

A study of how adults become Christians
with special reference to
the personal involvement of individual Christians

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This dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted
previously in support of any qualification or course.

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Abstract

This dissertation grew out of my desire to be better equipped to teach and encourage Christians in one to one evangelism, which is part of my ministry with the Pocket Testament League. My starting point was John Finney's 'Finding Faith Today' survey published in 1992.

I studied the stories of 383 people who became Christians, as adults, during the past seven years. The research method was a questionnaire. The Internet was used to make contact with Christian leaders who handled the questionnaires and became my point of contact with the respondents.

The questionnaire gathered data on how adults become Christians. The study showed that for most adults becoming a Christian is a sudden experience within a gradual process. Another prominent discovery was the relevance of attending a Church service to adults finding faith. Other conclusions were that for many people a crisis in their lives leads them to consider Christianity and that the Bible is still evangelistically relevant.

I looked in more detail at the role of the individual Christian in helping adults become Christians. The study confirms that most adults become Christians through relationships but it also shows the importance of witness to strangers. The majority of respondents knew of a Christian who was praying for them before they became a Christian.

The most relevant evangelistic activity was giving an invitation. I looked at a variety of other activities and how effective they were to the respondents coming to faith. The lifestyle of Christians and how they related to people are seen as very significant.

I have concluded that training Christians in personal evangelism must start with helping people to be salt and light to those around them. We can then move on to teach relational skills and how to share our faith in people sensitive ways.

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Introduction

For over 30 years my full-time employment has involved evangelism. From 1969 to 1983 I worked with the Seamen's Christian Friend Society and was engaged in personal evangelism among Merchant Seamen. Since 1983 I've been an Evangelist working with the Pocket Testament League, helping Churches with outreach.

Pocket Testament League has recently undertaken a review and decided to return to the movement's roots and to refocus on encouraging and training individual Christians to use the Bible in personal faith-sharing.¹ I therefore wanted to examine how best individual Christians could be used in evangelism.

Through undertaking the MA course at Cliff College I became aware of the work of John Finney and the 'Finding Faith Today' study, which he led, in the early 90s. Through his books, lectures and tutorial help John Finney broadened my interest in the whole subject of 'How adults become Christians'.

My research question became: "How do adults become Christians and what part can be played in this process by individual Christians?". The aim was to be better equipped to train and encourage individual Christians to be involved in evangelism. Examining the results of the 'Finding Faith Today' survey led to an interest in a number of issues, which I believe should affect the way individual Christians seek to help other adults become Christians.

¹ See www.bridge-builders.net and www.readcarryshare.com

The issue most often associated with this study is that conversion is a gradual process and not a single event.² Finney says, “The gradual process is the way in which the majority of people discover God and the average time taken is about four years.”³ This research has had a significant impact and encouraged a move towards methods of evangelism, which allow for this process. While agreeing that conversion is a gradual process I believed that for many people there is within that process an event and I wanted to test this hypothesis. I also wanted to see if there was any change in the ‘average time taken’. Both these issues should affect the way Christians witness. If conversion is a process then ongoing relationships are vital. If within that process there is an event, when a significant step of faith is made, we need to equip Christians to help people through that event.

‘Finding Faith Today’ asked, “What was happening to them at the time?”⁴ This led me to the question of ‘crisis’ and conversion. If ‘crisis’ does influence people seeking then individual Christians need to be approachable and have the time to get alongside people.

Through a lecture by John Drane⁵ I became concerned about who are we reaching? Are those becoming Christians as adults returning to a childhood faith? Are we

² For example: Green Michael, Sharing your faith with a friend (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2002) pp. 10-11.

Atkins Rev Dr Martyn, ‘Three year conversion’ Methodist Recorder, 27th October 2000
Mission Theological Advisory Group, The Search for faith and the witness of the Church (London: Church House Publishing, 1996) p.11

Ball Peter and Gundy Malcolm, Faith on the way (London: Mowbray, 2000) p.51

³ Finney John, Finding Faith Today (Swindon: Bible Society, 1992) pp. 22 - 25

⁴ Ibid. pp 32-33

⁵ Drane Rev Dr John “The McDonalidization of the Church” Lecture given at Northern Christian Resources Exhibition 26th October 2000

making any impact on the majority of the population who had no contact with the Church as children?

‘Finding Faith Today’ showed the value of relationships in evangelism.⁶ I wanted to ask who is used and in what ways they helped. There was, too, the question of : ‘If all those used are people with relationships is it pointless to witness to strangers?’

Encouraging people to read the Bible and distributing the Scriptures has always been part of my work. I was surprised that so few of the respondents to ‘Finding Faith Today’ indicated that the Bible was the main factor in them becoming a Christian. I therefore wanted to see if this was still true today.⁷

‘Finding Faith Today’ examined ‘Factors leading to faith’. Here I parted company with ‘Finding Faith Today’ because my interest was restricted to the involvement and effectiveness of individual Christians in helping adults to become Christians. I therefore wanted to ask these questions:

Were individuals involved?

Who were these individuals?

What did these individuals do to help?

All this was to be considered within the subject of “How can individual Christians help other adults to become Christians?”

⁶ Finney John, Finding Faith Today . pp 38-43

⁷ Ibid. pp 60-63

In the wording of the title the term ‘personal involvement’ was chosen because I wanted to consider all the possible ways a Christian could contribute. Alternative terms such as ‘personal evangelism’ or ‘personal faith sharing’ seemed to be restrictive and focus on ‘sharing the gospel’ or ‘leading someone to faith’.

‘Finding Faith Today’ collected data from a wide spectrum of Churches. Although 64% of the Churches were “Evangelical or Charismatic”⁸, Independent Evangelical Churches and Pentecostal Churches seemed poorly represented.⁹ Traditionally these Churches are concerned about evangelism and have a strong emphasis on personal salvation. Would the conclusion of the study have been different if these Churches had been better represented?

As I belong to an Independent Evangelical Church and most of my work is with Churches, which would regard themselves as ‘Evangelical’, it was from these Churches that I planned to collect my data. Therefore, from the outset I accepted that my data would be biased but hoped that in taking this approach my findings would prove a useful contrast to the results of the ‘Finding Faith Today’ study.

‘Finding Faith Today’ is often looked at as a study of those who had been recently ‘converted’. Strictly speaking this is not true because the study examined the experience of 511 people who, within the previous year, had made a public profession of faith, through baptism, confirmation or some other public confession.

⁸ Hanley Pam, Finding Faith today. The Technical Report. Research conducted by the Bible Society on behalf of Churches Together in England (October 1992) This is a detailed report of the research on which John Finney’s books are based. p.45
Finney, Finding Faith Today, p.9 “...the more evangelical and especially the more charismatic Churches have more people who profess faith as adults”

⁹ Ibid Appendix iv

The lower age limit for the 'Finding Faith Today' study was 16. My interest and experience is in evangelism among adults so I decided to only look at people over the age of 18. Rather than look at adults who had made a public profession of faith I wanted to consider those who had had a conversion experience or who considered that they had become Christians as adults.

Although inspired by 'Finding Faith Today' because of the limitations I was putting on my study and my own interest in the witness of individual Christians, I had arrived at a similar but different study to 'Finding Faith Today' under the title of: "A study of how adults become Christians with special reference to the personal involvement of individual Christians."

The research project

I considered trying to repeat the 'Finding Faith Today' study using the same questionnaire. This proved impractical because the questionnaire was 22 pages long and asked for a lot of information that was not relevant to my study. This study was the work of a large team and I did not have the same resources.

I decided to use a questionnaire because it would provide a way of gathering information from a wide group of people without time consuming personal contact. It would also make guaranteeing confidentiality easier.

I wanted to study people who had 'recently' become Christians as adults in order to learn how we should be witnessing today. My initial enquiries showed that the Churches I was in contact with had few recent 'adult' converts. I therefore decided to extend my study to those who had become Christians as adults within the past seven years. This meant that the respondents would have become Christians since any impact on evangelism made by the 'Finding Faith Today' study.

In order to ensure the respondents were genuine I decided ministers or other responsible Church leaders would handle the questionnaires. This meant asking these leaders to accept questionnaires and distribute them to suitable people.

Whilst wanting to maintain anonymity I also wanted to be able to send respondents a summary of my findings in the hope that they would be encouraged in their witness and as a way of thanking them for their involvement. Therefore, I asked the leaders to collect the completed questionnaires and return them to me. On returning

the questionnaires, leaders were asked to complete a small form giving their own personal details so that I could send them copies of my findings for the respondents.

Constructing the Questionnaire

I wanted the respondents to have the opportunity of answering my main questions in their own words, without imposing an agenda on them. Therefore, the first page of the questionnaire was taken up with two open ended questions, about how they had become a Christian and the part played in this by individual Christians. There were also open ended questions and spaces for them to answer in their own words at key points throughout the questionnaire. The last question was open ended and asked if there was anything else they would like to share which would help me with my research. Different types of questions were included to create variety and maintain interest and facilitate different ways of analysing the data and presenting the findings.

The test group

The questionnaire was tested on a group of three friends who had become Christians as adults within the past seven years. They were asked to comment critically on the questionnaire. Each wrote notes about what they thought of the questionnaire and suggestions for improvements. I interviewed each of them to make sure I understood what they were saying. At this stage a ‘critical friend’ also studied the draft questionnaire and I met with her to discuss improvements.

Refining the questionnaire

There was confusion over questions asked about childhood so these were clarified and questions about adult Church attendance moved from page two to page four so that the two issues were separated. The word ‘upbringing’ was added to question 5 to clarify that this question was about childhood.

The test group found questions 16 to 18 confusing, so an instruction was added at the top of page 2. The order was changed from ‘stranger, relative, friend’ to RELATIVE, FRIEND and STRANGER and these were put in block capitals.

The test group called the use of the term ‘Committed Christian’ in questions 8, 9 and 12 into question. They asked: Would this term “mean the same to all respondents?”¹⁰ After reflection I decided to keep the term as leaving out the word ‘committed’ might cause problems for those respondents who had been part of a Church since childhood. This did not clear up the issue but it was the best of the possible alternatives. See appendix 1 for a copy of the questionnaire

An Introductory letter was attached to each questionnaire thanking respondents for their help, stating the purpose of the research, assuring them of confidentiality and anonymity and promising to send them a summary of my findings.¹¹ The letter included my personal details and the details of two references so that they could check I was genuine. See appendix 2.

¹⁰ Bell Judith, Doing your research project (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993) p.11

¹¹ Ibid p.85

Distributing the Questionnaires

I started to distribute the questionnaire by telephoning a number of ministers and other Church leaders known personally to me. Although this proved fruitful it was also very time consuming and could only be carried out at certain times of the day. During my MA studies I wrote an essay, which dealt with ‘the privileges of leadership’. I found little written on the subject so I e-mailed Church leaders asking for a comment and asking them to pass on the e-mail request to their associates. I was surprised at the response – 60 quality comments.¹²

I therefore decided to e-mail those who had responded and ask if they would help with my research by handling the questionnaire. Some answered positively within a couple of days. Therefore, I decided this would be an effective way of contacting leaders about the questionnaire.

I asked leaders to send me the e-mail addresses of other leaders who I could contact or to simply forward to them my original e-mail. When I exhausted my list of e-mail addresses of leaders I turned to the internet. By feeding words such as ‘Evangelical Church’ or ‘Pentecostal Church’ into a search engine¹³ I found websites of Churches and many of these included the e-mail address of the Minister or other Church leaders. These leaders were then e-mailed to ask for their help.

¹² Bennett Dave, Unpublished LRM essay “Drawing upon several privileges and pressures of leadership construct the outline notes of a teaching session you are to lead for a group of young leaders titled ‘God’s leaders for today’. Submitted to Cliff College December 2000

¹³ <http://www.google.co.uk>

Through searching for Church websites I discovered an organisation, which was putting together a comprehensive list of all Churches in Britain to help people find a Church. By searching their website¹⁴ I discovered details of more suitable Churches and the e-mail addresses of their leaders. This website also enabled me to search parts of the country where I had no contacts.

In all I sent e-mails to 888 Christian leaders. Those who did not respond were sent a second e-mail after a couple of weeks.

I received 119 positive responses – a response rate of 13%. Leaders requested between 1 and 20 copies of the questionnaire with a mode of 5. In all I sent out 1050 copies of the questionnaire. 759 were sent to the 119 leaders contacted through e-mail. 291 were distributed to 35 other Church leaders. Each leader was sent a letter giving instructions and two leaders response slips.

The completed questionnaires returned slowly. Some were sent direct by the respondent and without a leaders reply slip but most were returned in line with the system I had devised. If a leader did not send completed questionnaires within a month another e-mail was sent to them. These follow up e-mails were friendly, shared how many questionnaires had been received to date and snippets of interesting information about the completed questionnaires. Many e-mailed back to share the problem of getting their people to return the questionnaires.

¹⁴ <http://www.findachurch.co.uk>

Graham Woolgar, General Director of the Pocket Testament League in the UK is an ordained Baptist minister in the London area. He mailed three copies of the questionnaire to 128 ministers of Baptist Churches and New Frontiers International Churches in the London area. He included a letter from himself and my leader's letter. Unlike my contacts these questionnaires were sent to leaders who had not expressed an interest or offered to help. They were asked to send the completed questionnaires directly to me. From these 384 copies 19 completed questionnaires were returned from 8 leaders.

In all I received 383 completed questionnaires. The respondents came from at least 118 different Churches¹⁵ and from 54 different towns or cities in the UK.

Response rates

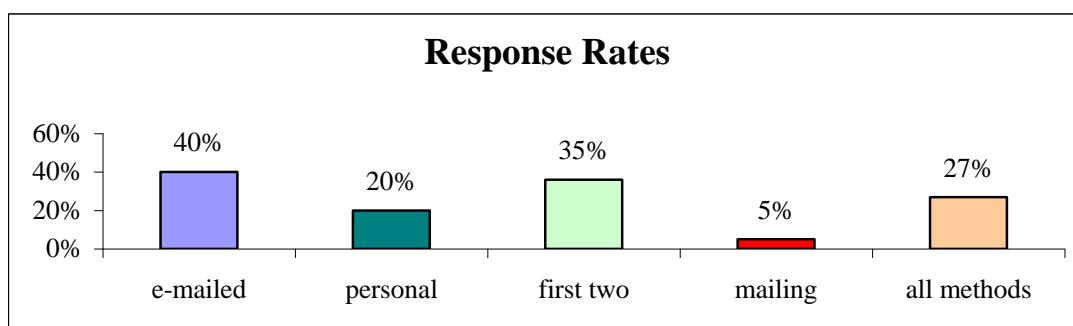
From e-mail contacts 305 out of 759

From my other more personal contacts 59 out of 291

Both the above 364 out of 1050

From those sent out by the PTL office 19 out of 384

All three methods 383 from 1434



¹⁵ Some questionnaires were returned without a 'Leaders Reply Slip' and although every effort has been made to trace them to a Church leader there are still some loose ends

The e-mail system was the most successful. This was surprisingly more than personal contacts and impressively better than sending out an unsolicited mailing.

In considering the effectiveness of using the e-mails we must take into account the fact that leaders did not see the questionnaire before agreeing to help. Although the e-mail system meant a less personal approach by the researcher it meant a more personal approach to the respondent from their own Church leader.

20 completed questionnaires were rejected. 18 because the respondent had been a Christian for longer than 7 years and two because they were under 18 when they became Christians.

Sampling

The system used was one of 'purposive sampling' in that I sought for particular people who were 'likely to produce the most valuable data'.¹⁶ Because of the nature of the research no 'sampling frame' was used and it is not known how representative the sample is of those from Evangelical Churches who have become Christians within the past seven years, therefore I accept that the sample could be biased.¹⁷

¹⁶ Denscombe Martyn, The good research guide (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1998) p.15

¹⁷ Ibid pp.17-18

Every effort was made to increase the size of the sample because of Denscombe's advice that; "The larger the numbers involved, the more the results are likely to be generalizable and reliable statistically speaking."¹⁸

Streamlining the research

My original plan was to move on from the finding of the questionnaires to focus groups made up of respondents to the questionnaire and also to interviews with respondents and 'experts' in the field. However, at a tutorial in June 2002 I was encouraged to face up to the fact that I did not have the time or resources to expand the present study beyond the results of the questionnaire. This was wise counsel because I had grossly under-estimated the time needed to interpret the questionnaire or the volume of data it would generate. During the summer of 2002 I accepted that it would not be possible to move on to other research methods nor would this be necessary in order to produce a worthwhile dissertation.¹⁹

Analysing the questionnaires

The 383 completed questionnaires were analysed without the use of a computer. I preferred this because it kept me more "in touch with the data and alert to possible connections"²⁰. The computer was only used at the presentation stage.

Most of the data from the questionnaire is quantitative. From the answers to the questionnaire nominal, ordinal and some interval data was produced.²¹ The data was

¹⁸ Ibid p. 175

¹⁹ see Bell Judith and Opie Clive, Learning from research (Buckingham: Open University Press, 2002) p.191 for a similar decision based on the limitation of resources.

