



# ***Global Religious Trends 2010 to 2020***

**A discussion paper**



**by Dr Peter Brierley  
Senior Associate for Church Research**

**January 2010**

# ***Global Religious Trends 2010 to 2020***

## **A discussion paper**

### Contents

	<u>Page</u>
Executive Summary	2
Introduction	4
1 The world population is growing but the Christian proportion is static	5
2 The proportion of Christians who are Evangelical is growing	8
3 The Challenge of other Religions	12
4 Demographic Change and Church Life	16
5 The Number of Immigrants and its Implications	29
6 The Evangelical Tribes	35
7 Lack of Confidence and Other Trends	48
Appendix 1: Additional Tables	54
Appendix 2: About Brierley Consultancy	57

## **Executive Summary**

**T**his paper looks at ten religious, demographic and other trends current in today's world which are likely to be of strategic importance for the forward thinking and planning of Christian leaders in churches, denominations, organisations, training institutions and other related activities, especially in the decade ahead, the years 2010 to 2020.

**1) *The Christian percentage of the world's population is static.*** While Christians represent an increasing proportion of the developing world's population (likely to be 26% by 2020), it is decreasing in the developed world (78%). It is especially shrinking in North America and Oceania. The overall average is 33%, that is, a third of the world's population is nominally Christian and has been since 1970.

**2) *The proportion of Evangelical Christians is growing.*** Evangelical Christians are growing numerically (by over 250 million in the next 10 years) and as a proportion of Christians (about 40% in both the developing and developed worlds). The growth is real but relatively slow. Evangelicals are likely to be 14% of the world's population by 2020. The key reasons for growth are global conversion growth offset by the decline of non-evangelicals in the developed world.

**3) *Islam is also growing as a proportion of the world's population.*** Alone of the world's major religions, Islam is also growing both numerically and as a percentage of the global population (likely to be 22% by 2020). Islam and Evangelicals are the only growing religious groups today and, as has already been evident during the past decade, are likely to continue to clash in key areas. There would appear to be a growing number of Muslims who truly worship Jesus but remain in their Islamic community.

**4) *There are fewer younger and more older people.*** The fertility rate is falling in developing countries, partly because of declining mortality rates, but also because more women, being educated, wish to work rather than stay at home. The fertility rate is increasing in developed countries, but largely because immigrant women have more babies than the indigenous population. Better medication is allowing the many AIDS sufferers to live longer, and better health means people's average life expectancy is greater – the percentage of those 60 and over will move from 11% in the world in 2010 to 14% by 2020, an increase of 300 million people. This is an especially serious problem for Europe.

However, there are relatively few young people attending church probably in the developing world and certainly in the developed world. Proportions of older people attending church are much greater. This has implications for culture, service and worship patterns, in which the generational differences are large. Both global demographic change and churchgoing age trends will continue in the directions given in the next 10 years, with profound and pervasive implications.

**5) *Immigration will increasingly be a major factor in population movement and church life.*** Major intra-continental migrations are currently taking place as well as inter-continental movements. Many immigrants (including asylum seekers and refugees) wish to follow their own religions in their country of adoption. Christian immigration has caused important church growth in Britain and elsewhere, some of which is quite deliberate ("reverse" mission). But growth in other religions, especially Islam, is also happening. The challenge is to integrate immigrant church leaders, to learn from them, and to celebrate with them.

**6) *Evangelicals are not a cohesive body.*** An analysis of the Evangelical Tribes in Britain indicates that the Pentecostal, Conservative non-separatists and Post/emergent evangelicals are all growing, and likely to continue to do so over the next decade. New (or House) Church evangelicals are static. Conservative separatists, Charismatic and Open/mainline denominational evangelicals are all declining, especially the last (the more traditional group). Again this has important implications for church culture, evangelism, leadership, communication and worship.

There are key age differences in these Tribes, but gender differences are less important. Where the different Tribes are located (and thus the type of ministry they are able to give) varies also, as does their ethnicity, the Pentecostals being especially different from other groups. Size of church is also a factor, with New Church and Pentecostal churches being largest and Conservative non-separatists and Open/mainline evangelicals the smallest.

These differences and trends almost certainly apply across the developed world; it is not known how far they are found in the developing world.

**7) *Lack of Confidence in the Gospel.*** The final Chapter looks at four further trends more briefly. One of these is the loss of confidence in the Good News of Jesus Christ which is partly responsible for the plummeting numbers of new Christians in the developed world. This does not appear to be a trend in the developing world.

**8) *Changing Forms of Family.*** Again more of a feature in the developed world, patterns of family life are rapidly changing with divorce common, cohabiting instead of marriage increasing rapidly, and a surging number of one-parent families (mostly the mother). These household structures are very poorly represented in church where the majority of attenders (67%) are traditional married couples (with or without children). Over the next 10 years, the proportion of households with married people is set to become a minority of all households, and the church needs to adapt to this changing situation or else become increasingly irrelevant to the majority.

**9) *The Challenge of Technology.*** The pace of technological change is frightening, and the moral foundations within it are shifting rapidly, as well as the actual mechanisms of communication. Facebook, YouTube, Twitter may be very popular currently but are likely to be forgotten by 2020! The culture and language implicit within these changes are crucially important for the younger generations, and church leaders must learn to use, adapt and put resources into these areas if they are to be relevant and effective in the years ahead.

**10) *We are moving out of the Judaeo-Christian tradition.*** The world as most of us know it is fast disappearing, partly due to major political changes, partly because of moral degradation, and partly because of the economic growth in India and China (and the authority that goes with that) where cultures are very different from cultures in the developed world. The absence of vision, confusion of values, loss of the common good, deterioration of dialogue and loss of personal decency are all consequences. Complete globalization, one world currency, one supreme world rule as envisaged in Scripture, may not be too far distant in the present century.

However, behind all these changes stands an unchanging Jesus Christ, the same, yesterday, today and for ever, Who has promised to be with us until the end of the age. Maranatha!

## **Introduction**

The world scene is moving at a very fast pace. Many far-reaching changes are taking place at this moment in time, both religious and secular. What are the key dimensions of these changes which will impact the witness of the church in the immediate years ahead? This paper looks at some of the most important trends from religious, demographic and other perspectives to identify some of the relevant strategic developments which Christian leaders need to wrestle with.

### **Origins**

The origins of this paper date back a few years to before the 2004 Forum for World Evangelization hosted by the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization in Pattaya, Thailand. As the Lausanne Senior Associate for Church Research, and then serving on the Lausanne Administration Committee, I was asked to write a paper for Forum participants on “Evangelicals in the World of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, which was published in one of the subsequent volumes emerging from the Forum.<sup>1</sup> At one of the International Committee meetings following that publication, planning for the upcoming Lausanne III Congress in Cape Town, South Africa in October, 2010, I offered to write a similar but wider ranging paper for that Congress, an offer accepted by the Congress Director, Blair Carlson, and the International Chairman, Doug Birdsall. This paper is the consequence of that acceptance.

Inevitably some of the trends previously noted will need to be repeated here but they are revisited as although the basic underlying data has only been adjusted and extended it is necessary to think through their implications in greater depth. However, the opportunity is also taken to look at other trends, some of a “softer” nature than simple statistical evidence sometimes allows, since these too fashion our world and the opportunities that lie ahead.

### **Sources of Data**

Some global data is readily obtained through sources such as the *World Christian Encyclopedia* or the *World Religion Database* (cited as appropriate in footnotes). A relatively new partial source is the World Values Survey, but, in general terms, the developed world has much more data about itself than the developing world. Hence some trends, especially on intra-country immigration, and the different types of evangelicals, in Chapters 5 and 6 respectively, are described much more from a developed-world or even just UK perspective, but included here as “global” since these trends *and their implications* could well spread beyond the developed world into the developing world in the years ahead. Inevitably therefore some of the global implications are extrapolated from a much narrower base.

It is also important to recognise that the developing world is not an extension of the developed world, and some developed-world trends may not be seen by the developing-world, and vice versa.

---

<sup>1</sup> See *A New Vision, a New Heart, a Renewed Call*, edited by Rev David Clayton, William Carey Library, Pasadena, California, 2005, Page 456f.

## **1) The world population is growing but the Christian proportion is static**

The population of the world is increasing quite rapidly. The latest United Nations (UN) Population Division figures indicate that in January 2010 there were just over 6.9 billion people on planet earth, up from 6.5 billion in 2005, and predicted to become 7.0 billion by 2012.<sup>2</sup> On current trends, the global population is likely to be 9.2 billion by 2050, which is a net increase of 0.7% per annum, or 33 million persons.

### ***Developing countries increase most in population***

Most of the increase over this period is among the developing countries<sup>3</sup>, increasing, as Table 1 shows, from 5.7 billion in 2010 to 8.0 billion by 2050<sup>4</sup>. The increase in the developed countries<sup>5</sup> is just 70 million, and this only because of the huge net flow of immigrants into these countries (over 87 million) expected over the next 4 decades.

*Table 1: Total world population in millions, by continent, 1970-2050*

Year	Developing World				Developed World				WORLD TOTAL
	Latin America	Africa	Asia	TOTAL	Europe	North America	Oceania	TOTAL	
1970	285	366	2,157	2,808	658	227	19	904	3,712
1990	442	631	3,183	4,256	723	278	26	1,027	5,283
2010	599	1,026	4,174	5,799	728	344	35	1,107	6,831
2030	714	1,490	4,812	7,016	731	412	43	1,186	8,202
2050	783	2,062	5,131	7,976	698	480	49	1,227	9,203

Half of the increase in population in the period of 40 years between 2010 and 2050 will be across 9 countries, which are, in order of contribution to the increase: India, Pakistan, Nigeria, Ethiopia, United States, Democratic Republic of Congo, United Republic of Tanzania, China and Bangladesh. Four of these countries are in Asia, four in Africa. Only one, the United States, is in the developed world.

The increase is a net figure. Populations decrease as well as increase. A quarter of the world's nations, 45 in all, are expected to see their population decrease in this period, 17 of which will see their population decline by at least 10%. These are Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cuba, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, the Republic of Korea,

<sup>2</sup> Population Estimates and Projections, United Nations Population Division, Press Release, March 2009.

<sup>3</sup> This term is taken in this paper to represent the continents of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

<sup>4</sup> The detail in the Table is taken from the US Census Bureau International Data Base, [www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/region.php](http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/region.php) accessed 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2009.

<sup>5</sup> Taken here to include the continents of Europe, North America and Oceania.

Romania, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. Thirteen of these are in Europe, 14 if Russia is included.

What does this mean for the church and mission work? In one sense, simply that there are more people to reach, and therefore more labourers are required for the harvest field. In many of these countries, the fields are white, ready to harvest. It is equally true that huge residues of poverty exist, and the practical needs of relief and development are not likely to diminish in the decades ahead. A recent publication by Todd Johnson explores this further.<sup>6</sup>

However, some populations are hard to establish. Table 1 uses the US Population Bureau figures which appear to ignore immigrants coming into Europe. Forecasting by linear regression is invalid as the population of Europe goes through a U-turn in the period under examination. With many European countries projecting a decreasing population inevitably workers will be welcomed from other countries because of the shortage of labour. The figures for 2030 therefore contain an estimate of 30 million and 50 million immigrants for the years 2030 and 2050 respectively. This takes into account estimates of the total population given by Eurostat, the Statistical Office of the European Commission.<sup>7</sup>

### *Christian trends worldwide*

A detailed analysis<sup>8</sup> of the figures in the 2001 *World Christian Encyclopaedia* shows that the Christian<sup>9</sup> proportion of the world's population, at 33%, is unlikely to change significantly in the first half of this century, as shown in Table 2:

*Table 2: Changing proportions of Christians*

Item	Developing countries	Developed countries	World: All countries
% Christian 1970	18%	80%	33%
% Christian 1990	22%	79%	33%
% Christian 2010	25%	77%	33%
% Christian 2030	27%	72%	34%
% Christian 2050	29%	67%	34%

Christianity is steadily expanding in the developing countries, but is projected by David Barrett and others to do so at a slower rate of increase in the years from 2010 than the previous 40 years. These countries between them represented more than four-fifths (84%) of the world's population in 2010. However, Christianity is declining in the developed world at an increasing rate, much faster in the next 40 years than the last 40.

The reason for the growth in the developing countries is important. World-wide, the annual birth rate of children into Christian families exceeds the birth rate of children into non-Christian families and hence the proportion of Christians could be expected to increase over time. However, while there is a positive conversion rate into the Christian faith in the developing world (+ 1.1%), there is a negative conversion rate in the developed world (-0.8%), and this exodus is more than sufficient

<sup>6</sup> *The Demographics and dynamics of Christian expansion*, Todd Johnson, Crowther Centre Monographs No 10, Oxford, September 2009.

<sup>7</sup> Given in *Europe in figures*, Eurostat Yearbook 2008, Eurostat, European Commission, European Communities, 2008.

<sup>8</sup> *Evangelicals in the World of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Peter Brierley in op cit Footnote 1, Appendix B, Page 456.

<sup>9</sup> Defined as "Followers of Jesus Christ as Lord, of all kinds, all traditions and confessions, and all degrees of commitment." This is also taken from the *World Christian Encyclopaedia*, edited David Barrett, George Kurian and Todd Johnson, Oxford University Press, New York, 2001.

to offset the biological gains.<sup>10</sup>

It is easy to be misled by percentages. Between 1990 and 2010 the number of Christians in the developing world increased from 943 million to 1,412 million<sup>11</sup>, an increase of 50%, or the equivalent of 64,000 extra Christians *per day*. In the same period, the number of Christians in the developed world increased from 811 million to 863 million, an increase of just 6%, or the equivalent of 7,000 extra Christians per day – but how many of these are due to Christian immigrants coming into these continents is not known.

Learning from the experience (and often persecution and suffering) of the Christians in the developing world is not just essential for the developed world but critical if the number of Christians in the developed world is not to go into irreversible decline. In 1970, nearly three-fifths (58%) of the world's Christians were in the developed world; in 2010 it was under two-fifths (38%), and is likely to be only just above a quarter (27%) by 2050 if present trends continue.

### *What does this mean for 2010 to 2020?*

In the immediate 10 years ahead, 2010 to 2020, these longer term trends do not change – that is, an increasing proportion of Christians in the developing world and a smaller proportion in the developed world. The numbers of Christians being added to the church will continue to be about 70,000 per day, this being a net number resulting from births and conversions less deaths and those leaving. The implications are:

- The harvest field grows ever bigger
- The continuing need to pray for, encourage and learn from the Christian growth in the developing world
- The importance of stemming the lapse rate of Christians in the developed world.

---

<sup>10</sup> The detail behind these figures is given in Table 10 of the paper mentioned in Footnote 8.

<sup>11</sup> Figures are given in Table 3.

## **2) The proportion of Christians who are Evangelical is growing**

The total Christian community by continent is given in Table 3. This is based on the *World Christian Encyclopedia* (WCE) but updated from figures on the World Religion Database<sup>12</sup> and an annual Table published by OMSC<sup>13</sup>.

*Table 3: Christian community in millions, by continent, 1970-2050*

Year	Developing World				Developed World				WORLD TOTAL
	Latin America	Africa	Asia	TOTAL	Europe	North America	Oceania	TOTAL	
1970	270	144	102	516	495	211	18	724	1,240
1990	411	277	255	943	552	237	22	811	1,754
2010	561	503	372	1,436	592	239	25	856	2,292
2030	698	724	525	1,948	561	260	29	850	2,798
2050	840	928	665	2,434	517	275	32	824	3,258

While these figures follow the percentages given in Table 2, they can be misleading in giving a false sense of security as the numbers increase. Table 4 gives the proportion, to one decimal place, of the number of Christians in relation to the relevant population (in Table 1, and expanding Table 2):

*Table 4: Percentage of Christians by continent, 1970-2050*

Year	Developing World				Developed World				Overall World %
	Latin America %	Africa %	Asia %	Overall %	Europe %	North America %	Oceania %	Overall %	
1970	94.7	39.3	4.7	18.4	75.2	93.0	94.7	80.0	33.4
1990	94.0	43.9	8.0	22.2	76.3	85.3	84.6	79.0	33.2
2010	93.6	49.0	8.9	24.7	81.3	69.5	71.4	77.3	33.3
2030	93.2	47.8	10.9	27.1	76.7	63.1	67.4	71.7	33.6
2050	92.9	45.4	13.0	29.2	74.1	57.3	65.3	67.2	34.2

<sup>12</sup> For details see [www.worldreligiondatabase.org](http://www.worldreligiondatabase.org).

<sup>13</sup> Found in each January edition of the *International Bulletin for Missionary Research*, published by the Overseas Ministries Study Center, New Haven, CT 06511, United States.

Latin America, North America and Oceania see their percentages consistently decline over this 80 year period, and particularly severely in North America. Both the African and European percentages increase initially but begin to decrease after 2010 and 2030 respectively. Only the Asian percentages increase throughout the period. These percentages are graphed in Figure 1 below:

*Figure 1: Proportion of relevant population which is Christian*

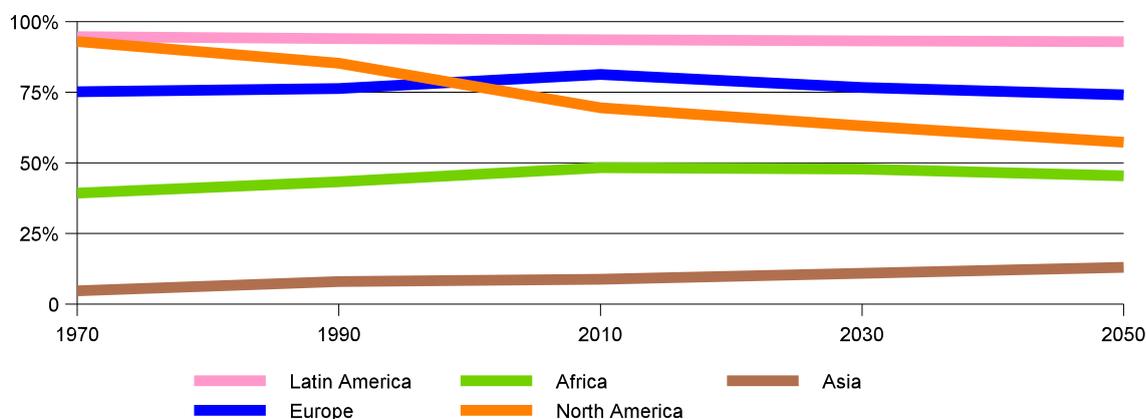


Figure 1 shows that the decline in the proportion of Christians in North America is the most dramatic line, along with Oceania which is not shown separately as it is very similar to that of North America.

### *Number of Evangelicals*

Table 5 gives the number of Evangelicals, including Pentecostals and Charismatics<sup>14</sup>, in the Christian community, the percentages from which they are derived being given in the earlier paper.<sup>15</sup> Table 6 then takes the main totals and expresses them as percentages either of the Christian community or the world population.

*Table 5: Evangelicals within the Christian community in millions, by continent, 1970-2050*

Year	Developing World				Developed World				WORLD TOTAL
	Latin America	Africa	Asia	TOTAL	Europe	North America	Oceania	TOTAL	
1970	11	17	44	72	129	53	4	186	258
1990	119	94	161	374	168 <sup>1</sup>	97	8	273	647
2010	169	176	219	564	203	119	10	332	896
2030	229	263	320	812	209	147	12	368	1,180
2050	278	375	403	1,056	218	176	15	409	1,465

<sup>1</sup> Revised figure

<sup>14</sup> Pentecostals and charismatics are “involved with Christ’s mission on earth; synonymous with believers in Jesus Christ who are aware of the implications of Christ’s great Commission, who have accepted its personal challenge in their lives and ministries, are attempting to obey his commands and mandates, and who are seeking to influence the body of Christ to implement it.” This is also taken from the *World Christian Encyclopaedia*, op cit.

