

**James 1:19 Be swift to hear and slow to speak.(KJV)**

**Learning to Listen (part 2)  
(what the survey tells us about our neighbours)**

This part of the study seeks to hear what people are saying about themselves that will help us begin a conversation with them about spirituality and life starting where they are at.

Task: Consider the following summaries and answer the questions.

**In Regards to the Spiritual Side of Life**

95% of Women and 90% of men believe there is more to life than they see feel or touch. 84% of women and 77% of men believe they have a “spirit or soul” and all of those women and 60% of men have had a spiritual experience which more often than not, has affected them quite deeply. These experiences include

- I dreamt my father died a week before he actually did
- I had the experience of looking down on my body
- I met a lady I didn't know who told me something about myself that she couldn't have known
- I was aware of my brother's presence after he died and felt him pull my hair

**Jesus**

97% believe that Jesus is an historical figure, 60% that he was the son of God and yet 86% say Jesus still has relevance today (and this is one of the only things that was consistent between men, and women.)

**Prayer**

67% of people pray with 75% of those praying to God. 78% of those who pray have had answers to their prayers. About 30% pray on a daily basis and the rest pray according to circumstance. The following comments help us to understand why people pray and what it means to them.

- I was aware of my brother's presence after he died and felt him pull my hair
- I pray to the saints as routine
- I never felt the need to pray
- Prayer is more than wishing
- I learned prayers as a child and still use them
- I don't want to abuse prayer and so I don't pray for my wants and needs but instead pray for people who are very sick
- Prayer helps because it makes me aware that there is something bigger
- I find it helpful when others pray for me

**The Afterlife**

68% of people asked believe there is an afterlife and this is fairly consistent across the ages but men are less likely to believe. If there is an afterlife, most think that our behaviour on earth will affect the outcome.

- I think we'll have the choice to be reincarnated so we can make amends
- I have no views on the afterlife
- It doesn't matter I don't need to know
- Everyone will go to one place but we'll have different experiences
- Some part of us might live on in more of a way than just being a memory

## **Regarding the future.**

Most respondents believe the world is going to get worse. Young people particularly with 92% pessimistic about the future but only 50% of the older ones. Men are slightly more optimistic, but only just. The key concerns are environmental, youth and financial. Crime is only of a concern to 16%.

## **Happiness.**

To be happy according to the survey you need Love. To know love and to be loved. Friends and family are next with money seen to be the key to a good life for only 5% of people

1. What is the one thing that stands out for you in these statistics? Are you surprised by what these figures reveal?
2. What do you hear people saying about their spiritual state of being through these stats?
3. Do you think there are elements of common ground between Christians and these your neighbours?
4. Consider the figures regarding the afterlife, what impact does this have for your sharing of the good news of Jesus with people?
5. Why do you think Jesus is quite highly regarded? What is significant about this perception?
6. Consider how you might respond to the experiences people have had in regards to spiritual things. Most are not "Christian experiences" but are very real and for many of those surveyed, it was difficult to share this stuff. Do you think that these experiences are hints of God beginning to work in their life?

Finish with prayer

- For the surveyed folk
- For wisdom to respond to peoples experiences
- For an attitude that listens.
- For a Church that is trustworthy