²⁰ Edwards Anne and Talbot Robin, The hard-pressed researcher (London: Longman, 1994) p101

coded, grouped and arranged in order. Averages, percentages and priority order were used to produce data that was then transferred to charts for easy access.

The qualitative data generated by the open ended questions was “combed to find themes and categories”²², which were then coded and, as far as possible, presented as quantitative data on charts. Quotes from the open-ended questions were categorised and used to support quantitative presentations.

The result was a considerable volume of data relevant to the research question.

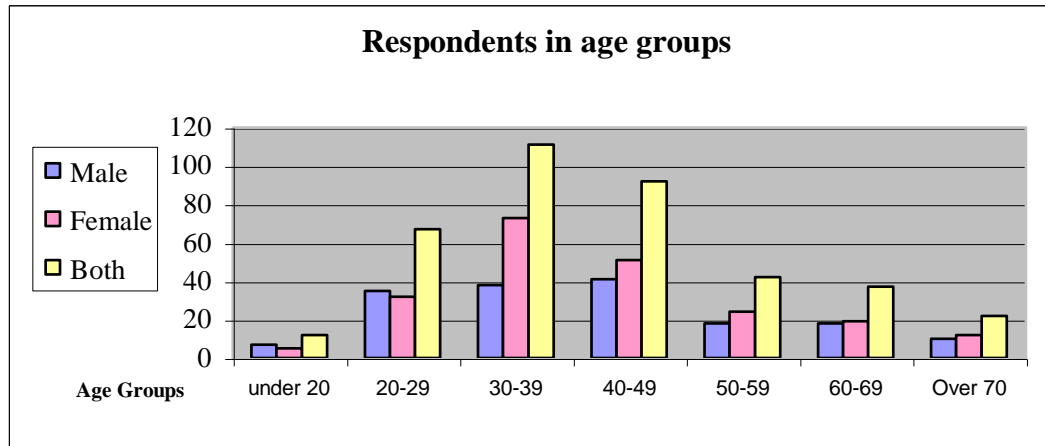
I also studied the research of others and relevant books and articles. At the writing stage I found that putting the findings of my literature search in a separate section resulted in too much repetition. Therefore, I decided to meld all the material into sections which dealt with aspects of the answers to the two parts of my research question.

²¹ Denscombe Martyn, The good research guide (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1998 pp. 178-179 p 15

²² Edwards & Talbot p.104

The Respondents

There are 383 respondents – 216 female and 167 male.

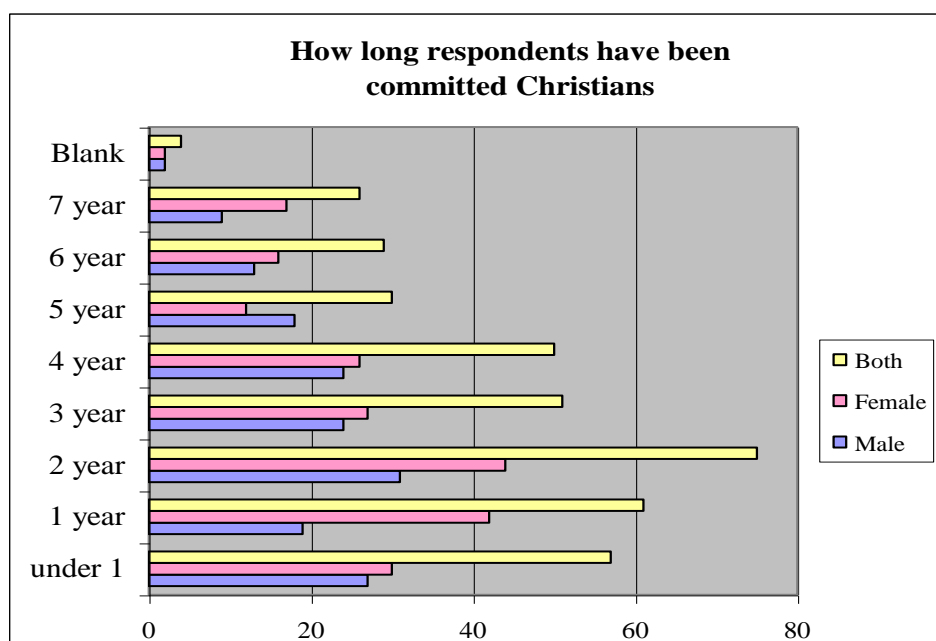


As can be seen from the chart above the age spread was similar for both sexes.

53% of respondents are in their 30s or 40s. 26% are over 50 and 21% are under 30.

Average age for both sexes is in the 30s but because respondents had become Christians within the last 7 years this could mean the average age for conversion could be in the 20s.

Only 9% are under 25 but we must take into account that many Christians in their early 20s did not qualify to answer the questionnaire because they had become a Christian before the age of 18. There is, too, the possibility that many Christians in their early 20s were away at University at the time when the questionnaires were being distributed.



The mean average for both male and female is 3 years and the mode is 2 years.

However, 29% had been committed Christians for less than 2 years.

Churches respondents belong to now			
Independent Evangelical	72	56	128
Baptist	57	43	100
Church of England	46	22	68
Pentecostal	17	24	41
New Churches	6	10	16
Methodist	4	3	7
Salvation Army	4	1	5
Presbyterian	0	4	4
United Reformed Church	2	0	2
Other	6	4	10
Blank	2	0	2

33% belong to Independent Evangelical Churches and 11% to Pentecostal Churches which were my main target groups. Many of those who indicate they belong to a Baptist Church will, in fact, belong to an independent Church which is not in the Baptist Union. The remainder mostly belong to Churches, which would be happy with the 'Evangelical' label. As stated in the introduction 'Evangelical' Churches

were deliberately targeted as they seemed poorly represented in the 'Finding Faith Today' study and these are the Churches which I would usually work with.

Becoming a 'committed Christian' and having a 'conversion experience'

The aim was to recruit people who had become Christians, as adults, within the past seven years. I asked three questions to discover if respondents were adult 'coverts'.

"Would you describe yourself as a committed Christian?"

All respondents answered this question. Only 1 male and 4 females answered 'No'.

Thus 99% said they would describe themselves as a 'committed Christian'.

"Was there a time when you would not have described yourself as a committed Christian?"

One male left this question blank. 2 males and 13 females answered 'No'. Thus 96% said there was a time when they would not have described themselves as a 'committed Christian'.

"Would you say you have had a conversion experience?"

4 males and 10 females left this question blank. 19 males and 33 females answered 'No'. Thus, 83% said that they had had a 'conversion experience'.

Of the 52 who said 'No', 44 said their experience of becoming a Christian was gradual and 7 said it was a sudden experience within a gradual process. None of those answering 'No' claimed to have had a sudden experience of becoming a Christian.

From the answers to these questions we have seen that almost all the respondents had changed to being 'committed Christians' during adulthood and that a large majority claimed to have had a 'conversion' experience.

Baptism, Confirmation or Church Membership

'Finding Faith Today' had studied those who had made a public profession of faith. My sample fitted my criteria but how many would have qualified for the 'Finding Faith Today' study? The questionnaire asked if they had been baptised, confirmed or become a Church member since becoming a Christian.

130 (60%) females and 114 (68%) males had been baptised.

Making a total of 244 (64%)

24 (11%) females and 16 (9%) males had been confirmed.

Making a total of 40 (10%)

143 (66%) females and 108 (64%) males had become Church members.

Making a total of 251 (65%)

Of the 54 who left all three blank 29 had been a committed Christian for a year or less. Thus only 25 respondents who had been a committed Christian for more than a year said 'No' to all three.

**Baptism, Confirmation and Church membership
since becoming a Christian**

	Female	Male	Both
Baptism only	38	33	71
Baptism and Confirmation	0	1	1
Baptism and Church Membership	85	74	159
Baptism + Confirmation + Church Member	7	6	13
Confirmation only	4	2	6
Confirmation and Church member	13	7	20
Church member only	38	21	59
Blank	31	23	54
Total	216	167	383
Number indicating at least one	185	144	329

86% of both Male and Female respondents had been Baptised, Confirmed or entered into Church membership since becoming a Christian.

Present Church Attendance

	Female	Male	Both
Weekly	187 86.5%	155 93%	342 89%
Several times a month	21 10%	9 5.5%	30 8%
Less frequently	7 3%	1 0.5%	8 2%
Blank	1 0.5%	2 1%	3 1%

Therefore the average respondent belongs to an 'Evangelical' Church to which they are now a weekly attendee. They have had a 'conversion experience' and have been a committed Christian for about 3 years. Since becoming a Christian they have been confirmed, baptised or become a Church member.

Answering the research question

Part one: “How do adults become Christians?”

The answers to the research question will be considered in two parts. The involvement of individual Christians in the process of adults becoming Christians will be considered in part two. However, in this first part I will indicate the relevance of the aspects of how adults become Christians to the involvement of individual Christians in evangelism.

The answers to the questionnaire have resulted in my considering a number of issues relevant to how adults become Christians today:

- a. The significance of childhood Church involvement
- b. The nature of the conversion experience
- c. The relevance of crisis to conversion
- d. The involvement of the Church as the agent of Mission²³
- g. The use of the Bible in evangelism
- h. The need for change of attitude not just an increase in knowledge

a. The significance of childhood Church involvement

Through Questions 5 to 7 on the questionnaire this study sought to discover the religious background and childhood Church involvement of the respondents.

²³ Bosch David. J, *Transforming Mission* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991) pp. 300-381
“...the fundamental change in favor of the local church, everywhere, as the agent of mission both in its own environment and further afield, cannot be gainsaid and constitutes a decisive advance over positions that had been in vogue for many years.”

Religious Upbringing or Background
From answers to question 5 of the questionnaire

	Female	Male	Both
Church of England	93	57	150
Roman Catholic	24	20	44
Baptist	6	7	13
Methodist	4	9	13
Evangelical	3	3	6
Presbyterian	1	3	4
Church of Scotland	2	1	3
Other Church	11	8	19
Nominal Christian	11	13	24
Not Religious	54	41	95
Other Religion	5	4	9
Blank	2	1	3

On the questionnaire there were only six categories. Additional categories are shown in this chart because of moving from 'Other Church' into a separate category any Denomination or type of Church which was represented by more than one respondent.

67% of females and 65% of males claim to have some Church influence in their upbringing or background. Only 25% of females and 24% of males categorise their background as Not Religious.

Combinations of Attendance at Sunday Services
and involvement in Church Activities during childhood

	Female	Male	Both
Regular Church attendance	32	40	72
Regular & involved in Church Activity	65	47	112
Occasional Church attendance	46	15	61
Occasionally & involved in Church Activity	32	20	52
Never Attended Church	34	36	70
Never but involved in Church Activity	7	7	14
Blank		2	2

88% of females and 84% of males had some contact with a Church during childhood. 29% answered that they were returning to a childhood faith.

A male respondent in his 20s, who was an occasional attender at Church services as a child and involved in the Boys Brigade, writes: “I was led back to the very same Church where I felt secure as a child.”

Returning to a Childhood Faith			
Arranged according to their religious background or upbringing			
	Female	Male	Both
Church of England	32 4	15 3	47 7
Roman Catholic	8	4	12
Other Churches	20 8	11 3	31 11
Nominal Christian	3	5	8
Not Religious	6	5	11
Other Religion	0	2	2
Blanks	2	0	2
TOTALS	71 12	42 6	113 18
Totals as %	33%	25%	29%

Figures in red show those who have returned to the same type of Church

Emphasising the importance of work among children and young people, this study shows that the Churches work among children is an effective long term evangelistic strategy. For the individual Christian it highlights the need to be aware of the background of those they are seeking to reach. A female respondent in her 20s, who had a Christian upbringing, writes: “...people who are resisting God do need to hear the gospel from another outside source – a friend who they respect and trust.” We must seek to help such people turn childhood faith into adult commitment. For individual Christians who attended Church as children there is a strong case for contacting those who attended with us because they are among the most likely group to find faith as adults.

Who are we reaching?

If the respondents were a representative group of people becoming Christians, as adults, in Britain today, who are we reaching and who are we in danger of neglecting?

In answering question 23, about how long they attended Church as adults before becoming a Christian, only 12 females and 6 males indicated that they had always regularly attended Church. The average age at which the majority stopped attending Church services was 13 years and 4 months. This is similar to the result of ‘Finding Faith Today’, which says that, “70% of participants who had experience of the Church as children left, most between the ages of 10 and 14.”²⁴

Average age at which those who attended Church regularly in childhood stopped attending			
	Female	Male	Both
Church of England	13.4	14.1	13.7
Roman Catholic	14.7	14.8	14.7
Other Churches	14.1	14.4	13.7
Nominal Christian	11.8	9.7	10.8
Not Religious	11.6	11.6	11.6
All	13.5	13.5	13.3

Only 12% of females and 16% of males had no contact with the Church as children.

Only 9% of respondents never attended Church during childhood or as an adult before becoming a Christian.

²⁴Finney, Finding Faith Today p.13

In the 'Finding Faith Today' study, only 20% had no contact with the Church in childhood.²⁵ This study undertaken 10 years later, shows a higher percentage for childhood Church involvement, only 15% having had no childhood Church contact. This result is surprising because the number of children in contact with the Church is declining.²⁶

Generally speaking we are reaching those who have previous contact with the Church and thus are already sympathetic towards Christianity. In many cases our evangelism is reaping the harvest of seeds sown during childhood. This study points to a lack of effectiveness in reaching the majority of the population who have never attended Church and don't intend to start.²⁷

b. The nature of the conversion experience

Question 11 of the questionnaire asked: "Which of the following best describes your experience of becoming a Christian?"

A gradual experience

A sudden experience

Sudden experience within a gradual process

²⁵Hanley Pam, Finding Faith today. The Technical Report. p.5 Finney John, Stories of Faith (Swindon: Bible Society, 1995) p.24

²⁶Brierley Dr Peter, The tide is running out (London: Christian Research, 2000) p.230
1000 children a week stop attending Church. More children lost in the 1990s than the 1980s.

²⁷Drane Rev Dr John "The McDonaldization of the Church" Lecture given at Northern Christian Resources Exhibition 26th October 2000. According to Drane 'there is very little evangelism aimed at the 60% of the population who have never attended Church and have no intention of ever attending.'

See also Drane Rev Dr John, The McDonaldization of the Church (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 2000) chapter 4

Also see note by Finney, Finding Faith Today, p.23 warning not to neglect outreach to those who have had no contact with the Church

Answers to Question 11								
	Blank		Sudden		Gradual		Sudden within Gradual	
Female	2	1%	21	10%	73	34%	120	55%
Male	4	2%	25	15%	65	39%	73	44%
Both	6	2%	46	12%	138	36%	193	50%

86% say becoming a Christian was a gradual process, of these 58% say there was within this gradual process a sudden experience.

There are still 12% who claim to have had a sudden experience.

Answers from other parts of the Questionnaire From those claiming a sudden experience									
Sudden Experience		Answered yes to being a committed Christian	Not always been a Committed Christian	Answered yes to having had a conversion Experience	Was there a specific time when they decided to be a Christian			Was there a Time Period between interest and response	
					Yes	No	Blank	Yes	None
Female	21	20	20	19	20	1	0	17	4
Male	25	25	25	23	19	5	1	15	10
Both	46	45	45	42	39	6	1	32	14

Most of the answers given by those claiming a sudden experience are consistent with a sudden conversion. 85%, of those claiming a sudden experience, say they can recall a specific time when they decided to become a Christian. However, 70% say there was a period of time between them first becoming interested in Christianity (as an adult) and them making a decision to become a Christian. This supports the concept of a sudden experience within a gradual process.

Question 13 asked: “Can you recall a specific time when you decided to become a Christian?” The next chart shows the respondents answers arranged according to their experience of becoming a Christian.

Answers to Question 13 arranged according to respondents experience of becoming a Christian				
Female	Total	Yes	No	Blank
Blank	2	2		
Sudden	21	20	1	
Gradual	73	48	24	1
Sudden within Gradual	120	103	16	1
Totals	216	173	41	2
Male	Total	Yes	No	Blank
Blank	4	4		
Sudden	25	19	5	1
Gradual	65	45	20	
Sudden within Gradual	73	64	8	1
Totals	167	132	33	2
Both	Total	Yes	No	Blank
Blank	6	6		
Sudden	46	39	6	1
Gradual	138	93	44	1
Sudden within Gradual	193	167	24	2
Totals	383	305	74	4

67% of those who said their experience of becoming a Christian was gradual, answered that they knew of a specific time when they decided to become a Christian. This further supports the concept of a sudden experience within a gradual process.

Question 14 asked: “How long was there between you first becoming interested in Christianity (as an adult) and making a decision to become a Christian?”

86% of respondents give a period of time between first becoming interested in Christianity, as an adult, and them making a decision to become a Christian. 39% said that the period of time taken was less than a year.

