21st Century Evangelicals
A snapshot of the beliefs and habits of evangelical Christians in the UK - Spring 2014

Time for discipleship?

Research by the Evangelical Alliance
What is a typical evangelical Christian? What contributions do they make to society? What do they believe? What is distinctive about their lifestyle? What opinions do they hold about the most pressing issues of the day?

These are just some of the questions that the Evangelical Alliance is exploring as part of an ongoing study into the beliefs, habits and practices of evangelical Christians in the UK. The answers will help Christian leaders and the Church at large to understand their social context, and to make more effective plans for mission and ministry in the world today.

In January 2011 our groundbreaking 21st Century Evangelicals research reported on our survey of more than 17,000 people. Since then more than 3,000 have agreed to join our panel. In partnership with eight other Christian organisations, we ask this panel questions on different themes to produce regular reports, and usually have more than 1,500 responses each time.

These are our reports so far, containing fascinating information on evangelicals’ beliefs, opinions and experiences. We hope that you will find the reports interesting and that they will spark conversations and ideas.

• Working faithfully? (Oct 2013)
• Life in the church? (May 2013)
• Do we value education? (February 2013)
• Confidently sharing the gospel? (November 2012)
• Does money matter? (September 2012)
• The world on our doorstep? (May 2012)
• How’s the family? (February 2012)
• Are we communicating? (December 2011)
• Does belief touch society? (September 2011)
• 21st Century Evangelicals (January 2011)

At eauk.org/snapshot you can:
• download all the reports and order paper copies
• access free downloadable Powerpoint presentations and discussion questions to further explore the issues raised
• get involved by joining the research panel.
Top 10 key statistics

98% agree or strongly agree that they can see God at work in their life over the long term

90% study the Bible every day or several times a week

31% Less than a third set aside a substantial period of time for prayer each day

63% get easily distracted when spending time with God

26% Only 26% feel they have been well-equipped to witness and share their faith with others

40% Only 40% agree their church does very well at discipling new Christians

90% say regularly attending church and/or a small fellowship group is helpful to their growth (and 60% say it is very helpful)

33% A third use Bible apps on their mobile device

70% Over 70% find attending large Christian conferences, festivals or conventions a help with their walk with God

60% have been inspired and influenced by a church leader or minister they knew

Icons used in this booklet

Where you see these icons it will highlight a higher or lower than average response from those listed. ‘Younger people’ signifies a group born after 1980, with ‘Older people’ signifying those born before 1960.

This online survey was carried out in November 2013 and a total of 1,744 took part. Among these 1,529 self-defined as evangelicals and the statistics presented in this report are based on this group. More detailed information about the sample is available from g.smith@eauk.org
What have we found?

Faith through hard times
Almost all evangelicals (98%) can see God at work in their lives over the long term, and many of the quotes speak of God’s faithfulness in people’s lives (pages 10-11). While 83% have experienced a major period of difficulty in their life, God has carried people through, with only 3% saying the crisis has damaged their faith in the long term (page 20).

Time to consider: How have your life experiences impacted your faith?

Quality time with God
This research shows evidence of ‘mobile discipleship’, with 60% praying on the move and a third using Bible apps (pages 12 & 17).

A whopping 90% of evangelicals read the Bible at least several times a week (pages 12-13).

While only 3% say they struggle to pray at all, less than a third set aside a substantial period each day to pray (page 16).

A third say they pray in private for between 30 minutes and one hour per week, 32 per cent for one to three hours and 11 per cent for more than three hours (page 16).

Busyness is making a disciplined spiritual life more difficult. Many admit to being easily distracted when spending time with God (63%) and the biblical character that the most people identify with is busy Martha (see Luke 10: 38-42).

Time to consider: Do you set aside time to focus on God? When you do, are you easily distracted? If you are, what steps can you take to help you concentrate on God?

Time with others
Our findings show that the Christian life cannot be lived alone.

The vast majority (90%) have found regularly attending church or home groups helpful, and 70% find large Christian gatherings a help in their walk with God (page 21).

Hearing others’ testimonies also really inspires people. Younger people in particular find mentoring helpful, and many say their church leaders have been a significant influence (pages 15 & 21).