<sup>15</sup> See op cit Footnote 1, Table 9.

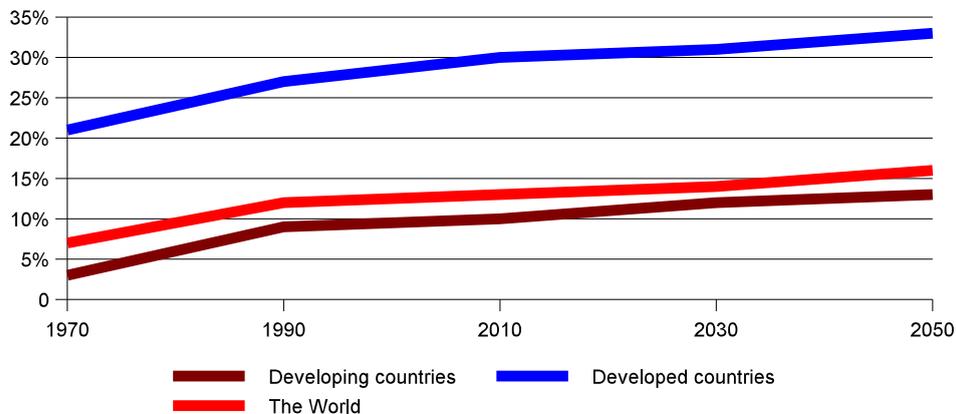
*Table 6: Proportions of Evangelicals in the Christian community and world population, 1970-2050*

Item	Developing World		Developed World		World Overall	
	Christian community	Population	Christian community	Population	Christian community	Population
1970	14	3	26	21	21	7
1990	39	9	34	27	37	12
2010	39	10	39	30	39	13
2030	43	12	43	31	43	14
2050	45	13	50	33	46	16

It should be noted that in 2010 Evangelicals formed 10% of the population of developing countries and three times that percentage (30%) in developed countries, implying that such a proportion should be exercising a much greater influence nationally and internationally than they appear to do.

The proportion of Evangelicals in the population is illustrated in Figure 2:

*Figure 2: Proportion of Evangelicals in the population, 1970-2050*



### *Rates of Conversion*

Within the Christian family the proportion of Evangelicals doubles between 1970 and 2050, from 21% in 1970 to 46% in 2050. Two-fifths (40%) of Christians were Evangelical in 2010. The *World Christian Encyclopedia* gives an analysis of the changes between 1990 and 2000 broken down by biological change and conversion change between Evangelicals and Non-evangelicals. This shows that the number of Evangelicals is increasing because the conversion rate for Non-evangelicals is negative in the developed world (-1.0%, that is, people are leaving the Christian faith) but positive for Evangelicals (+1.1%), although this is lower in the developing world (+1.0% to +1.2%). These figures are given in more detail in Figure 3 on the next page.

*Figure 3: Rates of Biological and Conversion growth*

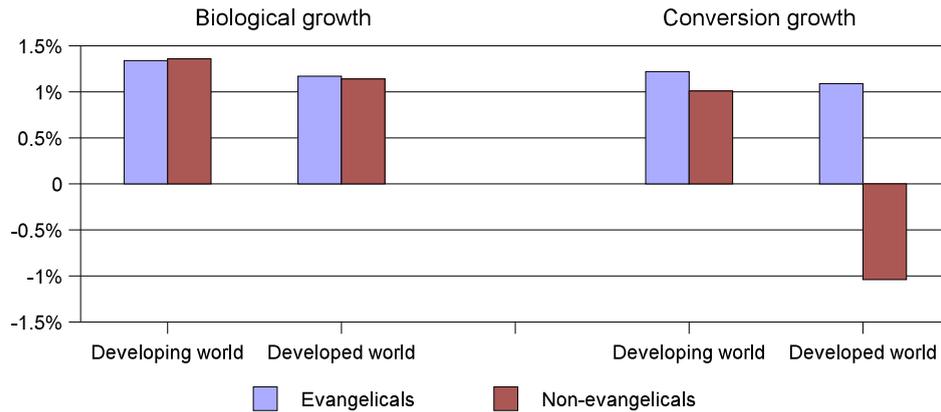


Figure 3 shows there is little difference in biological growth between Evangelicals and Non-evangelicals in either the developing or developed worlds. The difference is in the rates of conversion growth, in which Evangelical growth is consistently higher than Non-evangelical. Furthermore there is little difference in Evangelical conversion rates between the developing and developed worlds, but there is a huge difference in the Non-evangelical rates, where in the developed world Non-evangelicals are actively declining, and it is this difference which is the major cause of the gradual increase in the Evangelical proportion of world Christianity.

### *What does all this mean for 2010 to 2020?*

For the next decade, there would appear to be little change from those already in place. The worldwide dynamic influence of the charismatic movement and the huge growth of Christianity in the developing world which took place in the 1970s and 1980s continues to be outworked and no dramatic change is expected from these figures. It should be noted that in 2010, 13% of the world's population (Table 5) were Evangelical, though how many of these are active churchgoers is not known.

In his excellent book<sup>16</sup>, *The Longview*, Roger Parrott points out there is a huge difference between planning ahead and watching for God's opportunities, and that it is the latter rather than the former which so often makes the key difference in the outcome. Almost certainly the same is true of the development of Evangelicals in the decade ahead. This suggests the following:

- Evangelicals need especially to watch for the opportunities God will create
- The importance of focussing on conversion growth needs to be constantly maintained
- How can Evangelicals most strategically use their growing strength?

<sup>16</sup> *The Longview*, Dr Roger Parrott, David Cook, Colorado Springs, United States, 1990, Chapter 8.

### **3) The Challenge of other Religions**

Other world religions than Christianity are also going to be dominant on the world stage in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To support this statement, Tables giving the basic facts, showing the number of Muslims, those belonging to other religions, and those belonging to no religion (taken as the total of Atheists and Nonreligious in the WCE) are given in Appendix 1 as Tables A1 to A3 respectively. The total of these three Tables plus the figures in Table 3 equate to the population figures in Table 1.

#### ***Nominal Christians***

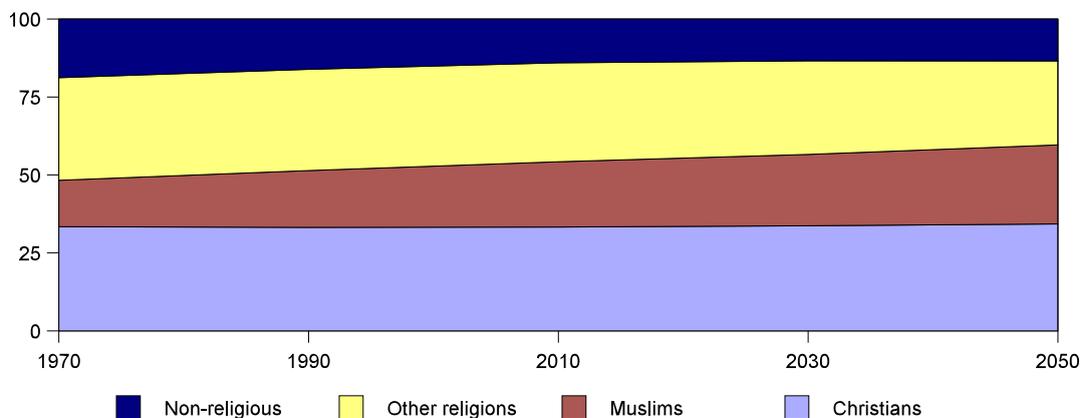
Estimating numbers of Christians and Non-Christians, especially in Europe, is hard to achieve accurately because of the large number of nominal Christians, that is, those who say they are Christian on a Census form but do not attend church or in any other material way demonstrate any faith or moral behaviour based on that statement. In the UK, the regular British Social Attitudes Surveys have been monitoring this for over 25 years and have shown that the decrease in Christian affiliation is largely linked to the national church, the Church of England, and that such disaffiliates now reckon they are not religious. The same phenomenon is very likely to occur in other European countries with whichever State Church they have, as was evidenced in some of the papers given in the 1999 Lausanne Consultation on Nominalism.

The same broad phenomenon of nominality is not confined to Christianity. There are plenty of nominal Muslims, Hindus and so on in Europe also! The numbers of other religions in Europe in Table A2 does not take nominality into account, and they broadly follow the findings of the research of Darrell Jackson.<sup>17</sup>

#### ***Overall trends***

The overall trends are illustrated in terms of proportions of the world population in Figure 4:

*Figure 4: World population by religious group, 1970-2050*



<sup>17</sup> *Mapping Migration*, Darrell Jackson and Alessia Passarelli, Churches' Commission for Migrants in Europe (World Council of Churches) and Nova Research Centre, Brussels, 2008.

This graph shows three broad trends:

- The Christian proportion of the world's population is static;
- The proportion of Muslims is growing;
- The proportions of other religions and non-religious are decreasing.

Thus while the numbers of Hindus, Buddhists, and so on continue to increase in numerical terms, they are doing so because the populations of the countries in which they are largely based, like India and Thailand, are also increasing, but as a proportion of the whole caucus they are declining. This may be seen by looking at the proportion of the world's population each of these groups accounts for over the period, given in the next Table:

*Table 7: Proportion of the world's population by different religious groups, 1970-2050*

Year	Christian %	Muslim %	Other religions %	Non- religious %	Base in millions (=100%)
1970	33	15	33	19	3,712
1990	33	18	33	16	5,283
2010	33	21	32	14	6,831
2030	34	23	30	13	8,202
2050	34	25	27	14	9,203

In 1970 other religions and the non-religious formed together just over half (52%) of the world's population. By 2050, that dominance will be reduced to two-fifths (41%), with the difference largely made up by the increasing proportion of Muslims. Table 8 summarises the position by region.

*Table 8: Percentage of world population who are Muslim*

Item	Developing World	Developed World	World Overall
% Muslims 1970	19%	2%	15%
% Muslims 2050	30%	5%	25%

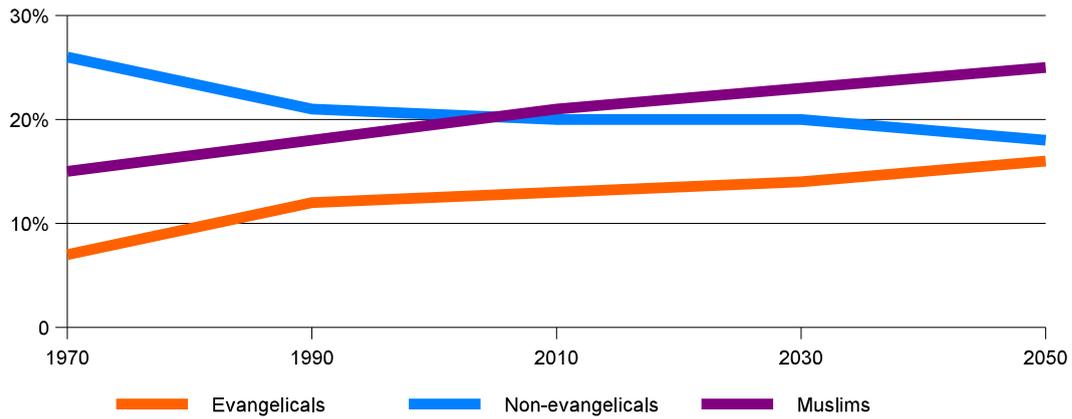
### **Muslims and Evangelicals**

The above Table and the earlier one showing the proportion of Evangelicals (Table 6) make it clear that at this time **there are only two significantly growing religious groups in the world** – the Muslims and the Evangelicals. This is clearly seen in Figure 5 on the next page.

Some of the implications of the especially large growth of Muslims in the continent of Europe are considered in Chapter 5, but the quintupling of the number of Muslims in Europe from about 2.7 million in 1970 to perhaps 15.2 million in 2010 is an important factor for population growth, numbers of immigrants, opposition to Christianity, and the impact on social and health services, with possible strategic political overtones. "Self-confident autonomous Muslim communities ... become much more activist, politicised, and religiously conservative than the people they claim to represent."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>18</sup> *God's Continent, Christianity, Islam and Europe's Religious Crisis*, by Professor Philip Jenkins, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, Page 137.

Figure 5: Proportion of Christians and Muslims of the world's population, 1970-2050



Muslims worldwide roughly outnumber evangelicals 2:1. David Watson, the British evangelist, once wrote, “the real contest today is between Third World Christianity and Islam.”<sup>19</sup> His comment remains true, except that it is no longer confined to the Third World. In a number of countries these two growing religious groups co-exist side by side or very close to each other. There has already been much violence as a consequence as in Nigeria, for instance. Unfortunately it seems likely that such confrontations are likely to continue and probably get worse. How do Christians in vulnerable areas best prepare for possible flare-ups and persecution? How can others outside those areas best help them?

It should be noted that Muslims and Evangelicals are growing at about the same rate, and also that while non-evangelicals are declining, even by 2050 they are still in the slight majority of Christians worldwide.

### Conversions to/from Christianity and Islam

The number of conversions from Christianity to Islam is not known on a worldwide scale, but estimates do exist in some countries. On the basis of evidence from the Census of Population in Scotland in 2001, for instance, it has been suggested that there could be as many as 5,000 conversions to Islam per year in the UK, perhaps half through marriage<sup>20</sup>. This is more than the 3,000 estimated in Rosemary Sookhdeo’s book.<sup>21</sup> However, the number of conversions in the UK from Islam to Christianity are very few. Worldwide, there are many reports of God using dreams to help people put their faith in Jesus, especially Muslims.

### Christians in disguise?

There is another trend currently taking place which started perhaps 20 years or so ago. There are some Muslims who worship Jesus, read and study the Bible, pray to God the Father, and generally seek to live an upright and moral life, but who continue to attend a mosque and say they are Muslim. The *International Journal of Frontier Missiology* ran a series of articles on this topic in 2007, and in one of them, “Biblical Muslims”, mission strategist Rick Brown explains why he feels those following such practices are genuine Christians. He summarises an earlier work by giving 6 different categories or criteria for distinguishing them<sup>22</sup>, starting each with the letter C:

<sup>19</sup> *Sex and the City of God*, Gordon Preece, Zadok Paper S125, Winter 2003, Zadok Institute for Christianity and Society, Fitzroy, Australia, Page 11.

<sup>20</sup> Presentation to Elam Ministries, Peter Brierley, May 2007.

<sup>21</sup> *Why Women convert to Islam*, by Rosemary Sookhdeo, Isaac, 2007.

<sup>22</sup> “Biblical Muslims”, Rick Brown, *International journal of Frontier Missiology*, William Carey International University Press, Pasadena, California, Volume 24, Number 2, April-June 2007, Page 65.

C1) Believers are open about their new spiritual identity as disciples of Jesus Christ and citizens of God's eternal Kingdom; they also have a new socioreligious identity as converts to a Christian social group; they follow primarily outsider religious practices and they use outsider language and terminology.

C2) As (C1) but they use insider language, usually with outsider terminology.

C3) As C(2) but they use many insider terms and many religious practices that seem compatible with the Bible, although not ones that are particular to the socioreligious community of their birth.

C4) As (C3) but they seek a distinct socioreligious identity that is neither the insider identity of their birth nor the identity of a convert to Christianity.

C5) As (C4) but they retain the socioreligious identity of their birth and might use insider terms and practices particular to the community of their birth, as long as they seem compatible with the Bible.

C6) As (C5) but they are secretive about their new spiritual identity.

Subsequent articles debated whether those in categories (5) and (6) were really Christian. It is also apparent that this phenomenon is not confined to Muslims. There are Biblical Hindus, and Biblical Buddhists also, and maybe others in other religious groups. Messianic Jews have a long and esteemed history; are these new disciples effectively Messianic Muslims?

While a number of such groups of Muslims, Hindus, etc. have been reported, especially in Bangladesh and Indonesia, there has not been any attempt, to the best of my knowledge, to assess how many people are involved. The total number at present is likely to be modest, but this is a trend which presumably will grow involving more and more people. Some evangelicals regard this as syncretism, but not all agree, and especially those working at the frontier of Muslim evangelisation. Professor Jonas Jørgensen writes of two field studies which suggest that judgement should not be hasty about "indigenous forms of Christianity as either authentic contextualization or illegitimate syncretisms" but that "the interreligious hermeneutics at work" should be examined carefully<sup>23</sup>. This is a difficult area, however. Latha Rajasekhar, a devout Hindu, wrote of her love for Jesus Christ in a 900-page epic, which has received accolades from eminent Hindu scholars and has been welcomed as incarnating "Christ in local milieu" by Rev Franklin Prabhun, a pastor of the Church of South India in Mysore<sup>24</sup>.

### *So what does all this mean, especially for the next decade?*

Over the next 10 years, the proportion of Evangelicals in the world's population will continue to grow, as will the proportion of Muslims. Interaction, engagement and sometimes violence will increasingly be involved. Churches in those areas, Dioceses or countries likely to be particularly affected need to prepare how to react to any extreme pressures before they happen. Hence:

- Prior preparation for involvement is likely to ease difficult situations, and help promote harmony and well-being.
- People in other religions are increasingly likely to wish to follow Christ without leaving their own religious culture, adapting Biblical norms accordingly.
- The number of nominal Christians and nominal adherents of other religions will continue to grow. Perhaps there is a need for a Second Lausanne Consultation on Nominalism.

---

<sup>23</sup> Article "Jesus Imanders and Christ Bhaktas: Report from Two Field Studies of Interreligious Hermeneutics and Identity in Globalized Christianity" by Asst Research Professor Jonas Jørgensen, University of Copenhagen, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Volume 33, number 4, October 2009, Page 171.

<sup>24</sup> Article "Jesus Christ, a Hindu inspiration", by Anto Akkara, *Inside Out*, Issue 55, September 2009, Council for World Mission.

## 4) Demographic Change and Church Life

The study of demography is immensely important for church life. Not only does the general study help us understand more about the population we serve in terms of age and gender, but it also allows us to have information on likely length of life, and, through cohort analysis, enables us to understand how the population is changing over time.

### *Forecasting the population*

When the United States Population Bureau or the United Nations (UN) are providing forecasts about the world's population, three key criteria are borne in mind:

#### *a) The average fertility rate per woman<sup>25</sup>*

The UN experts believe that fertility will continue to fall in the majority of countries in the developing world. Details are summarised in Table 9<sup>26</sup>. The sensitivity of these figures may be seen in the fact that should their figure for developing countries in 2050 be wrong, and the average fertility then was 2.50 instead of the expected 2.05, the world population would rise to 10.5 billion instead of the projected 9.2 billion! They also expect, in contrast, that the average fertility will rise slightly in the developed countries, despite the projected population decline in 45 countries.

*Table 9: Changing fertility rates*

Item	Developing World	Developed World	World: Overall
Average fertility 2009	2.73	1.64	2.56
Average fertility 2050	2.05	1.80	2.02

Why should the fertility rate in the developed countries be rising when it is declining elsewhere? There are two trends which help account for this. One is the number of immigrants coming into developed countries, looked at in more detail below, which causes the number of children born to rise as women take advantage of the better maternity conditions in developed countries. Secondly there is the increase in some countries of the numbers of national children being born to older women. In the UK, for example, the percentage of births to women 35 or over has increased from 15% of all births in 1998 to 20% in 2008, an increase in the actual number of births to women in this age bracket of 54%. (This has an impact on congregational life as well).