The mean average for all respondents is 2 years and 3 months. The mean average is 7 months longer for males.

Analysis of answers to Question 14 arranged under the respondents experience of becoming a Christian			
Gradual	Female	Male	Both
Give period	63	58	121
Under a year	23	18	41
Mean Average	1year 7months	2year 1month	2 years
Sudden	Female	Male	Both
Give period	17	15	32
Under a year	10	11	21
Mean Average	11 months	5 months	8 months
Sudden within Gradual	Female	Male	Both
Give period	109	69	178
Under a year	53	36	89
Mean Average	1year 6months	2years 5months	1year 9months
All	Female	Male	Both
Give period	189	142	331
Under a year	86	65	151
Mean Average	1year 6months	2years 1month	2years 3months

In working out the mean average some exceptionally high figures (19 years and over) were omitted.²⁸ Taking these figures into account²⁹ the average would be 3 years and 4 months. However missing out only the 1 @ 72 and the 2 @ 45 the average for all would drop to 2 years 8 months.

I would therefore conclude that the most common experience of becoming a Christian, represented by my sample, is a sudden experience within a gradual process and that this process takes an average of 2 years and 3 months. A typical respondent would say: "For me it has been a gradual recognition of the truth with a sudden decision to follow Christ." (Female 40s, answering Question 1)

²⁸ Male gradual one each of the following 20, 25, 30, 718 and of those who answered Sudden within gradual 3 @ 20 and one each of 25, 45, 72. Among those who answer that they had a sudden experience one male gave the period as 45 years. Female gradual 2 @ 20, 1 @ 30 and 2 say 'a few'. Of those who answered Sudden within gradual 2 @ 20, 1 @ 27, 1 @ 19 and 7 say 'few' or 'many'.

²⁹ Other than the one male who answered 718 which I think is his way of saying a very long time.

In 1992 Finney reported, “The gradual process is the way in which the majority of people discover God and the average time taken is about four years.”³⁰ The present study indicates that it is taking less time for the process of adults becoming Christians than it was 10 years ago. One reason for the difference in my study could be the rise, during the past ten years, of process evangelism courses, such as Alpha.³¹ For 58% of the respondents to this study the Alpha course was significant to them becoming Christians. A unique finding of the ‘Finding faith in 94’ study was that “the period of time decreases the older the person is”.³² My research does not support this hypothesis because older people give some of the longest periods.

If conversion is a gradual process then the individual Christian must concentrate on long term relationships. If within that process there is a sudden experience the individual Christian must be prepared to appropriately challenge people about their response and be equipped to sensitively help them through to new birth in Christ.

³⁰ Finney John, Finding Faith Today pp. 22 – 25

³¹ According to a Press release from Holy Trinity Brompton 5th June 2001 downloaded from http://alphacourse.org/press/releases/05_06_04_pr_7000ukchurches.htm 11th June 2002 “More than one million people in the UK are now estimated to have taken part in an Alpha course.” There are no statistics as to how many people have become Christians through Alpha. I e mailed Holy Trinity Brompton and asked: “please do you have any statistics or other details of people finding faith through Alpha” on 10th April 2002. William Johnson of The Alpha Office HTB replied 11th April 2002 but was unable to provide me with any statistics.

Ireland Mark’s, MA dissertation submitted to Sheffield University at Cliff College, 2000 p.73 says that 992 people have come to commitment or confirmation through Alpha courses in 146 Churches in the Lichfield Diocese of the Anglican Church

³² Brierley Rev Dr Peter, Finding Faith in 1994 a Technical Summary of the survey of the participants in the 1994 Lent groups (London: Christian Research) p.31

c. The relevance of crisis to conversion

Although Finney says, that the majority of the respondents to 'Finding Faith Today' were not going through any crisis³³ the total of those with something negative going on in their lives could be as high as 60%.³⁴ 13 of the 40 respondents whose stories Finney chose to present in detail were going through some sort of crisis at the time of their conversion and two had turned to the Church for help.³⁵ Hanley points out that of the respondents to 'Finding Faith Today' "14% had recently been bereaved and another 13% were concerned with their own health or others' illness. Almost one in ten were adapting to broken relationships or having children."³⁶

From my experience I would agree with Croft when he says that, "For many people, a significant moment in their spiritual journey occurs when they reach the end of their own resources."³⁷ Conflict is the first step in Loder's theory of how a person comes to faith. "A new experience, thought or idea disturbs the equilibrium of the individual, giving rise to a sense of unease or disturbance. The content of the experience or thought is not the key issue: the fact that it disturbs the individual's equilibrium is."³⁸ It is the seeking and finding of a solution to this crisis that results in conversion. While disagreeing with Loder, about the necessity for crises in order for somebody to come to a 'faith decision', my research does support the

³³ Finney John, Stories of Faith (Swindon: Bible Society, 1995) p.67

³⁴ see Finney, Finding Faith Today p.32 (I'm basing my figure on the total of percentages on that page and this could be wrong because individuals could have more than one of these problems.

³⁵ Finney John, Stories of Faith (Swindon: Bible Society, 1995). Studies on the experiences of 40 of those who completed the 'Finding Faith Today' questionnaire.

³⁶ Hanley p.67

³⁷ Croft, Man to Man p.49

³⁸ Loder James, The Transforming Moment (1982) outlined by Bridger Francis, Children finding faith (Bletchley: Scripture Union, 2000) p.151 James Loder was professor of Christian education at Princeton Theological Seminary for almost 40 years.

prominence of crisis in the faith journey of many adults who have become Christians. For example a lady in her 30s writes: “I had been attending Church and praying about my life. Then I miscarried a baby. This didn’t make me become a Christian but it left me confused with questions which I suppose made me start searching for answers and the truth”.

Question 21 of the questionnaire sought to discover what, if any, was the conflict going on in the respondents lives when they became Christians by asking: “Was anything significant happening in your life which led you to consider Christianity?” The choices given were Bereavement, Redundancy, Illness, Drug/alcohol dependency, Family issues or Another situation

Boxes ticked in answer to Question 21					
Topic	Female		Male		Total
Family Issues	59	27%	23	14%	82 21%
Bereavement	38	17%	10	6%	48 12%
Illness	32	15%	15	9%	47 12%
Dependency	9	4%	8	6%	17 4%
Redundancy	2	0.9%	2	1.2%	4 1%
Another Situation	53	24%	29	17%	82 21%
Ticked one or more topics	145		69		214
Question 21 also has a box to clarify 'Another Situation'					
Wrote in Box	106		71		177
Box Only	21		19		40
Topic and/or Box	166		88		254
Blank	50		79		129

77% of females and 53% of males (making 66% of the whole sample) gave details of something happening in their lives, which led them to consider Christianity. 12% had recently been bereaved, 12% said an illness had affected their situation, and 21% indicated that family issues had affected their situation. These figures are

slightly lower than 'Finding Faith Today' but in this study the majority of respondents did have a difficulty that led them to consider Christianity.

The overall total is 23% higher for females. For family issues, bereavement and illness the % is higher for females. Only for redundancy and dependency is the % marginally higher for males and these are small categories compared with the first three. This could indicate that men are less open about their difficulties. On the significance scale for question 26 far less men ask for help in a time of need.

Combination of boxes ticked in Question 21			
	Female	Male	Both
Bereavement Only	15	4	19
Redundancy Only	1	0	1
Illness Only	12	7	19
Dependency Only	3	3	6
Family Issue Only	29	16	45
Another Situation Only	44	25	69
Ticked only one topic	104	55	159
Bereavement & Illness	6	3	9
Bereavement and Another Situation	3	1	4
Bereavement and Family Issues	10	1	11
Redundancy and Family Issues	0	1	1
Illness and Dependency	0	1	1
Illness and Family Issues	8	2	10
Illness and Another Situation	1	0	1
Dependency and Family Issues	3	1	4
Dependency and Another Situation	1	1	2
Family and Another Situation	3	1	4
Ticked two topics	35	12	47
More than two topics	6	2	8
Totals	145	69	214
Box only	21	19	40
Totals with box only	166	88	254
Blank	50	79	129

Collating the combinations of the six categories. Of the 214 respondents who ticked one of the six boxes 74% ticked only one box, 22% two boxes and only 4% more

than two boxes. Redundancy is the issue most likely to be combined with other issues – although redundancy is a small sample 3 out of 4 indicated other issues. Dependency is the next issue most likely to be combined, 63% of those indicating dependency ticked another category. This is a warning that the people we are seeking to reach may have more complex problems than is first apparent.

Analysis of the details of ‘Another situation’ in Question 21			
	Female	Male	Both
Positive Issues	16	8	24
More about box already ticked	34	24	58
Depression or mental issues	21	6	27
Dissatisfied with life	8	16	24
Relationship Issues	13	7	20
Questioning the meaning of life	6	13	19
Change	8	8	16
Becoming a Mother	8		8
Their age or time of life	2	2	4
Occult Involvement	1	2	3
Cult arousing interest	2		2
Financial situation	1	1	2
Getting married and having children		2	2
Unemployment		1	1
Insomnia	1		1
Witness to Road Traffic Accident		1	1
Abuse		1	1
Pressure from Christians		1	1

Of the 177 who wrote in this box giving details of ‘Another Situation’ 24 wrote about something positive.³⁹ 58 wrote a comment explaining something about a topic already ticked.⁴⁰ This leaves 95 who comment about another negative situation which led to them considering Christianity. A man in his 60s, answering question 32 writes: “It is probably not the best way to become a Christian but I

³⁹ For example, “I was helped by the peace I found in empty Churches.” (Female 50s) “How I felt God was guiding me” (Male 30s)

⁴⁰ For example they had ticked ‘bereavement’ and in the comments box they explained their relationship to the deceased.

think that a lot of people like me, become Christians because they can see no other way to help them out of their troubles but to return to God and seek His help.”

The relevance to the involvement of individual Christians is the necessity to be sensitive to the needs of others, “During a personal crisis a Christian friend reached out and touched me. It felt like God was reassuring me.” (Female 30s Question 20) There is, too, the need to be available and approachable. A lady in her 70s answering question 20 says: “Yes, two people who helped me with their prayers and guidance during my husband’s illness.”

d. The involvement of the Church as the agent of mission

The ‘Finding Faith Today’ study revealed that: “The fellowship of the congregation and the friendship of the clergy were important factors in their spiritual journey. Most came to faith within the Church rather than finding faith outside it and then entering.”⁴¹ Three different surveys asking what helps people respond to the Christian faith have discovered the same answers but in a different order. A 1967 study⁴² says; ‘friends, family and Church’ but in the 1994 ‘Finding Faith’ survey the order changes to: ‘Church, family and friends’, leaving Brierley to conclude that: “In the 30 years... Church has become more important and family less important.”⁴³

⁴¹ General Synod of the Church of England, On the way (London: Church House Publishing, 1995) p.20

⁴² Brierley Peter “A measure of His purpose” analysis the survey on conversion by the Evangelical Alliance, 1967: in Hill Monica, Entering the Kingdom (British Church Growth Association, 1986) pp. 98-107

⁴³ Brierley Peter, “Why should I come to Church?” Report of the Christian Research survey ‘Finding Faith’ carried out in 1994. Quadrant (March 1998) p.1

Therefore, in answering the Question; “How do adults become Christians?”,

I enquired whether a Church was involved in this process.

Question 25 of the Questionnaire asked:

What type of Church do you attend now?

Was this Church involved in you becoming a Christian?

If ‘No’ was another Church involved?

Church involvement in respondents becoming Christians as adults			
Present Church was involved			
	Yes	No	Blank
Female	179 83%	37	
Male	118 71%	48	1
Total	297	85	1
Another Church involved			
	Yes	No	Blank
Female	21 10%	16	
Male	28 17%	19	1
Total	49	35	1
Therefore some Church was involved			
	Yes	%	
Female	200	92	
Male	146	87	
Total	346	90	

Only 10 % of respondents don’t indicate a Church involved in them becoming a Christian. This supports the findings of the other studies.

Question 22 asks: “Before you became a Christian did you attend a Christian Church - Regularly, Occasionally or Never”.

The data from this question supports Church involvement but the figures are not as high as for Question 25. 70% attended Church regularly or occasionally before becoming a Christian. Therefore, there are 20% who indicate that a Church was

involved but this was not through Church attendance. This highlights the value of other Church activities.

Church attendance, as an adult before becoming a Christian From Question 22							
	Total	Regularly		Occasionally		Never	
Female	216	53	25%	107	49%	56	26%
Male	167	35	21%	72	43%	60	36%
Both	383	88	23%	179	47%	116	30%

Question 23 asks: “If ‘regularly’, for how long did you attend Church before becoming a Christian?

Length of Church attendance for those who answered that they went to Church regularly before becoming a Christian				
	Female	Male	Total	Blank
Under 3 months	4	3	7	
3 to 12 months	7	3	10	
1 year	9	3	12	
2 years	4	4	8	
over 2 to 5 years	3	1	4	
more than 5 years	9	14	23	
Life time	12	6	18	
Total	48	34	82	6

Only 9% of those who attended Church regularly before becoming a Christian attended Church for less than two years.

Question 26 of the questionnaire listed 22 topics such as ‘Reading the Bible’ or ‘A stranger sharing their faith’ and asked the respondent to give a mark between 0 to 6 for how significant the topic was to them becoming a Christian. 6 was very significant and 0 was no significance or not applicable. The mean average for each

topic was calculated and the topics arranged according to the score they received.

This is set out in a chart on page 53

This significance question has resulted in one of the big surprises of my research, which is the prominence of attending a Church service.

On the mean average order of answers to question 26 ‘Attend Church Service’ is surprisingly high. Taking the average for all respondents it comes out at the top of the list of topics. (Female 1st Male 3rd Both 1st out of 22 topics) Even taking into account that 15% of respondents were already ‘within the Church’ this is still surprisingly high.

On the same scale an ‘Invitation to a Church Service’ (Female 5th Male 8th Both 7th) comes higher than an ‘Invitation to Alpha’ (Female 8th Male 13th Both 10th), an ‘Invitation to a Church social activity’ (Female 13th Male 14th Both 14th) and significantly higher than an ‘Invitation to an Evangelistic event’ (Female 21st Male 19th Both 20th)

Most of the Churches I work among would encourage Christians to bring friends to special events or to activities designed for outsiders such as the Alpha Course. Christians in these Churches would be encouraged to invite friends to special services on such occasions as Christmas, Easter or Mothering Sunday but inviting friends, who were not yet Christians, to an ordinary Sunday service would not figure in their thinking. However, in this study attending a Church Service has received the highest score. We will also see that an invitation to a Church service is very prominent in the answers to the open ended questions on the questionnaire

asking how respondents became Christians and how individual Christians were involved.

On the mean average scale from answers to question 26 activities traditionally thought of as 'Evangelism' are low on the scale (Street Work, Literature Distribution, Evangelistic Events). While activities which might not come as readily to mind when evangelism is mentioned receive a high score. (Attendance at a Church Service, Kindness of a Christian)

First actions from Questions 1 & 2 of the Questionnaire

I took the answers to the open ended questions on page one of the questionnaire and asked what was the first thing that happened in the process of these people becoming Christians and who took that action.

First action towards them becoming a Christian From analysis of Questions 1 and 2					
	Female		Male		Both
Individual Christian	92	43%	73	44%	165 43%
Own Action	37	17%	24	14%	61 16%
Within Church	33	15%	24	14%	57 15%
Church Outreach	32	15%	10	6%	42 11%
Not Known	13	6%	21	13%	34 9%
Other	9	4%	15	9%	24 6%
Total	216		167		383

We will consider the actions of individual Christians in part two.

'Not known' are those who give no clues, in their answers, as to what was the first action in the process of them becoming a Christian. The other three categories are relevant to the role of the Church as the agent of the mission.

‘Own action’ are those, for example, who just turned up at Church. A lady in her 60s answering question 32 writes: “I was drawn to Church, I came on my own. I really did not know why, it was such a strong feeling. It could not be ignored.” This group is a sizeable minority and highlights the need for Churches to be welcoming and friendly. Another lady in her 30s, answering question 20 about other ways Christians helped you to become a Christian, writes, “The welcoming atmosphere of our Church, also the genuine interest and care other people at Church have/had in me and my family.”

‘Within the Church’ signifies those who were already part of a local Church fellowship before becoming a Christian. This group had belonged before they had believed. A large proportion of the 23% who attended Church regularly will be this 15% who were already ‘within the Church’ when they became Christians.

‘Church Outreach’ signified those reached by activities arranged by a local Church such as an evangelistic event or mission. This category received a surprisingly low score. Only 11% mention the outreach of a local Church as the first action in the process of them becoming a Christian. This category received a significantly higher score from females, which could be an indication that the Church finds it harder to appeal to men. This supports the results from the significance scale of Question 26.

My conclusion, on this topic, is that generally speaking the Church was the agent of mission for the majority of the respondents but not through the methods which would be expected. 90% said a Church was involved in them becoming a Christian.