Time to consider: Are you spending time with other Christians, talking about your faith and building each other up? Who might God be calling you to get alongside and support?
Times are changing

There are differences in how each generation approaches their spiritual lives. Older Christians report more disciplined and structured prayer lives and longer periods spent in private prayer and Bible study (pages 16-18).

Younger people are more likely to have come to faith before the age of 12 and grown up in a Christian family (page 7). They are also more likely to report regular feelings of despair and anxiety, and to find having a spiritual mentor helpful (pages 20-21).

*Time to consider: Do you take time to get to know and learn from Christians of a different age from you?*

Time to share our faith

Disciples make disciples – or that should be the case. But, as our previous *21st Century Evangelicals* report *Confidently sharing the gospel?* also found, people don’t feel confident or equipped to share their faith with others (pages 9 & 11).

While it’s great that so many become Christians before adulthood (page 7), why are so few coming to faith as adults, and what does the Church need to do to address this?

*Time to consider: Do you feel equipped to share your faith? If not, how can you intentionally develop in this? If you do, how can you encourage others to be more confident in evangelising?*

How can the Church respond?

There are things to celebrate, including high Bible-reading rates and the value of fellowship (pages 12 & 21). But challenges remain:

- Only 40% feel their church does well at discipling new Christians and most say they do not feel equipped to share their faith (page 22).
- There is awareness of the need to personally develop in a number of areas, with 26% saying they often ignore global injustices and 26% admitting they are often self-centred (page 20).

We explore points of encouragement and challenge for churches on page 22 of the report.

*Time to consider: Would you say your church is intentionally discipling people, both new Christians and ‘older’ ones? How can discipleship be developed in your church?*

Video resources

We’ve filmed some key leaders and Alliance council members reflecting on the *Time for discipleship?* findings. The short video clips are available at [www.eauk.org/discipleship](http://www.eauk.org/discipleship) and perfect to show in your small group or church service to stimulate discussion. The clips include:

- Krish Kandiah (Evangelical Alliance) on the need for churches to intentionally focus on discipleship
- Roger Forster (Ichthus Christian Fellowship) on the importance of listening to God
- Jonathan Oloyede (National Day of Prayer) on the benefits of a disciplined prayer life
- Lucy Peppiatt (Westminster Theological Centre) on why church leaders are so influential
- John Risbridger (Keswick Ministries) on the centrality of church fellowship
- Ann Holt (Bible Society) on the importance of the Bible
- Rachel Gardner (Romance Academy) on the need to disciple young people
- Pastor Siew Huat Ong (Chinese Church in London) on their church’s model of discipleship
- Yemi Adedeji (One People Commission) on the benefits of the research series
DOES ONE MORE CHILD LIVING IN POVERTY REALLY MATTER?

I AM NICOLE, & I MATTER

Compassion believes that every child matters. By working through the local church in 26 developing countries, our holistic child development programme creates a safe environment where each child is known by name and can fulfil their God-given potential. Today, more than 1.5 million children are being released from poverty – in Jesus’ name.

You can bring hope to a child living in poverty.

SPONSOR A CHILD TODAY
www.compassionuk.org
Follow me - the first response

The age our panel first made a personal response to Christ

- As a child aged 12 or under (29%)
- Between the ages of 13 and 18 (41%)
- Between the ages of 19 and 25 (16%)
- Between the ages of 26 and 45 (11%)
- Age 61 or older (0%)
- "It wasn’t like that" (2%)

The majority of our panel (68%) came to faith before the age of 18.

We have detected a trend that the younger generation were more likely than the older generation to have come to faith before the age of 12.

People’s circumstances when they first responded to Christ

Most evangelical Christians have been brought up in a secure Christian family and church community, and are familiar with the Bible and Christian belief.

Although 8% had rejected faith or rebelled before returning to Christ, the majority seem to have come to a point in their childhood or youth where they realised they needed to make a personal commitment and take on what they had been taught for themselves.

God first revealed Himself to me through nature, which still speaks to me of His joy in creation.

