

Sharing faith in a changing world



The Census

2011

vs

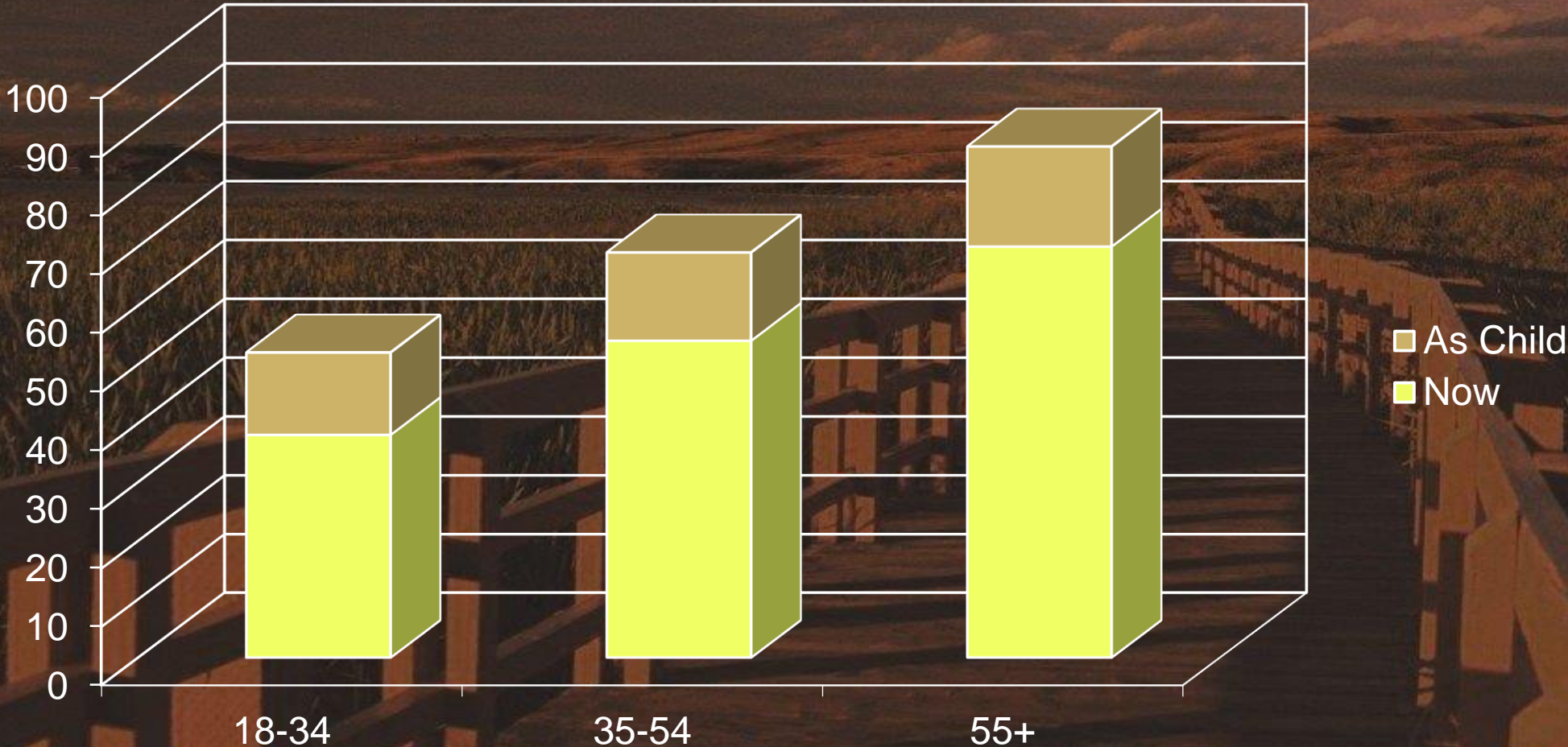
2001

- *Christian 59.3%*
 - *No Religion 25.1%*
 - Agnostic 0.06% (32,000)
 - Atheist 0.05% (29,000)
 - Humanist 0.03% (15,000)
 - *Muslim 4.8%*
 - *Hindu 1.5%*
 - *Sikh 0.8%*
 - *Jewish 0.5%*
 - *Buddhist 0.4%*
 - *Other 0.4%*
- *Christian 72.1%*
 - *No Religion 14.8%*
 - *Muslim 3.0%*
 - *Hindu 1.1%*
 - *Sikh 0.4%*
 - *Jewish 0.5%*
 - *Buddhist 0.3%*
 - *Other 0.3%*

Some details in Census 2011

- *No religion includes*
 - 176,000 Jedi Knights – (down from 390,000 in 2001) It also includes 6,750 who put Heavy Metal– where do these belong? Are these really non-religious or more likely to be Pagan or New Age?
- *Other Religions contains*
 - 44,500 New Religious Movement members 0.08% population – including 1,900 Satanists (1,500 2001)
 - 165,000 followers of New Spiritualities (if we don't include Jedis) 0.3% population – of which there are at least 80,000 (41,000 2001) but probably around 150,000 Pagans and perhaps as many as 250,000 - Baptists equal around 150,000 and Methodists 220,000

