PERCEPTIONS OF JESUS, CHRISTIANS AND EVANGELISM

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The fascinating results of a recent survey in the UK
Category: Church: UK

In July this year (2015, if you are reading this on Dave), the CofE, Evangelical Alliance and Hope sponsored a survey of the public's perception of Jesus,Â Christians and Evangelism. The results of this survey are now available online and present as good a snapshot as we are ever likely to get of these issues. I'd encourage you to take a look at the results and the various accompanying documents, there is some fascinating stuff here and church leaders, in particular, need to be aware of the trends identified.

Just to give you a flavour of what is in here:

The executive summary gives lots of good bullet point information:

> - *A majority of English non-Christians know a Christian. Approximately two in three non-Christians report that they personally know someone who is a follower of Jesusâ€"that is, someone they perceive to be a â€˜practising Christianâ€™ (67%). Most of these Christians are either family members (34%) or friends (40%).*
> - *One in three English adults do not know a practising Christian (33%). These individuals are more likely than average to be ages 35-44 (24%), Asian or Asian British (9%)â€"specifically Pakistani (4%), or live in East of England (14%) or London (16%). These individuals are less likely than average to be ages 55+ (19%), or Black or Black British (0%).*
> - *Most non-Christians enjoy the company of the Christian they know (60%). Three out of five say they enjoy being around their Christian friend or family member always (28%) or most of the time (32%).*
> - *Non-Christians attribute more positive than negative qualities to the Christian they know.*

The recommendations for church leaders document has some good suggestions:

> 1. *We need to pray for the Church in our nation. We are faced with an enormous challenge but also great opportunities. Simply improving our skills or commitment will not be enough, we need Godâ€™s intervention, prayer alongside any action is essential.*
> 2. *Resurrection is recognised by so many people but they clearly donâ€™t recognise the impact it has on their lives. Letâ€™s together increasingly highlight the significance of Easter and its implications for all those in England.*

There are further good resources on the home page for the survey.

In the light of yesterday's blog post, I'd like to close by quoting the introduction to the executive

summary:

> *Dr Patrick Dixon, Chairman of Global Change, Ltd, warned the gathering of the danger of institutional blindness. The power of the Holy Spirit was needed alongside the hard work of contextualising the gospel, he said; not an institutional response but a people movement; something simple that enabled Christians to have millions more sensitive, positive, culturally-relevant conversations about Jesus that could be deeply effective in evangelism. The delegates also sought to prioritise themes in response to the question: â€˜What is the Lord saying to the churches?â€™*
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> *Pastor Agu Irukwu, of the Redeemed Christian Church of God UK, said, â€˜We mustnâ€™t institutionalise what comes out of thisâ€”the early Church was a dynamic, expressive movement. The Holy Spirit must have the central roleâ€™.*