Women in developing countries are wanting fewer children, so more are using contraceptives, which are becoming more widely available. One sixth (18%) of women in sub-Saharan Africa now use these, and the fertility rate in Kenya, for example, has fallen from 8.0 in 1993 to 5.3 in 2008<sup>27</sup>, a very rapid decline. Also more women are now receiving education and are wanting to work rather than raise a family, so again the fertility rate drops.

---

<sup>25</sup> The fertility rate is the average number of children born to a woman over her life-time. It is measured by taking the number of births and dividing by the number of women aged 15 to 45, roughly their child-bearing age.

<sup>26</sup> Population Estimates and Projections, United Nations Population Division, Press Release, March 2009.

<sup>27</sup> From the website [www.overpopulation.com](http://www.overpopulation.com), accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2009.

Part of the reason for falling fertility is better infant mortality rates through generally improved health provision.

*Table 10: Changing infant mortality rates*

Item	Developing World	Developed World	World: Overall
Average mortality rate 2009	4.7%	0.6%	4.3%
Average mortality rate 2050	1.7%	0.4%	1.6%

If there is less chance that half your children will die before they are five years old, women will have fewer children. Mortality rates are given in Table 10, but still show a big difference between developing and developed countries

#### *b) The number of people with AIDS*

It is both the number of people with HIV/AIDS in different countries that is important and the proportion of them receiving anti-retroviral treatment. Both are expected to increase, with between at least 40% and 50% of all sufferers having this treatment (and many more in some countries) in the decades ahead, thereby increasing the average length of life for a person getting the disease from 12 years to 28 years.

The number of people living with AIDS worldwide in 2008 was estimated as 33.4 million<sup>28</sup>, of whom 2.1 million were children, 15.7 were adult women and 15.6 were men. 2.7 million people were newly affected, and 2.0 million people died in 2008. While the number represents 0.8% of the world's population, it includes 5.2% of the population of sub-Saharan Africa.

#### *c) Immigration*

This is not strictly a demographic feature in the sense that immigrants do not increase the world's population, just the population of different countries. It is, however, of immense importance as a continuing trend, with many implications for the church. It is looked at specially in a subsequent chapter.

### ***Numbers of older people are increasing***

One consequence of the situation the UN figures describe (of smaller numbers of children being born) is that the percentage of older people increases. This is enormously helped by the better standard and wider availability of improved health resources in many countries, which means that people live longer. Table 11 shows the increasing proportion of older people, which is likely to rise in both the developing and developed worlds. Across the world the proportion of those over 60 is set to double, increasing in numerical terms from 750 million in 2009 to 2 billion by 2050.

---

<sup>28</sup> From the website [www.alert.org/worldstats.htm](http://www.alert.org/worldstats.htm), accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2009, but quoting figures from UNAIDS of November, 2009.

Table 11: Increasing numbers of elderly people

Item	Developing World	Developed World	World: Overall
% Over 60 2009	9%	21%	11%
% Over 60 2050	20%	33%	22%
Average life 2009	66 years	77 years	68 years
Average life 2050	74 years	83 years	76 years

The UN uses the figure of 60 to distinguish “elderly” people, but in at least one survey a majority of people agreed with statement that “people over 50 are written off as old”<sup>29</sup>.

The developed world includes the continent of Europe, and the demographic trends here are so major in their significance (and warning to everyone else) that we need to look at them separately.

### European Trends

The population changes in Europe are of course included within the totals for developed countries, but the demographic changes taking place within Europe are quite untypical of what is happening elsewhere.

#### Fertility Rate

The population replacement level, called the Total Fertility Rate (TFR), is 2.1 children per woman on average. If the TFR is below 2.1 the population is declining, and if it is above, it is increasing. Naturally it varies somewhat in any particular area or country over relatively long periods of time, say decades, and the overall trend is important as well as the absolute value.

If the value is too low then it is very difficult for the population to grow quickly; the proportion of elderly people increases and the consequent ratio of elderly to the workforce makes it difficult for the government to get sufficient income tax to pay for services provided. Elderly people need more medical care; in the UK, for example, there are expected to be 1.7 million people with dementia in 2050<sup>30</sup>. So the fact that the TFR is only 1.2 in Poland, and 1.3 in Germany, Greece, Italy and 8 other European countries in 2005<sup>31</sup> is actually very serious for those countries, as it will take 80 to 100 years to correct the downward trend.<sup>32</sup> The overall TFR in Europe averaged 1.4 between 2000 and 2005.<sup>33</sup>

#### Greying Europe

The consequence of low fertility rates in Europe is the same as elsewhere – an increase in the number of elderly in the population. This is illustrated by the proportions of each population aged 60 or over across Europe for the years 2005, 2025 and 2050,<sup>34</sup> shown in Figure 6 on the next page.

<sup>29</sup> *Attitudes to Age in Britain, 2004-2008*, by Dominic Abrams, Tina Eilola and Hannah Swift, Centre for the Study of Group Processes, Dept of Psychology, University of Kent, Research Report No 599, Dept for Work and Pensions, 2009.

<sup>30</sup> Talk at university College London “The new biology of ageing” by Professor Dame Linda Partridge, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

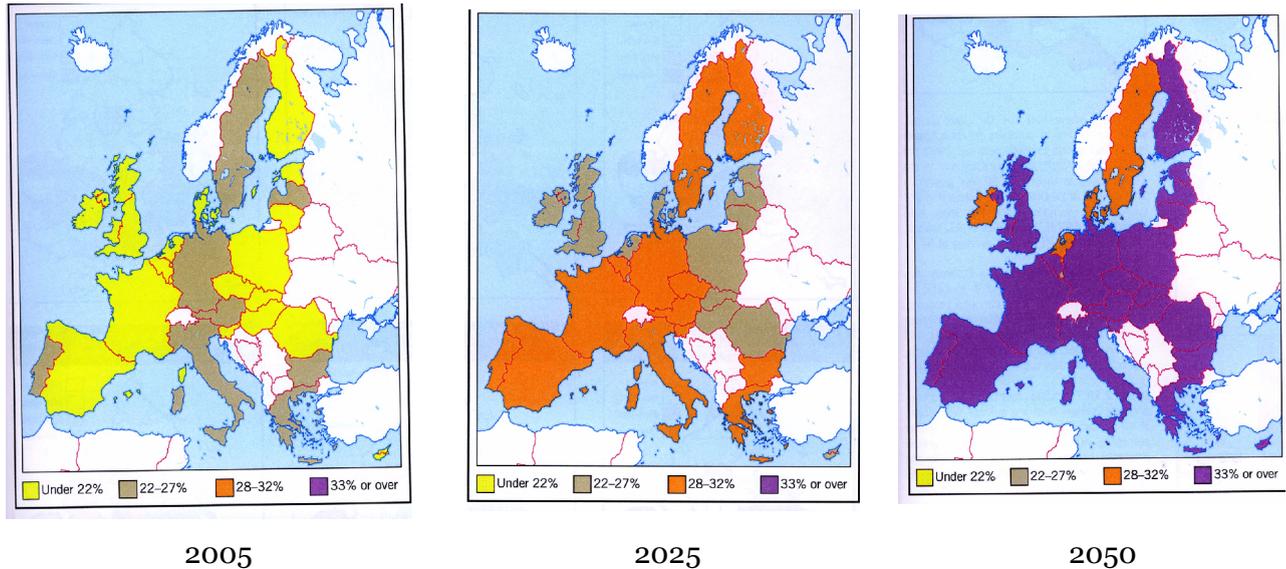
<sup>31</sup> *Europe in Figures*, Eurostat Yearbook 2008, Table SP12, Page 46.

<sup>32</sup> See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-3X5h1F](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-3X5h1F) on Muslim demographics from Friends of Muslims, March 2009.

<sup>33</sup> Op cit, *Europe in Figures*, Table SP11, Page 45.

<sup>34</sup> Taken from *Religious Trends*, No 7, 2007/2008, edited Peter Brierley, Christian Research, Swindon, Page 2.9.

Figure 6: Changing proportions of those 60 or over



Mr Jérôme Vignon, Director of the European Commission’s Directorate for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities wrote<sup>35</sup> in an article: “The European Union is facing unprecedented demographic changes that will have a major impact on the whole of society. The issues are much broader than older workers and pension reforms. The ageing society will affect almost every aspect of our lives, from consumption patterns, business and family life to public policy and voting behaviour.”

Lola Velarde, President of the Institute for Family Policies, points out that abortion is “one of the causes of the demographic decline in Europe”. In 2007, Agenzia Fides reported that 1,200,000 abortions were registered across Europe, equivalent to one every 25 seconds<sup>36</sup>.

### Religious attendance

What have these demographic trends to do with the church and world evangelism? They impact the Christian scene in a number of ways. We have already looked at the Christian community (in Chapter 2) because the WCE is one of the few sources of information by country on numbers of people who call themselves Christian. However, these numbers are very different from those attend church.

There is very little information about religious attendance (Christian or otherwise) from a global perspective. David Barrett gives the number of affiliated members for every country for 1970 and 1995, but not attendance. The World Values Survey covered 84 countries between 1995 and 2004 and the European Social Survey has undertaken detailed interviews in 2002, 2004 and 2006. In both surveys, not every country is included every time, but these studies do give a key behavioural measure of faith.

One question in both surveys is, “How often do you attend religious services?” with those claiming at least once a month counted as regular attenders. This gives self-reported attendance which when compared to actual counted attendance is invariably greater, and usually by a factor of 2 or more<sup>37</sup>.

<sup>35</sup> *Sigma*, The Bulletin of European Statistics, 010-2008, Page 50.

<sup>36</sup> Article “Europe needs Jesus!” in *Sword*, Volume 4, Number 6, November/December 2009, Page 34.

<sup>37</sup> This has been observed in a number of papers. See, for example, “What the polls don’t show: a closer look at US church attendance” C K Hadaway, P L Marler and M Chaves in *American Sociological Review*, Volume 58, 1993; “Did you really go to church this week?” by C K Hadaway and P L Marler, *The Christian Century*, 6<sup>th</sup> May, 1998; How many Americans attend worship each week? An alternative approach to measurement” by C K Hadaway and P L Marler, *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Volume 44, 2005; Foreword by Professor David Voas to *Religious Trends* No 7, 2007/2008,

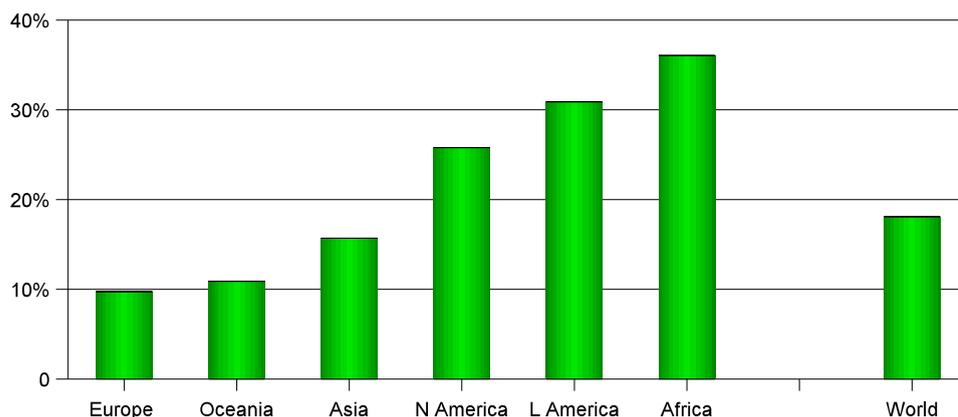
In a 2008 paper, Marion Burkishmer, of the University of Geneva, gave an analysis from these two Surveys of attendance broken down by age, with young (those aged between 18 [sometimes 15] and 30) people compared with old (those 50 and over)<sup>38</sup>. She could not distinguish between religions in the survey results, so her answers look at total *religious* attendance, and her figures are expressed as a percentage of the total population. As the surveys took place over a period of 11 years, there is some inevitable variation (and comparison error) with time, which is ignored in the following paragraphs. The detailed figures are given in Table A4 in the Appendix, where the population is taken as that for year 2000<sup>39</sup>. The results by continent are interesting and are shown in Table 12, and illustrated in Figures 7 (below) and 8 on the next page by taking half the percentages given. The population figures shown are for the population for just those countries in each continent for which the surveys were undertaken, and are on what the percentages are based, but they are not therefore the total world population.

*Table 12: Self-defining proportions of young (18-30) and old (50+) of population attending religious services*

Age-group	Developing World				Developed World				Overall World %
	Latin America %	Africa %	Asia %	Overall %	Europe %	North America %	Oceania %	Overall %	
Young	62	72	31	38	20	52	22	31	36
Old	71	77	37	43	35	69	29	47	44
Pop (mn)	318	382	3388	4,088	729	427	23	1,179	5,267

On the basis of these results some 36% of the world's youth say they attend religious services regularly, and 44% of those over 50. If those in the middle age range are taken as the average, 40%, and assuming self-reporting is double actual attendance then these Surveys suggest that one-fifth, 20%, of the world's adults attend a religious service at least once a month, but this percentage varies hugely by continent.

*Figure 7: Likely proportions of young people attending religious services, by continent*

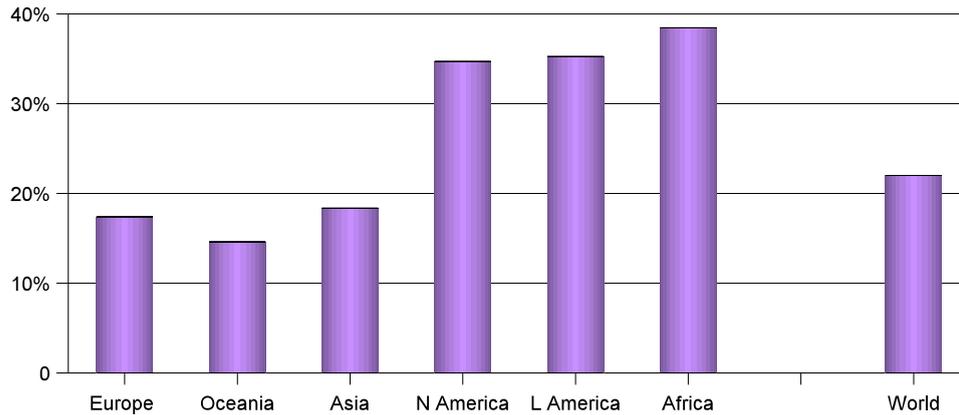


Christian Research, Swindon, Wiltshire, 2008, Page 0.3.

<sup>38</sup> *Young people: are they less religious than older people and are they less religious than they used to be?*, Marion Burkishmer, University of Geneva, Switzerland at the 5<sup>th</sup> Lausanne Researchers' Conference, Melbourne, Australia, April 2008.

<sup>39</sup> The world total is some 800 million fewer than it should be (actual 6,055 million) because some 140 countries were not included in the Surveys.

Figure 8: Likely proportions of older people attending religious services, by continent



The interest of course is in the continental variations. The developed world has fewer young people and more older people attending than the developing world. Europe has the smallest percentage of young people attending, with Oceania very close; these two continents have the lowest percentage of older people attending. North America's percentages are closer to – indeed above – those for the developing world. Africa's percentages are highest across the world with an average of about twice as many as the overall average attending religious services. These results simply describe in numbers what is already known.

In regard to specifically European trends, it is worth noting that in two countries the percentage of young people attending is *greater* than the percentage of older people: Bulgaria and Bosnia/Herzegovina, which are relatively close together. The same is true of the Asian countries of Armenia and Georgia. All of which have been through some horrific political upheavals in recent years.

### *Huge disparity*

The value of this data is that it provides religious data by age, and not just as a total number. As a consequence we can compare the proportions, by continent, of those attending church with the average population aged 18 to 30 and 50 and over. The detailed continental figures are given in Table A5 in the Appendix 1, but since the surveys on which attendance was requested were based on adults only, those under 18 are also omitted from the comparisons. Figures 9 and 10 repeat Figures 7 and 8 but have the population figures added.

Figure 9: Young people attending religious services and younger population, by continent

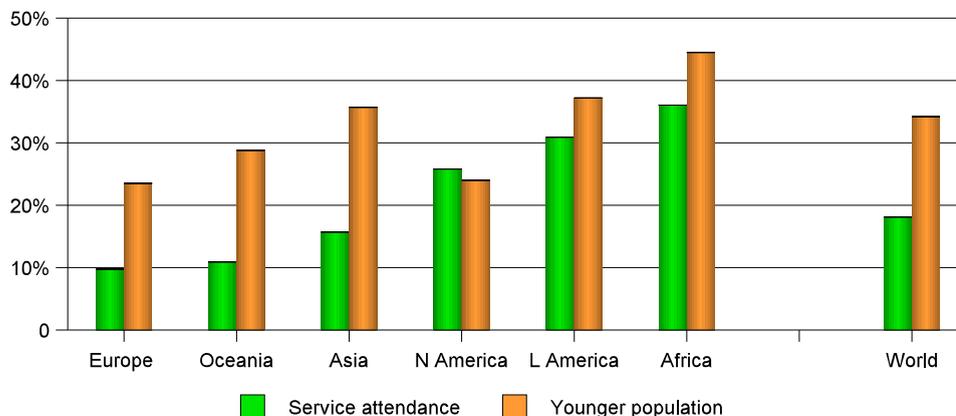


Figure 10: Older people attending religious services and older population, by continent

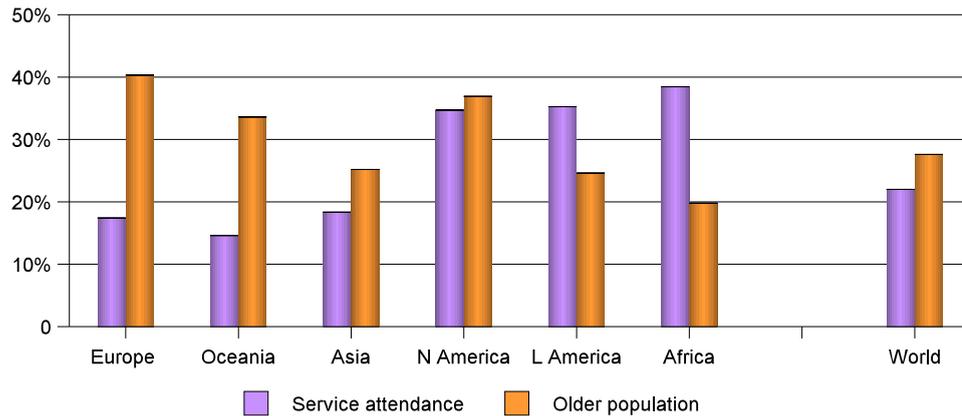


Figure 9 shows that for five of the six continents younger people attending religious services are far fewer than their proportions in the general younger population. Only in North America are those in their 20s attending church (and other religious services) in good numbers. Even in Latin America and Africa where swarms of young people attend church, their numbers are not as high pro rata as their proportion in the general population. In Europe, Oceania and Asia the mis-match is especially high.

Figure 10 shows a similar position for Europe, Oceania and Asia with respect to older people, but the position for the other continents is different. About the same proportion of people attend religious services as there are in the population in North America, but there are more older people than one would expect attending church in Latin America and Africa.

It is clear that attendance in the continents of Europe and Oceania is of crucial concern. The low attendance in Asia is perhaps understandable given the history of suppression in China (which accounts for about a third of the population of the continent) over the last 60 years.

### People in their 20s

The 20s are the decadal group with the lowest percentage of the population in church in England – just 3%<sup>40</sup>, a percentage which has dropped the most rapidly of any age-group over the last quarter century. This is likely to be the case throughout Europe and Oceania also. Many of those who are churchgoers are concentrated either in London or in the larger churches around the country. So the average church has very few if any in this age group.