For the majority of the respondents attendance at a Church service was significant to them becoming a Christian

Relevance to involvement of individual Christians is that we should be part of a local Church and our life and witness should draw people into the Church.

Individual Christians must be trained and encouraged: “to do evangelism in whatever way seems to be appropriate in and from the family of the local Church.”⁴⁴ As an evangelist working with a Para-church organisation the results of this study are a stark warning that evangelism must be linked to the life of the local Church.

e. The use of the Bible in evangelism

A surprisingly low percentage of the ‘Finding Faith Today’ respondents said the Bible was an important factor in them coming to faith - 5% said it was the main factor and 27% said it was a supporting factor. Finney says, “Not surprisingly many saw the Bible as a book which was a companion on the way rather than the main factor.”⁴⁵ The result of the 1994 survey carried out by Christian Research is more encouraging with 61% saying the Bible influenced them in coming to faith.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Green M, Evangelism Through the Local Church (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990) p.x

⁴⁵ Finney, Finding Faith Today pp. 60-61

⁴⁶ Brierley Peter, “Why should I come to Church?” Report of the Christian Research survey ‘Finding Faith’ carried out in 1994. Quadrant (March 1998) p.1

“Christian Research undertook a large survey in 1994 to validate Finney’s work, and the research that we did looking at how people came to faith did in fact agree with what John Finney had done, but we found that he had unfortunately omitted the majority of those who came to faith - notably those who were in their teenage years. The reasons why they came were very similar to those that John Finney found.”

Dr Peter Brierley Executive Director of Christian Research Vision Building, 4 Footscray Road, Eltham, London SE9 2TZ admin@christian-research.org.uk in an e mail to me 25th April 2002

Tidball says, “The Bible is one of the great untapped resources of the evangelistic work of the Church.”⁴⁷

Therefore, this study looked at the use of the Bible in evangelism.

On the significance scale of Question 26, Reading the Bible is high (Female 4th Male 2nd Both 3rd out of the 22 topics). It has the highest number of respondents giving a mark for significance 322 (84%) and it receives the greatest number of grade 6, meaning it was very significant, 178 (46%).

On the same significance scale from question 26 ‘Being given part of the Bible to read’ is disappointingly low. (Female 14th Male 9th Both 11th out of the 22 topics). This must be balanced by how many respondents are already ‘Within the Church’ and the high number of respondents who are returnees who might already have a Bible.

The answers to the questionnaire include many encouraging comments about the effects of distributing the Bible: “it was through reading the gospel of Mark for myself that I truly encountered Christ...” (Male 20-24)

“...attended a carol service. Was given a copy of Luke’s gospel on the way out and I put it away and forgot about it. ...At a very low point in February I just took Luke’s gospel off the shelf and read it. The word was very powerful, ...Started reading the New Testament – found I was reading it more than my novel. Impacted by the truth, I started attending the Church I had been to at Christmas.”(Female 30s)

⁴⁷ Tidball Derek, Using the Bible in Evangelism (Swindon: Bible Society) p.3

“After going through my divorce which followed a violent marriage, I had so many unanswered questions. I had started to read my Bible which I’d had since I was a child and I realised that God was the answer.” (Female 40s)

My conclusion is that the Bible is a God given tool for evangelism.

Individual Christians should be encouraged to recommend the Bible with confidence but we can only do this effectively if we read it ourselves allowing God to speak to us and seeking to live out what we learn. Encouraging Christians to do this is at the heart of the work of the Pocket Testament League.⁴⁸

f. The need for change in attitude not just an increase of knowledge

In answering question 32 a female in her 30s writes: “Non-Christians often believe that they know what Christianity is all about and that it is not for them. They do not know the concepts and do not understand a lot of the language used amongst Christians. You have to translate a lot into normal language, even though it is all English.” This points to the need for an increase in knowledge and understanding of the Gospel before a response can be made.

My own view on this issue has been influenced by Engel’s “model of spiritual decision processes”⁴⁹ which emphasises the key issue that to be in a position to make a ‘faith-decision’, a person needs to have acquired an adequate knowledge of the Christian faith. For Croft, who bases his ‘Stages of Faith’ on the Engel Scale, making a faith decision will “involve an outward discovery of the Gospel message

⁴⁸ see www.bridge-builders.net and www.readcarryshare.com

⁴⁹ Engel James F & Norton Wilber, What’s wrong with harvest (Zondervan, 1975) chapter 5 ‘Great Commission in Modern Dress’, downloaded from: <http://www.newwway.org/engel/harvest.htm> (13th June 2002) **see Appendix 5 page 113**

and an inward process of discovery of a person's own need for Christ".⁵⁰ This view seems also to fit with Fowler's concept of conversion involving a change in the content of faith.⁵¹

In answering Question 32 a male in his forties comments: "People being shifted from indifference to the Gospel is a factor." This led me to consider whether change of attitude is as important as an increase in knowledge.

Gray's Matrix⁵² highlights the key issue that to be in a position to make a 'faith-decision' a person needs to move to an 'open' attitude to the Christian message. It is not just a question of acquiring an adequate knowledge of the Gospel. Gray's Matrix is an adaptation of the Engel scale and like Engel he may have based his model on the work of Sogaard.⁵³ Gray inverts Engel's vertical scale so that 'knowing nothing of the Gospel' is at the bottom and 'ability to reach others' is at the top with a midway point representing regeneration. He then adds a horizontal line with 'Antagonistic' on the extreme left and 'Enthusiastic' on the extreme right. "It separates out the cognitive elements into the vertical while the attitudinal

⁵⁰ Croft Steve, Growing new Christians (London: Marshall Pickering, 1993) pp.24-30

⁵¹ Fowler James W, Stages of faith (Cambridge: Harper & Row, 1981) p.281

⁵² Gray Frank, "Radio Programming Roles: FEBC Perspectives (ver 2.20)" (Far East Broadcasting Company, 1996) Downloaded from <http://www.febc.org/roles200.html> 8th March 2002 **See Appendix 6 on page 114**

⁵³ Sogaard Viggo, Research in Church and Mission, (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1996) Sogaard who has a "Two-dimensional model with both cognitive and affective dimensions. He says, "The model stimulated the design of similar models by other writers... people have tried to adapt it to their way of thinking' by way of example he cites the Engel scale, in: Engel James, How can I get them to listen (London:Zondervan) 1977. Sogaard Viggo, Research in Church and Mission, (Pasadena: William Carey Library, 1996) pp. 56-63

dimensions belong to the horizontal.”⁵⁴ People are now seen as somewhere on this square grid. “Effective evangelism not only requires people to obtain more knowledge; they must also move from a position of antagonism/indifference to a more positive viewpoint. They are unlikely to wish to find out more until they view Christianity more positively.”⁵⁵

Although the questionnaire was not designed to collect data on this subject I wondered if what the respondents had written to open ended questions would give some indication of a change in attitude and clues as to how Christians can help people to change their attitude towards Christianity, Church and Christians.

There are 3 respondents who say they were atheists “totally against God and Church” (Male 30s), and they speak of change of attitude. Only one gives any insight into how that change took place. “Arrived at university as an atheist. I met and made friends with some Christians. Debates and discussions followed.”

(male 20-24) In answering question 2 he talks of the impact of the lifestyle of two Christian friends. After a year at University he had a crisis, prayed and started reading the Bible.

Some respondents talk of preconceived ideas about Christians and the Church.

“The biggest handicap was my perception of Christians.” (Male 50s.)

“..a Christian man I met impressed me by his simple and generous lifestyle and choices. ...helped me to see Christians positively.” (Female 40s)

⁵⁴ Whittack Tony, “Manifesto for the future. Online Evangelism: state of play and futuregoals.” Paper for Internet Evangelism Conference November 2000. p.17 Downloaded from <http://www.gospelcom.net/guide/future.htm> 8th March 2002

⁵⁵ Whittaker Tony, Director of SOON Gospel Literature, “Gray’s the colour of life” Downloaded from <http://www.gospelcom.net/guide/future.htm> 8th March 2002

“...seeing Christians in the Church who were the same age as me and seeing that they lived as Christians and so showing me it wasn’t the reserve of the old / weird / fanatics.” (Male 30s)

The respondents to the questionnaire do give clues that for some of them there was a need for a change in attitude. This is a subject that I discovered after the questionnaire was written but it has had a profound affect on my thinking. The relevance to the involvement of individual Christians is that we have the opportunity, by our lifestyle, to change people’s preconceived ideas and help them see the relevance of the gospel.

Conclusions to part one of answering the research question:

How do adults become Christians?

For many people becoming a Christian as an adult is the fruition of seed sown during childhood. The Church has little impact on the majority of the population who have no previous Church experience.

Generally speaking the research says that adults become Christians through a sudden experience within a gradual process. While reacting to the concept of process, by maintaining long-term relationships, we must sensitively challenge people to respond to the gospel.

The reaction to a negative situation is a significant factor for many people who become Christians as adults. This is seen in the majority of respondents having a

negative situation in their life leading them to consider Christianity; therefore, we must be available and approachable to care for people.

A local Church was involved in the majority of respondents becoming Christians, suggesting that evangelism is best linked to the local Church.

In this study the use of the Bible is a significant factor in adults becoming Christians. The Bible is seen as an effective tool for evangelism, which can be distributed with confidence.

Comments from the questionnaire and my wider reading have brought into focus. ‘The need for a change of attitude, not just an increase in knowledge’, which is particularly relevant when we consider outreach to those with no previous Church involvement.

Answering the research question

Part two: “What part can be played in the process of adults becoming Christians by the involvement of individual Christians?”

Part one considered what could be learnt from my research about some aspects of how adults become Christians. Part two will look at the following aspects of personal witnessing covered by the questionnaire:

- a. The role of the individual Christian in evangelism
- b. The significance of relationships
- c. Assessment of the involvement of strangers
- d. Activities used by individual Christians and their relevance
- e. Unhelpful aspects of activities
- f. Comparison with how respondents try to help others
- g. The importance of style of approach over activity

a. The role of the individual Christian in evangelism

“The strength of the Church in mission is precisely that lay people do the work.”⁵⁶

Individual Christians are at the cutting edge of the Church’s contact with people and they are best equipped to contextualize the gospel. “They are the people who know what Biblical faith must do if it is to meet everyday problems.”⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Robinson Martin, Winning hearts, winning minds (London: Monarch Books, 2001) p.xvi. This is a reprint of his book Winning the west published in 1996. In his introduction to this new edition he says that the one section he would want to rewrite is ‘the elements of the missionary congregation’ and among the elements he would add is that the Church is ‘A Lay Movement’.

⁵⁷ Gilliland Dean, ‘Contextualization’ in: Moreau A Scott (Editor), Evangelical Dictionary of world missions (Carlisle: Paternoster, and Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000)p.227

The answers to the open ended questions 1 & 2⁵⁸ of the questionnaire were analysed asking what was the first thing that happened in the process of these people becoming Christians and who took that action.⁵⁹

First action towards them becoming a Christian From analysis of Questions 1 and 2					
	Female		Male		Both
Individual Christian	92	43%	73	44%	165 43%
Own Action	38	17%	24	14%	62 16%
Within Church	33	15%	24	14%	57 15%
Church Outreach	32	15%	10	6%	42 11%
Not Known	12	6%	21	13%	33 9%
Other	9	4%	15	9%	24 6%
Total	216		167		383

As can be seen from the above diagram the category with the highest score was the action of an individual Christian with 43% and the percentage is similar for both sexes. The next chart shows that an Individual Christian was the strongest category for all age groups.

First Actions from Questions 1 & 2 arranged in age groups							
Age Group	Total	Not Known	Within Church	Own Action	Individual Christian	Church Outreach	Other
under 20	12	1	5	1	5		
20 - 24	41	3	8	4	24	1	1
25 - 29	26	2	4	4	14	1	1
30 - 39	111	7	20	21	43	14	6
40 - 49	92	10	9	21	30	16	6
50 - 59	42	6	3	6	20	3	4
60 - 69	37	3	6	3	18	2	5
70 +	22	2	2	1	11	5	1
Totals	383	34	57	61	165	42	24

⁵⁸ Question 1. "How did you become a committed Christian?"

Question 2. "What part – if any – did the help or influence of individual Christians play in you coming to faith in Christ?"

⁵⁹ For further explanation of the analysis of the answers to question 1 & 2 and comment on the other topics see pages 42-43

Question 26 of the questionnaire listed 22 topics and asked the respondent to give a mark between 0 and 6 for how significant the topic was to them becoming a Christian. 6 was very significant and 0 was no significance or not applicable. The following chart shows these topics in the order of the mean average for all respondents.

Analysis of answers to question 26

Number marking significant any mark 1 to 6	How many gave 6	Mean Average		Order of scores		
				Female	Male	Both
314	166	4.27	Attend Church Service	1	3	1
312	148	4.17	Friend sharing their faith	3	4	2
322	178	4.1	Reading the Bible	4	2	3
302	178	4.04	Kindness by a Christian	2	7	4
327	137	4.01	Lifestyle of Christian	9	1	5
292	123	3.89	Gospel explained by individual	7	5	6
298	125	3.76	Invite to Church Service	5	8	7
278	129	3.74	Gospel Explained by Speaker	11	6	8
223	160	3.51	Attend Alpha Course	6	12	9
224	150	3.48	Invite to Alpha Course	8	13	10
253	102	3.37	Given part of Bible to read	15	9	11
245	114	3.34	Given help in time of Need	10	16	12
269	88	3.28	Given a Christian Book	14	10	13
278	83	3.22	Invite to Church social	13	14	14
249	105	3.2	Asking for help in need	12	17	15
206	79	2.93	Changed life of a Christian	17	11	16
250	69	2.92	Given Literature (not in Street)	16	15	17
180	55	2.55	Attend Evangelistic Event	19	18	18
266	78	2.45	Stranger sharing Gospel	18	20	19
174	52	2.13	Invite to Evangelistic Event	21	19	20
149	25	1.97	Given Christian Video	20	21	21
111	18	1.6	Given Literature in the Street	22	22	22

Activities, which reflect the role of the individual, are high on the list.

‘Friend sharing their faith’, ‘Kindness by a Christian’, ‘Lifestyle of a Christian’, ‘Gospel explained by an individual’ are all in the top seven.

‘A Friend sharing their faith’ (Female 3rd Male 4th Both 2nd) and ‘Gospel Explained by an Individual’ (F7 M5 B6)⁶⁰ are both higher than ‘Gospel explained by a Speaker’ (F11 M6 B8).

The interaction between individual Christians and individuals who are not yet Christians is the backbone of all outreach. “It is doubtful if any evangelism is effective without prayerful and persistent work with individuals”⁶¹

b. The significance of relationships

‘Finding Faith Today’ showed that people come to faith through relationships. At least 67% of respondents to that study said a relationship was the most important factor, in them coming to faith.⁶² When asked what was the most important secondary factor, Christian friends and the minister were by far the most significant.⁶³ This is confirmed by a 1995 study in the USA ‘into ways people accept Christ’ in which 53% of respondents indicated it was through relationships.⁶⁴

⁶⁰ References to (F19 M18 B18) refer to the position of a topic out of the 22 topics of question 26 F = female M = male B = both (the total for all respondents). These figures appear in the three columns on the right hand side of the chart on page 53

⁶¹ Watson David, ‘I believe in Evangelism’ (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1976) p.98

⁶² 21% Christian Friend, 17% Minister, 29% Family member. Finney, Finding Faith Today p.38

⁶³ Hanley Pam, Finding Faith today. The Technical Report. pp.70-71

Also: General Synod of the Church of England, On the way (London: Church House Publishing, 1995) pp.20-21

⁶⁴ Barna George, ‘Beliefs: Salvation’ Report on what Americans believe. Barna Research Online downloaded from

<http://www.barna.org/cgi-bin/PageCategory.asp?CategoryID=4> 13th May 2002

A female respondent in her 30s writes: “Building a relationship of trust, rapport and empathy - just listening and being open to opportunities to share your faith. ...is of fundamental importance.”⁶⁵

Questions 27 & 28 are the most relevant in considering relationships, they asked:

27. Before you became a Christian did you have a Christian

friend ☐ relative ☐ neighbour ☐ work colleague ☐ acquaintance ☐

28. Did any of the following play a significant part in you becoming a Christian?

friend ☐ relative ☐ neighbour ☐ work colleague ☐ acquaintance ☐ stranger ☐

Relationships and their significance from Questions 27 & 28

	Friend	Relative	Neighbour	Work Colleague	Acquaintance	Stranger
Before	229	202	51	70	79	
Significant	199	122	31	39	51	52
Significant but not in 'Before'	11	3		1	6	
Used of 'Before'	188	119	31	38	45	

From this we can see that relationships are a key factor in adults becoming Christians. 92% of the respondents had a relationship with a Christian before becoming a Christian themselves. 86% of the respondents had at least one relationship with a Christian, which was significant to them becoming a Christian.

These figures are considerably higher than the previous studies.

⁶⁵ This was in answer to Question 32 “Is there anything else you would like to share which you feel would help me in my study of how people find faith and the part played in this by the involvement of individual Christians?”