I was non-Christian faith background 1%
I was a convinced atheist 3%
I was an agnostic 6%
I had no time for God or the Church 6%
My life was a mess 8%
I had been brought up a Christian but had rejected faith, drifted far away or been a 'prodigal' 9%
I was religious but not a Christian 15%
I had little or no experience of church 18%
I was familiar with the Bible and what it meant to be a Christian, but just hadn’t made a personal commitment 29%
I had been brought up in a committed Christian family and within the life of a church 45%
I had a secure home and loving family life 56%
Acts of public commitment after coming to faith

It seems that believer’s baptism is now very common for evangelicals across all denominations. Figures for believer’s baptism were:

- 95% of Baptists and Pentecostals
- 90% of Charismatics
- 89% of “other evangelicals”
- 48% of Anglicans and Free church members
- 28% of Church of Scotland Presbyterians

28% of Anglicans took part in a confirmation service, only 53% of Anglicans had been confirmed, and 43% publicly recognised as becoming a member of a church.

Around two thirds (65%) received some formal teaching or discipling soon after becoming a Christian.

Early learning

I wish I’d had a mentor during the first two years of my walk with God.

- 35% No formal teaching or discipling
- 26% Confirmation/membership classes
- 20% Baptism preparation class
- 14% One-to-one mentoring or personal discipling from a mature Christian
- 10% Other structured group course
- 9% Alpha course
- 8% Self-study course (eg study books, online learning)
- 7% Structured course aimed at new Christians
- 2% Christianity Explored course

Women & younger people
How successful do people think their early experience of being taught or discipled about the Christian faith was?

For most of these aspects of the Christian faith the respondents felt they had been taught or discipled successfully early on, especially in terms of strengthening their faith and understanding Christian beliefs through Bible study.

However, people were more likely to agree that their church had prepared them to use their gifts and talents within the church than in work, public life and the wider community. Does this mean the Church needs to work on equipping people to be whole-life disciples, not just in church?

Interestingly, later in the survey only 40% agreed that their church does very well at discipling new Christians.

For most of these aspects of the Christian faith the respondents felt they had been taught or discipled successfully early on, especially in terms of strengthening their faith and understanding Christian beliefs through Bible study.

I’ve not regretted becoming a Christian for a moment

I think more churches need to take responsibility for discipling their members.

I am very grateful for the fact that in my early Christian walk the importance of reading the Word was emphasised. So was worship, a quiet time with God and seeking Him with all of my heart.

I did not feel well discipled after conversion, though the evangelical church I joined was very supportive.

Worryingly only 26% felt that they had been very successfully equipped for witnessing and sharing their faith with others.

I am very thankful for the solid, in-depth Bible teaching that I had in my youth and subsequently. This helped to prepare me for life’s tragedies.

I’ve found that the best discipleship has come about through genuine friendship rather than by a programme put on by the church.

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How people describe the course of their Christian life so far

It is encouraging that none of our panel say they are on the point of giving up their faith, although 8% fear their faith is currently stagnating or in a rut.

While almost half (48%) have experienced periods of struggle or doubt they do believe they are growing spiritually overall.

When invited to give comments about what helps them in their discipleship, many people mentioned the benefit of:

- attending large conferences and festivals
- taking up leadership responsibilities, such as preparing materials to share with others
- being involved actively in mission or social action
- personally studying through books or the internet

I've been a Christian for a long time but at the moment I fear I'm stagnating, in a rut or 'losing my first love'.

I've been growing and learning as a Christian, though there are a number of things which don't seem as certain or important as when I was a new Christian.

It's been a relatively smooth path of learning and growth towards becoming a mature Christian with a strong, clearly-understood faith.

There have been a number of ups and downs, periods of struggle or doubt, but overall I believe I am growing spiritually.

My faith appeared to be lost during a period of severe depression.

The steep learning curves have happened during times when the rest of my life has been in chaos.

It's a completely different life. I used to be consumed with going out, meeting guys, drinking etc and partying. Now my life is filled with Christians - I feel part of God's family, it's wonderful. I just want everyone to join my new family. God is so good.

I lost one of my children to suicide when he was 15. This brought me closer to God but away from the church.