Some unpublished research suggests that where they do go to church they are usually very committed – and mostly in one of two broad ways – **either** for mission (akin to the old evangelical fervour) **or** for social development (poverty relief, climate change, and community responsibility are therefore big pulls). Unlike their parents, they are often willing to take responsibility for doing things, so long as this action is not boring like administration (as they would see it). They are often keen to be involved in radical mission (and hence with Fresh Expressions, etc.).

They are therefore difficult to attract to a small church, and are unlikely to attend every week anyway. It is essential to give them some kind of active responsibility (eg teaching teens, leading worship). Many will not want to go down accepted paths of becoming an official assistant in a church (or, say, an Anglican Reader) so they can create problems for leadership in how best to use their energy and willingness to be involved. Some organisations and larger churches have taken the risk and appointed those either in their late 20s or very early 30s with appropriate training to positions of

<sup>40</sup> Op cit., *Religious Trends*, No 7, Footnote 34, Table 12.3.4.

major responsibility (usually the CEO or senior minister) with spectacular results.

Those in this age-group are sometimes better at seeing the big picture than older people in their 40s or 50s. It is important to think through where they have come from, that is born in the 1980s, went to school in the 1990s, so Presidents Clinton and Bush will be their major examples of free world leadership, thus having 9/11 and the Iraq War as key events in their lives. They have seen political despair, sleaze and corruption often as normal. They have had few if any role models of note! Billy Graham (and the Lausanne Movement) are as much history to them as John Wesley!

Many (in Britain at least) will have attended schools with few male teachers (primary or secondary), and probably perhaps a quarter have come from single parent families. Climate change, appalling poverty in the developing world, and the paucity of dynamic religious activity will have been their natural environment. Few will have heard of the Lausanne Covenant.

Acceptance of immigrants – yes. Acceptance of homosexuality as a fact of life, though not themselves necessarily practising – yes. Acceptance of women leadership – no problem usually apart from some churches. Acceptance of cohabitation – yes. In the UK 2% of churchgoers currently cohabit (some 300,000 couples), at least half of whom are folk in their 20s (faithful but simply not married). Single parenthood – OK. Their morality is different from older folk in the main and how Biblical it all is would be a big discussion with them.

Do they find conventional church relevant to them? Mostly no. Do they find it boring? Mostly yes. So they simply do not attend regularly. Do they move around a lot? Yes, and often for employment reasons. A published prediction by Sony is that by the time a person is 38 they will have had between 10 and 14 jobs<sup>41</sup>.

#### *No trend data*

One of the problems with the World Survey and European Social Attitudes data is that although they have been undertaken more than once there are yet no serious time trends. Effectively we have a picture of what religious attendance was like in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century, but have insufficient data to project that forward in any reasonable way. It is also unfortunate for our purposes that they have not measured religious attendance of those under 18.

However, in both the UK and Australia church attendance has been tracked for long enough over the past 20 or 30 years to allow some kind of tentative calculations of future trends. Figure 11 on the next page shows church attendance in Britain since 1980 projected forward for the coming decade, broken down for the age-groups considered above.

The graph shows a catastrophic loss of children under 18, which must be a major concern for the survival of the church in the longer term. In England in 2005, 39% of churches had no-one attending under 11 years of age, 49% no-one attending between the ages of 11 and 14, and 59% no-one attending between the ages of 15 to 19.<sup>42</sup> “Half the Church of England parishes had no work among young people in 2005” said an official Anglican publication.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> Sony video “Do you know?”, June 2008, [www.releasetheplatform.com](http://www.releasetheplatform.com).

<sup>42</sup> *Pulling out of the Nosedive*, A contemporary picture of churchgoing, Peter Brierley, Christian Research, Eltham, London, 2006, Page 118.

<sup>43</sup> *Resourcing Mission within the Church of England*, Report of the Group established by the Archbishops, GS 1580B, 2005.

Figure 11: Age of churchgoers in Great Britain, 1980-2020

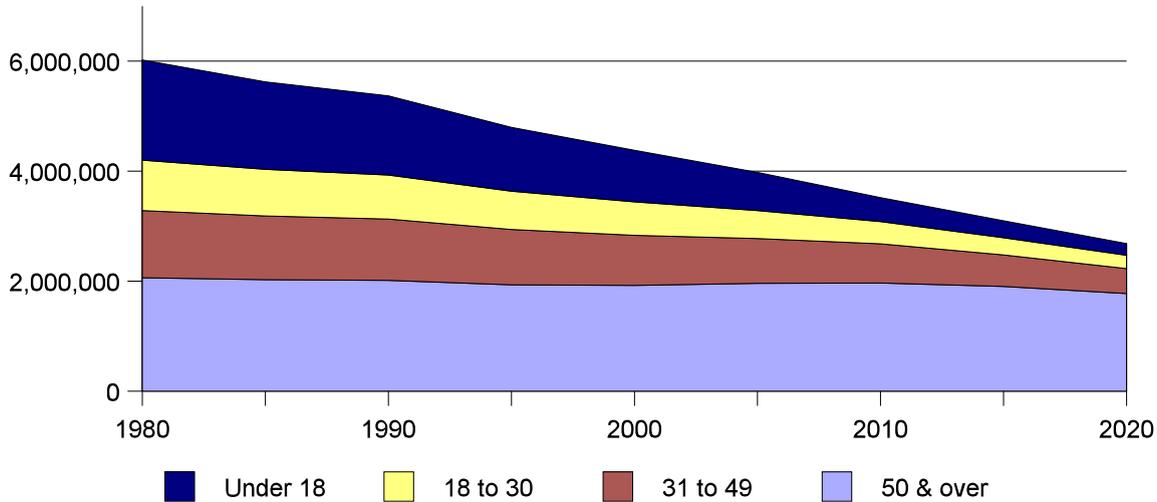


Figure 11 also shows the drastic loss of those aged 18 to 30, only a quarter of their strength in 1980 by 2020<sup>44</sup>. *Keeping those of this age-group is almost as important as reaching them!*

It also shows that while those aged 50 and over have retained their numbers between 1980 and 2010, in the decade ahead these too are also likely to drop, of the order of 10% of their numbers in 2010.

### Older people and other generations

Demographically, older people are especially interesting. As has already been noted, they are living longer largely because of the quality of health provision. While those in their “Third Age” are usually defined for simplicity as aged 65 to 74 in the developed world (as by the UK Office for National Statistics), the attitudes and values implicit in this age-group impinge on those under 65 and over 74 – and these are sometimes different from a further group, sometimes called the “Fourth Age” (those 75 and over). This latter point is extremely important for church and organisational leaders as it means that those in the Third Age are NOT younger versions of the Fourth-Agers.

Consider the Table on the next page which shows the age of selected cohorts at the time of cultural or economic events for those living in the developed world. Quite different examples and comments would be needed for each of the continents in the developing world. The Table and comments are illustrative of the broad principle that age cohorts vary very widely.

“Fourth Agers” roughly correspond to those born in 1920 in this Table. They went to school in the 1930s and fought in the Second World War. Their values were partly driven by their parents living through the 1930s recession and their world-view by the horrors of war. Their world was that of the British Empire, which when mapped covered half the world in pink. These are the “Senior” generation.

<sup>44</sup> Should these trends become reality then by 2015 there will likely be more people going to church aged 18 to 30 than under 18, a larger age-group altogether, which but highlights the crisis for those under 18 even further.

Table 13: Age of people born in different years when significant events occurred

Event	Year	Born in 1920	Born in 1935	Born in 1950	Born in 1965	Born in 1980
End of War in Europe	1945	25	10	~	~	~
Elizabeth II becomes Queen; World Vision 2 years old	1952	32	17	2	~	~
Billy Graham's Haringay Crusade in London	1954	34	19	4	~	~
Soviet Union launches Sputnik 1	1957	37	22	7	~	~
Oral contraceptives available	1961	41	26	11	~	~
The Beatles begin; UK Abortion Act; first colour TV	1967	47	32	17	2	~
Man lands on the moon; UK Divorce Reform Act	1969	49	34	19	4	~
Oil crisis; Lausanne Congress, Switzerland	1974	54	39	24	9	~
Sony Walkman launched; Shah of Iran forced into exile	1979	59	44	29	14	~
Falklands War; CDs go on sale	1982	62	47	32	17	2
Second Lausanne Congress; Berlin Wall comes down	1989	69	54	39	24	9
Nelson Mandela elected President; Bill Clinton in 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	1994	74	59	44	29	14
Death of Diana, Princess of Wales; Tony Blair becomes PM	1997	77	62	47	32	17
President Bush starts first year; 9/11	2001	81	66	51	36	21
Last commercial flight of Concorde	2003	83	68	53	38	23
Barack Obama elected US President; Gordon Brown is PM	2007	87	72	57	42	27

Third Agers correspond roughly to those born in 1935 in this Table. They lived through the “swinging sixties” largely when their world views were already formed (in their early 20s) and were generally shocked by what was happening. The British Empire mostly shattered into pieces while they were in their 20s or early 30s, and in the same period Bishop John Robinson’s very divisive book *Honest to God* was published (in 1963). These are the “Builder” generation. They have been major beneficiaries of the boom years in employment. Many Christian businesses and organisations were started when they were in their late 30s or early 40s (and not a few have found it difficult to find equally visionary successors). Many joined and gave their energy to the House Church (later New Churches) Movement. Spring Harvest started in 1979; the first Lausanne Forum was held in Pattaya, Thailand in 1980.

The “Boomer” generation is represented roughly by those born in 1950 in the Table.<sup>45</sup> The sexual revolution occurred while they were growing up and became part of their way of life. They grew up with Rock ‘n’ Roll. They took their young families to Spring Harvest in their thousands in the 1980s, and brought a huge wave of charismatic life to churches of all denominations, both in the UK and elsewhere. Their dislike of institutional life probably began then. They were born *before* the general availability of television, frozen foods, Xerox, contact lenses, the pill, credit cards, laser beams, ball-point pens, dishwashers, air conditioners, FM radios, yogurt, guys wearing earrings, “software”, Pizza Hut, McDonald’s and instant coffee!<sup>46</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Taken from *Ageing in a Consumer Society*, From passive to active consumption in Britain, by Ian Rees Jones, Martin Hyde, Christina R Victor, Richard D Wiggins, Chris Gilleard and Paul Higgs, The Policy Press, Bristol, 2008, Page 23, but amended and adapted, with Christian elements introduced.

<sup>46</sup> Private email from Dawn Moor, 18<sup>th</sup> October 2009.

Boomers have taken the electronic revolution as it came and found the time to keep pace with it. They will begin to retire in the next decade,<sup>47</sup> and some will return to church, but the church they knew in the 1950s when they were children has now probably changed almost beyond their expectations. Spirituality for many of them is a “journey” not a decision. When these retire, “final-pay” pensions will not be common, so they will have less money. “The Wanless report into social care for older people ... (points) out that the rising expectations of the baby boomers will be one of the most pressing concerns for policy makers in the next few decades.”<sup>48</sup> Others suggest that “the ageing of the boomer generation may help to change attitudes to later life, but policies and practices, as well as attitudes, tend to lag behind demographic change.”<sup>49</sup>

The “GenXer” generation is approximately represented by those born in 1965 in the Table. Different expressions of sexuality are equally acceptable. Self-determination was the political sounding board of both President Reagan and Prime Minister Thatcher when GenXers were in their 20s, and that individualism and “we can do it” attitude has remained with them. No wonder so many find it hard to resonate with traditional church life, and why so many older church leaders find teaching discipleship to this group so difficult. Missions are supported – so long as charity begins at home, and so long as overseas it embraces relief and development. Their experience of church is of a declining group; relatively few embrace radical evangelism.

The “GenYer” or “Mosaic” generation is represented by those born in 1980 in Table 13. For them, the electronic revolution of ipods, mobiles, wifi are just norm. Anything which isn’t electronic, including church, is “boring”. Sexual freedom is not really a discussion point; 30% of 15 year olds have had sex already; Britain’s youngest father was aged 12 when his next-door neighbour’s daughter had his baby. They have grown up under government specialising in sleaze and “spin doctor” leadership, a culture governed by greed, materialism and pleasure seeing enormous corruption and poverty worldwide, and they (as well as many others) don’t trust politicians!

What does all this say? That the generations are truly HUGELY different, and the values of one generation are not assumed by the next, though they may be by the one after – the grandparental influence must not be overlooked.

### *The “Builder” generation*

In terms of church, the Builder generation is the most dominant, and in general terms they have money, they have time, they have energy and they have vision. They are the key generation at this moment in church and mission terms, hence the need for “Grandparents and Mission” seminars and the wealth of conferences and activities for this age-group. In the UK, there are some 750,000 churchgoing grandparents – how do we get them involved in family life, in mission, in leadership? They are not to be regarded as younger versions of people ten years their senior, as they think and live differently. Their attitude to later life is also different from that of their parents, who were frequently reluctant to give up their homes, but now specialised accommodation is often more acceptable.

In technical terms, their “consumption” patterns are totally dissimilar – they focus on spending on interests, hobbies, travel and leisure, they disagree with the standards and behaviour of the young often acutely, and can be intensely individualistic.<sup>50</sup> “The increasing individualisation and diversification of post-working life ... will become more pronounced.”<sup>51</sup> Health, housing and social support become ever more important in determining the well-being of older people.<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> Article “Reaching the Baby Boomers” by Roger Standing, *Christianity magazine*, November 2009, Page 24.

<sup>48</sup> Op cit., *Ageing in a Consumer Society*, Page 111.

<sup>49</sup> Article “The Age Revolution”, by Professor Alan Walker, Director of the New Dynamics of Ageing Research, *Society Now*, Economic and Social Research Council, UK, Issue 4, Summer 2009, Page 11.

<sup>50</sup> Op cit., *Ageing in a Consumer Society*, Page 36.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., Page 117.

<sup>52</sup> *Well-being of Older People in Ageing Societies*, Asghar Zaidi, European Centre Vienna, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2008, Pg 26.

### *Increasing numbers of older people*

Table 11 (Page 18) pointed to the growing numbers of older people in both the developing and developed worlds, and Figure 10 shows that many of those 50 or over are not in church, unlike older people in Latin America and Africa. If 33% of the population in developed countries will be over 60 by 2050, it maybe that some predictions of UK church attendance of the over 60s being twice that percentage will also become true! In Africa, where so many have to walk to church, some of these older people will find it increasingly difficult to attend, though the proliferation of small rural churches in Africa may well alleviate this. Elderly people of whatever continent will value audio/visual means, tapes or cassettes, to enable them to participate in Christian music and teaching to keep their faith strong.

The UN Executive Summary puts it this way<sup>53</sup>:

Population ageing is:

- Unprecedented – that is, without parallel in human history, with more and faster to come
- Pervasive – it’s a global phenomenon affecting every man, woman and child
- Profound – having major consequences and implications for all facets of human life
- Enduring – we will not return to the young populations of previous times.

### *Age-cohorts not people-groups?*

There are three African nations where youth outnumber the old in attendance – Nigeria, Uganda and Zimbabwe, and one Asian country, the Philippines. Does this diversity in age in attendance at services suggest that rather than continuing to focus on “people-groups” for mission in terms of strategic importance, agencies should instead concentrate on “age-groups” or “age-cohorts”? What do the high levels of attendance by young people in many countries imply for religious family life? Or for engagement in mission or reverse mission? In the developed world, with more older people involved with church, how may that energy and commitment be best used?

One key aspect of the generational differences was highlighted by Charles Price, a British minister who is Senior Minister of the Peoples’ Church, Toronto, Canada, when speaking at Easter People, Blackpool, in April 2007. He felt that whereas church culture used to be defined denominationally (such as an Anglican or Methodist) or socially (such as professional or working class), today’s culture is defined generationally, so that the Boomer culture is different from the GenX culture which again is different from the GenY culture. He went on to say that each culture has to be reached appropriately and targeted suitably. It is also important, though, that generational isolation is not encouraged so that the hand feels no need of the foot etc in the Body of Christ.

Much of the above reflects the developed world societal divisions; in many developing countries cultures are still deeply community based so that all age groups are much more cohesive. It is therefore worth asking, in your community, what is the distribution by age? Are the issues cited above likely to become important for you in the decade ahead?

### *So what does all this mean for the coming decade?*

There are some common threads in all of this. Increasing numbers of people, changing proportions of the elderly in the population, decreasing numbers of youth in church are global features. Some of the drivers of this – changing fertility rates, decreasing child mortality, more efficient medication, huge immigrant transfers – can be noted and need continuing study.

---

<sup>53</sup> Email from Dr Tom McCormick of Tyndale Seminary on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2008 quoting [www.un.org/ageing](http://www.un.org/ageing).

What emerges, however, is the dominance of age-cohorts or age-groups. Age not class, age not gender, age not location, age not country of birth, age not country of residence, age not marital status, age not economic status, age not type of housing, age not living arrangements, tends to be the outcome, even if not all of these are covered in this paper. Generational cohorts, whatever their fancy names, are the groups which need to be evangelised, converted, disciplined and shepherded into service in a thousand different ways. Should we make “age-cohorts” the new criteria for our strategic thinking and then set our targets and actions accordingly?

Specifically, for the next decade:

- The global population will continue to increase for the reasons given, meaning at the very least more people needing to be reached with the Good News.
- The ageing phenomenon will begin to become more and more apparent, especially in our churches where older people will form an ever larger proportion.
- Training younger leaders to work in partnership with older people, perhaps ex-leaders, will not always be easy, and enabling older people to carry on, even in leadership will require careful handling.
- Encouraging grandparents will be one aspect of this need to engage older people in a meaningful way.
- Focussing on those under 18 will become more and more urgent, so more Children’s Workers and Youth Workers will need to be recruited.
- The need to reach and keep those in their 20s will become paramount, as well as using them in a relevant way for the cause of Christ.
- Perhaps we need to rethink strategically, specifically with respect to age, how we are to take the whole gospel through the whole church to the whole world.

How do the themes of this chapter work out in your context?

## **5) The Number of Migrants and its Implications**

**A**s Christians we are bidden to welcome the stranger in our midst – something that has not always been done as wholeheartedly as it should. Some strangers have felt completely rejected even when they have tried to join us in worship!

The UN expect immigration to continue with many more people moving from one country to another in the years and decades ahead. The three countries with the largest average *annual* intake between 2009 and 2050 are projected to be the United States with 1.1 million per year, Canada with 214,000 and the United Kingdom with 174,000. While these changes don't add to the total world population, migrants impact services, especially health services, in the countries to which they move, and, as a consequence, probably live a little longer than if they had stayed in their home country. The number moving also slightly shifts the balance of population from one continent to another. Huge numbers of people move or migrate *internally* within their own countries; in this chapter "migration" refers to those who move *externally* from one country to another.

Worldwide there were an estimated 191 million immigrants in 2006, the number having doubled over the previous 50 years. 115 million (60%) live in developed countries, of whom 38 million are in the United States (13% of the total population). Of this 115 million, 63 million (55% of those in developed countries) live in Europe<sup>54</sup>.

### ***Continuing mix of cultures***

In the UK for example, the suggested annual increase is a HUGE number if the forecast is true – some extra 7.1 million people coming to the UK over the next 40 years. Especially for England, where the majority of immigrants settle, this means that an influx of new people from different cultures is likely to be an ongoing responsibility. Before we are able to welcome them to our country, our town, our street, our church, we need to examine such attitudes as – immigrants put too much of a strain on our services (social, education, health, etc.), they swamp the employment market, they don't integrate into our culture (for example in language, religions or customs), they lower the tone of a neighbourhood, they engender crime, especially among young people in gangs, they are a "channel" for terrorists, and so on.