Christian Affiliation BRIN 2011



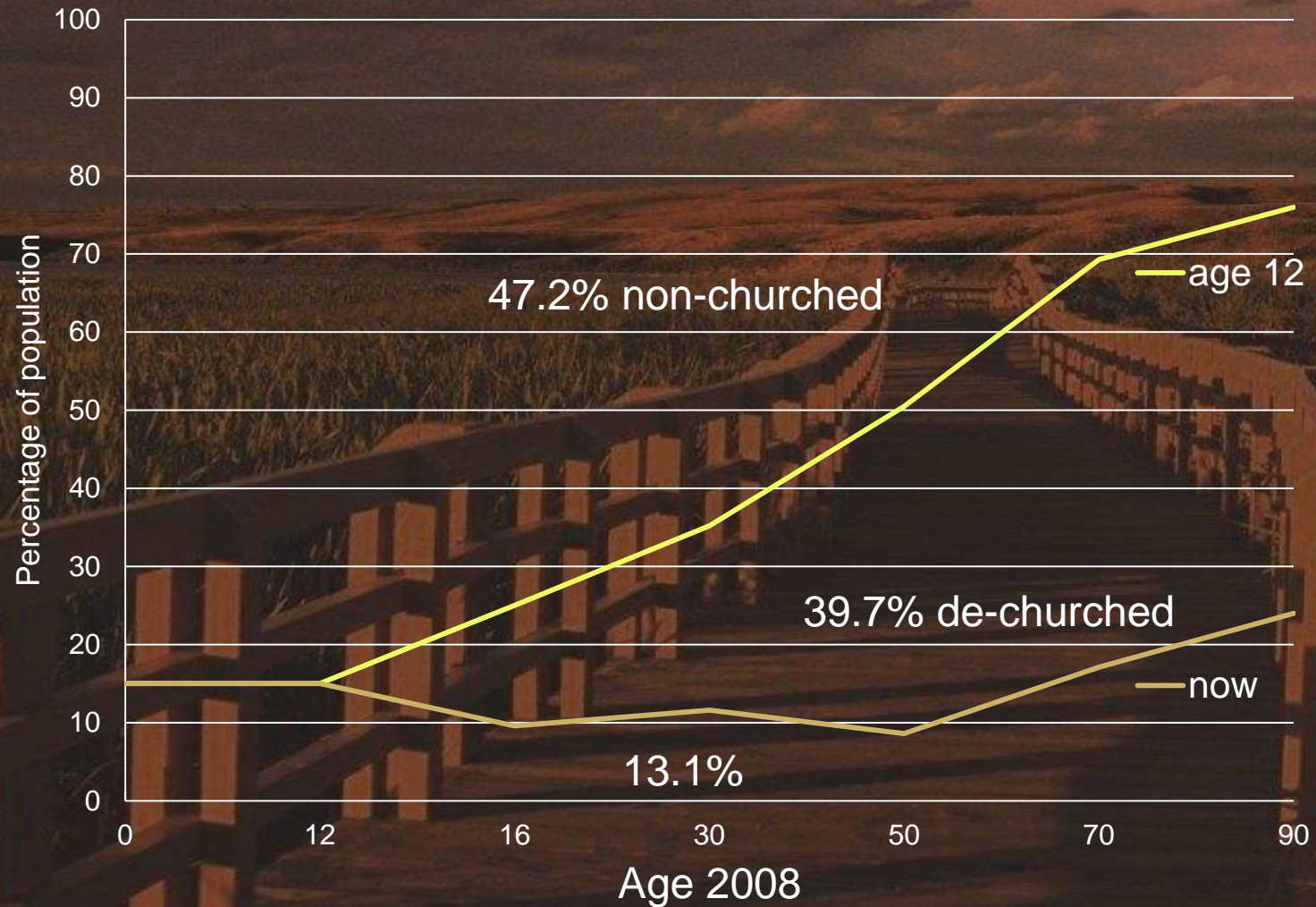
Age 2011

Church attendance weekly 2008 EVS

76% of New Christians Come from 40% De-Churched

finding faith today 1992

This section of the population is older and decreasing over time



The local goes global



- *The internet-global communication in place of print*
 - No regulation of access or content (with some censorship)
 - Many empowered but some have no access
- *Media a global phenomenon*
 - Everywhere is in your living room
 - You may know more about what is happening in Africa than at the end of your street
 - Our choices become everyone's business – global tensions in the church
- *The internet now a major source of spirituality and exploration of faith*

The global becomes local



Postmodernity ?