I further analysed the answers to Questions 1 & 2 to identify which relationships were mentioned. This is from open-ended questions, which I asked respondents to answer before completing the rest of the questionnaire. This supported the data from Questions 27 & 28 in that 'Friend' then 'Relative' received the highest scores.

Relationships mentioned in answers to Questions 1 & 2 Including those who did not initiate the first action			
	Female	Male	Both
Friend	53	31	84
Relative	30	34	64
Work Colleague	14	12	26
Neighbour	8		8
Housemates	2	1	3
Other Relationship	16	19	35
No Relationship	5	7	12
More than one Relationship	5	8	13
Total Respondents who mention a relationship in their answers to Questions 1 & 2	123 57%	97 58%	220 57%

Analysing the answers to Questions 1 & 2 reveals that 22% of respondents mention a friend, 17% a relative, 4% a work colleague, 2% a neighbour and 0.7% a housemate. Only 3% mention the influence of an individual Christian with whom they had no relationship.⁶⁶

The value of friendship

In the answers to questions 27 & 28 the largest group is 'Friend', over half the respondents had a friend who played a significant part in them becoming a

⁶⁶ 'Other relationships' This category includes types of relationship only mentioned by one respondent. These include relationships such as: Fellow sports person, School Teacher, Employer, Therapist, Wife's doctor, Chatty cleaner, Aerobics teacher, Son's Sunday School Teacher, Health Visitor, Fellow Carer, Fellow homeless person, Best Friend's Mother and Ski Instructor

Christian. For 16% a friend was the only relationship they had with a Christian and for 20% a friend was the only significant relationship. For 15% a friend was both the only relationship and the only significant relationship.

Looking at age groups, 'Friend' is the most prominent group for both sexes under 40. For males friend and relative are similar for those in the 40s 50s and over 70 but relative is the most significant for those in their 60s. For females friend is the most prominent category for all age groups except those in their 50s and 60s when relative is more prominent.

In answering questions 1 & 2, which asked how respondents became Christians, and in what ways individual Christians were involved in helping them 22% mention the significant actions of a friend.

This highlights the importance of friend-based evangelism, which is one of the key conclusions of John Clarke's two-year research project looking at how British churches are making new disciples.⁶⁷ This is also supported by the other research studies into people finding faith. In the 'Finding Faith in 1994' study 51% say a friend helped them towards the Christian faith.⁶⁸ In Finney's 'Finding Faith Today' study 15% of men and 24% of women said that Christian friends were the main factor in them finding faith and 39% of men and 40% of women said it was a supporting factor.⁶⁹ However, we must realise that, "Friendship evangelism is far

⁶⁷ Clark John, Evangelism that really works (London: SPCK, 1995) p.14

⁶⁸ Brierley Rev Dr Peter, Finding Faith in 1994 a Technical Summary of the survey of the participants in the 1994 Lent groups (London: Christian Research) p.38

⁶⁹ Finney, Finding Faith Today p.38

more than just a strategy. There is the implicit recognition that friendship is a fundamental characteristic of our faith. Jesus' whole ministry was focused on friendship."⁷⁰

Respondent's comments emphasise the significance of friendship:

"Friendship evangelism is the best way because sharing the gospel must also involve sharing your life with somebody." (Male under 20)

"I think people being friends with non-Christians and sharing their lives is a major way that people are converted. The witness of a Christian who is open about the gospel and tells their friends has a major effect." (Male 20-24)

Looking at the other relationships in questions 27 & 28

Relative is much higher than anticipated. 52% of respondents have a Christian relative. 60% of relationships with relatives are significant. The influence of relatives is evenly spread between the sexes and age groups but is more prominent among older people. This is due partly to the influence of younger relatives becoming Christians.

Work Colleague and Neighbour are much lower than anticipated since every Christian has neighbours and a high proportion will have work colleagues. However, for 4% a Work Colleague was their only significant contact with a Christian. This figure is only 1% for neighbours.

⁷⁰ Spriggs & Jackson, p.46

The key role of the individual Christian in evangelism is building relationship bridges, which are strong enough for the gospel to cross.⁷¹

c. Assessment of the involvement of strangers

Questions 16 to 18 asked respondents to tick 3 groups of 10 boxes about the actions of ‘Relative’, ‘Friend or Acquaintance’ or ‘Stranger’. Which groups were ticked is an indication of who was involved in trying to help respondents become Christians.

89% ticked at least one box in the ‘Friend or Acquaintance’ group, 65% in the ‘Relative’ group and 48% in the ‘Stranger’ group. The first two add further support to conclusions reached from data from other questions but it is interesting to note that almost half the respondents indicated an action by a Stranger.

On the significance scale for question 26 “A stranger sharing the gospel” comes very low (Female 18th Male 20th Both 19th out of the 22 topics). However, 69% of respondents mark it as having some significance to them becoming a Christian and 20% give a 6 meaning it was very significant.

An activity associated with the work of strangers is ‘Being given Christian literature in the street’. This came lowest, for both sexes, out of the 22 topics on the significance scale of Question 26, but 29% marked this of some significance and

⁷¹ Singlehurst Laurence, Sowing, reaping, keeping (Leicester: Crossway books, 1995) p.25 Where he illustrates this by saying that the Church attempts to cross a bridge that will stand 1 ton with a 5 ton message. He suggests using five one ton messages. I would suggest the building of stronger bridges

5% gave it a score of 6. Some indication of the significance of these actions is gained from the analysis of the answers to question 28 because stranger is among the significant relationships.

From the analysis of the answers to question 28			
STRANGER	Significant encounter with a stranger	Only Christian involed in them becoming a Christian	Only Significant encounter with a Christian
Female	29	6	13
Male	23	6	11
Both	52	12	24

13% of respondents had an encounter with a stranger that was significant to them becoming a Christian. When asked about the Christians they had encountered before becoming a Christian, for 6% a stranger was the only category, which they could tick. This would signify that outreach to strangers is by no means a waste of time. A male respondent in his 40s writes: “I was invited into Church for coffee and mince pie and whoosh...” Jesus said, “I was a stranger and you invited me in”⁷²

A good example of the witness of a stranger is the lady working in a library music department, who on meeting a customer for the first time, helps him book tickets for a concert. He writes: “She seized an opportunity to tell me about a Christian group, who she thought I would like... She did not say they sang about God, I found that out for myself.” (Male 40s) Subsequent conversations about music moved on to talking about God and eventually an invitation to Alpha. This story illustrates the principle that whenever possible our outreach to strangers must seek to turn them into friends.

⁷² Matthew 25:35 NIV

d. The activities used by individual Christians and their relevance

This section is arranged under the activities which were used by Christians in trying to help the respondents to become Christians, which were:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 15. Praying | 8. Caring and getting alongside |
| 16. Inviting | 9. Answering questions |
| 17. Lifestyle | 10. Making a suggestion |
| 18. Sharing your story | 11. Having a common interest |
| 19. Using the Bible | 12. Giving videos |
| 20. Giving literature | 13. The use of the Internet |
| 21. Explaining the Gospel | 14. The use of variety and imagination |

Questions 16 to 18, found on page 3 of the questionnaire, asked whether, before they became a Christian, a 'relative', 'friend or acquaintance' or a 'stranger' had done any of the following:

- Pray for you
- Pray with you
- Give you Christian literature
- Give you part of the Bible
- Give you a Christian video
- Invite you to a Church activity
- Invite you to a Church service
- Invite you to the Alpha course
- Tell you how they became a Christian
- Try to explain the Gospel to you.

Thus giving ten topics for each of the three relationship groups. From these answers we can learn, for example, how many people had somebody try to explain

the Gospel to them and whether that person was a relative, friend/acquaintance or a stranger.

Answers to Questions 16 to 18					
Arranged according to the % who ticked that box					
RELATIVE					
Female	%	Male	%	Both	%
Praying For	47	Praying For	50	Praying For	43
Service Invite	31	Service Invite	37	Service Invite	33
Giving Bible	27	Activity Invite	34	Activity Invite	28
Activity Invite	24	Literature	24	Giving Bible	25
Literature	24	Giving Bible	22	Literature	24
Telling	14	Telling	20	Telling	17
Explain	14	Explain	15	Explain	15
Praying With	12	Praying With	13	Praying With	12
Alpha Invite	11	Alpha Invite	9	Alpha Invite	10
Giving Video	4	Giving Video	5	Giving Video	4
FRIEND OR ACQUAINTANCE					
Female	%	Male	%	Both	%
Praying For	71	Praying For	68	Praying For	70
Activity Invite	55	Service Invite	56	Activity Invite	53
Service Invite	51	Activity Invite	51	Service Invite	53
Literature	47	Literature	40	Telling	44
Telling	47	Telling	44	Literature	45
Explain	38	Explain	40	Explain	38
Alpha Invite	36	Alpha Invite	29	Alpha Invite	33
Praying With	34	Praying With	29	Praying With	32
Giving Bible	27	Giving Bible	22	Giving Bible	25
Giving Video	9	Giving Video	8	Giving Video	8
STRANGER					
Female	%	Male	%	Both	%
Literature	21	Praying For	30	Praying For	23
Praying For	17	Explain	22	Literature	20
Explain	15	Literature	20	Explain	18
Telling	9	Service Invite	17	Service Invite	11
Giving Bible	9	Praying With	13	Telling	11
Activity Invite	7	Activity Invite	12	Giving Bible	10
Praying With	7	Telling	12	Activity Invite	9
Service Invite	6	Giving Bible	11	Praying With	7
Alpha Invite	4	Alpha Invite	3	Alpha Invite	4
Giving Video	3	Giving Video	1	Giving Video	2

1. Praying

Questions 16 to 18 asked about two aspects of prayer. Respondents were asked if, before they became a Christian anybody prayed ‘for them’ and/or ‘with them’.

87% of the respondents knew of somebody who was praying for them before they became a Christian. A third of all respondents indicated that a Christian prayed with them before they became a Christian.

My research would agree with Rees who says, “it is my observation that few people.. become Christians...without somebody first praying for them.”⁷³ He further comments that, from his experience, “many people welcome an offer to be prayed for”⁷⁴ and like many other writers on evangelism encourages us to pray for non-Christian friends by name.⁷⁵ I would agree with Barrs that we should “pray for the work of the Spirit in the hearts and minds of those around us” and “for open doors in our relationships so we will have the opportunities to make the Gospel known”.⁷⁶ However, I have one puzzling question, and that is, amid such evidence and encouragement, ‘Why do I spend so little time in prayer?’

2. Inviting

As an evangelist I have often been asked to preach the Gospel and call for a response at events and services that were only attended by Christians. When there have been non-Christians present I have sometimes been able to enquire why

⁷³ Rees Justyn, Love your neighbour for God’s sake (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1997) p.54

⁷⁴ Ibid p.158

⁷⁵ For example Legg Steve, The A-Z of Evangelism (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2002) p.120

⁷⁶ Barrs Jerram, The heart of evangelism (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 2001) pp.50-51

they were there and generally the answer is because a Christian, whom they trusted, gave them an invitation and accompanied them to the event.⁷⁷

The ‘Finding Faith Today’ study asked why the respondents had started going to Church and 16% said it was because they were invited.⁷⁸ When asked how they decided which Church to attend 43% said it was the one recommended by their friends.⁷⁹ Finney says that, “Training in evangelization should mention that one of the simplest and most effective forms of evangelism is, ‘Would you like to come along with me to Church next Sunday?’” While agreeing with Finney on the general relevance of the invitation I was surprised that he suggested an invitation to a Sunday service and not a low key visitor friendly event aimed at outsiders.

How Christians helped them from answers to open ended Questions 1 & 2			
ACTIVITIES	Female	Male	Both
Invite other than Church Service	41	26	67
Lifestyle	32	24	56
Invite to Church Service	25	24	49
Prayer	19	14	33
Explained Gospel	7	11	18
Answering Questions	7	6	13
Involving the Bible	2	4	6
Getting alongside	3	6	9
Making a Suggestion	6	3	9
Common Interest	1	3	4
Total of Both Invitations	66	50	116
Indicated received both	3	5	8
Received an invitation	63 29%	45 27%	108 28%

⁷⁷ see John J, Calling Out (Milton Keynes: Word Publishing, 2000) p.260 - for similar observations.

⁷⁸ Finney, *Finding Faith Today* p.79

⁷⁹Ibid p.79

Looking again at the content of the answers to the two open ended questions on page one of the questionnaire the action by an individual Christian which occurs most often is that of the invitation. 28% mention a significant invitation and for 13% that invitation was to a Church service. The latter is 3% lower than the figure for respondents of the 'Finding Faith Today' survey who said they had started going to Church because of an invitation. However, the data from my questionnaire is from open-ended questions, which asked how respondents had become Christians and what part individual Christians had played in helping them and for that reason I think it could be more significant.

We have already seen that the data from Question 26 showed that 'Attending a Church Service' was first in order of significance in activities associated with respondents becoming Christians. It is one of the surprises of this project that my research supports Finney's suggestion about the evangelistic relevance of Christians inviting friends to accompany them to a Church service.

The importance of an invitation is supported by the answers to Questions 16 to 18, which asked respondents if anybody had invited them to a Church activity, a Church service or to the Alpha course. The same questions were asked about, relative, friend/acquaintance and stranger. Excluding 10 females and 6 males who leave this section blank, 18 females and 16 males do not record any kind of invitation. Therefore, 87% of all respondents did receive some kind of invitation.

These figures could represent many more invitations because a box can only be ticked once. So a person might have ten friends who have each given an invitation

but they are represented on the questionnaire by just one tick. However, these figures are a guide to how active Christians have been in extending an invitation to the respondents.

“I was searching for something for about six months. I had tried clubs - even the spiritualist Church! Then a neighbour put an invitation to an Alpha course through my door and I decided (with great fear) to go along. (Female 30s Question 1)

“A friend persistently asked me to go to Church over a 15 year period! Eventually gave in to please her and attended a carol service. *Months later...* started reading the New Testament ...Impacted by the truth I started attending the Church I had been to at Christmas.” (Female 30s)

Question 20 - Contents of Box					
	Female		Male		Both
Totals	216		167		383
Blank	71	33%	53	32%	124 33%
No	32	15%	34	20%	66 17%
Yes	113	52%	80	48%	193 50%
Comments	86		62		148
Not Relevant	27		18		45
Relevant	59	27%	44	26%	103 27%
ANALYSIS OF COMMENTS					
Lifestyle	34		25		59
Style	25		16		41
Friendship	17		8		25
Answering Questions	4		5		9
Help in Crisis	2		1		3
Stranger	1		2		3
Getting alongside	1		2		3
Internet	1		1		2
Other	16		11		27

3. Lifestyle⁸⁰

Answering Question 20 “Is there any other way in which an individual Christian helped you decide to become a Christian?” - 57% of the relevant answers⁸¹

mentioned the example or lifestyle of a Christian. A male in his early 20s writes:

“By being my friend and living the life of a Christian. Her life was the Bible I used to read.”

Analysing the answers to question 20 revealed the following aspects of Lifestyle

i. Good moral standard

“Demonstrating ethics and honesty that I did not previously have...” (Male 40s)

“By their behaviour, self-control and self discipline.” (Male 40s)

ii. Genuineness

“Their truth and integrity got me interested. Their living a good example and sticking to it - no matter what. They were believable.” (Female 30s)

“Andrew lived out his faith in his life.” (Male 20-24)

iii. Comparatively Different

“I aspired to be like them - they seemed calmer, more helpful, friendlier, stronger, swore less - lots of silly things that built up to inspire me to want to change...”

(Female 25-29)

“By living lives the way God wants them to. I was shown Jesus living in their everyday lives.” (Male 40s)

⁸⁰ see chart on page 66. For explanation of ‘style’ see pages 87-88

⁸¹ That is those which do talk about another way an individual Christian had helped them.

iv. Testimony to what God can do

“By being a model of the healing God brings through Jesus and I desperately wanted that healing.” (Female 30s)

“Lifestyle a testimony of how God changes people” (Female 30s)

v. Something desirable – I need what they have

“Just the way they lived their lives, I wanted that joy and feeling of love.”

(Female 30s)

“She always exhibited inner strength and resolution. I envied her clarity of thought and purpose.” (Male 40s)

vi. ‘Normal’ people

“I was greatly impacted by meeting Christians that I viewed as ‘normal’ and ‘fun’, broke down my preconceived ideas I had developed.” (Female 30s)

“I think the main influence was the fact you don’t have to be perfect – plus my friend was always a good laugh, not boring at all.” (Male 30s)

The sixth aspect is very revealing. It shows how people have preconceived ideas about Christians as: ‘cheesy’, ‘patronising’, ‘boring’, ‘weird’, ‘fanatics’, lacking a ‘sense of humour’. They use words such as ‘normal’, ‘ordinary’ and ‘cool’ to describe the Christians whose lifestyle made an impact.