The same attitudes need to be dealt with wherever immigrants settle, and whatever type of immigrant they may be. This precedes answering such questions as: How can we best work with these non-native people? How help them? How support them? How understand them? How learn from them? How evangelise them?

### ***Increasing number of immigrant churches***

The increasing number of immigrants can also mean a continuing proliferation of new migrant churches, if they come from Christian countries, or mosques, temples, etc. For example, two new Black Majority Independent Churches (BMICs) have started *every week* in England for at least the last 10 years<sup>55</sup>, many in London, where congregations may be found not just for black people but for people from perhaps 100 different countries, many speaking their own language.

---

<sup>54</sup> See [www.globalissues.org/article/537/immigration](http://www.globalissues.org/article/537/immigration), accessed 24<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

<sup>55</sup> A total of over 1,000 churches!

This forms a huge opportunity for evangelism as those struggling with English during the week will go to a church on a Sunday where their own language is spoken, even if they were not previously churchgoers. For example, 7 new Croatian churches were started in the first 5 years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century in England, and 18 new Tamil churches, doubling their number. This kind of proliferation is widespread. A number of Roman Catholic churches were swamped when 400,000 Polish immigrants came looking for employment between 2005 and 2007, even if half returned home within 2 or 3 years. In 2005, a sixth (17%) of churchgoers in England were non-white<sup>56</sup>; that could be a quarter (26%) by 2015.

### *The challenge of “reverse mission”*

Many migrants come seeking employment or asylum. Some are refugees, some are highly skilled workers, others are temporary labour. Some will come for the summer season, others permanently. Some come to give service, others come to trade. Some are “irregular migrants” or illegal migrants whose presence is undocumented.

Some will come from Christian countries, some from Muslim, some from other lands. Some will come deliberately in order to evangelise their country of adoption (among the indigenous population), in a movement being called “reverse mission”. It has been suggested that there were 1,500 “reverse missionaries” in the UK in 2008 from 50 countries, but no central record exists. Certainly mission workers are leaving Brazil to work in Portugal. However, it must be recognised that “reverse” mission is just one part of a wider world movement – some 16,000 national mission workers are preaching the gospel in 10 Asian nations<sup>57</sup>, but this is not seen as “reverse” mission, the term being applied more to mission workers coming to work in those European countries which two centuries ago sent mission workers to their country taking the Good News.

Some of these “reverse mission” efforts at church planting are very successful. For example, the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG) is now the third largest Pentecostal denomination in the UK, behind the Assemblies of God and Elim, and having overtaken the fourth largest, the New Testament Church of God, in 2005, having only started in the UK in the 1990s. It had 30,000 members in 2006, across 230 churches<sup>58</sup>. This could raise questions like: How strictly is this “reverse” mission? How far was it founded deliberately by a church planter from overseas? Or how far was it an expression of their own faith by ordinary immigrants?

Does reverse mission or the friendliness in churches suggest that congregations will become increasingly multi-racial? Probably, but as Bill Hybels of Willow Creek Church, Chicago, which has massively increased its non-white numbers in recent years, points out “there will still be people who will only want to worship amongst their own kind.”<sup>59</sup>

Often reverse mission workers are not supported as well as they need to be, and ways need to be found of identifying them and helping them as required. How acceptable are such reverse mission workers in the indigenous church scene in the UK, for example, or should reverse mission workers be encouraged to concentrate just on the immigrant population from their own countries? Some already work almost entirely among those of their own cultural background and nationality. Should they be challenged to think more widely?

---

<sup>56</sup> Op cit., *Pulling out of the Nosedive*, Footnote 42, Chapter 5.

<sup>57</sup> *Revolution in World Missions*, K P Yohannan, Gospel for Asia, York, 2008.

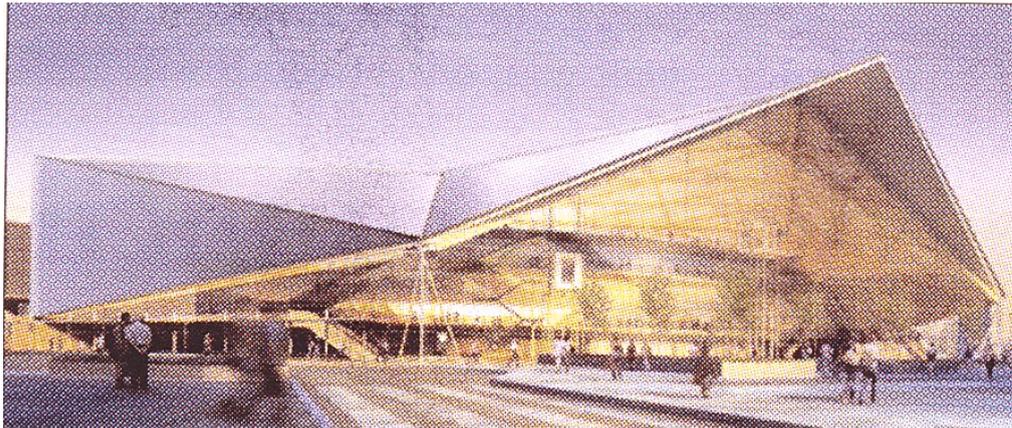
<sup>58</sup> *Religious Trends* No 7, 2007/2008, edited by Peter Brierley, Christian Research, Swindon, Wiltshire, 2008, Table 9.16.1.

<sup>59</sup> Article “The Color of Faith” by David van Bema, *Time* magazine, 11<sup>th</sup> January, 2010, Page 29.

### *The impact on national leadership*

Why are immigrant churches so successful? Explaining one of the reasons, the Deputy Director of the Afro-Caribbean Evangelical Alliance said, “We put mission before justice”. Another reason is the size of their vision. When the Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC), the largest church in the UK, had to move their location because of the construction of the Olympic Villages for the forthcoming Games in 2012, they proposed a 38-acre church costing £73 million, although this was turned down by the planning authorities who could generate greater revenue from that amount of land by letting it out for industrial purposes.

*Figure 12: The suggested development by KICC in East London, 2008*



Many churches wish to extend their premises or build new worship centres, but few match even a tenth the amount of this venture. The growth of KICC is perhaps the more remarkable in that when Nigerian Matthew Ashimolowo started it in 1992 it had just 300 people, and 17 years later had 12,000 attending on a Sunday. He “uses cable TV and radio to speak to a wider audience in the UK, and beyond, in Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Malawi, Uganda, Sierra Leone, and the Anglophone Caribbean.”<sup>60</sup> Matthew is quoted as saying that “the trouble is we are seen as a Black thing and not a God thing.”

The leader of the RCCG, Pastor Agu Irukwu, was asked why Black church leaders so often had bigger visions than white church leaders. He remarked it was a difficult question, and then turned away as if not to answer it, but simply said quietly, “You have to believe that all things are possible with God.”<sup>61</sup>

### *The increasing number of Muslim families*

With the expansion of the European Union, people have been free to travel across national European borders, and many migrants come to the UK. Of those who came in 2004, 60% were between 15 and 29 years of age, and in this age-group these numbers are almost equal gender-wise. The UK population is currently experiencing a “baby-boom”, with 100,000 more births in 2006 than in 2001.

“The number of births to foreign born mothers in the UK has risen by 65.0% since 2001, while the number of births to UK born mothers has only risen 6.4%.”<sup>62</sup>

Furthermore, foreign born women have a higher fertility rate than national women, 2.5 to 1.8. The increase in births to national born women is largely among women aged 20 to 24 and 35 and over.

<sup>60</sup> Op cit., *God's Continent*, Footnote 18, Page 89.

<sup>61</sup> Personal conversation in 2006.

<sup>62</sup> Article “Have women born outside the UK driven the rise in UK births since 2001?” by Nicola Tromans, Eva Natamba and Julie Jefferies in *Population Trends*, No 136, Summer 2009, Office for National Statistics, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

This latter increase is important to note as doubtless some of these women will be churchgoers, and may help to explain why those in their 30s are some of the more irregular church attenders. Some see this migration as a strategic move by Muslim countries to send people to other lands, especially France and the UK, in order to increase their number of Muslims<sup>63</sup> and promote their vision of world Islamisation.

The organisation “Friends of Muslims” suggests that many Muslim immigrants are encouraged to have as many children as they can, with the ultimate result that “a third of all children in Europe will be Muslim by 2025.” They also predict that France will as a consequence become a Muslim Republic “within 39 years”<sup>64</sup>.

These are serious concerns, and there is no doubt that the immigrant birth rate is higher, and that the size of Muslim households is larger (it averages 3.8 people in the UK against 2.4 overall and 2.3 in Christian households<sup>65</sup>). However, it may well be that some of these claims and implications are exaggerated. Many Muslim children, at least in the UK, attend western schools, and learn western-style morality (which it may be wished they didn’t!) and western-style values, of which gender equality is one important element. Partly as a consequence, a number of Muslim women in the West wish “to escape their bonds”<sup>66</sup>, as, for example, in forced or arranged marriages.

As Christian families have signally failed to pass on their faith successfully to many of their children in the UK in a culture alien to Christianity, why should the modern way of life not result in a similar outcome for Muslim families? Thus, it is by no means certain that the second generation of Muslim immigrants will follow their parents’ faith in the numbers that are being predicted, and if they don’t then the outcome will not materialise in the proportions suggested. Generally, though, Muslim families are more rigorous in observing their faith, and therefore their children are much more likely to be instilled with their beliefs and practices, so the predictions could become reality.

However, this raises an issue little researched – how far the second and third generations of a migrant group retain the religious language and practices of the initial generation. Some research on this has been undertaken by the Christian Research Association of Australia<sup>67</sup>. The issue is very important:

*“What most [second-generation residents] have in common, though, is the classic dilemma of the [one] who finds himself caught between cultures, who feels utterly separated from the country of family origin and yet cannot identify with his own country of birth and upbringing. As one observer notes, ‘People recruiting for Islamic Jihad know exactly who to be on the lookout for in the Netherlands: second-generation Moroccan youths suffering from an identity crisis with few prospects and plagued by the thought that the Islamic world is being suppressed.’”<sup>68</sup>*

### **Theological response to immigration**

The detailed analysis of European immigration made by Rev Dr Darrell Jackson has already been mentioned<sup>69</sup>. His report looks at the theology of migration and how churches might respond to the migrants. Migrants need to be allowed to express their religious creed, he postulates, and “the religious communities of the host society can be enriched by the contribution of migrant religious

<sup>63</sup> See [www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-3X5hlF](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6-3X5hlF) on Muslim demographics from Friends of Muslims, March 2009.

<sup>64</sup> Op cit., website given in Footnote 3.

<sup>65</sup> Op cit., *Religious Trends* No 7, Table 4.6, from *Focus on Ethnicity and Religion*, Office for National Statistics, 2006.

<sup>66</sup> Op cit., *God’s Continent*, Footnote 60, Page 195.

<sup>67</sup> See, for example, the article “Religion and Ethnicity”, by Rev Dr Philip Hughes, Executive Director, *Pointers*, Volume 19, Number 3, September 2009, Christian Research Association, Melbourne, Australia, Page 1.

<sup>68</sup> Op cit., *God’s Continent*, Footnote 18, Page 159. See also the article “Islam and the West: facing conflict for mutual gain?” by Richard Shumac, in *Zadok Perspectives*, No 105, Summer 2009, Page 15.

<sup>69</sup> See *Mapping Migration*, in Footnote 17.

communities.” He concludes there also needs to be exchange and sharing, allowing integration and the avoidance of marginalisation and frustration.<sup>70</sup> Daniel Groody has contributed a fourfold foundation on the theology of migration<sup>71</sup>.

However, it might be argued from Scripture that while the Israelites were instructed to welcome and care for the strangers in their midst and treat them justly and mercifully, they were nowhere told to allow them to practise their own religion. In fact, the idolatrous ways of “incomers” were strictly forbidden, disobedience often resulting in God’s judgement and national disaster. In this permissive and tolerant society, has the church largely forgotten this? The UK government certainly seems to have done so!

### *Developing world*

The above comments reflect the UK situation which may, however, become more relevant in other countries in the decade ahead. The situation of immigrants and emigrants in the developing world is very different.

*“Asia is awash with both economic migrants/immigrants/emigrants and those moving away from persecution – the movements are multi-directional, break families apart, leave churches wondering how to deal with church members who are involved in multiple families, communities where all the men have left or conversely (as in the Philippines) churches where a high proportion of mothers have left to earn money in say the Middle East (as maids), churches which lose all their potential leaders, etc.”<sup>72</sup>*

### *So what does this mean for the decade ahead?*

Probably more questions than answers! The church has still to learn to cope realistically with an ever-increasing number of strangers if not in their own congregations then in the new churches down the street around the corner. In the next decade:

- Some kind of formalisation of the welcome process needs to be made
- Some kind of recognition of “reverse” mission workers also needs to be made, and appropriate help given if required
- National Christian leaders need to be able to understand better the culture, spirituality and vision of many of the migrant leaders, and work in partnership with them where relevant
- The change in the faith mix of different populations needs to be noted also, and the consequences accurately evaluated, so that appropriate reactions can be employed
- The Church needs, too, a biblical theology re immigration on which to base its response to such problems as the increasing Islamisation of Britain
- Perhaps, above all, we should learn to celebrate the new openings for spreading the faith that immigrants often create.

Does immigration work in terms of the gospel? Yes, it does. Consider the many stories of people being brought to faith through immigrant workers in otherwise closed countries.

In pure statistical terms, between 1998 and 2005 the number of churchgoers in England

---

<sup>70</sup> Op cit., *Mapping Migration*, Page 27.

<sup>71</sup> See article “Crossing the Divide: Foundations of a Theology of Migration and Refugees”, by Daniel G Groody, *Theological Studies*, Fall, 2009.

<sup>72</sup> Correspondence from Mrs Rose Dowsett, January 2010.

declined -15%. However, the number of black<sup>73</sup> people attending black churches increased +42% in that period, the number of black people attending white churches increased +8%, while the number of white people going to black churches decreased -11%, and the number of white people going to white churches fell -20%. Had it not been for the black churches and their growth some 250,000 fewer people would have been going to church in 2005. *That's* the statistical value of immigration!

If this does not reflect your situation, what are the salient issues your church faces vis-a-vis immigrants, and how are they likely to change over the next decade?

---

<sup>73</sup> And other non-white churchgoers.

## **6) The Evangelical Tribes**

The term “tribe” has not often been associated with Christians, or other people of faith, but has become more common in the past few years. George Barna wrote a book<sup>74</sup> called *The Seven Faith Tribes*, although he uses “tribes” here to denote the various religious groups, such as Christians, Muslims, Hindus, etc. He found Christians formed 82% of the USA adult population, broken into two groups, 66% “Casual Christians” and 16% “Captive Christians”, with many of the latter being evangelical.

When world Christianity went through its rapid expansion in the 1970s and 1980s, due to what some called the “Third Wave” of intense charismatic and Pentecostal expansion, the different new denominations then formed were often called “streams”. In this chapter, however, we will look at “tribes” within the Christian faith.

“Evangelical” is derived from the Greek word “euaggelion” meaning, according to Carl Henry, “conforming to the basic doctrines of the Gospel ... (signifying) one who is devoted to the Good News ... of God’s redemptive grace in Jesus Christ.”<sup>75</sup> He goes on:

*“Evangelical Christians are thus marked by their devotion to the sure Word of the Bible; they are committed to the inspired Scriptures as the divine rule of faith and practice. They affirm the fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, including the incarnation and virgin birth of Christ, His sinless life, substitutionary atonement, and bodily resurrection as the ground of God’s forgiveness of sinners, justification by faith alone, and the spiritual regeneration of all who trust in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ.”*

Not all would agree with parts of that definition today, and the reason why it is important to look at the various “evangelical tribes” is because of the danger, and some would say, very great likelihood, of the evangelicals splitting into two or more groups, less perhaps along the lines of theology but more because of the practical implications of what “evangelical” means in a church or Christian service context.

### ***History and Ethos***

The Evangelical Alliance was formed in 1846 when Christians from 10 countries met in London to form an organisation “for the expression of unity among Christian individuals belonging to different churches”. In 1951 believers from 21 countries formed the World Evangelical Fellowship, today renamed as the World Evangelical Alliance, a network of churches in 128 countries and of over 100 international organisations, and partner of the 2010 Cape Town Lausanne Congress. There are, however, other, much smaller, bodies representing particular groups of Evangelicals.

Robert Webber’s 2002 book *The Younger Evangelicals* puts evangelicals into three broad time frames: Traditional Evangelicals (1950 to 1975); Pragmatic Evangelicals (1975 to 2000) and Younger

---

<sup>74</sup> *The Seven Faith Tribes*, Who they are, What they believe, and Why they matter, George Barna, Barna, an imprint of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois, United States, 2009.

<sup>75</sup> Entry “Evangelical” by Carl H Henry in *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, edited by J D Douglas, Zondervan Corporation, United States and The Paternoster Press, Exeter, Devon, 1974, Page 358.

Evangelicals (2000 onwards)<sup>76</sup>. In Britain, Church of England evangelicals describe themselves as “open evangelicals” or “mainstream evangelicals”, belonging to such bodies as Reform, Fulcrum, New Wine, Fellowship of Confessing Anglicans, Anvil and so on. In the United States the word mixes with “fundamentalism” and “the Religious Right”.

David Bebbington has identified four characteristics of evangelicalism: biblicist, crucicentrist, conversionist, activist<sup>77</sup>, but such typologies could be multiplied, especially if one looks at evangelicalism in different countries and continents. There is no agreed breakdown, and different groupings vary around:

- Scripture – its authority and the way in which it is explained (hermeneutics)
- Theology – atonement, mission, eschatology
- Polarities – independence v denominational engagement<sup>78</sup>, charismatic v cessationist, 6 day creationism v evolutionary creationism, women in leadership<sup>79</sup>.

Such variations certainly cause discussion but can also cause division. CPAS, an evangelical Anglican body in the UK debated at its Council of Reference meeting in November 2009 whether it should add a “label” in front of the word “evangelical” to describe itself in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, such as “open evangelical”, “pan-evangelical”, “positive evangelical”, etc., but the Council decided not to have any such extra word added.

In the *World Christian Encyclopedia* David Barrett estimated there were 16,000 denominations in 1970, a number which had grown to 41,000 in 2010<sup>80</sup>; how many of these are evangelical is not known, but probably quite a high percentage! “There is no known counter force visible in our culture which would work against increased varieties in Christian approaches,” wrote Kevin Kelly<sup>81</sup>.

For the remainder of this Chapter we shall focus on one source of evangelicalism identification which has the huge advantage of being able to be analysed by gender, age, denomination, and over a short period of time – Church Censuses.

### *English and Scottish Church Censuses*

For four separate years across a quarter of a century a comprehensive study was undertaken by writing to every church in England, and three times in Scotland asking questions about church attendance on a typical Sunday. The first of these in both countries did not ask a question about churchmanship or ethos, but in the five Censuses which followed the question was always asked in the same way: “Which of the following terms best describe your congregation? Tick up to three only.” Nine possible answers were given with a tenth “other” which was open; the possible answers were slightly different in England and Scotland. In England these options were: Anglo-Catholic, Broad, Catholic, Charismatic, Evangelical, Liberal, Low Church, Orthodox, Radical, Other please specify.

The answers were very carefully piloted the first time the question was asked, in 1989, and the subsequent range of 162 different combinations was translated into 7 “churchmanships” of which “evangelical” was one<sup>82</sup>. Since many of the sponsors of these Censuses were evangelical organisations,

<sup>76</sup> Quoted in *Evangelism and the Emerging Church*, by Cary Labnanow, Ashgate Publishing, 2009.