Modernity

to

postmodernity

t
r
u
t
h
s
a
r
e
c
o
n
s
t
r
u
c
t
e
d

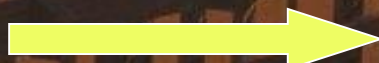
t
r
u
t
h
s
a
r
e
c
o
n
s
t
r
u
c
t
e
d



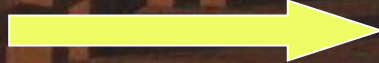
I tell my story



I choose my beliefs

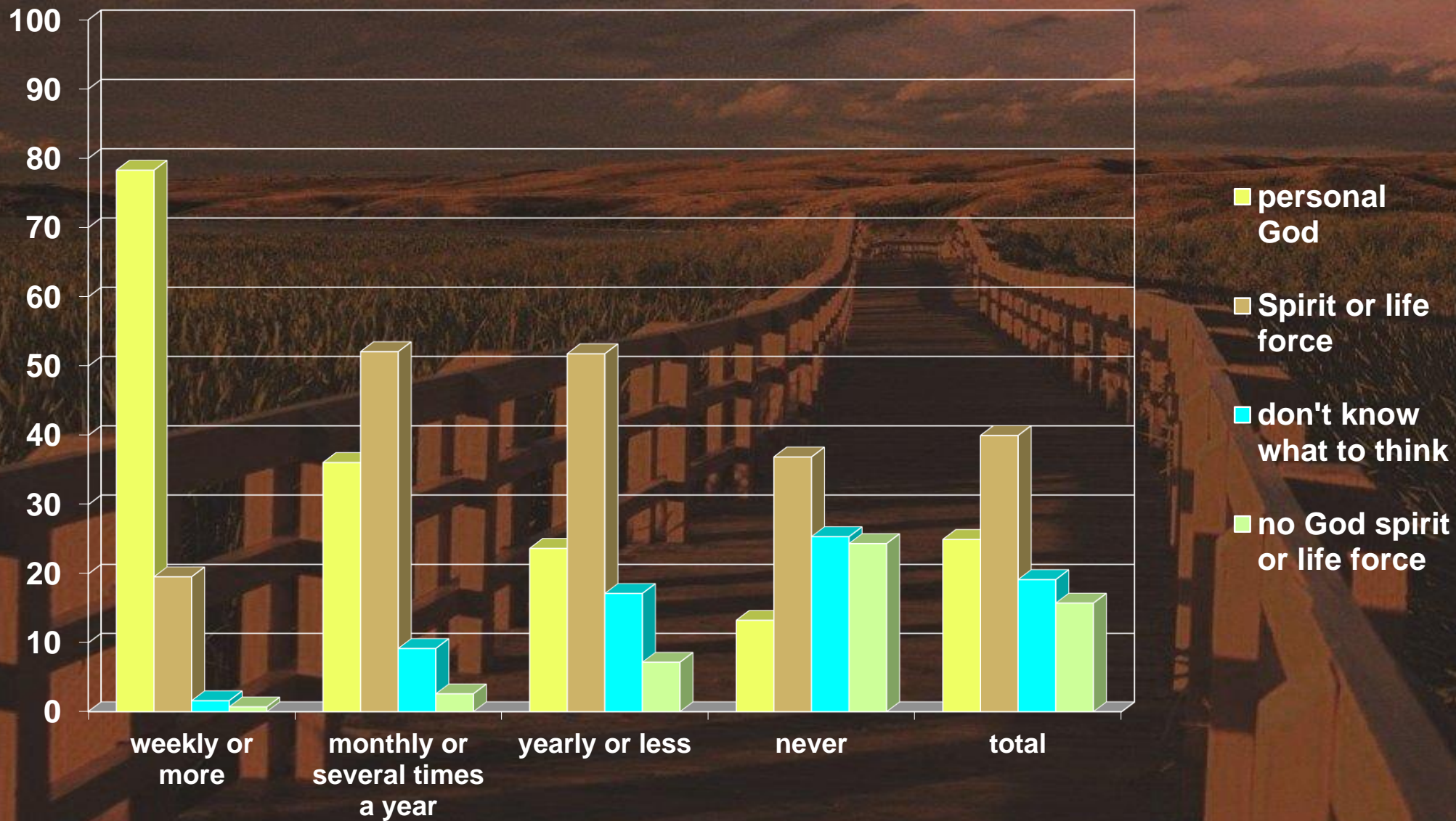


I buy my identity

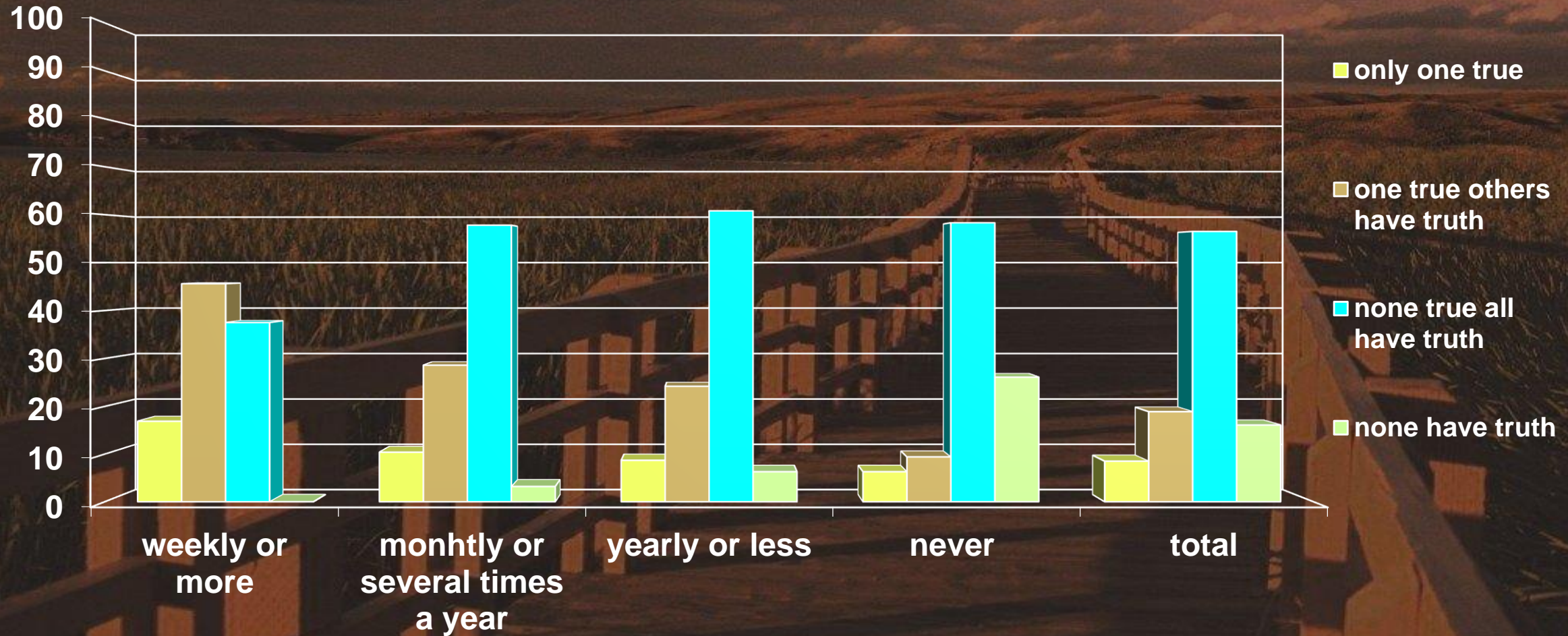


**The logic of
consumerism**

Belief in God? by church attendance EVS 2008

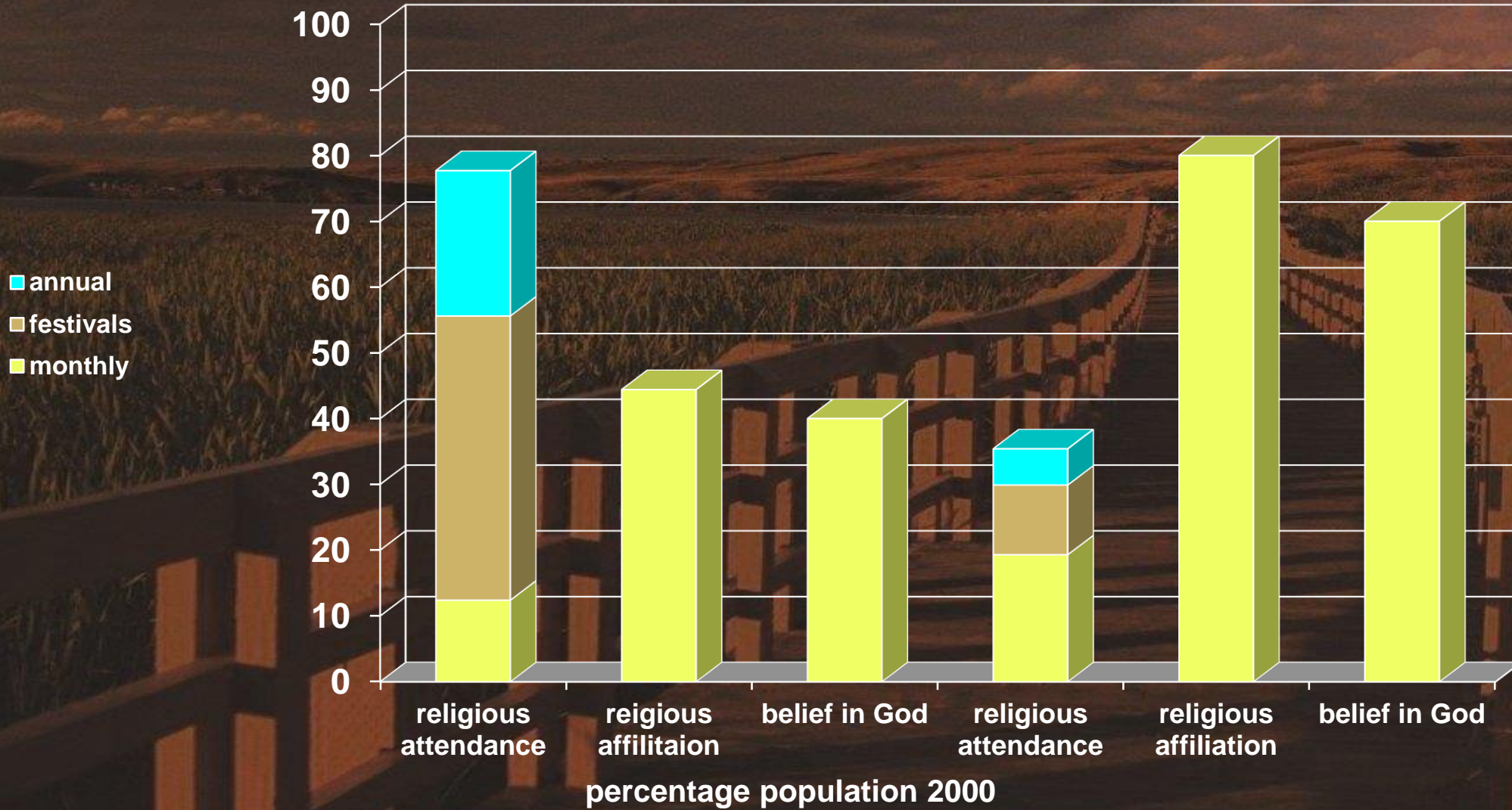


Truth in religion? by church attendance EVS 2008

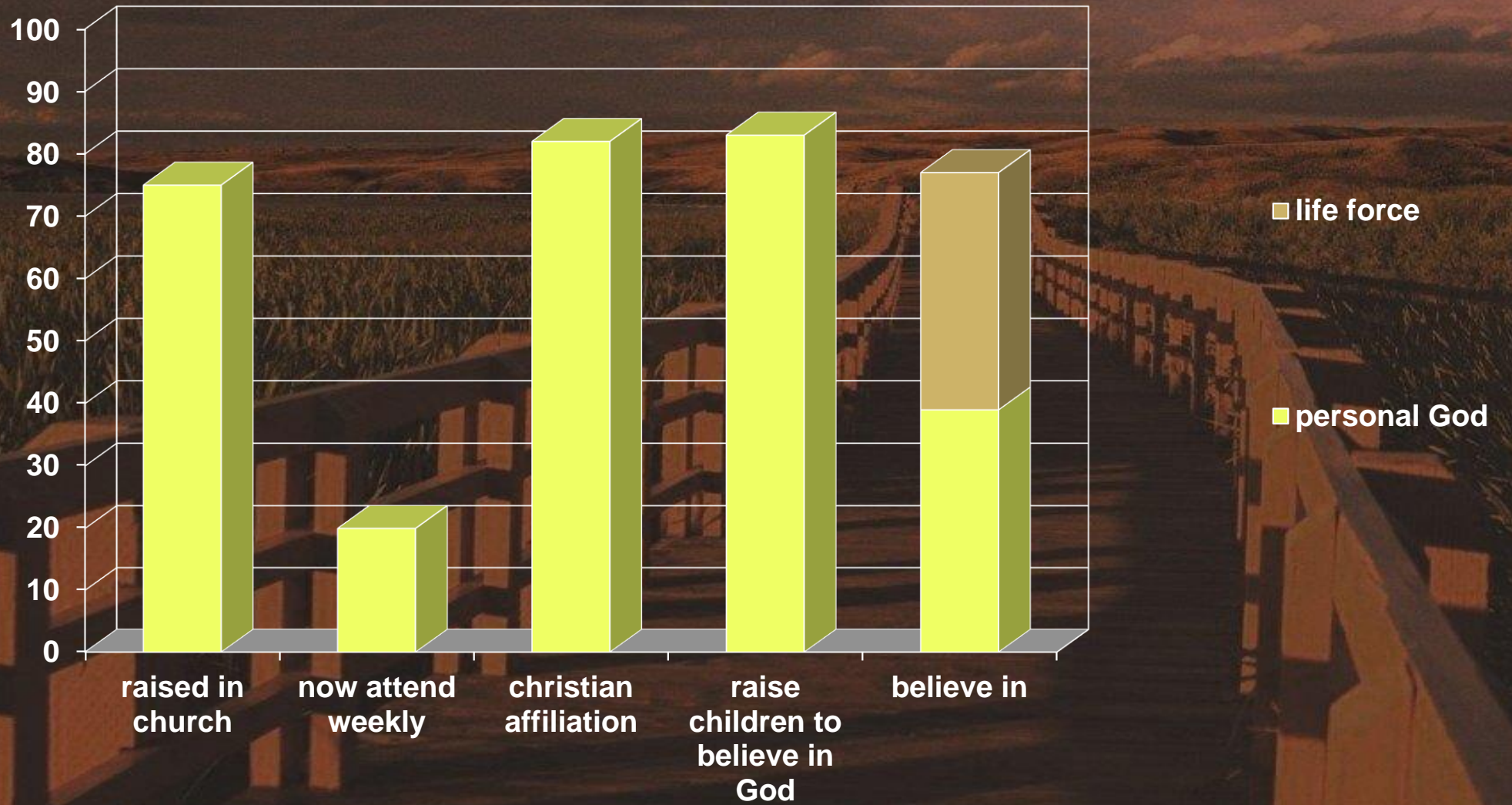


Japan

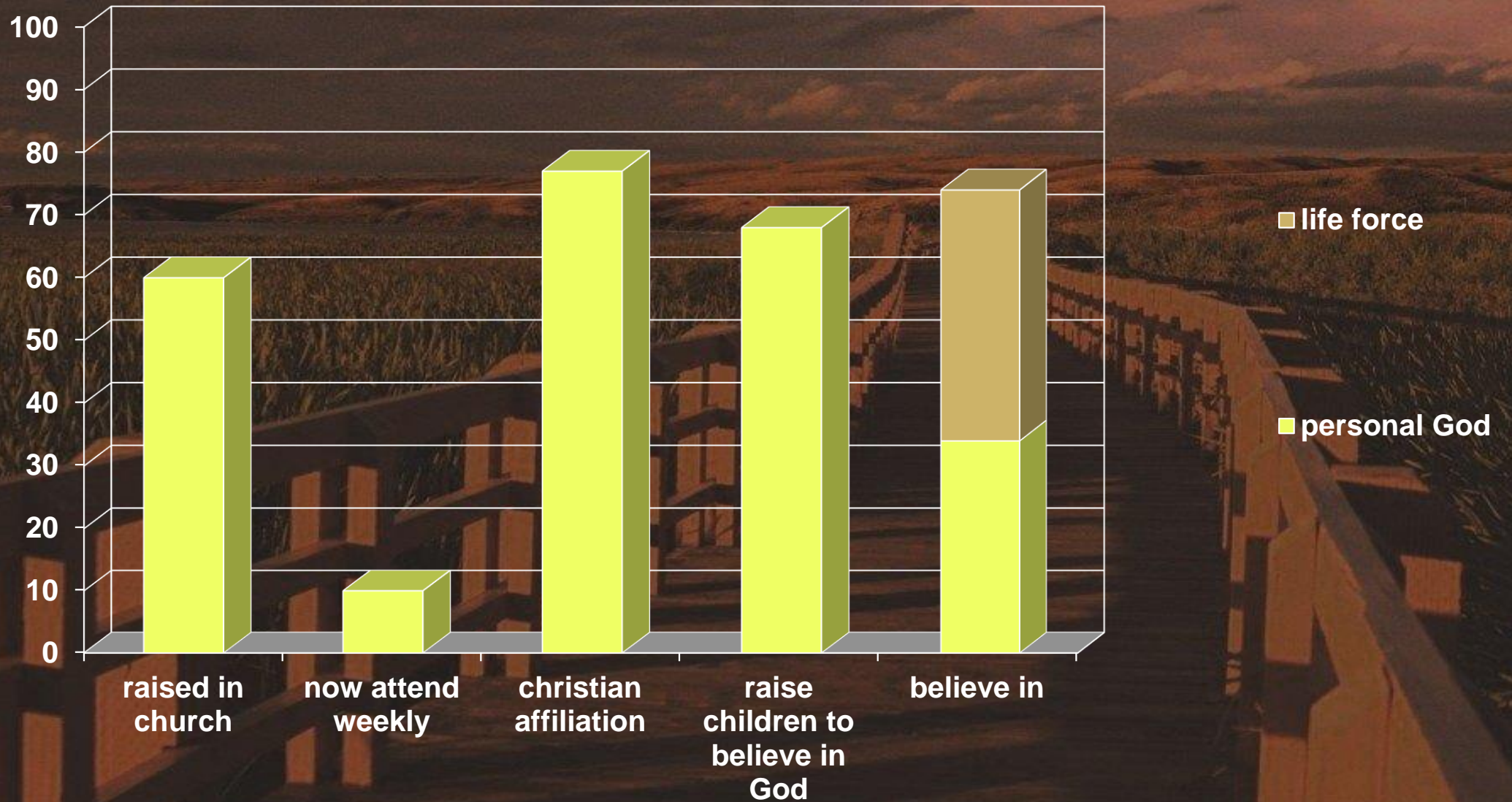
Britain



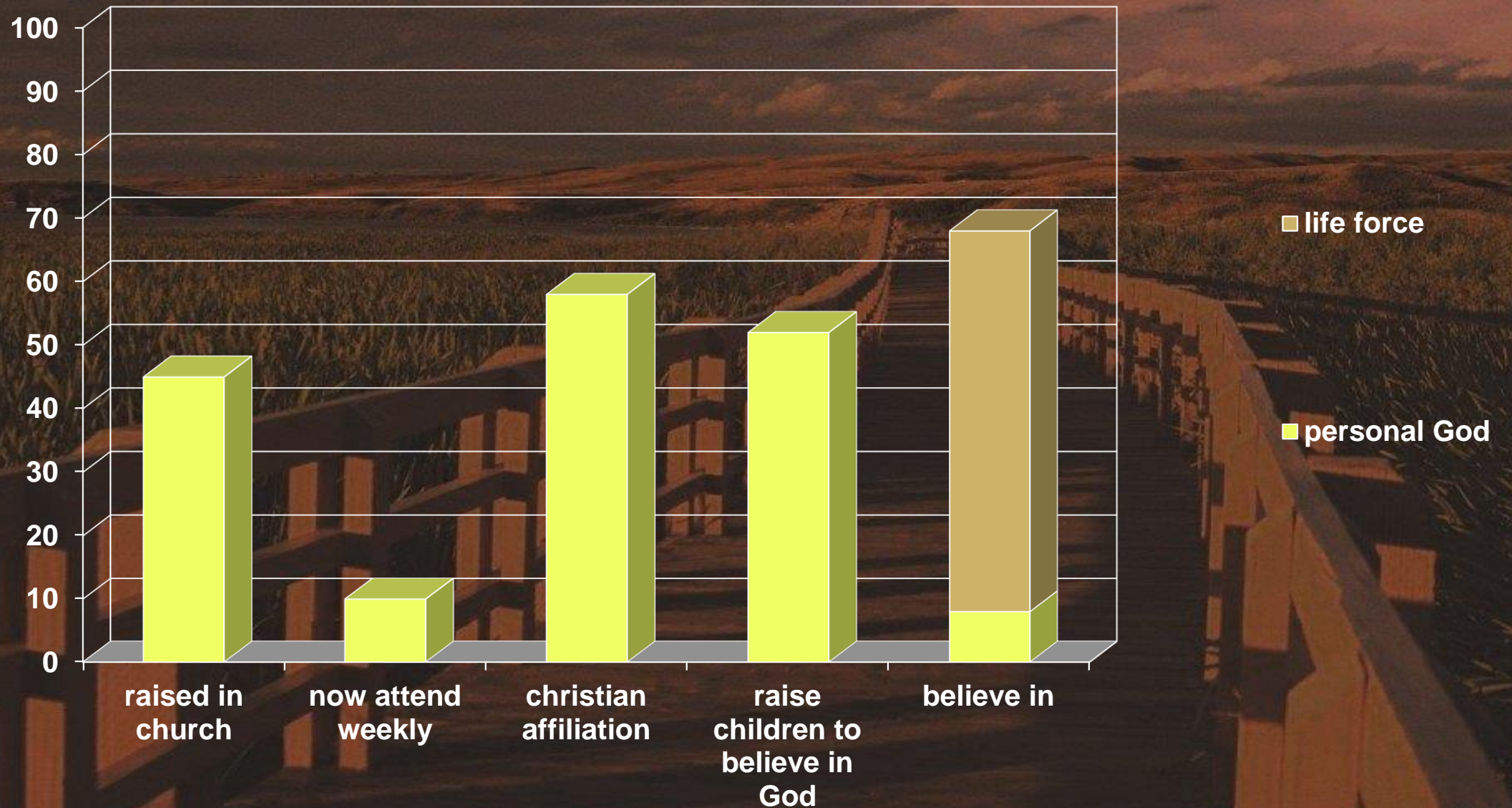
Builders (born 20s+30s) in 2008



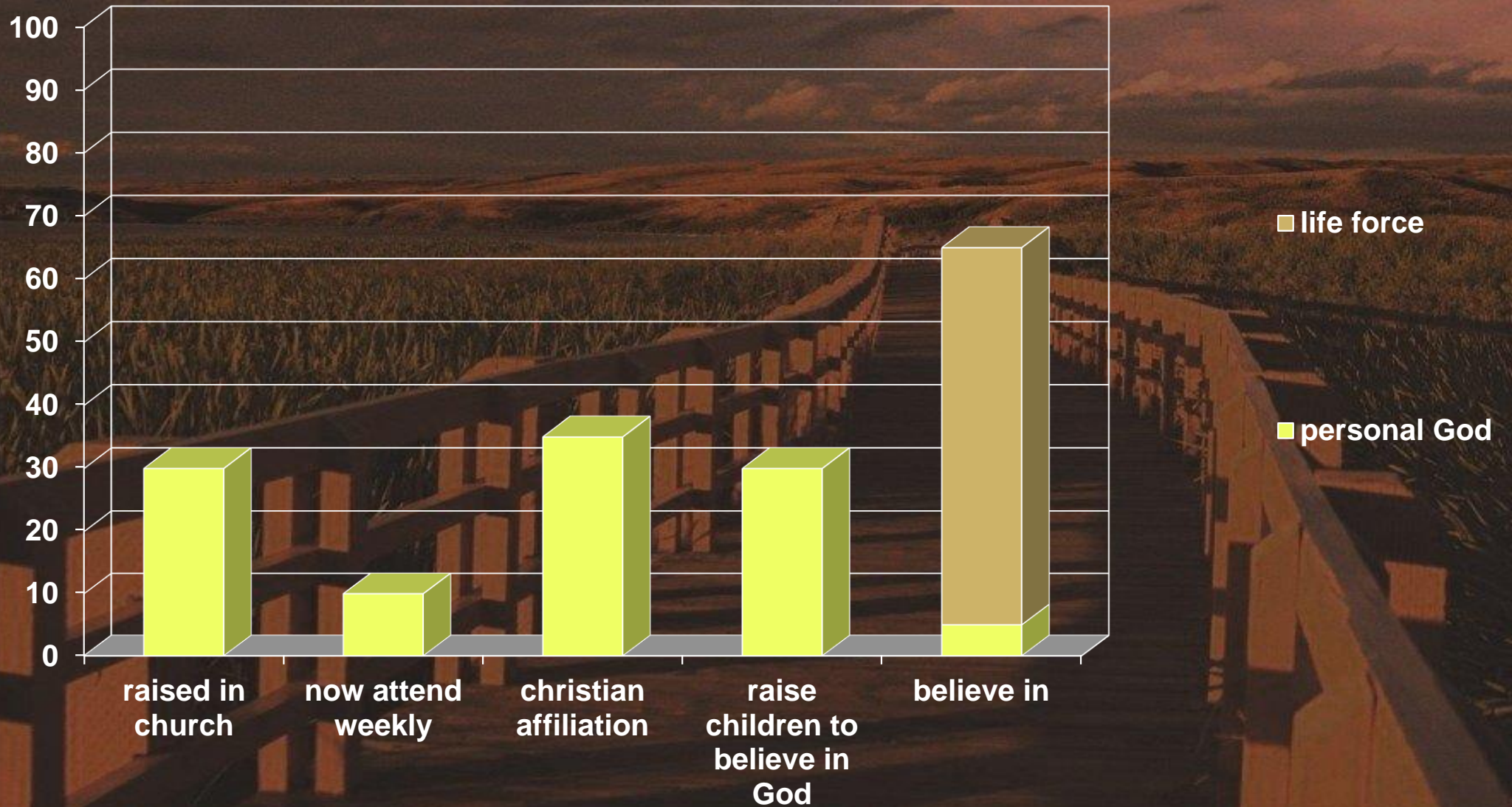
Boomers (born 40s+50s) in 2005



Gen-Xers (born 60s+70s) in 2005



Gen-Yers (born 80s+90s) in 2018?



Post- Secularism?



- *Post-modernity - multi-faith in a post-secular age*
 - Post-modern move from truth as fact to truth as experience - From universal truth to true for me may be different to true for you.
 - Rejection of objectivity for subjectivity
 - Personal belief re-enters the public square
 - Any and every belief All are equally unprovable