I found that God delivered me from depression and anger, but many other aspects of my life did not change over night... Slowly but surely I have seen God's grace changing my heart and attitudes and reforming me in the image of His Son through the Holy Spirit.
What helps growth?

Our panel’s opinions and experiences:

Most Christians today are not very disciplined in their spiritual lives and walk with God

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12%</td>
<td>42%</td>
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I can see God at work over the longer-term in my life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>68%</td>
<td>29%</td>
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I can see God at work in my life on a daily basis

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>47%</td>
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I am encouraged by seeing evidence of God working in the lives of other people around me

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<tr>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
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I have seen a big change for the better in my life since I started following Jesus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53%</td>
<td>31%</td>
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We asked people to assess themselves on the state of their own discipleship:

These are the average ratings across the entire panel:

Legend: 1: Doing very badly – 10: Doing very well

- Men: Knowing you are loved, forgiven and accepted as a child of God
- Older people: Trusting in God and His promises and purposes
- Older people: Growing spiritually as a Christian
- Older people: Living, acting and reacting like Jesus
- Men, older people: Confidently sharing the gospel with unbelievers
- Older people: Feeling close to Jesus
- Older people: Serving Jesus by practical caring action
- Older people: Knowing you are in the place and role in life where God wants you to be

We also asked respondents to assess themselves on how they were doing on the fruits of the spirit. The findings came out as surprisingly positive, with none of the ‘fruit’ having an average score below 6 out of 10. The highest scores were for faithfulness and love, the lowest for self-control and humility.

Men feel they are doing better at humility, while older people rate themselves as doing better at peace, patience and self-control.
88% agree it is important for every Christian to read or study the Bible on a daily basis (of these 50% strongly agree).

In practice, just over half (50.5%) say they engage with the Bible daily and a further 40% at least several times a week.

- At least once every day (50%)
- Several times each week (40%)
- Once each week (4%)
- Less than once a week but at least once a month (4%)
- Less than once a month (1%)

Martha was the Biblical character most often identified with, with 58% of women identifying with her. She was selected almost three times more than her contemplative sister Mary, indicating that busy lifestyles are a widespread feature of contemporary discipleship.

Simon Peter is also a top choice, with just over a third identifying with him. Paul was the third most selected figure with 27%. Some 35% of men and 13% of women selected him.

Generally speaking men were more likely to identify with men from the Bible and women with the female followers of Jesus.
How much time people spend on the Bible, per session

Ten to 20 minutes is the most common length of time people claim to spend studying their Bible.

More than half (57%) say that after church most weeks they spend some time reflecting on or thinking about what the speakers/preachers have said. Church leaders are more likely to spend longer periods in studying the Bible.

Things people find helpful when reading the Bible

50% Bible commentaries or other books
43% Printed Bible study notes
33% A Bible app on your phone or other mobile device
29% A Bible-reading plan
28% A Bible website
20% Emails from a Bible study organisation
13% Podcasts or other audio recordings from a Bible study organisation
12% None of these, just an open Bible
11% DVDs or other video resources

Struggles with the Bible

55% find it hard to understand what the Bible says (at least sometimes)
70% rarely or never find it hard to see how it is relevant to my life today
93% rarely or never find it hard to accept that the Bible is reliable and true

82% (perhaps unsurprisingly) find it hard to live up to the commandments and challenges found in the Bible
48% admit that (at least sometimes) they find it hard to understand how God could order or allow some of the things recorded in the Bible
For North Korean refugee, Eun Hee, following Jesus meant no turning back – even though it cost her life. After she became a Christian in China, she chose to return to her country to share the gospel. Despite the dangers, she regularly made the perilous journey to an Open Doors safe house in China, to collect clothes, food and medicine to take back for others. One day the police came to Eun Hee’s house and took her away. Later, she died in prison.

Though our secret networks, Open Doors supports many brave Christians like Eun Hee, who are giving their lives to help the church in North Korea survive. But time is short, and the need is desperate.

“God has called me to stay here and be his witness. I cannot leave the other Christians behind.”

