

**Overview – Taken from: Where Do We Go From Here? Ralph W. Neighbour, Jr.**

**Innovators**

In your church, you have a group of 2.5% who are eager and ready to try out new ideas. Their lifestyle is characterized by a wide spread of friends, many living long distances away. These “risk takers” are usually more affluent than the rest of the group, since they may have to absorb losses resulting from innovating. These people are venturesome, creative, and ready to try a new idea if it makes sense to them.

**Early Adopters**

13.5% of your congregation falls into this category. They are usually the opinion setters in the church—certainly more than the Innovators are. Potential adopters in the next category, the Early Majority, will be friends of, and influenced by, these Early Adopters. They will be the “public relations” members, influencing those in the member who ask them, “What do you think about this new cell group concept?”

**Early Majority**

These are the “deliberate” people, about 34% of the total who wait until they are sure the idea has a pretty good possibility of succeeding. They interact frequently with the Early Adopters. However, they probably subscribe to the idea, “Be not the last to lay on the old aside, or the first by which the new is tried.” They seldom lead out, but will be the first to adopt after the innovators and Early Adopters have working models established.

**Late Majority**

These represent a significant 34% of the church, and can best be described as the “skeptics.” This group will not adopt a new concept until most of the others in the church have done so. The weight of the “institutional endorsement” must be present before they will agree to share in what is going on. It takes the pressure of the peer group to motivate them to adopt, even after they see how they will benefit from the change. However, once they have accepted the new idea, it will be hard to ever eliminate it.

**The Laggards**

Traditional to the core, this 16% are the last to adopt. They tend to seek out others who agree with their opinions about things, and are openly suspicious of all innovations and innovators. They can slow things to a crawl if they are in positions of leadership. When the “pillars” of the church contain a majority of Laggards, there’s little or no hope of that church body being changed. Unseating incumbents is hard to do, whether it is in politics or in church life.

**Bible Study: Mark, John, Acts,**

1. Discuss which of the above groups would best define how you approach new ideas. Everyone is wired differently, don’t view one group as being better than another.
2. Read Mark 6:3 and Mark 3:20-21. Jesus’ family was not quick to completely believe in His identity. Scholars debate as to why Jesus family want to take charge of Him (seize forcibly). They could have been embarrassed at all the attention He was attracting and wanted to protect the family name. List some reasons some believers disassociate themselves from Jesus while in a public setting?
3. Describe what it might have been like to have Jesus as a half brother?

4. Read John 7:5. Why do you think Jesus' family didn't believe in Him? In what ways do you believe not having family support affect Jesus' ministry? Have someone describe a time when they were doing the right thing but their family didn't support them.
5. Read Acts 1:14. It wasn't until after the resurrection that Jesus siblings believed. Which of terms listed above in the intro paragraphs would describe His siblings?
6. James the half brother of Jesus went from being a doubter to the leader of the church in Jerusalem. Read Acts 15:13 & 19. James spoke with authority. How has your faith in Jesus grown from doubt, to belief, to a strong faith?
7. C.S. Lewis once said: "Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important." How does the Resurrection of Jesus make Christianity infinitely important?