

DISSERTATION ABSTRACTS

A STUDY OF NONES IN BRAZIL AND THE USA IN LIGHT OF SECULARIZATION THEORY WITH MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS

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The growth of those who declare themselves to be Nones, or religiously unaffiliated, in Brazil and the USA has been continuously higher than that of the general population. In Brazil, they are the third-largest group in the religious field, behind only Catholics, and Pentecostal evangelicals. In the USA, they are the second largest group, after Protestants as a whole. The Nones, in their diverse groups, are more represented among the youth in both cultures, and reflect the modern and postmodern influences of contemporary secularism, being a product of the process of changing human thought.

This work studies the Nones, in both countries, based on selected elements that characterize the theories of secularization used within the sociology of religion. In the absence of a direct biblical text related to the Nones, as they are a phenomenon much later than the biblical period, a suggested biblical framework for mission with the group was chosen based on biblical narratives describing the *missio Dei* among what the Bible calls foreigners.

In the fifth chapter, the study proposes eight areas considered sensitive for the missional relationship with the Nones in both Brazil and America: The Identity of God, The Bible as the Source of Truth, Institutionalized Religion, Need for Relationships and Community, The Social Role of Religion, Cross-Cultural Barriers, Cultural and Religious Plurality, and Mass Communication/Technology. Some of these can be considered critical, and others as an opportunity for mission. The characteristics of Nones related to each area were presented, and then, missiological and sociological principles were suggested to fill the gaps in the respective areas, forming a bridge of contact with the Nones.