Join us in a year of prayer and action for Christians in North Korea and where faith costs the most. Order your FREE copy of our new prayer resource, Live Like a North Korean at:

www.opendoorsuk.org/itstime

Today, millions of Christians around the world experience discrimination, imprisonment, torture and even martyrdom – simply because they believe in Jesus. Working with Christians on the frontline, Open Doors provides Bibles, leadership training, literacy programmes, livelihood support and advocacy services for believers who suffer for their faith.
Inspirational personal figures

Among those who evangelicals know personally, who are the most inspiring and influential figures for them?

We asked people to select up to four from the following categories. Here's what they chose:

- A Sunday school teacher or children’s club leader (15%)
- Another Christian worker, missionary or evangelist (17%)
- A friend who I made when I was a student (17%)
- Women (25%) were more likely than Men (20%)
- My father (23%)
- A Christian youth worker or leader (23%)
- My spouse/partner (29%)
- Older age groups
- A friend who I made when I was an adult (29%)
- My mother (27%)
- A church leader or minister (60%)

Inspirational public figures

We asked people to list which recent Christian authors, speakers or leaders have influenced them the most - here are the top 10 names that were listed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>John Stott</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Tom Wright</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Philip Yancey</td>
<td>8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jeff Lucas</td>
<td>6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Piper</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS Lewis</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Johnson</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Ortberg</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Billy Graham</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Hybels</td>
<td>3%</td>
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</table>

Other popular figures (with between 3% and 1% mentioning them) were J. John, Joyce Meyer, Danielle Strickland, George Verwer and Jackie Pullinger.
How do we pray?

- 5% Yes – two or more substantial periods every day
- 26% Yes – one substantial period of time every day
- 32% Yes – I try to find at least a few minutes every day
- 4% Yes – a regular session at least once a week
- 1% Yes – a regular session but less than weekly
- 18% I don’t have a fixed pattern but just pray when the chance or need arises
- 3% I struggle to find the time or will to pray very much at all
- 11% Other pattern

The 11% who specify “other pattern” have a variety of practices, with many aspiring to “pray without ceasing” or to constantly “practise the presence of God”.

Do you set aside regular times for personal prayer, contemplation or being alone with God?

Around two thirds say they try to have a regular daily pattern to their prayer life. Less than a third (31%) set aside a substantial period of time for prayer every day, but another 32% try to find at least a few minutes every day.

18% say they pray when the chance or need arises rather than in a disciplined way.

Older people (those born before 1960) are significantly more disciplined and structured in their prayer patterns.

Practices that have helped in their personal walk with God

These are examples that our respondents have used over the last few years to help them with their walk with God.

- 43% Keeping a journal
- 70% Attending conventions, festivals or other large gatherings of Christians
- 64% Regularly taking communion, (Eucharist, Lord’s Supper)
- 32% Going on retreats
- 34% Fasting

Knowledge of biblical truths and the need to be in communion with God doesn’t readily translate into practical prioritisation of spiritual activity.
How much time do people set aside for private prayer each week?

More than half (57%) pray privately for less than an hour each week. Although 87% agree every Christian needs to spend time alone with God on a daily basis, and that without that their faith will suffer, 42% said that they find it difficult to find time on a regular disciplined basis to pray and read the Bible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Set Aside</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No time at all</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 30 minutes</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 minutes to an hour</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One to three hours</td>
<td>32%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Three to seven hours</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over seven hours</td>
<td>2%</td>
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</table>

What do people find helpful as a way of strengthening their prayer and devotions?

63% agree they are easily distracted when they try to spend time alone with God (15% strongly agree).

- Praying ‘on the move’ e.g. walking, or travelling by car, train or bus: 60%
- Your own lists of people to pray for: 48%
- Have a special place in your home where you regularly pray: 45%
- Meditating on a verse of scripture: 43%
- Listening or singing along to (Christian) music before or while you pray: 41%
- Prayer letters, diaries or calendars from a church or Christian organisation: 35%
- Going into a church building, or public prayer room: 23%
- Using written prayers or set liturgies: 17%
- A special place outside in the open air: 13%
- Particular bodily postures (eg kneeling): 10%
- Lighting a candle: 9%
- Contemplating an object, statue or other work of art: 7%

Church leaders and older people report praying for longer than the average.