<sup>77</sup> *The Dominance of Evangelicalism*, David W Bebbington, IVF, Nottingham, 2005.

<sup>78</sup> Stemming from the public fall-out of two widely respected British evangelical leaders in 1966 – John Stott and Martyn Lloyd-Jones.

<sup>79</sup> From a presentation by the Rt Rev Peter Broadbent, Bishop of Willesden, in a paper at the January 2009 Strategic Thinkers’ Forum, held at High Leigh Conference Centre, Hertfordshire, UK.

<sup>80</sup> Article in *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, OMSC, New Haven, USA, Volume 34, Number 1, January 2010.

<sup>81</sup> Article in *Willow*, magazine of the Willow Creek Association, and reported in *Christian Post* on their website 17<sup>th</sup> February 2008: [www.christianpost.com/article/20080209/31127\\_Portrait\\_of\\_Christianity](http://www.christianpost.com/article/20080209/31127_Portrait_of_Christianity)

<sup>82</sup> English response rates were 70% in 1989, 33% in 1998 and 50% in 2005.

particular attention was focussed on this category, which was broken down into three sub-categories, which in England were “Broad Evangelical”, “Evangelical” and “Charismatic Evangelical”. The first of these was made up mostly of those who ticked both “Broad” and “Evangelical” irrespective of any third box also ticked, and the third of those who ticked at least both “Charismatic” and “Evangelical”.

A number ticked just the one box “Evangelical” and to distinguish these from the other two Evangelical categories the word “Mainstream” was added and put in front, but the word “Mainstream” was not on the original form. This word was first used in 1989 long before the word became associated with particular denominations, such as Mainstream Anglicans or Mainstream Baptists, even if members of these organisations are mostly evangelical; the membership of either group should not necessarily be equated to the Census totals for those combinations. A detailed analysis of all the 162 combinations used and how many respondents ticked each one, and the final category into which they were allocated has been published for the 1989 and 2005 English Censuses<sup>83</sup>.

Because there have been three English Censuses which asked about churchmanship, and trends can therefore be slightly more reliably used for forecasting, more analyses have been undertaken of this variable in England than in Scotland, so we will focus on the English answers first.

### *Evangelicals – one category among others*

The following Table gives an overview of the entire results for the seven main categories, and three sub-categories:

*Table 14: Proportions of churches and churchgoers in each category, 1989-2005*

Churchmanship	Churches			Churchgoers		
	1989 %	1998 %	2005 %	1989 %	1998 %	2005 %
Anglo-Catholic	5	6	5	4	5	5
Broad	16	13	13	9	9	9
Catholic	16	16	15	39	27	27
<b>Evangelical</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>40</b>
Liberal	14	12	12	10	11	9
Low Church	12	12	12	6	8	7
Others	2	3	3	2	3	3
Base (=100%)	38,607	37,717	37,501	4.7 mn	3.7 mn	3.2 mn
Broad Evangelical	11	10	8	9	6	6
Mainstream Evangelical	11	16	18	8	17	18
Charismatic Evangelical	13	12	14	13	14	16

The Table shows that most churchmanships have remained fairly stable across these 16 years with the exception of the Evangelicals, who have grown. The denominational affiliations will be looked at shortly, but most Roman Catholics identified themselves as “Catholic”, and there was an enormous

<sup>83</sup> See *Religious Trends*, No 6, 2006/2007, edited Peter Brierley, Christian Research, Eltham, London, 2006, Table 5.13.3.

drop in the numbers of Roman Catholics attending church between 1989 and 1998, which helps explain the huge fall of Catholics in the Table in these two years.

It may also be seen that there are many more Broad churches than churchgoers (many are in rural areas where congregations are much smaller), and many more Low churches than churchgoers, but many more Catholic churchgoers than churches (because the average Roman Catholic congregation is by far the highest of any denomination).

The minister completed the form on behalf of his/her congregation. How far they did this accurately without reflecting their own position is impossible to know, although most will tally. The size of their congregation for analysis purposes was taken as wholly belonging to the churchmanship category identified by the minister, something that will never be entirely true, although in a series of surveys undertaken by Christian Research at the turn of the century it was found that about two-thirds of a congregation would follow the churchmanship stated by the minister, so the assumption is not totally unreasonable. For the remainder of this Chapter we will focus on Evangelicals, and on churchgoers rather than churches (except for Table 21).

There are different groups of Evangelicals, and not just those in Table 13. Some characterise them as Conservative, Open and Charismatic. A CPAS discussion paper went further and identified the following types<sup>84</sup>, not necessarily exclusive of each other:

- Fundamentalist evangelicals (“ultra inerrancy” is the touchstone)
- Liberal evangelicals (cp Mark Thomson in *Churchman*, 1997)
- Traditional evangelicals (emphasis being on personal experience of regeneration and a commitment to mass evangelism)
- Justice/peace evangelicals (activist/politically minded, but not to be confused with the Religious Right)
- Ecumenical evangelicals (emphasis on relationships with the Church as a whole)
- Post-modern evangelicals (an emphasis on engaging with today’s culture and context)
- Accepting evangelicals (those increasingly uncomfortable with hard-line statements issued by some evangelical groups).

There are other groups as well, sometimes associated with particular denominations, such as Fulcrum with Anglicans, Open Evangelicals and Reform, both the latter initially Anglican but now with wider representation.

If these kinds of words are not relevant in your context, what would be the appropriate descriptions of different communities of evangelicals? Do you have any different “tribes” at all?

### *Evangelical Tribes*

In a paper presented to the Strategic Thinkers’ Forum in January 2009, the Rt Rev Peter Broadbent, Bishop of Willesden, suggested 7 Evangelical Tribes, which are listed on the next page, with two changes – a small eighth Tribe has been added for the non-charismatic overseas worshippers, and the inclusion of Vineyard attenders as part of the New Wine grouping has been changed to the New Church group at the strong representation of Terry Virgo, the leader of Newfrontiers International. The total is the grand total of the number of Evangelicals attending church in England in 2005, representing 40% [Table 14] of all churchgoers, including children, and 2.5% of the population<sup>85</sup>.

It may well be that some or all of these “tribes” are not present, or not present in similar proportions, in other countries within Europe or within North America or Oceania, and may not occur at all among the developing countries in other continents. Nevertheless an indication of some of their

---

<sup>84</sup> Taken from a Council of Reference paper, *Report to council: cpas and the evangelical community* November 2009.

<sup>85</sup> The forthcoming edition of *Operation World* will put the percentage as 9% as they include all those who are no longer attending church for whatever reason.

characteristics may be of interest<sup>86</sup> since one of the very likely trends in the next decade is that these “tribes” will develop elsewhere.

On this analysis, Open Evangelicals and Pentecostals form between them over two-fifths (43%) of all Evangelicals, with Charismatic (including the New Churches) over a quarter (29%) of the total and conservative groups (the first two lines) a fifth (17%) of the total, with the remainder, the last two lines just 11% of the total.

The last group, the non-charismatic overseas, are sufficiently small and in practice probably sufficiently close to the open/mainline denominational evangelicals to be included with them, and for simplicity they are put together in subsequent analyses.

*Table 15: The Evangelical Tribes in England, 2009*

No	Tribe	Examples of derivation <sup>87</sup>	2005 Number	% of total
1	Conservative separatist	Affinity <sup>88</sup> , Brethren, FIEC	142,800	11
2	Conservative non-separatist	Reform, UCCF, Proclamation Trust	77,400	6
3	Pentecostal	Elim, Assemblies of God, BMIC, NTCoG, CoGoP	273,000	22
4	Charismatic evangelicals	New Wine	210,800 <sup>89</sup>	17
5	New Church	Newfrontiers, Pioneer, Salt & Light, Ground Level, Ichthus, Vineyard	154,600	12
6	Open/mainline denominational evangelicals		365,500 <sup>90</sup>	29
7	Post/emergent evangelicals		28,500	2
8	Non-charismatic overseas	Chinese, Korean, Tamil etc.	12,200	1
TOTAL		All Evangelicals	1,264,800	100

### *Trends in proportions*

Table 16 on the next page shows how the respective proportions of the Evangelical Tribes have changed since 1989, based on the number of churchgoers for the years 1989, 1998 and 2005, with a projection to 2015.

The Table shows a few movements in terms of proportions of the total number of Evangelicals – the separatists are declining<sup>91</sup>, the non-separatists are growing, there was a huge expansion in numbers of Pentecostals between 1998 and 2005, largely because of the burgeoning numbers of black churchgoers in that period (which is likely to continue but at a slower rate), mostly at the expense of

<sup>86</sup> It has to be assumed, in the absence of any other information, that the evangelical “tribe” has the same characteristics of the remaining evangelicals or others in any particular denomination.

<sup>87</sup> Abbreviations stand for: FIEC = Fellowship of Independent Evangelical churches; UCCF = Universities’ and Colleges’ Christian Fellowship; BMIC= Black Majority Independent Churches; NTCoG = New Testament Church of God; CoGoP = Church of God of Prophecy; URC = United Reformed Church and SDA = Seventh-Day Adventists.

<sup>88</sup> New name for the British Evangelical Council.

<sup>89</sup> Of which Anglican 114,900; Baptist 65,100; Methodist 14,700; RC 8,400; Salvation Army 3,500; URC 4,200.

<sup>90</sup> Of which Baptist 158,000; Methodist 38,200; RC 27,400; Salvation Army 26,500; URC 10,500; SDA 10,600.

<sup>91</sup> Both the Christian Brethren (Open) and the FIEC have declined since 1989.

open/mainline evangelicals<sup>92</sup>, while the other groups remained about the same pro rata.

Table 16: Size of the different tribes, 1989-2015

No	Tribe	1989 %	1998 %	2005 %	2015 Est %
1	Conservative separatist	14	11	11	10
2	Conservative non-separatist	3	5	6	9
3	Pentecostal	15	15	22	24
4	Charismatic evangelicals	18	17	17	15
5	New Church	12	13	12	13
6	Open/mainline denominational evangelicals	37	38	30	25
7	Post/emergent evangelicals	1	1	2	4
Base (= 100%)		1,430,400	1,391,300	1,264,800	1,111,900 <sup>93</sup>

This is in terms of proportions; in terms of actual numbers, the total number of Evangelicals dropped 12% in these 16 years (and 22% going to 2015), and the only two groups which have grown numerically are the Conservative non-separatists (up 79% to 77,000 in 2005) and the Pentecostals (up 24% to 273,000 in 2005).

Only a relatively small number of people attending “Fresh Expression” or emerging churches were included in the 2005 as this was a phenomenon only just beginning then (some 300 churches with 18,000 people, with half assumed to be new people). Judging by (non-quantitative) reports the number of such churches has grown quite considerably since, perhaps to as many as an extra 1,000 churches in 2010 not counted elsewhere. The “post/emergent evangelicals” group consists of two groups – the post-evangelicals which seem to be declining and the emergent evangelicals which are definitely growing. Part of the latter’s growth is intentional evangelism, resulting in new people coming to faith, though some of those attending “Fresh Expressions” churches are those who have transferred out of the traditional denominations wanting something different<sup>94</sup>.

If one projects these trends on to a large screen, asking which of these might be applicable in other countries and continents, five broad trends emerge:

- The conservatives are slowly growing as a proportion of the total
- The Pentecostals are growing (largely because of the immigrant factor)
- Charismatics are slowly declining as a proportion of the total, but still almost 30%
- Open/mainline evangelicals are declining, but still a substantial proportion
- The emerging churches are growing but not yet making a substantial difference to the overall picture.

<sup>92</sup> The surge in 1998 was mainly due to a large number of Catholic Evangelicals as the charismatic movement was strong in Catholic churches during the 1990s, but this was not maintained in 2005. If their numbers are omitted the open/mainline evangelicals would have gone from 27% in 1989 to 26% in 1998 to 20% in 2005, and to 19% in 2015.

<sup>93</sup> This total was published in *Pulling out of the Nosedive*, Footnote 42, Page 54.

<sup>94</sup> See, for example, *Fresh Expressions of Church: Fishing Nets or Safety Nets*, Matthew Stone, MA in Pastoral Theology, Anglia Ruskin University, 2009.

### Age of the various tribes

The 2005 English Church Census was analysed in great detail due to a substantial grant from the University of Manchester. Consequently it is that analysis which is used in the remaining parts of this Chapter, based on a denominational breakdown of the various tribes, shown, on a very tentative basis, in Table A6 in the Appendix. The proportions in the various age-groups are shown in Table 17:

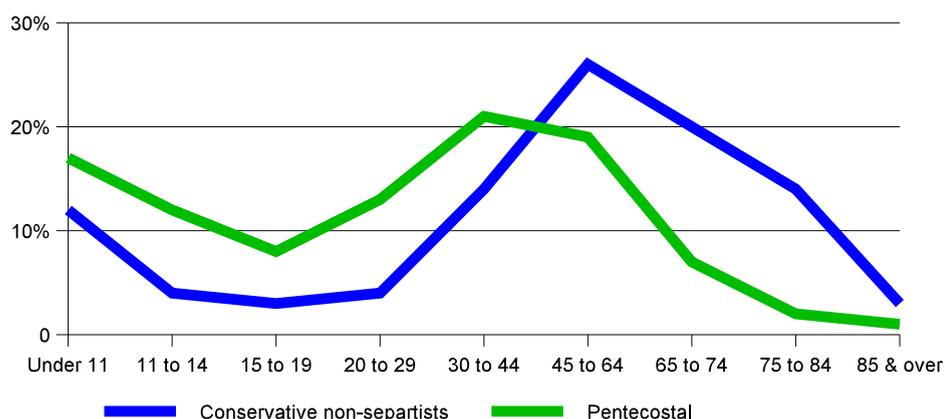
Table 17: Proportions in different age-groups, by Evangelical Tribe, 2005

No	Tribe	Under 11 %	11 to 14 %	15 to 19 %	20 to 29 %	30 to 44 %	45 to 64 %	65 to 74 %	75 to 84 %	85 & over %	Base (=100%)	Average age in years
1	Conservative separatist	13	6	6	9	19	25	12	8	2	142,800	42
2	Conservative non-separatist	12	4	3	4	14	26	20	14	3	77,400	50
3	Pentecostal	17	12	8	13	21	19	7	2	1	273,000	33
4	Charismatic evangelicals	16	5	4	7	18	25	14	9	2	210,800	43
5	New Church	17	8	7	14	23	23	5	2	1	154,600	34
6	Open/mainline denominational evangelicals	14	5	4	5	15	25	17	12	3	377,700	47
7	Post/emergent evangelicals	12	5	5	7	17	26	15	11	2	28,500	45
	<b>All evangelicals</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1,264,800</b>	<b>41</b>
	All churchgoers	13	6	5	7	16	24	17	10	2	3,166,200	54

Evangelicals in general terms are younger than churchgoers generally. Of Evangelicals, the Conservative non-separatists are the oldest group, nearly two-fifths (37%) 65 or older, and less than a fifth (19%) under 20. The next oldest group are the Open/mainline evangelicals with a third (32%) 65 or over but nearly a quarter (23%) under 20.

The youngest groups, by far, are the Pentecostals and those in the New Churches, with 10% and 8% respectively 65 and over, and 37% and 32% under 20. Youth work for both groups is a very high priority. The Conservative non-separatists and the Pentecostals are illustrated in Figure 13; all other tribes are between these two.

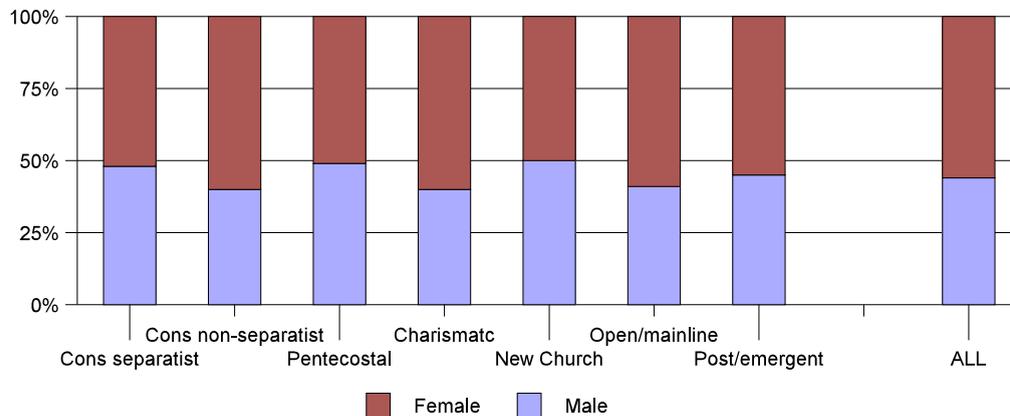
Figure 13: Proportions in each Age-group, youngest and oldest, 2005



### Gender of the various tribes

Figure 14 shows the percentage of churchgoers by gender by Evangelical Tribe. They fall into broad groups: the Pentecostals, New Churches and Conservative separatists have the highest percentages of men attending (and are also the three groups with the youngest average ages), while the Conservative non-separatists, Charismatic and Open/mainline evangelicals have the lowest proportion of men in their congregations (of whom the first and last have the oldest average ages).

Figure 14: Gender of churchgoers by Evangelical Tribes, 2005



It is perhaps somewhat ironic that the Tribe with perhaps the strictest reservations on female leadership, Conservative non-separatists, has one of the highest percentages of women attending their churches – or is this cause and effect?

### Environment of the various tribes

The kind of environment in which a church was located was given by 63% of the churches in England in the 1989 English Church Census and has been used since. When applied to the Evangelical Tribes, the proportions of churchgoers in each environment is as given in Table 18:

Table 18: Proportions of churchgoers by environment for each Evangelical Tribe, 2005

No	Tribe	City Centre %	Inner City %	Council Estate %	Suburban %	Towns %	Other built-up %	Comm. Rural %	Remoter Rural %	Base (=100%)
1	Conservative separatist	5	0	5	45	16	4	13	12	142,800
2	Conservative non-separatist	9	0	7	39	13	6	11	15	77,400
3	Pentecostal	8	40	10	19	13	3	6	1	273,000
4	Charismatic evangelicals	6	0	6	42	17	6	11	12	210,800
5	New Church	2	7	5	29	31	5	13	8	154,600
6	Open/mainline denominational evangelicals	5	0	6	43	20	6	10	10	377,700
7	Post/emergent evangelicals	6	0	6	43	15	5	12	13	28,500
	<b>All evangelicals</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1,264,800</b>
	All churchgoers	5	12	7	36	17	4	11	8	3,166,200

This Table shows many contrasts in the Evangelical Tribes:

- The many rural Independent chapels are reflected in the Conservative separatists, who are also strong in suburban areas.
- The Conservative non-separatists are especially strong in City Centres, but also in the remote countryside.
- The Pentecostals have a virtual monopoly of the Evangelical presence in the Inner City areas being responsible for 90% of it, reflecting especially the large numbers of black churches. They are also quite strong in City Centres, but much weaker in suburban and rural areas generally.
- Charismatics are strong in suburban areas and the remoter rural places also.
- New Churches are especially strong in the many towns of our land, and form a fifth (21%) of the Evangelical presence there; they are weaker in suburban areas.
- The Open/mainline denominational evangelicals are above average strength in suburban areas and towns, but would be average if the Pentecostals were ignored.
- Post/emergent evangelicals likewise show above average in suburban areas, but also in the rural areas, the latter being more significant than the former.