 - All of this much to the annoyance of Richard Dawkins.....
 - and Christians?
 - Religion once more on the agenda but any religion with no way back to Christendomindeed is Christianity disadvantaged compared to the alternatives?

The New Tribes of Britain

- *The Postmodern cultural elite*
 - Advertising, gaming, social networking, reality TV, theoretical physics, film making, popular music, multi-culturalism
- *The New Spiritualities*
 - From Pagan roots – ecology, spirits in nature, communal ritual, feminine deity. To New Age roots – eastern mysticism, personal growth and well being, pic 'n' mix from all religions
- *Life to the Max*
 - Clubbing, recreational drugs, binge drinking, foreign travel, the latest gadgets, serial monogamy, cosmetic surgery, celebrity status, spending the children's inheritance

The New Tribes of Britain

- *Middle Britain*
 - Family and friends, working parents raising families, tuition fees, fear for the future generations, keeping up with the joneses
- *The single person household*
 - product of falling birth rates and family breakdowns, need for community and identity, can be part of any other group
- *Cultural sub-groups*
 - Ethnic groups from outside Britain, youth sub cultures
- *The under-class*
 - Desperate poor, chronically sick or disabled, addicts, sex workers, petty criminals, those in the care system. Sold visions they can't aspire to, lack of hope, a culture of getting by, for some pride in small things and fierce loyalty to the culture

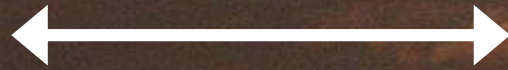
The New Tribes of Britain

- *Reasserting British identity*
 - Cut immigration, minorities should adopt British values and culture, reasserting the countries Christian tradition, buy British
- *Religious traditionalists*
 - Society to be run on religious values, sacred texts as source of truth, public marking of religious identity, traditional views on family, gender and sexuality
- *The New Atheists*
 - Science and reason the source of truth, society to be run on secular values, religion not only wrong but dangerous, post-modernism and New Spirituality as bad as religion, academics and high culture, Religious high art admired

The New Tribes of Britain

Postmodern

- Culture formers
- New Spiritualities
- Life to the Max



- Middle Britain
- Single person
- Sub culture groups
- Under class

Traditionalist