Hunter says, “Since the credibility of Christians and the Church is a question for secular people, they need to meet credible Christians”.⁸² The challenge for the Christian is to lead a genuinely different life in such a way that it does not alienate them from other people.

5 females and 5 males in answering question 32 mention the paramount importance of lifestyle. For example a male in his 20s writes: “If non-Christians don’t see anything different in the lives led by Christians, then the impact made on non-Christians is very poor.” There are, too, the stark warning from writers on personal witnessing that, “What you do speaks louder than what you say.”⁸³ and that “Christianity is more caught than taught.”⁸⁴

4. Sharing your story

From Questions 16 to 18 of the questionnaire we find that 17% of respondents had a relative who told them how they became a Christian. 46% had a friend or acquaintance and 11% a stranger who shared how they had become a Christian.

Comparing these figures with the data from Question 27 & 28 reveals that 32% of the relationships with relatives included that relative sharing how they had become a Christian. 63% of relationships with friends and acquaintances included the

⁸² Hunter George G III, *How to reach secular people* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992) p.59

⁸³ Bickel Bruce and Jantz Stan, Sharing your faith (Oregon: Harvest Books, 2000) Chapter 3 “Words are not enough” pp.61-83

⁸⁴ Warner Graham, The Evangelism Handbook (Guildford: Eagle, 2000) p.27 This the second of Warner’s 131 Evangelistic Principles.

person sharing how they had become a Christian. 84% of significant encounters with strangers included the stranger sharing how they had become a Christian.

From question 26 we can see that “A friend sharing their faith” came second overall in significance out of the 22 topics covered in that question. It is a little more significant for females.

Question 32 asked: “Is there anything else you would like to share which you feel would help me in my study of how people find faith and the part played in this by the involvement of individual Christians?”

11 respondents comment on the significance of testimonies, for example:

“I feel testimonies are the best way. They touch people.” (Female 25-29)

“Hearing about the work of God in people’s lives is also powerful stuff.”

(Male 30s)

“It is very important for Christians to tell other people about themselves. I think people always want to know about other people... we are naturally nosey.”

(Female 40s Q32)

Warren says: “Personal stories are also easier to relate to than principles, and people love to hear them. They capture our attention, and we remember them longer.

Unbelievers would probably lose interest if you started quoting theologians, but they have a natural curiosity about experiences they’ve never had. Shared stories build a relational bridge that Jesus can walk across from your heart to theirs.”⁸⁵

⁸⁵ Warren Rick, The Purpose Driven Life (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002) p.290

We need to encourage Christians to share the story of their Christian pilgrimage, of how their story became entwined with God's story. Long calls this 'Narrative evangelism'.⁸⁶ "To tell our faith story means expressing how faith in God works for us today". Churches should provide opportunities for Christians to practise sharing their story within gatherings of Christians, so that they are prepared to share it with non-Christian friends when the opportunity arises.⁸⁷

5. Using the Bible

From Questions 16 to 18 'being given part of the Bible to read' by a friend comes 9th out of 10 for both sexes but 25% received part of the Bible to read from a friend. It is higher on the lists in the relative section coming 3rd for females and 5th for males but, because this question asks about 'any time before you became a Christian', these figures could include gifts given during childhood. 25% had been given part of the Bible to read by a relative. Only 6% had been given part of the Bible to read by a stranger. The figures for relatives and friends are 5% higher for females and for strangers they are 1% higher for females.

We have seen that 'Reading the Bible' is very high on the significant scale of question 26. Although, 'Being given part of the Bible to read' is lower on the scale, 66% of respondents say that being 'given part of the Bible to read' had some significance in them becoming a Christian and 27% give it a 6 indicating it was very significant.

⁸⁶ Long Jimmy, Generating Hope (London: Marshall Pickering, 1997) p.208

⁸⁷ Price Janice, Telling Our Faith Story (London: Church House Publishing, 1999) pp 4 & 22. The whole of this booklet tells how to run a two hour training course teaching Christians how to tell their story – a very valuable resource

Little is said, in recent books on evangelism, about encouraging non-Christians to read the Bible. Tidball says, “It is possible to use the Bible when little conversation has taken place, since it is quite capable of speaking for itself.”⁸⁸

6. Giving literature

By studying the answers to questions 16 to 18 we learn that 24% had received Christian literature from a relative, 45% from a friend or acquaintance and 20% from a stranger.

From question 26 we can see how significant this literature distribution was to the respondents becoming Christians. “Being given Christian literature (not in the street)” was towards the bottom of the significance scale from question 26 (female 16th male 15th both 17th) but 65% marked it as having some significance to them becoming a Christian and 18% gave a 6 meaning it was very significant.

‘Being given Christian literature in the street’ came lowest in order of mean average, for both sexes. Comments such as: “I would have avoided anyone giving out literature in the street”, were expected, but 29% marked ‘being given Christian literature in the street’ as of some significance and 5% gave it a score of 6 meaning it was very significant.

‘Being given a Christian book to read’ is also low on the significance scale. (Female 14th Male 10th Both 13th) However, 70% mark it of some significance and 23% give a score of 6 meaning it was very significant to them becoming a Christian.

⁸⁸ Tidball p.50

A female in her 30s answering question 20, about other ways Christians helped, writes: “A friend lending me the first three books of the ‘Left Behind’ series. It made me think and question and eventually led me to Alpha .”

These figures do not reflect any decline in the relevance of printed material⁸⁹ and would encourage the distribution of appropriate literature as a effective method of evangelism.

7. Explaining the Gospel

In the answers to questions 16 to 18 the figures for ‘Try to explain the Gospel to you’ seems low. 15% had a relative who ‘tried to explain the Gospel to them, 38% a friend or acquaintance and 18% a stranger.

How significant was it that respondents had somebody try to explain the Gospel to them? In the analysis of the open-ended questions 1 & 2, only 7 females and 11 males mention somebody explaining the gospel to them as being significant to them becoming a Christian. However, when we consider the significance scale of Question 26 “The Gospel explained by an individual comes 6th overall. 76% say it had some significance and 32% give a 6, meaning it was very significant to them becoming a Christian.

The ‘Gospel explained by an individual’ comes two places higher than ‘the Gospel explained by a public speaker’. 43% more respondents mark the significance of an

⁸⁹ see Kelly Gerard, Get a grip on the future without losing your hold on the past (London: Monarch, 1999) pp. 113-125 for comment on “living with post-literate communication”

individual explaining the Gospel than a public speaker but the number of respondents giving a 6 is higher for the public speaker by 3. I would conclude that an individual explaining the Gospel is as significant as the Gospel being explained by a public speaker. Both these categories are higher for males than females.

Many of the recent books on personal witnessing include gospel outlines some of which are diagrammatic.⁹⁰ Pollard, warns against such outlines because there is “not one presentation that is appropriate for all people at all times.” From my own experience being able to draw a visual aid helps the recipient’s understanding and the Christian’s confidence.⁹¹

There is very little evidence from the answers to the questionnaires that ‘explaining the gospel’ included encouraging a response. One man was asked, “if he had made a decision” and a lady had a friend who asked “how she was doing”. Three respondents say they were asked if they would like ‘to pray a prayer of commitment’. Explaining the gospel should include doing what we can to encourage people “to make a decision” and we need to have an “expectation that people will hear and respond.”⁹² Green speaks of the “privilege of becoming the midwife at the birth”⁹³ of a new Christian.

⁹⁰ Chapman John, Know and tell the Gospel (Sydney: Matthias Media, 1998) pp.129-155
Green Michael, Sharing your faith with a friend (Leicester: IVP, 2002) pp. 82-99
John J, Natural Evangelism (Oxford: Lynx Communications, 1996) pp. 42-50
Pippert Rebecca Manley, Out of the saltshaker (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999)
Appendix 1 pp.262-270

⁹¹ See Chapman pp.154-155

⁹² John J, Calling Out p.246 (whole of chapter 16 pages 245-265 is relevant to calling for a response.

⁹³ Green, Sharing p.82 see also Green Michael, Evangelism and the local Church (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1990) pp.268-276

8. Getting alongside (Caring)

We have seen that 66% said there was a need or crisis in their lives which led them to consider Christianity. From other parts of the questionnaires we can see Christians responding to those needs. A female in her 40s says that another way Christians helped her to become a Christian was, “By the way ...they treated people, the fact that they really cared.”

In the analysis of question 26 “Act of kindness by a Christian” came 4th out of the 22 topics. 78% gave a mark of significance and 46% gave it a 6, meaning it was very significant to them becoming a Christian. This topic came much higher for females (2nd) than for males (7th).

64% said “Being given help in time of need” had some significance to them becoming a Christian and 30% gave it the highest mark of 6. This topic was considerably lower for males (16th) than females (10th) The same is true of “Asking for help in a time of need” which came 17th for males and 12th for females.

The contrast between males and females suggests that men are less likely to seek help or be reached by social action. Female respondents were more likely to ask for help if they had a need.

Many comments by respondents speak of caring Christians, such as: “...a Christian friend who was always there for me to talk to and ask questions.” (Female 25-29)
“By being practical. Helping when practical help was needed and also being supportive in the hard times.” (Male 30s)

Another aspect of caring mentioned in answers to the questionnaires is listening.

Two answers to Question 20, “Is there any other way in which an individual Christian helped you decide to become a Christian?” are a female in her 40s sayings, “Yes, just by listening to me and encouraging me.” and a male in his 40s writes, “A listening ear, patient, helpful”.

9. Answering questions (relaxed apologetics)

Only 13 respondents answering questions 1 & 2 and 9 answering question 20 mention being helped by a Christian answering their questions.

Answers to question 20 (about other ways people helped) include a female in her 50s saying that her friend helped by, “...answering the questions that I had always been afraid to ask but wanted to know.” and a male in his 30s writing, “...by answering my multitude of questions.”

Some people will need in depth help to move “real intellectual obstacles in their path” to faith.⁹⁴ Others need help to take apart the views they hold, Pollard calls this ‘positive deconstruction’.⁹⁵ However, from my experience the sincere enquirer can be helped. There are many books answering the most commonly asked questions⁹⁶, both for Christians to study and also to give to a questioning friend. There is also

⁹⁴ McGrath Alister, Bridge-building (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1992) p.96

⁹⁵ Pollard Nick, Evangelism made slightly less difficult (Leicester: IVP, 1997) p.44

⁹⁶ Allen John & Eyre Gus, Christianity is ridiculous (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1995)
Gaukroger Stephen, It makes sense (London: Scripture Union, 1987) (still available 2002)
Gumbel Nicky, Searching Issues (Eastbourne: Kingsway Publications, 1994)

material on the Internet.⁹⁷ Part of the work of equipping Christians for personal witness should be to make such resources known and available.

How the questions were answered matters. For example a female in her 20s writes that a Christian, “Answered my questions and non-Christian ideas in a non-judgmental way” and a female in her 30s says, “The leader of my Alpha group answered my questions honestly and never got impatient.” We need “gentleness and respect” when giving the reason for our hope.⁹⁸

For many Christians one of the fears of witnessing is being asked a question you can’t answer. “...but not having the answer isn’t the main problem – the important point is how we handle not having an answer.”⁹⁹ It is encouraging that my research has shown that being able to give an invitation is far more significant than the ability to answer questions!

10. Making a suggestion

As people don’t usually like being told what to do, it is interesting that some of the Christians who were involved in helping the respondents to become Christians used a suggestion, which is much less threatening.

Answering questions 1 & 2 - 6 females and 3 males mention a Christian making a suggestion. “...non-Christians at AA suggested more prayer and meditation. The

⁹⁷ <http://www.evangelismtoolbox.com>

⁹⁸ 1 Peter 3:15 NIV

⁹⁹ Lawrence James, Lost for words (Oxford: Bible Reading Fellowship, 1999) p.106

Christian suggested speaking to a priest or pastor. ...I ended up talking to the pastor of the Baptist Church.” (Male 30s)

“My wife’s doctor suggested that she might like to go to his Church for some help on the spiritual side.” (Male 60s)

“...I was cynical, but I read John’s Gospel as she suggested.” (Female 30s)

11. Common Interest

Answering question 32 a male in his 50s writes, “After years of searching from the sidelines alone it was not until I came across someone who had similar interests and talked my language did the penny drop.” In this case the common interest was motorcycling.

There is surprisingly little direct evidence of a common interest being a significant factor in the respondents becoming Christians. Although indirectly we can see that all relationships could involve a common interest such as working in the same office or being part of the same family.

Haggard, advocates that ‘common interest groups’, which meet to do activities such as fishing together or talking about each others writing, are a way of bringing into the circle of influence of Church people without them having a felt need or an interest in the Gospel.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Haggard Ted, Dog training, fly fishing and sharing Christ (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2002) pp.23-28

Individual Christians can use any interest to build relationships from which come witnessing opportunities if they are open and honest about their faith. Aldrich encourages us to seek and “cultivate common interests” and use them as “relational building blocks”.¹⁰¹

12 Giving away videos

Looking at questions 16 to 18 ‘Give you a Christian video’ ranked lowest of all the topics for both sexes and all three relationship groups. Only 4% of respondents had received a Christian video from a relative, 8% from a friend or acquaintance and 2% from a stranger.

On the significance scale from question 26 ‘Being given a Christian Video’ was near the bottom for both sexes. Out of the 22 topics it came: 20th for females, and 21st for males. However, 39% of respondents gave it a significance mark and of these 25 respondents gave it a score of 6 meaning very significant in the process of them becoming a Christian.

I had included “being given a video” because of my involvement in the ‘JESUS Video Project’, which I wrongly anticipated would affect the figures in this section. According to Agape in the UK, “Over 2 million homes have already been offered the JESUS video. More than 600,000 have accepted it.”¹⁰² Graham Cray says, "I recommend the JESUS video as a proven evangelistic tool for an age which does

¹⁰¹ Aldrich Joe, Lifestyle Evangelism (Oregon: Multnomah Publishers, 1981) pp 180-181

¹⁰² Downloaded from: <http://www.jesusvideo.co.uk/> 1st October 2002 ‘Agape’ is the UK distributor for the Jesus film, see: <http://www.agape.org.uk>

not understand Christian teaching because it does not know the Christian story." ¹⁰³

13. The use of the Internet

As we have seen, the research project made use of the Internet to discover the addresses of Christian leaders and e-mail was used to ask for help in distributing the questionnaires. I therefore became interested in whether the Internet had played a part in any of the respondents becoming Christians.

The answer was 'yes' but not many. Only one male respondent in the 25 – 29 age group used websites to study the Bible and the Christian faith. In answering question 32 he writes: "If anything was a Godsend this Internet connection was. I could read the Bible, sermons, testimonies and this is what God used to speak to me." We learn from his answer to Question 1 that while living in Wales the person who helped him to become a Christian was a pastor in Texas USA who corresponded with him by e-mail.

One interesting aspect here was that this man's background made it difficult to turn to friends and family who were Christians because he felt he had already let them down. Rich says, "We have found that the anonymity that the Internet provides enables people to feel more at liberty to open up and talk about Jesus in a way that they would never think of doing face to face."¹⁰⁴

¹⁰³ Cray Graham Rt Rev, Bishop of Maidstone . Downloaded from: <http://www.jesusvideo.co.uk/> 1st October 2002

¹⁰⁴ Rich Matthew (Internet Evangelist) Down loaded from <http://www.e-evangelism.com>. 18th November 2002

One male respondent was reached by a Christian using a chat room to evangelise.

Another wrote: "People have been pro-active in encouraging me to think about things by sending me e-mails." (Female 20-24)

While agreeing with Blackmore that the Church "needs to learn how to use the technology now so they are in a position to be effective when it does count"¹⁰⁵, I disagree with his reason for not making it a priority. He sees the Internet as impersonal and points out that people come to Christ through relationships. I would suggest that it is possible to build a relationship with somebody using the Internet.

Careaga says, "This new technology presents us with the opportunity to build relationships with people we would not reach or meet in any other fashion"¹⁰⁶

The UK already has at least one full-time 'Internet Evangelist'¹⁰⁷ who has a team of volunteers using 'chat rooms' to evangelise.

14. And more.....variety and imagination in witnessing

From the other answers to question 20 there is a great variety of ways that individual Christians helped the respondents. We would never be able to put together an exhaustive list of the ways Christians can witness. As one female respondent in her 40s says: "It's very hard to communicate via a questionnaire the myriad ways God used others to reach people for Christ." Watson rightly says: "opportunities come in so far as we really want them."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Blackmore Vernon, Using your Church Website (Cambridge: Grove books, 2001) p.8

¹⁰⁶ Careaga Andrew, Sharing the Gospel in Cyberspace (Vital Issues Press, 1999)

Down loaded from <http://www.e-evangelism.com>. 1st October 2002

¹⁰⁷ Mark Rich works full-time as an e-vangeist In 2000 he founded 'e-vangelism' which is an Internet Mission aiming to encourage Christians to use chat rooms to evangelise.