Collectively this shows that the environment is an important factor, and is especially relevant for Pentecostals (Inner City), New Churches (Towns) and the two Conservative groups and the Post/emergent evangelicals (remoter rural areas). The other significant denomination in the Inner City is the Roman Catholics, who see 33% of all churchgoers in that environment in their churches. Catholics and Pentecostals account for almost two-thirds (64%) of Inner City churchgoers and over half (51%) of those attending on Council Estates – the only two environments dominated by just one or two denominations.

### *Location of the various tribes*

Location is not the same as environment, although often the two are closely connected. The 2005 Census location results were analysed by individual county, but these have been grouped into regions for ease of analysis and for seeing the variations. These are shown in Table 19 below:

*Table 19: Regional variations of the Evangelical tribes, 2005*

No	Tribe	North North %	York- shires %	North West %	East Mids. %	West Mids. %	East Anglia %	SE North %	Lon- don %	SE South %	South West %	Base (=100%)
1	Conservative separatist	5	3	11	7	11	6	14	11	17	15	142,800
2	Conservative non-separatist	6	6	12	9	10	6	10	10	19	12	77,400
3	Pentecostal	2	5	7	6	12	1	6	53	4	4	273,000
4	Charismatic evangelicals	5	6	11	8	10	6	11	13	18	12	210,800
5	New Church	2	7	7	7	6	5	14	22	18	12	154,600
6	Open/mainline denominational evangelicals	5	6	1 1	7	10	6	12	15	17	1 1	377,700
7	Post/emergent evangelicals	5	4	11	7	11	6	14	11	17	14	28,500
	<b>All evangelicals</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1,264,800</b>
	All evangelicals excluding Pentecostals	5	6	10	8	9	6	12	14	18	12	991,800
	All churchgoers	6	7	13	7	9	4	11	20	13	10	3,166,200

The Table shows that the proportion of Evangelicals in London is higher than the general proportion of Christians which is because of the dominance of so many black churches, and lower in the North West, where the Roman Catholics are especially strong.

Conservative separatists are strong in the South West reflecting the independent tradition there. Conservative non-separatists are weaker in Greater London than might have been expected given several quite large Anglican Reform churches in the capital.

The Pentecostals are again a special case. More than half (53%) of all the Pentecostals in the country worship in Greater London! Perhaps it is not surprising as a quarter (25%) of all the capital's churches are Pentecostal (and another quarter are Anglican). Again it is the huge number of black churches in the streets and boroughs of the capital, especially Brent, Hackney, Haringey, Lambeth, Newham and Southward, each with 70 or more, though their presence is weaker elsewhere.

There are fewer New Churches in the North than churches of other Evangelical Tribes, and in the North West, and West Midlands, but many more in Greater London where almost a quarter (22%) of those attending these churches worship. In contrast, Post/emergent evangelicals are weaker in London than elsewhere.

### *Ethnicity of the various tribes*

The 2005 Census also requested the ethnicity of churchgoers; individual slips indicating this were completed by half a million churchgoers. How this varied by the different tribes is shown in Table 20:

*Table 20: Ethnicity of the Evangelical tribes, 2005*

No	Tribe	White %	Black %	Indian %	CKJ %	Other Asian %	Other Non-W %	Base (=100%)
1	Conservative separatist	82	9	2	4	2	1	142,800
2	Conservative non-separatist	84	12	1	2	1	0	77,400
3	Pentecostal	55	40	2	1	0	2	273,000
4	Charismatic evangelicals	83	12	1	2	1	1	210,800
5	New Church	89	5	2	2	1	1	154,600
6	Open/mainline denominational evangelicals	82	12	1	2	2	1	377,700
7	Post/emergent evangelicals	82	9	2	4	2	1	28,500
	<b>All evangelicals</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1,264,800</b>
	All evangelicals excluding Pentecostals	84	10	1	2	2	1	991,800
	All churchgoers	84	10	2	2	1	1	3,166,200

Black = Black Caribbean/African/Other; "Indian" also includes Pakistani and Bangladeshi churchgoers;

CKJ = Chinese, Korean and Japanese; Other Asian will include Singaporeans and Filipinos;

Other Non-W = Other Non-white and will include those from Latin America.

There is little difference among the various Evangelical tribes according to the ethnicity of those who attend their churches, apart from the Pentecostals, two-fifths (40%) of whom are black, and the New Churches which have only half the percentage of black people that other evangelical churches (outside the Pentecostals) have (5% to 10%).

### Size of church in the various tribes

The final analysis of the Tribes looks at how they vary by the size of their church congregations, and these are given in Table 21. Note that these figures are based on the number of churches, not churchgoers, so the underlying numbers are different from those used previously. The number of churches with 300 or more attending is based on actual numbers identified from research later than the 2005 Census. These figures are based on usual attendance, including children, on an average Sunday. The figures therefore exclude mid-week worship attendance (of those who do not also come on Sunday) which would add about 10% to the overall total. Just 6.3% of the English population attended church on an average Sunday in 2005.

Table 21: Evangelical Tribes by size of their churches, 2005

No	Tribe	Under 25 %	26 to 50 %	51 to 100 %	101 to 150 %	151 to 200 %	201 to 300 %	301 to 400 %	401 to 500 %	Over 500 %	Base (=100%)	Average size
1	Conservative separatist	11	18	31	24	12	2	1	0	1	1,490	83
2	Conservative non-separatist	28	25	26	9	3	3	3	1	2	1,411	71
3	Pentecostal	14	18	17	14	12	11	9	3	2	2,073	129
4	Charismatic evangelicals	23	23	26	12	6	5	2	1	2	2,424	80
5	New Church	4	13	29	19	12	10	5	3	5	1,226	140
6	Open/mainline evangelicals	23	23	27	13	7	5	1	0	1	5,828	70
7	Post/emergent evangelicals	17	20	29	19	9	3	1	1	1	475	79
	<b>All evangelical churches</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14,927</b>	<b>82</b>
	All churches	28	21	21	11	7	6	2	2	2	37,501	84
	All churches except Roman Catholics	30	22	22	10	7	5	2	1	1	33,845	67

Evangelical churches are a fifth larger on average than non-evangelicals, if the Roman Catholics, which have very many large churches, are excluded (their average attendance is 244). However, generally, Evangelical churches are small churches, with two-thirds (66%) having under 100 in attendance on an average Sunday. There are, however, about 900 Evangelical churches in England with 300 or more present.

The Pentecostal and New Churches are the largest churches, with the New Churches having a higher average number of attenders because of a larger number of churches in excess of 500 people (60 in total, whereas the Pentecostals have 41).

The smallest churches are the Conservative non-separatist and the Open/mainline denominational evangelical churches, with the other three groups (Conservative separatists, Charismatics and Post/emergent evangelicals) all about the same average size.

### Scottish evangelicals

The only other country where similar analyses of evangelical church life are available in a comparable way is Scotland, which had two Censuses in 1994 and 2002 which measured churchmanship. Their figures are smaller and much more difficult to break down into the Evangelical Tribes used for

England. Some 29% of their 570,000 Sunday churchgoers in 2002 were Evangelical<sup>95</sup>, or 160,000.

As in England, Scottish Evangelical churches are larger than others if the Catholics are excluded. While, like Scottish churchgoers generally, numbers attending Evangelical churches declined between 1994 and 2002, those attending the more conservative churches grew a little. Three-quarters of the Evangelicals are in one of three denominations: the Church of Scotland (34%), the Independent churches (25%) or the Baptist churches (15%). Only the Baptist Evangelicals grew between 1994 and 2002, and that because of the increasing numbers in their charismatic churches. Evangelicals in Scotland are slightly younger than those attending non-Evangelical churches, largely because those attending charismatic churches are much younger than average (36 to 47).

The highest concentrations of Evangelicals in Scotland are in the Western Isles (69%), the Shetland Islands (53%), Aberdeen City (46% – which overall has the smallest percentage of churchgoers), West Lothian (41%) and the Highlands (40%). The lowest proportions of Evangelicals are in those areas where more than half the percentage of those attending is Roman Catholic.

### *So what does all this mean?*

This Chapter has shown that Evangelical “Tribes” definitely exist and that they have quite different characteristics. The key Tribes, as given here, are as follows. Growth is only seen in the Pentecostals, Post/Emergent evangelicals and the Conservative non-separatists. ***The same is probably likely to be true world-wide.***

1) *The Pentecostals.* The second largest group (22% in 2005), dominated by the black churches (40% of total), and as a consequence they are growing quite rapidly. Half are located in Greater London, and conversely are weak in the Northern regions. The youngest of all the evangelicals, with 37% under 20, 10% 65 and over. Half of attendees are male. The Pentecostals represent 90% of all Inner City evangelicals, with 40% of their number there. Have many large churches, some 300 with congregations in excess of 300 people.

2) *New Churches.* Stable, half the size of the Pentecostals. Also very young, 32% under 20, 8% 65 and over. Half of attendees also are male. Relatively scarce in City Centres, well represented in Greater London, and strong in towns. Have smallest percentage of non-white attenders. Have the largest congregations, and the highest percentage (13%) of congregations of at least 300, and have 60 churches with over 500 people.

3) *Post/Emergent evangelicals.* A very small group, but also growing. These are the Fresh Expression evangelicals plus those who tend to disagree with the dominant next groups. Strong in rural and suburban areas, and weak in Greater London. Post/emergent evangelicals have more non-black ethnic minority groups in attendance than other Tribes, except the Separatists.

The above three somehow seem to sit outside the main framework of evangelicals, forming two-thirds of the total (64% in 2005):

4) *Conservative evangelicals,* which can be split into Separatists and Non-Separatists, with the former declining and the latter growing (because of increasing number of larger churches). Collectively one-sixth (17%) of all evangelicals. Conservatives are strong in the rural areas, and especially the South West. The Non-separatists are the oldest among evangelicals (19% under 20, 37% 65 and over), have the highest percentage of women (60%) in their congregations, but very small congregations on average, with four-fifths (79%) under 100 people. The Separatists have more non-black ethnic minority groups in attendance than other Tribes, except Post/emergent evangelicals.

---

<sup>95</sup> Information in this section taken from *Religious Trends*, No 4, 2003/2004, Peter Brierley, Christian Research, Eltham, London, Section 12.

5) *Open/mainline evangelicals*, which some would call traditional, a large group, a third (30%) of the whole, but declining relatively rapidly. Also an elderly group, with 23% under 20 but 32% 65 and over. Strong in suburban areas. The smallest average congregations, with three-quarters (73%) under 100 in size.

6) *The Charismatic evangelicals*, slightly more than half the previous group (17%), but also declining, but fairly slowly. Strong in suburban and rural areas. Very few distinctive features among the characteristics analysed.

What we do not have are the theological/doctrinal, cultural, historical and personality/temperament differences between the tribes. Nor is it clear that the tribes have the self-understanding to accept these factors in the way we interpret Scripture. Do we largely stay in our ghettos? How much do we humbly listen to one another, read each other's literature, seek to understand others?<sup>96</sup>

The question must be repeated – if these descriptions are far from the situation in your church or country, what groups of evangelical communities would you put in their place? Can any broad information or data be given for them, or used to describe them, such as “mostly young”, “more in the south”, “less conservative”, “a growing group”?

---

<sup>96</sup> Questions in personal correspondence with Mrs Rose Dowsett.

## **7) Lack of Confidence and Other Trends**

Thus far we have looked at major trends in the Christian world – the static state of Christianity as a proportion of the world’s population; the growth of evangelicalism and the decline of non-evangelicals; the challenging rise also of Islam, alone of the world’s religions; the changing nature of both the world’s population and those attending churches – far fewer young people, many more older people; the constant impact of wholesale immigration; and the changing nature of evangelicalism itself – the rise of Pentecostalism, Conservatism (non-separatist) and Emergent evangelicals<sup>97</sup>, with the decline of “traditional” Christianity, separatist conservatism, and the present lack of growth of charismatic (and New Church) forms of worship.

In addition to these six trends, in this final Chapter we look much more briefly at four other trends likely to be important in the next 10 years, in less depth, largely because there is less data, but also because they are much more widely obvious.

### ***Lack of Confidence in the Gospel***

The most important of these is the seeming loss of confidence of Christians in taking the gospel to others. When a group of churches was asked in a Vision Building day what was the key factor inhibiting the growth of the churches in that town, five out of 6 voted “lack of certainty in explaining the faith to outsiders”. This is a critical issue.

However bleak the circumstances, there are encouragements, such as those coming to faith through Alpha or Christianity Explored or other teaching courses. In the 1980s when church attendance in Britain was dropping we were still seeing some 120,000 coming to faith each year – even if we were also seeing 170,000 leaving and 60,000 churchgoers dying. One step forward but two steps back. In the early years of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the number coming to faith has dropped to 80,000 people per annum<sup>98</sup>, offset by 40,000 leaving the church and 120,000 dying (as we now have so many elderly churchgoers). Still one step forward and two steps back. The essence of these numbers is that we simply have fewer coming to faith and more being promoted to glory. More deaths than conversions! No wonder we decline.

Why are fewer coming to faith? Have the books by Dan Brown and Richard Dawkins done their evil work? Dan Brown may say that *The Da Vinci Code* is a novel, but it reads like fact. “Dan Brown says he has *researched* his work, and Jesus did have a baby by Magdalene Mary,” is a difficult allegation to refute for many churchgoers, unfamiliar (and untaught) with doctrines of Biblical authority and apologetics.

Leslie Francis and Philip Richter have long researched why people leave church<sup>99</sup>, of which “unfulfilled expectations” is a key component whether that is expressed in terms of boredom with services, loss of faith or unfriendly congregations. Some critical research by the Willow Creek Association in Chicago<sup>100</sup> showed that some of the most mature Christian people in their church were

<sup>97</sup> “Churches outside mainstream Christianity are growing the fastest” said a report in *Christian Post*, 17<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

<sup>98</sup> See *Pulling out of the Nosedive*, Footnote 42.

<sup>99</sup> *Gone for Good? Church Leaving and Returning in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Professor Leslie Francis and Dr Philip Richter, Darton, Longman and Todd, London, 2008 which updates their earlier research on a similar topic, *Gone but not Forgotten*, published in 1998.

<sup>100</sup> *Reveal where are you?*, Greg Hawkins and Cally Parkinson, Willow Creek Resources, 2007.

tired of their religion. What used to be a life-time's call to take the gospel to a foreign country (19<sup>th</sup> century) has become downplayed to a short-term visit, however valuable such may be to the individual, to help build a school (21<sup>st</sup> century)<sup>101</sup> or other like activity<sup>102</sup>.

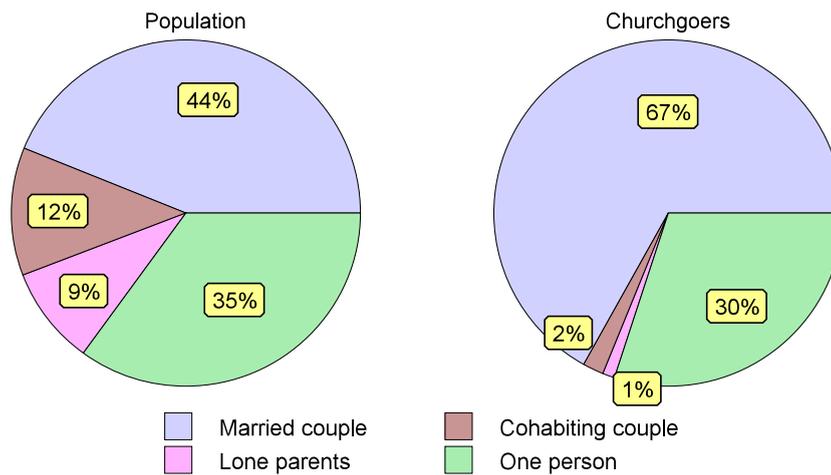
Perhaps no wonder the percentage of the world's population who are Christian is static! However, in places where confidence in the gospel is NOT the main obstacle to faith sharing, in your context, what would be the main barriers to sharing the gospel, and to the growth of the church?

### Changing Family Forms

Family life is changing in the developed world, and this also has implications for evangelical Christianity. The proportion of the population who are married is decreasing, the number who have experienced a divorce is increasing (some suggest it is "a normal part of the life course, and step parenting is viewed as good enough"<sup>103</sup>), and the number of those living together without being married is increasing, as is the number of single parents.

In the UK, this can be epitomised by the following pie-charts, contrasting the population and churchgoers:

Figure 15: Household structures among the population and churchgoers, England, 2009



It is clear that, in Britain at least, the church very poorly represents two areas of family pattern which are fast growing – the number who are cohabiting and the number of lone parents. It has been found that it is the larger churches which tend to attract these groups, simply because with more such folk present they tend to form a natural affinity among themselves; in smaller churches, they often feel out on a limb.

However, the same broad trends are also true in the United States and Australia, where a recent report suggested 5% of Melbourne's churchgoers were in a de facto relationship<sup>104</sup>. In some church communities, especially some of the non-white communities, living together faithfully without

<sup>101</sup> Article "The Statistical State of the North American Protestant Missions Movement", by Michael Jaffarian, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Volume 32, Number 1, January 2008, Page 35. Short-termers were three-quarters (75%) of North American mission workers in 2005.

<sup>102</sup> While some short-termers will eventually become long-termers, research suggests proportion is about 10%. It would be interesting to research what proportion of young people in the church (18 to 30) have had such a short-term visit, and how many churches actively encourage this, and how.

<sup>103</sup> Article "New family forms are not norms", by Professor Simon Duncan, *Society Now*, Summer 2009, Page 7.

<sup>104</sup> *All Melbourne Matters*, The Citywide Report of Research of Church in Melbourne, by Rev Dr Philip Hughes and Stephen Reid, for Transforming Melbourne, by the Christian Research Association, Melbourne, Australia, February 2009, Page 66.

necessarily being married is accepted as part of the norm. In many developing countries, this has to be the pattern of family life as getting married in the essential, traditional way, is simply too expensive an option. Some have suggested that biblically this pattern is perfectly acceptable<sup>105</sup>.

One London church, finding it had a specially large proportion of single parents in its neighbourhood (from a study of the population census figures for their area), set about establishing facilities and resources for these families, inviting them in. Many subsequently joined that particular church. Some, however, might feel that such specific ministry labels and sets apart such families rather than warmly accepting and integrating them into the church family.

### *The Technology Challenge*

This topic has been well documented elsewhere, so there is no need for detailed references or explanations. Just one will suffice – there were 2.7 billion Google searches per month in 2006, and 31 billion per month in 2008<sup>106</sup>. It could be as many as 400 billion in 2010! This would seem to have the following components of importance to global trends:

#### *Moral issues*

“An overwhelming majority of the challenges – such as abortion, stem cell therapies and pornography – Christianity will be facing in this millennium will be driven by new technologies.”<sup>107</sup> It might be arguable how far new technology drives some of these issues, but one reason for the smaller number of children in the world is the high incidence of abortion. In some countries over 50% of foetuses are aborted, such as Belarus, Bulgaria, Chile, Cuba, Estonia, Romania, Russia, Ukraine and Vietnam<sup>108</sup>. The issue is particularly important in some countries such as Ireland, where, having had a negative referendum on the Lisbon Treaty in 2008, the Government was able to negotiate being allowed not to apply a mandatory entitlement to abortion before the successful 2009 referendum<sup>109</sup>.

#### *Communication*

The rise in the use of Twitter, Facebook, YouTube is incredible. In March 2009 Nielsen indicated there were 66 million “unique audiences” for Facebook, out of some 350 million active users, only 100 million of whom were in the United States. The average user has 130 friends and spends 55 minutes *per day* on Facebook<sup>110</sup>. Nielsen also showed that there were 7 million for Twitter, up from ¾ million in December 2007<sup>111</sup>. MySpace had 54 million active users in 2009, but had registered its 100 millionth member in 2006. Bebo, launched in July 2005, had 25 million members within 18 months<sup>112</sup>.