- British Identity
- Religious traditionalists
- New Atheists

What is the Gospel for each tribe

What kind of church would potentially welcome each tribe?

Words chosen by UK adults to describe Jesus

All UK adults	18-34 year olds	Practising Christians	Non-Practising Christian
Spiritual, 49%	Spiritual, 41%	Loving, 93%	Loving, 59%
Loving, 48%	Loving, 41%	Wise, 88%	Spiritual, 58%
Peaceful, 47%	Leader, 40%	Inspirational, 88%	Peaceful, 55%

When Christians talk about their faith in Jesus 1 in 5 of UK non-Christians they talk to are open to an experience or encounter with Jesus. But 60% don't want to know more.

Positive Experiences	Negative Experiences
Wanted to know more about Jesus Christ, 18%	60%, Did not want to know more about Jesus Christ
Open to an experience or encounter with Jesus, 20%	49%, Not open to an experience or encounter with Jesus
Felt sad that I did not share their faith, 16%	43%, Felt glad that I did not share their faith
Felt more positive towards Jesus Christ, 22%	30%, Felt more negative towards Jesus Christ
Felt closer to the person in question, 27%	29%, Felt less close to the person in question
Felt comfortable, 51%	33%, Felt uncomfortable

Christendom Bereavement

- *Shock*
 - How could this happen? Paralysis, going through the motions
- *Denial*
 - Britain is still a Christian country, honest. Revival is round the corner. People will come back if we just wait.
- *Anger*
 - Against secularists, against Christians who have ‘betrayed us’, against failures of church and its leadership
- *Bargaining*
 - If only we pray hard enough, this is the programme that will turn it all around
- *Grief*
 - How can we sing the lord’s song in this foreign land? All that has been achieved fading, nostalgia for Christendom as something lost
- *acceptance*

Mission: shift to Christendom

- *Early Church incarnate in local culture*
 - Greek Church - Paul uses poetry to Zeus
 - Roman Church - Jesus as Orpheus
 - Coptic Church - the image of Isis becomes Mary
 - Celtic Church - Jesus the Druid (Columba)
 - Germanic Church - the Heiland
- *Christendom one faith one empire*
 - The Saxon Church and the war band
 - Synod of Whitby - the date of Easter; monks hair
 - Mission ends within empire,
 - becomes conquest beyond it
- *Modernity evangelism recovered in Christendom*
 - Individuals called to belief in a Christian country