'e-vangelism' has 20 associate members. See: <http://www.e-vangelism.com>

¹⁰⁸ Watson David, I believe in Evangelism (Hodder and Stoughton, 1976) p.100

Unhelpful aspects of activities

So far, answers to questions 16 to 18 have been treated, as positive input into the lives of the respondents, but is that true? Question 19 on the questionnaire asked: “Were any of the actions ticked in Questions 16 to 18 unhelpful or even a hindrance?”

Were actions ticked in Questions 16 to 18 Unhelpful or a hindrance			
	Female	Male	Both
Yes	46	20	66
No	161	143	304
However....			
Positive Comments	8	3	11
About the Questionnaire	2	1	3
Therefore....			
Negative	35	16	51
Positive	172	147	319
Blank	9	4	13

Some of those who ticked yes went on to give positive comments or to comment on the Questionnaire or how they answered previous questions. Deducting these means that only 16% of females and 9% of males said that an action they indicated in answering questions 16 to 18 was unhelpful or even a hindrance. This is encouragingly low, however, we must remember that this is a survey of people who did become Christians. The sample represents ultimately satisfied customers and not those who were put off Christianity by those who tried to help them become Christians. Analysing the answers to question 19 reveals some repeated themes, which indicate faults to be avoided.

Insensitivity

Respondents indicate a need to be sensitive towards the feelings of people by giving examples of this not being taken into account. For example:

“Sometimes people can be insensitive to one’s needs - particularly if they are a lot older. I don’t think anyone is converted by bullying...” (Female 40s)

“When I was 18 strangers I met explained their faith and how their lives had improved pointing out that mine too could improve and I’d find new friends.

However, I was quite content with my life and friends and found their inferences almost offensive.” (Male 30s)

“...people got in the way of me meeting God...” (Female 30s)

Analysis of ways actions were unhelpful or a hindrance From answers to Question 19			
	Female	Male	Both
Insensitivity	11	6	17
Undue Pressure	8	4	12
Inappropriate Literature	2	2	4
Irrelevant Church outreach or service	2		2
Lack of advice about Bible reading		1	1
Theology of Hell		1	1
Too many invites		1	1
Reaction to 'Charismatic' gifts	1		1
Lack of lifestyle	1		1
Objection to door to door visitation	1		1
Yes but OK in the end	3	1	4
Comment Not Relevant	6		6

Undue pressure

This is a difficult issue because we do want people to respond to the Gospel and there is a sense of urgency but the respondents warn against too much pressure.

“My friend pushing me too fast. I became confused and on guard.” (Female 30s)

“Once invited to a service then they would continue to follow their invitation up on a regular basis - As I wasn’t a Christian then I found it sometimes annoying particularly if it was on the phone.” (Male 30s)

“Evangelism should never deteriorate into coaxing, much less into threat.”¹⁰⁹

Inappropriate Literature

“Christian literature from strangers was often inappropriate.” (Male 20-24)

“...I found the literature ...boring and heavy going.” (Female 40s)

This points to the need for market research of literature among new converts or even people outside the Church. Comparing the covers of old books reveals how quickly a publication becomes out of date therefore there is need for a constant review of literature.

Change of heart now

5 females and 4 males indicated that although they considered the actions a hindrance or unhelpful at the time, they had seen it from a different perspective afterwards or now that they are a Christian. For example: “I’d say ‘yes’ because sometimes it annoyed me when people spoke to me but it worked out in the end - so I don’t think of it as a hindrance.” (Male under 20)

There is a warning here about the danger of taking the stand that the end justifies the means because of seeing things from our ‘Christian’ perspective. We must remember how we felt as a non-Christian when somebody acted inappropriately and adjust our own actions accordingly.

¹⁰⁹Bosch, *Transforming Mission* p.413.

f. Comparison with how they try to help others

Question 30 listed the same 10 topics as questions 16 to 18 and asked: “As a Christian have you tried to help other people consider Christianity by:”- (then it listed the ten topics with tick boxes.)

How they try to help other people consider Christianity from Question 30					
FEMALE		MALE		BOTH	
Praying For	199	Praying For	146	Praying For	345
Telling	161	Telling	109	Telling	270
Service Invite	160	Service Invite	105	Service Invite	265
Activity Invite	156	Activity Invite	101	Activity Invite	257
Literature	106	Explain	92	Literature	194
Alpha Invite	98	Literature	88	Explain	179
Praying With	90	Praying With	60	Alpha Invite	155
Explain	87	Alpha Invite	57	Praying With	150
Giving Bible	56	Giving Bible	51	Giving Bible	107
Giving Video	29	Giving Video	24	Giving Video	53

97% of respondents filled in this section of the questionnaire. Looking at how many of the 10 boxes respondents ticked the mean average is 5.4. Comparing their answers with those for questions 16 to 18 reveals that 34% of females and 42% of males have tried to help others in more ways than they themselves were helped.

As with questions 16 to 18 praying for people comes first. Next comes telling how you became a Christian which we have seen is a very non-threatening way of communicating the gospel. Third comes an invitation to a Church service, which is in keeping with the prominence, we have discovered of attending a Church service in the experience of respondents becoming Christians.

At the bottom end of the list, as in the answers to questions 16 to 18, came ‘giving away videos’. As with the activities of ‘friends and acquaintances’ in 16 to 18 the next topic from the lower end of the list is ‘giving away parts of the Bible’ which is disappointing for someone who works for an organisation which encourages Christians to use the Bible in personal witnessing.

Question 31 asked: “Are there other ways you try (or have tried) to help people become Christians. 57% answered this question.

Analysis of answers to Question 31 Lists all topics mentioned more than once			
	Female	Male	Both
Example/Lifestyle	49	29	78
Words	42	15	57
Helping	11	5	16
Friendship	3	8	11
Changed Life	8	2	10
Openness	6	3	9
Church or Youth Work	4	5	9
Time with or for people	6	3	9
Another form of Invite	2	5	7
Listening	3	3	6
Answering questions	3	2	5
Helping to run Alpha Course	2	3	5
Christian Music	2	3	5
Use of the Internet		5	5
Written Testimony	2	2	4
Hospitality	2	1	3
Community Involvement	3		3
Sport	1	1	2
Taking children to Church	2		2
Giving audio tapes	2		2
Introduce to other Christians		1	1
Another Topic	5	12	17
Something already covered	15	8	23

Again the importance of lifestyle is emphasised. Words includes anything which is not covered by ‘telling your story’ or ‘explaining the gospel’, it includes being open about their faith and sharing answers to prayer.

g. The importance of style of approach over activity

Analysing the answers to open ended questions revealed the opinion that the way we do evangelism is as important as doing evangelism. I’ve called how we do evangelism ‘style’ and what we do has been called ‘activity’.

53% of respondents wrote a comment in answer to the last question on the questionnaire. “Is there anything else you would like to share which you feel would help me in my study of how people find faith and the part played in this by the involvement of individual Christians.” In answering this question 10% commented on the importance of what I have called, “style of approach over activity”.

Analysis of comments from Question 32			
	Female	Male	Both
Style	26	12	38
Insights	14	10	24
God's work	13	8	21
Testimonies	8	3	11
Lifestyle	5	5	10
Prayer	2	6	8
Friendship	1	6	7
Preaching	2	4	6
Good Ideas	4	1	5
My research	3	1	4
Internet		2	2
Music	1	1	2
Negative		1	1

“People tried to explain Christianity to me before - I found them very ‘in your face’ and if anything they pushed me away. My house-mates never pushed information on me but let me see Christ at work in their lives.” (Female 20-24)

“I have found being too pushy with my friends puts people off. I drop little

seeds about it and if they ask then I tell them.” (Female 30s)

This issue of ‘style of approach over activity’¹¹⁰ is also found in 11% of the answers to question 20 about other ways in which individual Christians helped respondents decide to become a Christian, for example: “Seeing people at Uni excited about being Christians and them not criticising me for not being one.” (Female 20-24)
“...seeing the strengths of the Gospel message through its weakness...even though they were scared they were still obedient.” (Female under 20)

Boursier proposes matching witnessing style to personality types.¹¹¹

In answering question 32 a female in her 40s makes an excellent suggestion as to how we can improve the way we do evangelism. “I believe we should take personal development courses, improve people and relationship skills. ...I have found not all Christians are positive, they are caring and compassionate but find it difficult to socialise. If we can work on these self-development issues I believe Christians would be much more endearing to non believers.”

Pippert encourages “developing our conversational skills” and says: “Our attitude and style communicate content just as our words do.”¹¹² Improving our “friendship skills”¹¹³ and our effectiveness at relating to people must be high on our training agenda.

¹¹⁰ see chart on page 66

¹¹¹ Boursier Helen T, Cringe free Evangelism (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1996) pp. 66-67

¹¹² Pippert Rebecca Manley, Out of the saltshaker (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999) p.115 and also whole of chapter 9 “Developing conversational skills” pp.113-12

¹¹³ Spriggs David & Jackson Darren, Friendship Matters (Bletchly: Scripture Union, 1999) pp.45-54

Conclusions to part two of answering the research question:

“What part can be played in the process of adults becoming Christians by the involvement of individual Christians?”

The role of the individual Christian in helping adults on their journey to faith is paramount. The need is for an army of Christians who have faith sharing on their agenda.

Relationships – particularly friendships - are the key means of reaching those who are not yet Christians but the research also indicates that there is value in witnessing to strangers.

The most important activities that Christians can engage in, to help other adults become Christians, are praying and inviting. Inviting friends to a Church service is an effective method of evangelism.

Our lifestyle is a key factor in reaching others. Christians must ‘be’ good news not just share good news.

We need to cultivate sensitivity towards people’s needs and feelings and take care not to use undue pressure.

The way we do relational evangelism is as important as having it on our agenda.

Where do we go from here?

Making the research known

As promised I will be sending to the Christian leaders who helped, and through them to the respondents, a summary of my findings and conclusions. As promised I will also be refunding all postage.

Articles

Sections of the research will be used to produce articles to offer for publication in the Christian press. I particularly want to write articles on:

The power of the invitation

The nature of conversion

Change of attitude is as important as an increase of knowledge

The way we do evangelism is as important as doing evangelism

Presentations

I have already begun to give presentations about the study in Churches with the aim of encouraging Christians to be involved in evangelism. I have also used information from the study to illustrate sermons. A power point presentation will soon replace the OHP slides for further presentations.

Website

In conjunction with the Pocket Testament League, material from this study will be rewritten and presented on a website to encourage Christians in bridge building and personal faith sharing. There will be a link to this new website from www.bridge-builders.net

Stories

I am using some of the stories from the questionnaires to encourage others. Almost every time I've shared in a Church about the research, Christians have shared with me their stories. I plan to continue to collect these stories to use in further reflection and to encourage others. As a result of the research I am actively encouraging Christians to use their stories – to put them in writing – to get them posted on a website.

Application to my own ministry

As well as extending my teaching and training ministry, applying what I have learnt will change the way I engage in evangelism. The study has encouraged me to return to making an appeal in order to give people an opportunity to respond because the study has shown that for many there will be 'a sudden experience within a gradual process'. As most respondents knew of a time when they became a Christian I will develop training to equip Christians to help people at their moment of response.

The study has encouraged me to be more zealous in encouraging people to read the Bible. In training I will continue to encourage Christians to build relationships with people who are not yet Christians. However, now I will add to this an emphasis on giving invitations – particularly to a Church service.

Reflections on the Research Project

The restrictions of the questionnaire as a research method

Contrary to warnings I had read, the respondents left few questions blank. Most respondents wrote answers to the open ended questions. However, a small number of respondents wrote inadequate comments such as: “I went from being an atheist, totally against God and the Church, to being saved in one year.” (Male 30s) In answering Question 2 there are a few frustrating comments such as “A big part” or “Invaluable”.

My original plan was to follow up the questionnaire by interviewing some of the respondents. As I explained in the introduction this was not possible. There are many answers to the questionnaire that cause me to want to ask for more information. This does show the weakness of this research method.

The open-ended questions produced some of the best material. Valuable insights and good ideas about the subject were gained from the answers to Question 32.

The use of the Internet and e-mail

This project demonstrates the usefulness of the Internet in gathering information, such as the e-mail addresses of leaders in Churches with whom I had no previous contact.

E-mail proved a very effective way of asking for help from Christian leaders. For me it was less time consuming than phone calls or personal visits and there were no

travel expenses. I also believe that leaders found e-mail easier to respond to or to reject, than other means of communication. They could ignore the e-mail request without giving a reason or respond with a reply which took only moments to send.

The Project was too big

My aim to try to cover so many issues raised by 'Finding Faith Today' meant that my questionnaire was long and the amount of data it generated was difficult and time consuming to manage.

One result was that not all the data from the questionnaires was used in the dissertation. For example all the data was split into age and it would be possible to compare the findings from different age groups but very little use was made of this in the dissertation.

However, the research project has gathered valuable information, which I will use to mould my future ministry. Although it has been a steep learning curve I have gained valuable experience in how to undertake research, which will be invaluable as I move on to one of the projects in the suggestions for further study section.

How would I do it if I could start again?

I would use a shorter questionnaire and aim at no more than 100 complete questionnaires. I would include with the questionnaire a form asking if people would be willing to be interviewed and/or become a member of a focus group.

I would follow up the questionnaire with interviews and/or focus groups of selected respondents, in order to further clarify some of the issues raised by the findings from the questionnaires.

I would try to make a better job of pre-coding the questionnaire and make more use of computer software to carry out statistical tests. This would involve a more in depth study of statistics and the use of the computer, before starting on the research.

Ideas for further research

Further study into how adults become Christians and the relevance of personal witness.

Further research could be carried out by interviewing people who had recently become Christians as adults. It would be interesting to compare two or more groups of adult converts who had come to faith in difference decades to ascertain how things are changing.

The prayer of faith

This study enquired into the nature of the conversion experience and asked: “Can you recall a specific time when you decided to become a Christian?” Several respondents mention that they were encouraged to say a prayer when they responded to the Gospel , one calls it ‘the sinners prayer’.

I would like to carry out research into people praying at the point when they believe they became a Christian and what is the significance of this prayer. There is no such prayer in the New Testament but prayers to pray are part of many Gospel presentations. I would like to research the origin of such prayers in the history of evangelism. I suspect that this tradition may not go back further than Charles Finney and the second great awakening.

Internet evangelism

Only a small number of the respondents to this study mention the Internet and only one became a Christian directly by using websites but the study has alerted me to the opportunity to evangelise through the Internet.

My study has supported the concept that the building of relationships is key to reaching adults with the Gospel. The Internet seems very impersonal and anonymous. Therefore, one area of study is whether by using the Internet we can build relationships with people we have not met face to face and if that matters for successful evangelism to take place. Careaga writes: "This new technology presents us with the opportunity to build relationships with people we would not reach or meet in any other fashion."¹¹⁴ It would be interesting to test this hypothesis by research.

A change of attitude is as important as an increase in knowledge.

This is a subject I discovered while doing my research and the present study has referred to it. In today's British society, contact with the Church is decreasing. There are many misconceptions about the Church and Christians. The media stereotypes Christians as weak people. For many people Christianity has no relevance and Church is seen as a disposable aspect of society. How can we help people to change their attitude?

¹¹⁴ Careaga Andrew, *Sharing the Gospel in Cyberspace* (Vital Issues Press, 1999)
Down loaded from <http://www.e-evangelism.com> 1st October 2002

Conclusion

The research has shown that work among children is an effective long term evangelistic strategy. However, we must face the challenge of reaching the majority of adults who have had no previous contact with the Church.

Many people are not ready to listen to the Gospel because they have preconceived ideas about Christians or Christianity. We must aim not just to impart knowledge but to change attitudes. To accomplish this we need to be working with people further back in the process that could lead them to faith

The most effective way of reaching people is through relationships, particularly friendship. Therefore, training the individual Christian in evangelism must start much further back than how to use gospel outlines or answer commonly asked questions. We must start with matters such as relational skills, the art of conversation and the ability to listen.

The research has shown that many turn to God at times of vulnerability. Therefore, Christians must be willing to walk with people through life's experiences, seeking to help whenever possible and expecting nothing in return.

A local Church is involved in the story of most adults who become Christians. Therefore, the individual Christian must see their efforts to reach people as part of the outreach of the Church. As this study has shown the individual Christian giving an invitation to a Church service or activity is one the most effective evangelistic activities.

The character and lifestyle of the individual Christian and their ability to relate to people are the main factors we must seek to cultivate. However, we need to start even further back with our relationship with the Lord because intercessory prayer was seen to be a major factor in adults becoming Christians.

Word Count 19,855

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Table of Appendices

1. The Questionnaire
6 pages – reduced size and font because of margins
2. Letter which was attached to every questionnaire
3. Leaders letter
4. Leaders reply slip
5. The Engel Scale
6. Gray's Matrix

PLEASE answer the first two questions in your own words before completing the rest of this questionnaire.

1. How did you become a committed Christian?

2. What part - if any - did the help or influence of individual Christians play in you coming to faith in Christ?

If you need more space please feel free to write or type your answers to either of these questions on separate sheets of paper.

Please staple separate sheets to questionnaire.