These various social networking sites are becoming major sources of communication, and, in many cases, *the* major source for young people. It is essential that the church people use them as well but for the Gospel. Just as many businesses now trade through these sites, perhaps more individual churches can also be involved to share Biblical truth on finding faith, topical issues, controversial questions, etc. This is a major trend which needs to be used holistically by Christians.

---

<sup>105</sup> *Living Together and Christian Ethics*, by Adrian Thatcher, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

<sup>106</sup> Sony video “Did you know?”, June 2008, [www.releaseplatform.com](http://www.releaseplatform.com), quoted in *FutureFirst*, Brierley Consultancy, February 2009.

<sup>107</sup> Article “Portrait of Christianity” by Audrey Barrick, *Christian Post*, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2008.

<sup>108</sup> Source: [www.guttmacher.org/pubs/journals/25s3099](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/journals/25s3099) accessed 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009 but based largely on data in the mid-1990s. Life expectancy is also low in some of these countries; it is lowest in all the developed world in Russia (73 years for women, 59 for men, which is also the largest gender gap).

<sup>109</sup> Article “Why did Ireland reject the Lisbon Treaty in 2008?”, by John Fitzgibbon, *Briefings*, Faith in Europe, Number 15, June 2009, Page 28.

<sup>110</sup> Source: [www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics](http://www.facebook.com/press/info.php?statistics) accessed 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009.

<sup>111</sup> Source: [www.mashable.com/2009/3/16](http://www.mashable.com/2009/3/16), accessed 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2009.

<sup>112</sup> *History of Cromer Beach Mission*, Rev Philip Bligh, Bligh, 2008, Page 349.

## Language

It is not always realised that many of these sites use their own language, often using abbreviations for common words, or spelling words phonetically. Those under 20 seem to have a special facility with such, often mistaking the special spelling on these sites for the real spelling. This is likely to intensify, with language use and spelling being modified accordingly. The next generation of Christians will speak Facebook and YouTube language as easily as people speak traditional English today.

## Culture

Implicit within much of these websites is a culture of post-modern principles – such as that “an individual views and preferences, provided they harm no-one else, should not be questioned or constrained ... spiritual/religious beliefs and practices are purely personal lifestyle choices – in no way necessary.”<sup>113</sup>

## Beyond the Judaeo-Christian tradition

Speaking at the 2008 Lambeth Conference, when most of the Bishops in the Anglican Communion gathered together, the Bishop of Durham, the Rt Rev Tom Wright, looked ahead into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and drew a conclusion from the demise of the British Empire (“on which the sun never set”) in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. This envisaged the possible demise of the current American status as the sole world super-power, that “the next great superpower ... whether it is India or China ... (means that) the world will be dominated for the first time since ancient Rome by a superpower that does not stand within the Judaeo-Christian tradition.”<sup>114</sup>

This latter conclusion is a potential trend seen most perhaps in the continent of Europe (at least since the middle ages), long the centre of Christianity, where people are “believing without belonging” (Grace Davie’s well-known phrase<sup>115</sup>), and where commitment and involvement in institutional religion are both in very serious decline. However, the overall trend is not totally clear or the outcome obvious. European institutional religion is unquestionably declining, but other types of Christianity are emerging. The gender of those involved is key – women carry on believing much longer than the men, and they live the longest. Immigration is impacting Europe almost more than anywhere, except perhaps America. An interesting book contrasting American and European faith experiences<sup>116</sup>, ultimately concludes that some kind of Christian faith will remain in Europe, and it will not become totally secular, as other observers, such as Philip Jenkins, suggest.

That is not to minimise the seriousness of the situation. On 11<sup>th</sup> December 2008, 80 Christian leaders from most branches of the church, and from both Houses of Parliament, as well as business and education met in the House of Lords to consider the moral and spiritual implications of the financial crisis. They looked at the five major social institutions underpinning the structure of society: the economy, family, education, law and government, and religion. All had changed radically over the previous decades and “this had changed Britain from its centuries-old Judaeo-Christian heritage to a polycultural, multi-religious society with no fixed standards of personal or social morality.”<sup>117</sup> It is this conclusion that makes this trend so important.

Clifford Hill, who has long maintained a prophetic watch over the UK, underscored the above when he wrote, “Our great Parliamentary traditions that have guaranteed our freedoms and rights as

---

<sup>113</sup> Op cit., *All Melbourne Matters* (Footnote 102) Page 47.

<sup>114</sup> *The Bible and Tomorrow’s World*, Rt Rev Tom Wright, Growth Centre Monographs, Number 4, Church Mission Society, Oxford, September 2008, Page 17.

<sup>115</sup> *Religion in Britain since 1945*, *Believing without Belonging*, by Prof Grace Davie, Making Contemporary Britain, Blackwell, Oxford, 1994.

<sup>116</sup> *Religious America, Secular Europe?*, A Theme and variations, by Peter Berger, Grace Davie and Effie Fokas, Ashgate Publishing, Aldershot, Hampshire, 2008, Page 39 but elsewhere too.

<sup>117</sup> *The State of the Nation*, Unpacking Britain’s Woes, The Facilitating Group, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2009, Page 2.

individuals and have guarded our values, principles and beliefs, founded upon our Judaeo-Christian heritage are all being swept away at a stroke by the most godless Government in recent history. ... Please do not think that I'm advocating a mere change of Government to save this nation! We have reached such a stage of degradation and depravity that only God can heal our nation."<sup>118</sup>

What are the implications of such a slide? George Barna identifies five<sup>119</sup>:

- The absence of a shared vision of the future
- Confusion regarding appropriate values for decision-making
- The elimination of a sense of the common good
- The deterioration of respectful dialogue and the fruitful exchanging of competing ideas
- The abandonment of moral character and personal decency.

### *So what does all this say?*

This paper has looked at 10 current trends all which will, to a greater or lesser extent, impact the next decade in general social life, in church life, and in the evangelical world. They are not the only trends which could have been highlighted. Others include the increasing importance of church mid-week, the growing involvement with local communities, the widening impact of larger churches (throughout the developed world as a Report from Australia testifies<sup>120</sup>), and the awareness that “many are increasingly dissatisfied with an institutional religion that is often disconnected from social problems, ... and often blind to (or ignorant of) profound injustices throughout the world that break the heart of God,” as YWAM explained in its adoption of “Kingdom Mission”.<sup>121</sup>

In terms of the four trends looked at in this Chapter and the next decade:

- The hindrance of Christian witness through lack of confidence in the Gospel, the social and legal risks of proclamation, the fear of actual persecution, resulting in an uncaring responsibility for the salvation of present and future generations.
- The change currently taking place in family structure is likely to continue at an increasing rate. Already the proportion of households in the UK where there is a traditional married couple is in the minority and will be even more so by 2020. The church will either ignore this trend (and thus more than half the population!) or will find ways of accommodating it.
- The pace of change in technology is likely to increase even more. Today's Facebook, YouTube and Twitter will be forgotten by 2020 and replaced by something even more instantaneous and accessible. Furthermore as the current generation of teenagers moves into its 20s, these young people will begin to fashion the whole of society (including the church) by these communication techniques. To ignore them means the loss of ability not only of speaking but also of being heard at all seriously.
- The loss of Judaeo-Christian heritage is likely to proceed at a slower pace, but the consequences that George Barna and Clifford Hill articulate will increasingly take hold. We are in for a very stormy time, clearly foretold in the Scriptures.

---

<sup>118</sup> Paper “Death of Democracy”, Dr Clifford Hill, C & M Ministries Trust, Winter 2009, Pages 1 and 2.

<sup>119</sup> Article “America's Seven Faith Tribes hold the Key to National Restoration”, by George Barna, from his website [www.barna.org/barna-update/article/13-culture/262](http://www.barna.org/barna-update/article/13-culture/262) ... on 24<sup>th</sup> May 2009.

<sup>120</sup> Op cit., *All Melbourne Matters*, (Footnote 102), Page 41.

<sup>121</sup> Article “Evangelicals and Social Action”, *International Journal of Frontier Missiology*, Volume 26, Number 1, January-March 2009, Page 16.

*Final word*

It would be easy perhaps to look at these 10 trends as if that was the total picture. It isn't. There is one major trend, more important than all these put together, which has not been mentioned – the trend that history is His Story, and that:

God is working His purpose out, as year succeeds to year;  
God is working His purpose out, and the time is drawing near –  
Nearer and nearer draws the time, the time that shall surely be,  
When the earth shall be filled with the glory of God, as the waters cover the sea.

That is The Trend of all trends, and an absolute certainty rather than just a trend.

Marantha! So come, Lord Jesus.

### **Appendix 1: Extra Tables**

*Table A1: Muslim community in millions, by continent, 1970-2050*

Year	Developing World				Developed World				WORLD TOTAL
	Latin America	Africa	Asia	TOTAL	Europe	North America	Oceania	TOTAL	
1970	0	143	391	534	18	1	0	19	553
1990	1	251	677	929	29	4	0	33	962
2010	2	402	988	1,392	33	5	0	38	1,430
2030	3	540	1,290	1,833	40	8	1	49	1,882
2050	4	677	1,592	2,273	46	10	1	57	2,330

*Table A2: Other religions in millions, by continent, 1970-2050*

Year	Developing World				Developed World				WORLD TOTAL
	Latin America	Africa	Asia	TOTAL	Europe	North America	Oceania	TOTAL	
1970	8	78	1,126	1,212	5	4	0	9	1,221
1990	15	99	1,581	1,695	7	12	1	20	1,715
2010	21	113	1,986	2,120	13	31	3	47	2,167
2030	25	247	2,120	2,392	16	55	3	74	2,466
2050	27	433	1,913	2,373	18	82	5	105	2,478

*Table A3: Non-religious community in millions, by continent, 1970-2050*

Year	Developing World				Developed World				WORLD TOTAL
	Latin America	Africa	Asia	TOTAL	Europe	North America	Oceania	TOTAL	
1970	7	1	538	546	140	11	1	152	698
1990	15	4	670	689	135	25	3	163	852
2010	23	8	769	800	118	37	4	159	959
2030	31	11	878	920	126	50	6	182	1,102
2050	39	15	986	1,040	128	63	7	198	1,238

Table A4: Percentage attending religious services from World Value and Europe Social Surveys

Con	Country	Young %	Old %	Pop (mn)	Con	Country	Young %	Old %	Pop (mn)
A	Japan	2.4	17.0	126.5	E	Estonia	4.7	17.7	1.5
A	China	2.6	3.0	1,284.6	E	Iceland	5.1	17.6	0.3
A	Azerbaijan	10.1	23.4	8	E	France	5.2	17.1	59
A	Vietnam	11.0	17.9	82.6	E	Denmark	5.3	17.9	5.2
A	Taiwan	16.5	23.1	22.8	E	Finland	6.5	20.7	5.2
A	Kyrgyzstan	22.3	32.2	5.1	E	Russia	6.7	13.0	145.6
A	Armenia	30.9	25.6	3.8	E	Sweden	6.7	14.0	9
A	Iraq	32.0	39.2	23.8	E	Belarus	8.5	22.8	10.1
A	Rep Korea	33.9	42.9	47.1	E	East Germany	8.9	18.4	17.6
A	Georgia	35.8	19.6	5.5	E	Switzerland	9.1	39.6	6.8
A	Turkey	36.6	50.3	67.7	E	Czech Republic	9.5	18.4	10.3
A	Jordan	39.7	65.9	6.4	E	Norway	9.7	16.4	4.4
A	Iran	40.7	62.1	74.6	E	Hungary	10.1	26.7	9.9
A	Saudi Arabia	41.3	48.6	21.3	E	Latvia	11.1	20.3	2.5
A	Singapore	41.7	47.3	3	E	Lithuania	11.1	20.3	3.7
A	India	49.0	54.8	1022	E	Ukraine	11.1	19.6	51
A	Bangladesh	60.2	76.1	134.4	E	Great Britain	12.1	24.1	57.3
A	Indonesia	68.5	78.3	212.7	E	Netherlands	13.4	39.5	15.9
A	Philippines	79.3	78.4	74.6	E	Belgium	14.3	39.8	10.2
A	Pakistan	86.8	95.4	161.8	E	Montenegro	14.5	18.7	0.7
	<b>Asia</b>	<b>31.4</b>	<b>36.7</b>	<b>3,388.3</b>	E	Spain	18.3	54.1	39.8
NA	Canada	22.9	46.6	31	E	Serbia	18.9	23.2	9.6
NA	United States	47.2	66.6	275.1	E	Greece	19.1	54.9	10.6
NA	Dominican Rep	55.3	72.7	8.5	E	Luxembourg	19.9	47.5	0.4
NA	Puerto Rico	60.7	77.5	3.8	E	Moldova Rep	21.4	42.8	4.5
NA	El Salvador	67.8	75.4	6.4	E	West Germany	22.9	47.9	64.1
NA	Mexico	70.4	82.8	102.4	E	Bulgaria	23	22.3	8.6
	<b>North America</b>	<b>51.6</b>	<b>69.4</b>	<b>427.2</b>	E	Slovenia	24.1	38.7	2.1
LA	Uruguay	18.2	27.9	3.3	E	Albania	24.8	37.4	3.6
LA	Argentina	33.9	50.0	36.6	E	Austria	25.2	51.3	8.1
LA	Chile	36.3	57.9	15.3	E	Macedonia	28.0	36.5	2.2
LA	Venezuela	37.7	61.8	24.2	E	Romania	33.9	58.7	22.6
LA	Peru	62.8	77.8	26.1	E	Portugal	37.5	59.1	9.8
LA	Colombia	63.1	72.9	37.8	E	Italy	40.0	64.6	57.3
LA	Brazil	73.6	76.3	174.8	E	Slovakia	40.5	64.2	5.5
	<b>Latin America</b>	<b>61.8</b>	<b>70.5</b>	<b>318.1</b>	E	Bosnia/Herzo	46.1	43.2	4.7
Af	Morocco	41.7	67.7	29.6	E	Ireland	47.6	89.8	3.5
Af	Algeria	42.9	65.1	31.2	E	Croatia	49.8	55.9	5.1
Af	Egypt	43.9	46.3	69.1	E	N Ireland	55.5	74.3	1.7
Af	South Africa	67.0	77.0	46.2	E	Poland	74.2	81.0	38.8
Af	Zimbabwe	82.5	75.9	12.5	O	Malta	80.4	91.5	0.4
Af	Tanzania	85.0	87.1	39.6		<b>Europe</b>	<b>19.5</b>	<b>34.8</b>	<b>729.2</b>
Af	Uganda	86.0	81.8	24.6	O	New Zealand	18.2	27.5	3.8
Af	Nigeria	95.4	94.4	128.8	O	Australia	22.5	29.5	19.2
	<b>Africa</b>	<b>72.1</b>	<b>76.9</b>	<b>381.6</b>		<b>Oceania</b>	<b>21.8</b>	<b>29.2</b>	<b>23</b>
						<b>World</b>	<b>36.2</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>5,267.4</b>

Table A5: Proportions in four age-groups of population, by continent, 2000<sup>122</sup>

Age-group	Developing World				Developed World				Overall World %
	Latin America %	Africa %	Asia %	Overall %	Europe %	North America %	Oceania %	Overall %	
Under 18	37.7	49.0	35.8	38.1	21.6	25.5	29.8	23.0	35.4
18 to 30	23.2	22.7	22.9	22.9	18.4	17.9	20.2	18.3	22.1
31 to 49	23.8	18.2	25.1	23.9	28.4	29.1	26.4	28.5	24.7
50 & over	15.3	10.1	16.2	15.1	31.6	27.5	23.6	30.2	17.8
Pop (mn)	519.6	803.9	3,685.6	5,009.1	730.6	313.4	30.5	1,074.5	6,083.6

Table A6: Tentative denominational affiliation of the English Evangelical tribes, 2005

No	Tribe	Ang	Baptist	RC	Indep	Meth	New	Pente	URC	Others	2005 No
1	Conservative separatist	0	0	0	142,800	0	0	0	0	0	142,800
2	Conservative non-separatist	77,400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	77,400
3	Pentecostal	0	0	0	0	0	0	273,000	0	0	273,000
4	Charismatic evangelicals	114,900	65,100	8,400	0	14,700	0	0	4,200	3,500	210,800
5	New Church	0	0	0	0	0	154,600	0	0	0	154,600
6	Open/mainline denominational evangelicals	94,700	158,000	27,000	0	38,200	0	0	10,500	49,300	377,700
7	Post/emergent evangelicals	10,500	0	0	18,000	0	0	0	0	0	28,500
TOTAL		297,500	223,100	35,400	160,800	52,900	154,600	273,000	14,700	52,800	1,264,800

<sup>122</sup> Taken from [www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/groups.php](http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/groups.php), accessed 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2009.

## **Appendix 2: About Brierley Consultancy**

**B**rierley Consultancy began in 2007, after its founder moved on from being the Executive Director of Christian Research for 14 years and European Director of MARC Europe for the 10 years prior to that. He has been a Lausanne Associate for Research since 1984. In 1972 he began what became in 1983 the *UK Christian Handbook* (still being published in the UK) and when with Christian Research compiled 7 editions of *Religious Trends*. Brierley Consultancy is committed to:

- Building vision for the future for individual churches and Christian agencies.
- Interpreting the results and suggesting actions from research so that the Kingdom of God may grow.
- Enabling strategic thinking in churches or agencies using the latest analyses of Christian life in the UK and the rest of the world.

A 6-page bi-monthly bulletin called *FutureFirst* is published by Brierley Consultancy “providing facts for forward planning”, a digest of contemporary statistical information on church and religious life. For a sample copy please write to the address below. It has received many plaudits from church and agency subscribers for its succinct but relevant articles.

We happily work with all Trinitarian churches – Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, Presbyterian, Reformed, Independent, Catholic, Pentecostal, Charismatic, Orthodox and many smaller denominations. We do not work with non-Trinitarian groups such as the Jehovah’s Witnesses or Mormons.

Peter Brierley is well known in the UK for organising and analysing large scale Church Censuses of church attendance held in the various countries of the United Kingdom, the most recent of which is the 2005 English Church Census, the results of which were published in September 2006.

Recent key publications include:

- *British Religion in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, *Religious Trends* No 7, 2007/2008, Christian Research, March 2008
- *Pulling out of the Nosedive*, *Religious Trends* No 6, 2006/2007, Christian Research, September 2006 [Tables from the English Church Census]
- *The Future of the Church*, *Religious Trends* No 5, 2005/2006 edition, September 2005
- *Pulling out of the Nosedive*, What the 2005 English Church Census reveals, Christian Research, September 2006 [Commentary]
- *Coming Up Trumps!*, Four ways into the future, Authentic Media, 2004
  
- *God’s Questions*, Vision, Strategy and Growth, ADBC Publishers, September 2010
- *21 Concerns for 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christians*, ADBC Publishers, February 2011
- *Church Statistics*, ADBC Publishers, forthcoming
- *Mission Workers Today*, ADBC Publishers, forthcoming

Brierley Consultancy is headed by Dr Peter Brierley, a statistician with 42 years of experience in working on Christian evaluation, research and publishing. For more information either write to him at The Old Post Office, 1 Thorpe Avenue, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 4PW, United Kingdom or email [peter@brierleyres.com](mailto:peter@brierleyres.com) or phone +44 (0) 1732 369 303. Website: [www.brierleyconsultancy.com](http://www.brierleyconsultancy.com)