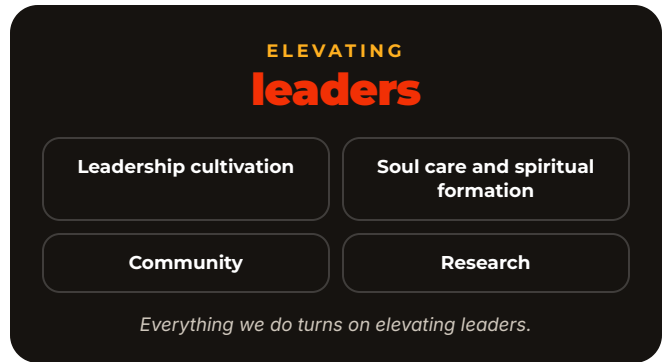
— HOW THIS SHAPES WHAT WE DO

What this means for NXT Move

NXT Move exists to accelerate Jesus-following in the next generation by elevating leaders and multiplying impact.

What we bring is the table: a trusted, community-owned backbone, with the relationships, the facilitation and the platform that let the church's next-generation efforts act as one. Our regions own the movement. Our calling is to guard leaders into what God has entrusted to them, as a guardian raises an heir (Galatians 4:1-2). Everything we do turns on elevating leaders: leadership cultivation, soul care and spiritual formation, community, and the research that tells us whether it is working.

It also changes where we go. If we keep growing by opportunity, our footprint will mirror the church's footprint, and that is not a balanced footprint of the world. So we have turned our strategy toward the least reached.



First steps for 2027

- 1 Focus younger.** Put the next generation at the center of every regional table, starting with the Nairobi Model City as the place we show what that looks like.
- 2 Activate every believer.** Equip leaders through Leadership Cultivation to carry walk with one, invite one, reach one into their churches and campuses.
- 3 Collaborate.** Serve the Next Gen Global Collab as its backbone, and take the Jesus Following Index from pilots to a shared baseline with its members.

A CAUSE, NOT AN ORGANIZATION

An invitation

This is not an invitation to join an organization. It is an invitation to a cause, and it is the same wherever you are.

- 1 Talk about the flat line** with the people you work alongside, and ask what it would take in your city for the church to grow faster than the world again.

- 2 Find the others** working toward the same generation where you are, and act together: one calendar, one table, one map of who does what.

- 3 Measure together,** and read the results together. Young people should be co-researchers, not respondents.

- 4 Make room.** Share the table with young leaders in real decisions, and stay long enough to be trusted.

- 5 Activate one.** Walk with one person, invite one person, reach one person.

THE PROOF

Go deeper

Every statement here is proven in the working paper, *ACCELERATE: Breaking the Flat Line*, where each figure is sourced and labeled Counted, Estimated, Modeled or Projected. The paper is a working draft, open for comment, and goes to invited academic readers in November.

STATEMENT	LABEL	THE PROOF
4.8 times more Christians, 5.1 times more people	COUNTED	1.1 The line in one chart nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-1-1
The church has grown faster than the world twice	ESTIMATED	1.2 Engine one nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-1-2 1.6 Engine two nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-1-6
Young adults are less religious than their elders in 41 of 106 countries	COUNTED	2.1 The age gap nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-2-1
The generation that decides 2050 is not yet 20	PROJECTED	5.5 The generation that decides 2050 nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-5-5
Every sustained rise began with ordinary believers	ESTIMATED	1.2 nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-1-2 6.5 Activation nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-6-5
Each year of waiting costs about 5 million people	MODELED	5.4 The cost of waiting nxtmove.global/accelerate/#s-5-4

- COUNTED census or survey data
- ESTIMATED scholarly reconstruction from partial evidence
- MODELED derived mainly from assumptions: a stake, not a prediction
- PROJECTED a future scenario

To quote it: as part of the Next Gen Global Collab, this is what we found. Kriel, J. (2026). *ACCELERATE: Breaking the Flat Line*. Working paper, NXT Move Global for the Next Gen Global Collab. nxtmove.global/accelerate.

The paper, its sources, its print editions and its feedback form: nxtmove.global/accelerate. This piece, kept current: nxtmove.global/accelerate/why.

© NXT Move Global, October 2026. Vision statement, based on Draft 5 of the paper. The paper has been shared with invited readers; it has not been through a formal peer-review process and does not claim to have been.



NXT MOVE

Elevating Leaders. **Multiplying Impact.**

**We are 4.8 times more than we
were in 1900, and still losing
ground.**

May that not be our legacy.



nxtmove.global/accelerate/why · this piece, kept current
nxtmove.global/accelerate · the research behind it
jfindx.org · the Jesus Following Index
nxtmove.global · who we are and how to join the work