Please tick the appropriate boxes and fill in the blanks

3. **Sex** Male ☐ Female ☐
 4. **Age** under 20 ☐ 20-24 ☐ 25-29 ☐ 30-39 ☐ 40-49 ☐ 50-59 ☐ 60-69 ☐ 70+ ☐

5. How would you describe your religious background or upbringing?

Church of England ☐ Roman Catholic ☐ Other Church ☐ *Please specify ...*

Nominal Christian ☐ Not religious ☐ Other Religion ☐ *Please specify...*

6. During childhood did you attend Sunday services?

Regularly ☐ Occasionally ☐ Never ☐

If regularly or occasionally did you stop attending? Yes ☐ No ☐ If 'Yes' at what age ..

7. During childhood did you attend any other activities at a Christian

Church?

Yes ☐ No ☐ If 'Yes' please give details of the activities you attended in the box below.

8. Would you describe yourself as a committed Christian? Yes ☐ No ☐

Was there a time when you would not have described yourself as a committed Christian?

Yes ☐ No ☐

10. Would you say you have had a conversion experience? Yes ☐ No ☐

11. Which of the following best describes your experience of becoming a

Christian?

A Gradual experience ☐ A Sudden experience ☐

Sudden experience within a gradual process ☐

12. How long have you been a committed Christian?

13. Can you recall a specific time when you decided to become a Christian?

Yes ☐ No ☐

14. How long was there between you first becoming interested in Christianity (as an adult) and making a decision to become a Christian?

15. Would you describe your becoming a Christian as returning to a childhood faith? Yes ☐ No ☐

Questions 16 to 18 ask about the actions of relatives, friends/acquaintances and then strangers

16. At any time, before you became a Christian, did a RELATIVE do any of the following:

- ☐ Pray for you
- ☐ Pray with you
- ☐ Give you Christian literature
- ☐ Give you part of the Bible
- ☐ Give you a Christian video
- ☐ Invite you to a Church activity
- ☐ Invite you to a Church service
- ☐ Invite you to an Alpha Course
- ☐ Tell you how they became a Christian
- ☐ Try to explain the Gospel to you

17. At any time, before you became a Christian, did a FRIEND or ACQUAINTANCE do any of the following:

- ☐ Pray for you
- ☐ Pray with you
- ☐ Give you Christian literature
- ☐ Give you part of the Bible
- ☐ Give you a Christian video
- ☐ Invite you to a Church activity
- ☐ Invite you to a Church service
- ☐ Invite you to an Alpha Course
- ☐ Tell you how they became a Christian
- ☐ Try to explain the Gospel to you

18. At any time, before you became a Christian, did a STRANGER do any of the following:

- ☐ Pray for you
- ☐ Pray with you
- ☐ Give you Christian literature
- ☐ Give you part of the Bible
- ☐ Give you a Christian video
- ☐ Invite you to a Church activity
- ☐ Invite you to a Church service
- ☐ Invite you to an Alpha Course
- ☐ Tell you how they became a Christian
- ☐ Try to explain the Gospel to you

19. Were any of the actions you ticked, on the previous page, unhelpful or even a hindrance? ☐ Yes ☐ No If 'Yes' please give details:

20. Is there any other way in which an individual Christian helped you decide to become a Christian?

21. Was anything significant happening in your life which led you to consider Christianity?

Bereavement ☐ Redundancy ☐ Illness ☐

Drug/alcohol dependency ☐ family issues ☐

Another situation ☐ Please give details, if possible, in the box below...

22. Before you became a Christian did you attend a Christian Church

Regularly ☐ Occasionally ☐ Never ☐

23. If 'regularly', for how long did you attend Church before becoming a Christian?

24. Do you attend Church now?

Weekly ☐ Several times a month ☐ Less frequently ☐

25. What type of Church do you attend?

Church of England ☐ Roman Catholic ☐ Methodist ☐ Baptist ☐ Pentecostal ☐

Independent Evangelical ☐ URC ☐ Other Church Please specify

Was this Church involved in you becoming a Christian? Yes ☐ No ☐

If 'No' was another Church involved? Yes ☐ No ☐

If 'Yes' what type of Church was involved in you becoming a Christian?

.....

26. Thinking of how you became a Christian how significant were the following?

Please circle the appropriate number. 0 indicates no significance or not applicable

	very significant					not significant		
Reading the Bible	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Lifestyle of a Christian	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Invitation to a Church social activity	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
A friend sharing their faith	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Invitation to a Church service	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Attendance at Church service(s)	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
An invitation to an Alpha Course	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Attending an Alpha Course	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Invitation to an evangelistic event	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Attending an evangelistic event	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Being given or lent a Christian book	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Hearing the gospel explained by a public speaker	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Act of kindness by a Christian	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Your asking for help in a time of need	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
A stranger sharing their faith	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Being given the Bible (or part of it) to read	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Change in the life of a new Christian	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Being given Christian literature in the street	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Hearing the Gospel explained by an individual	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Being given or lent a Christian video	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Being given help in a time of need	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	
Being given Christian literature (not in street)	6	5	4	3	2	1	0	

27. **Before you became a Christian did you have a Christian**

friend ☐ relative ☐ neighbour ☐ work colleague ☐ acquaintance ☐

28. **Did any of the following play a significant part in you becoming a Christian?**

friend ☐ relative ☐ neighbour ☐ work colleague ☐ acquaintance ☐ stranger ☐

29. **Since becoming a Christian have you:**

Been baptised ☐ Been confirmed ☐ Become a Church member ☐

30. **As a Christian have you tried to help other people consider Christianity by:**

- ☐ Praying for them
- ☐ Praying with them
- ☐ Giving them Christian literature
- ☐ Giving away parts of the Bible
- ☐ Giving away videos
- ☐ Inviting them to a Church activity
- ☐ Inviting them to a Church service
- ☐ Inviting them to an Alpha Course
- ☐ Telling them how you became a Christian
- ☐ Trying to explain the Gospel to them

31. **Are there other ways you try (or have tried) to help people become Christians?**

32. **Is there anything else you would like to share which you feel would help me in my study of how people find faith and the part played in this by the involvement of individual Christians?**

*Thank you very much for your help - it is really appreciated.
Please return this questionnaire to the person who gave it to you.*

Appendix 2

Dave Bennett
32 Edenpark Road
BIRKENHEAD
CH42 9JP

Tel: 0151 608 1169
e-mail: edenpark@btopenworld.com

Thank you for being willing to help me.

The following questionnaire is part of my research in connection with an MA course in Evangelism Studies with Sheffield University at Cliff College.

The questionnaire is being given by Church leaders to adults who have become committed Christians within the past seven years.

Although I need the involvement of people who have genuinely become Christians, the questionnaire is anonymous. At no time will your name or location be referred to in my report or records. I assure you that completed questionnaires will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality.

I would be grateful if you could complete the questionnaire within a couple of weeks of receiving it as I need them back to me by the end of May.

If you have any problems with the questionnaire or would like to talk with me about my research please don't hesitate to phone or e-mail me.

Later in the year I will forward to you - through the person who gave you this questionnaire - a summary of my findings.

I'm very grateful that you are willing to take the time and trouble to help me.

Dave Bennett
Evangelist with the Pocket Testament League

References:

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Revd Dr Martyn D Atkins Postgraduate Tutor Cliff College
Cliff College, Calver, Hope Valley, Nr. Sheffield, S32 3XG
Phone 01246 582321 (ext 107 or 109) e-mail: m.d.atkins@cliff.shef.ac.uk

Appendix 3

Dave Bennett
32 Edenpark Road
BIRKENHEAD
CH42 9JP
Tel: 0151 608 1169
e-mail:edenpark@btopenworld.com

Instructions to Christian leaders who have agreed to help with my research.

THANK YOU FOR BEING WILLING TO HELP ME

What I need you to do please:

Give the questionnaire to people who have become Christians as adults within the past seven years and encourage them to fill it in within a couple of weeks.

Collect in the completed questionnaires after a couple of weeks.

Return them to me at the above address by the end of May. Return postage will be refunded. Please do not return unused copies of the questionnaire.

One of the problems encountered in putting together a questionnaire is the use of terms such as: "committed Christian" or "becoming a Christian". I would be grateful if you could explain such terms to people, if you feel this is necessary.

There may be people who have become Christians as adults who would have difficulty in filling in the questionnaire. I would be grateful if you or another responsible Christian could fill the form in with them.

I would prefer that a Christian leader handles the questionnaires and returns them to me as this will mean there is a check on who fills in the questionnaires. The questionnaire is anonymous but I need to be sure that the respondents have genuinely become Christians as adults.

When you return the questionnaires please could you include a completed leaders information slip giving your name and address.

Later in the year I will send to you a summary of my findings and a thank you letter for you to pass on to those who completed the questionnaire.

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR GIVING ME YOUR TIME AND SUPPORT
- IT REALLY IS APPRECIATED

Yours very sincerely in Christ

Dave Bennett - Evangelist with the Pocket Testament League

Leaders information slip

Please include with completed questionnaires

Name.....

Address.....

.....

.....

Postcode

Phone Number.....

e mail.....

Church or Christian organisation

.....

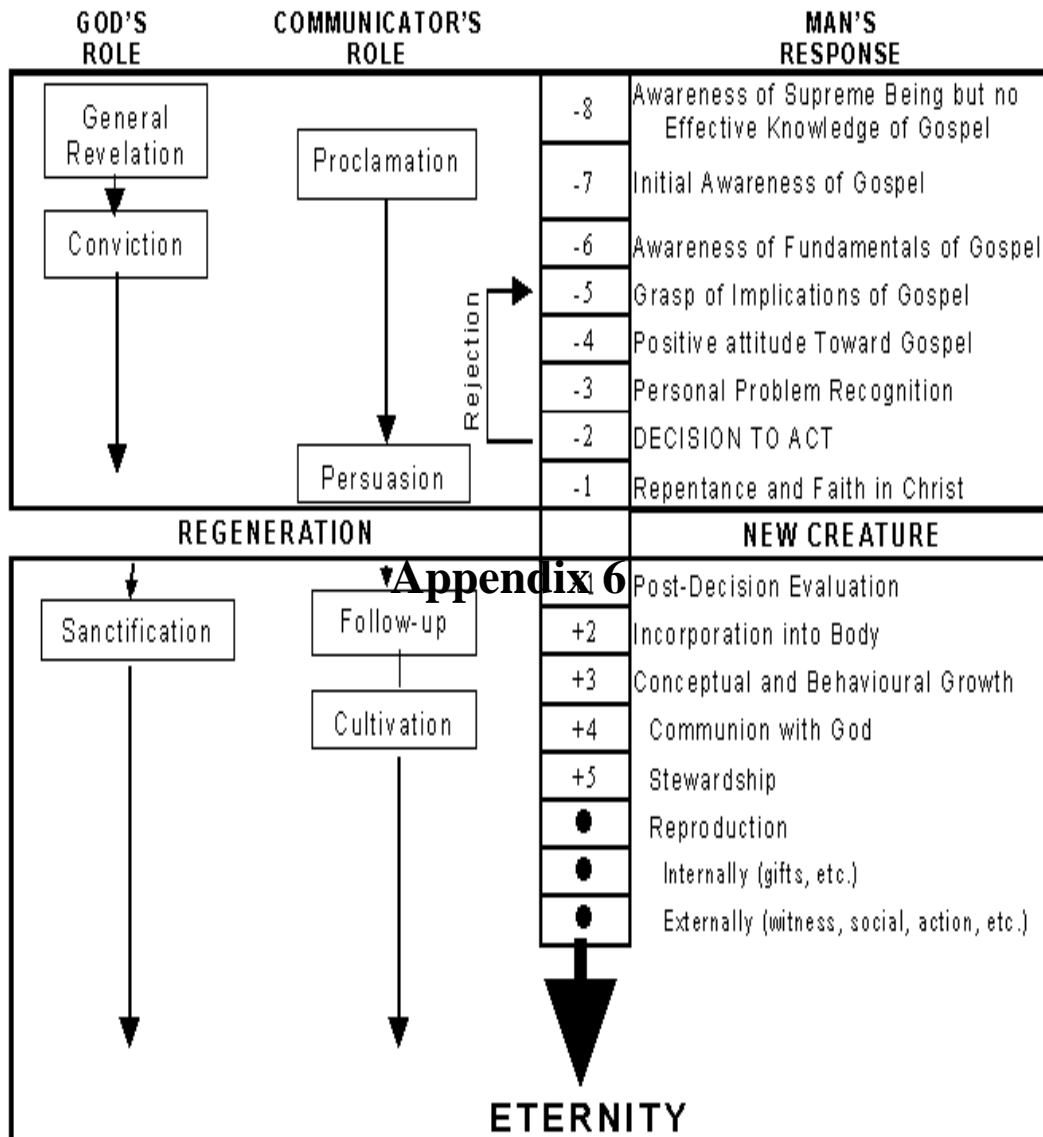
Position held

Number of completed questionnaires

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR ALL YOUR HELP

Dave Bennett 32 Edenpark Road Birkenhead CH42 9JP

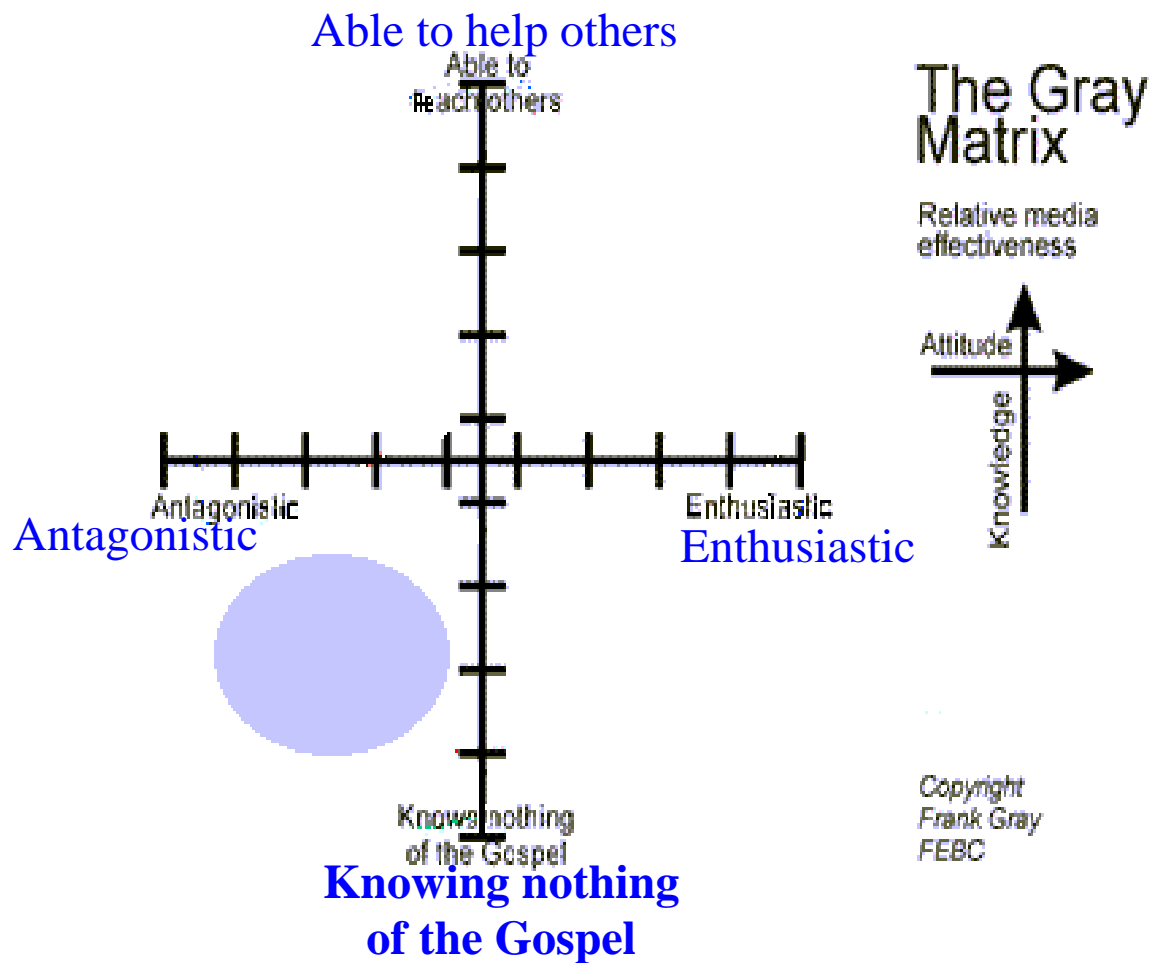
The Engel Scale



James F Engel & Wilber Norton

“What’s Gone Wrong With The Harvest”, Grand Rapids: Zondervan Press, 1975, p. 45.

Gray's Matrix



Frank Gray, "Radio Programming Roles: FEBC Perspectives"
(Far East Broadcasting Company, 1996)

Downloaded from <http://www.febc.org/roles200.html>