“Praying on the move” The most popular and helpful mode of prayer

The more traditional forms and disciplines are cited by less than one in four as helpful.

Though I don’t often experience supernatural answers to prayer I’m pressing in to see them.
What do we pray?

We asked people how often they prayed the following:

Ask God to bless your family
- Always or almost always: 49%
- Often: 37%
  - Older People

Confess and seek forgiveness for your sins
- Always or almost always: 36%
- Often: 40%
  - Younger people

Try to listen to what God is saying
- Always or almost always: 32%
- Often: 39%
  - Younger people, Church leaders, Charismatics

Ask God to help or heal other people you know
- Always or almost always: 30%
- Often: 52%
  - Older people, Church leaders, Pentecostals and Church of Scotland

Ask God to bless the work of your church
- Always or almost always: 26%
- Often: 48%
  - Older people, Church leaders, Pentecostals and Church of Scotland

Ask for people to come to faith in Christ
- Always or almost always: 25%
- Often: 44%
  - Church leaders

Ask God to work in situations overseas (e.g., in missions, for the persecuted Church)
- Always or almost always: 22%
- Often: 39%
  - Older People, Church of Scotland/Presbyterian

Ask God to bless your local community
- Always or almost always: 16%
- Often: 39%
  - Church leaders

Ask for help to overcome temptation
- Always or almost always: 15%
- Often: 34%

Ask for healing of your own illnesses
- Always or almost always: 6%
- Often: 17%
  - Women & Pentecostals

What do people think are the most important purposes of prayer?

(Based loosely on the Lord’s prayer)

- To bring you into a closer relationship with God
- To offer worship and thanksgiving to God
- To bring about God’s kingdom on earth
- To listen to what God is saying
- To bring human wills into line with God’s will
- To win people for Christ
- To confess and seek forgiveness for your sins

Most important of all: ⚫ Very important: ☢️
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Pens
Pens Bible reading notes and free teaching outlines connect Sunday teaching with everyday learning. Ideal for children aged 3–6. www.meetpens.co.uk/adults

Waverley
If as a leader you would be interested in taking up a free trial place on one of our short courses please contact us on 01252 784719

Compact, daily Bible reading notes for adults and children.

For a free sample pack email sales@cwr.org.uk
What are our struggles?

- While 83% have experienced a major period of difficulty in their life, God has carried people through, with only 3% saying the crisis has left them with a fragile faith.
- Just over a quarter (27%) said the crisis they experienced had really shaken their faith, but on the whole they emerged as a stronger Christian.
- Just over half (54%) said their faith remained secure or was strengthened through the trial.

It is worth considering that those who lost their faith or left church following a crisis probably would not have taken this survey.

We asked people to rate themselves in relation to certain temptations and struggles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temptation</th>
<th>Younger people</th>
<th>Older people</th>
<th>Church leaders</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ignoring global exploitation or injustice</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-centredness</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgemental attitudes</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Despair, worry or anxiety</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypocrisy</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Looking at pornography</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unforgiveness</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being one person in church and a different one at work</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lying or dishonesty</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addiction to alcohol, tobacco or drugs</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gambling</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We asked people to rate themselves on the seven deadly sins on a scale of 1 to 10, but the statistical results were disappointing as most people tended to opt for mid-range scores.

The lowest average scores (indicating the greatest perceived failure) were for **pride** and **gluttony**, and the highest ones (indicating less of a problem) were for **envy** and **greed**, with **sloth**, **wrath** and **lust** placed in the middle.
We are not alone

Over the last year or two, how helpful have the following kinds of interaction been to your growth as a Christian?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interaction</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular attendance at church services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular attendance at a church home group or cell group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearing others' testimony</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training sessions or courses to extend my knowledge or equip me for discipleship, mission or Christian service</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular participation in a mission or outreach team or Christian social action project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular sharing in prayer, Bible reading or devotions with other members of my family or household</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular meetings of a small mutually accountable group such as a prayer triplet or group of Christian friends</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular sessions with a personal mentor, spiritual director or 'soul friend'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular sharing in prayer, Bible reading or devotions with my spouse/partner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular meetings of a workplace-based Christian group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The great thing about Christianity is that we are not alone. This graph illustrates that fellowship with others is really important in our discipleship. We’ve also found that more than 70% find attending large Christian conferences, festivals or conventions a help with their walk with God.

