



21st Century Evangelicals

A snapshot of the beliefs and habits of evangelical Christians in the UK

Good news for the poor?

Discussion questions

We hope you have been able to read our recent research report ***Good news for the poor?*** – available at www.eauk.org/surveys.

This handout suggests some questions and discussion starters that can be used by small groups to dig deeper into the findings. The questions are based on the main research findings, available on pages 4-5 of the report.

You might want to start by praying together and reading a Bible passage such as Deuteronomy 14:28-29, Psalm 12:5, Psalm 82:3-4, Psalm 140:12, Proverbs 22:22-23, Isaiah 58:6-11, Matthew 6:3-4, Matthew 25:34-40, Acts 2:44-45 and James 2:15-17.

Material poverty

- What material goods would you struggle to live without?
- Are you surprised that one in ten evangelicals have previously been in serious debt problems? Does the church need to respond to this?
- Have you sat down and listened to the stories of any people struggling with poverty in your locality? If so, what have you learned from them? If not, what do you think they might say?
- Why do we tend to think that poverty overseas is caused by injustice and corruption but that poverty in the UK is caused by personal factors?
- How would you summarise what the Bible teaches about poverty?

Relational poverty

- What role does the family have in addressing poverty?
- Is your church a community where richer and poorer people share their lives and resources with one another?
- What can you do to build relationships with the poor and marginalised in your community?
- Why do you think only one in ten have invited poor people into their home for a meal?
- Do you catch yourself treating people differently because of their social status?

Discussion questions

Spiritual poverty

- Do you think churches should be more focused on meeting spiritual needs or materially needs, or both?
- Is your church effective at outreach and disciple-making in the less affluent parts of your community?
- It seems poorer people are not being given leadership opportunities in church. Why do you think this is?
- How does the gospel challenge and offer good news to those who are materially rich but spiritually poor?

Responses to poverty

- Are you doing anything personally to tackle poverty?
- Is your church making a difference to the lives of those in need?
- If you run social action projects, are these effective in tackling poverty? Or bringing people to faith?
- Less than half (44%) say their church is working on a project to address poverty in their own community. Did this statistic surprise you?
- Half said that their church is committed to supporting a charity or ministry tackling poverty overseas. Did this statistic surprise you?
- What is distinctive about Christian social action programmes?

The politics of poverty

- Why do you think evangelicals are more likely, compared to the general population, to think that the welfare budget is too low?
- What policies would you like to see to address poverty in the UK?
- Do you think churches have a role in engaging with politics and campaigning on specific policies?
- What poverty issues do you think Christians should be campaigning on?