A massive 99% of our respondents attend church regularly. Of these, 61% find attending church very helpful and a further 29% somewhat helpful. However there were 9% who said going to church hasn’t helped them much. This was more commonly felt by men and by Anglicans and Free Church members, in contrast with Charismatics and Pentecostals who were more likely to find attending church very helpful.
Discipleship and the Church

Although high proportions of people feel they have benefitted from attending church or small group activities (page 21), it seems people can see room for improvement in the intentional discipling and teaching of their churches.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>My church succeeds in helping people become transformed so they are more like Jesus Christ</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My church does very well at discipling new Christians</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teaching, sermons or talks at my church have helped me grow and mature as a Christian</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasons to be encouraged

- **Teaching** - Almost three quarters say the teaching in their church has helped them grow and mature as a Christian.

- **Influence** - 60% said that a church leader had influenced them, making church leaders by far the most frequently mentioned influence – far exceeding other categories such as spouses, friends and parents (page 15).

Challenges for the UK Church

- **Discipling new Christians** - As seen in the table, only 40% agree that their church does well at discipling new Christians, with a very low 8% in strong agreement. This is a concern and can encourage all churches to take time to consider how well they are doing at discipling new believers and helping them grow.

- **Whole-life disciples** - God wants us to be whole-life disciples, but people were more likely to agree that their church encourages them to use their gifts and talents within the church than in work, public life and the wider community (pages 8-9).

- **Equipped to share** - Worryingly only 26% felt that in their early discipleship they had been very successfully equipped for witnessing and sharing their faith with others (pages 8-9).

I am so thankful for a church who have turned my life around

Burnout, burnout, burnout. I love the church but it hasn’t so much discipled us as squeezed us for all it could get... Sometimes it feels a little “every man for himself” which isn’t supposed to be the culture of church at all!

I struggle to find comfort and fellowship in evangelical churches... I find that the focus is entirely on ‘inward’ spirituality, or evangelism based purely around talking to other people.

I find sermons at church really unhelpful - they are pitched to Bible students rather than people living real lives in the real world.

I’m grateful to those who’ve walked closely with me. Christian community is very important. Our faith is not just between us and God but is corporate.
Add your voice to the biggest evangelical movement in the UK

We’re looking for more voices.

We’re looking for more people who want to shape the evangelical movement across the UK, people who want to help us speak to government and make sure that the Evangelical Alliance brings real, lasting change to people and communities.

Will you join us? You’ll also get a free bi-monthly copy of idea (the biggest Christian magazine in the UK), access to members-only resources and much more.

Join us. We’re better together.

eauk.org/join
Afterword

As disciples of Christ we are all learners, seeking to grow in our knowledge of God and pursuing lives of faith that honour Him in today’s busy world. Churches across the UK are helping Christians to do this, and I hope that these findings will help with this important work.

It’s so encouraging to see from this report that evangelicals really know God is at work in their lives, and it’s great to hear the stories of God’s faithfulness to people in good times and bad. It’s also exciting to hear that Christians are using innovative ways to spend time with God, embracing new smartphone technology to help them read the Bible and pray on the go.

Yet, challenges remain, and this research is designed to spark conversations and ideas in your church. It raises some important questions for us all, such as: how can we make sure that our churches are effectively discipling Christians at all stages of their faith? How can churches equip people to share their faith with others? What can help us avoid life’s distractions and set aside time to be with God?

My prayer is that this research will inspire and provoke you to continue to live the life of a disciple, walking with other believers and sharing your faith with those around you.

Steve Clifford, general director, Evangelical Alliance

Discussion questions and a Powerpoint presentation of key findings can be downloaded free on our website.

For more detailed information about the research, and to join our research panel, visit eauk.org/snapshot

For more on discipleship visit eauk.org/discipleship

A fuller data report is also available on request from g.smith@eauk.org