Learning from foreign mission

- *‘Do not try to call them back to where they were,*
- *and do not try to call them to where you are, beautiful as that place may seem to you.*
- *You must have the courage to go with them to a place neither you nor they have been before.’*

Vincent Donovan – ‘Christianity re-discovered’ from the preface to the second edition SCM 2001

- *Our situation more like that of St Paul moving from mission to Jews who shared his religious background to Gentiles who did not – or of the Celtic Missionaries in a Pagan country*

Double listening



Two ears one mouth
Use accordingly in mission



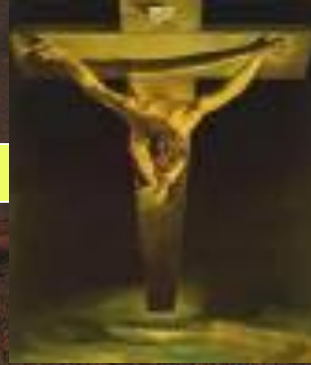
To the Mission Context

To the essence of
the Christian
Inheritance

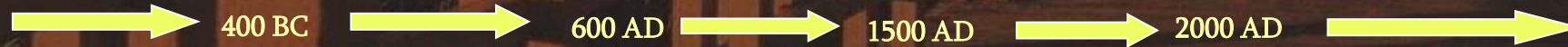


Failure to enter the other persons world leaves us like
the tourists who keep speaking louder in their own
language

A new Reformation?



Eternal Gospel



Judaism

Early
Church

Christendom

Reformation

?

Changing expression – David Bosch ‘Transforming Mission’

Consumer Christianity?



A Gospel kernel or a seed packet?

- *Seed message that brings forth life*
- *What is that message?*
- *Does it work in all situations?*
- *Or a seed packet that plants a whole garden*
- *A set order or adaptable?*



Restoring the whole story of salvation



creation



sin



salvation



New creation

← *Individuals saved* →

← *Creation saved* →

The transformation of people linked to the transformation of creation

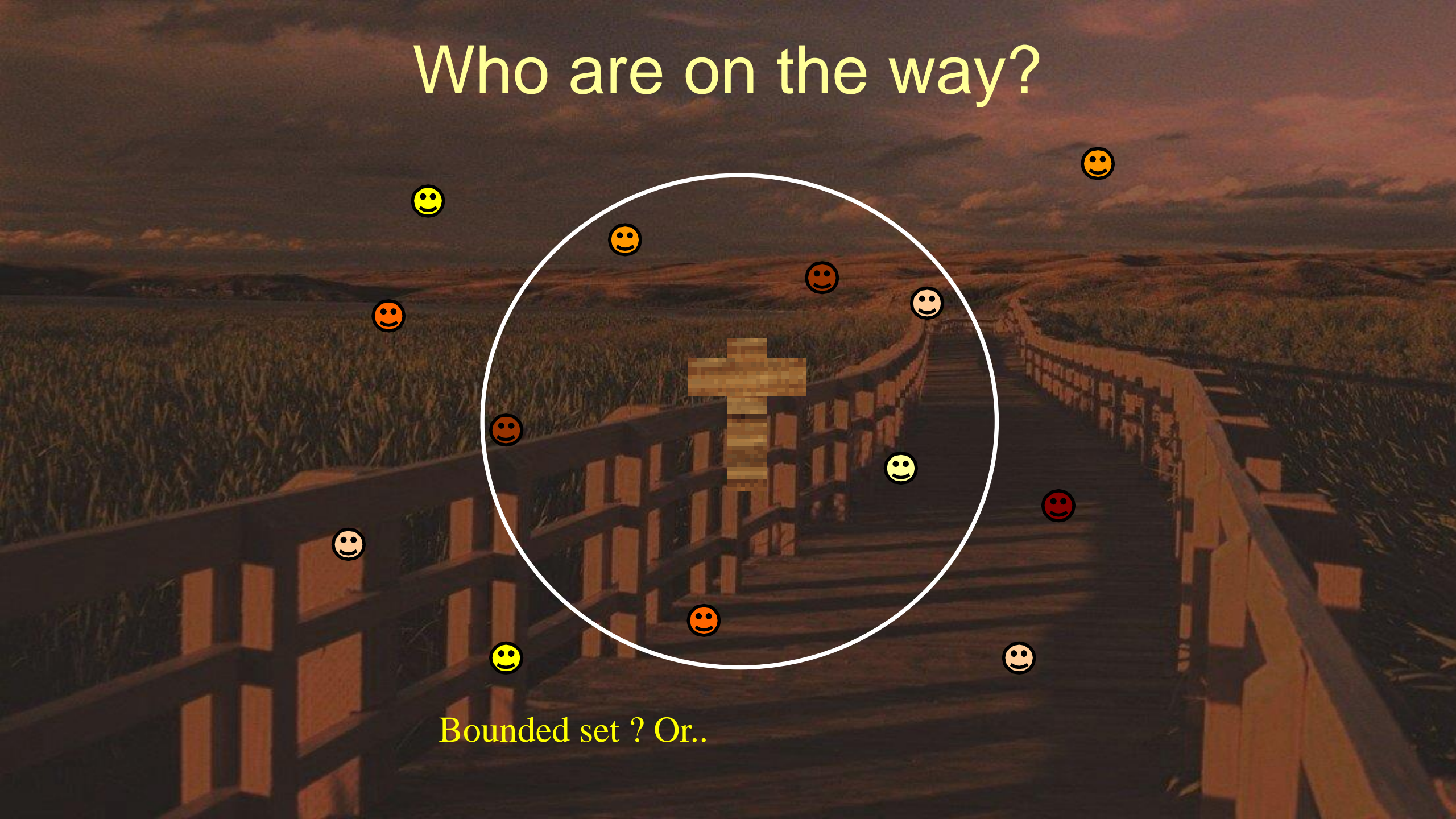
– Romans 8, 2 Cor 5

Three levels of mission community



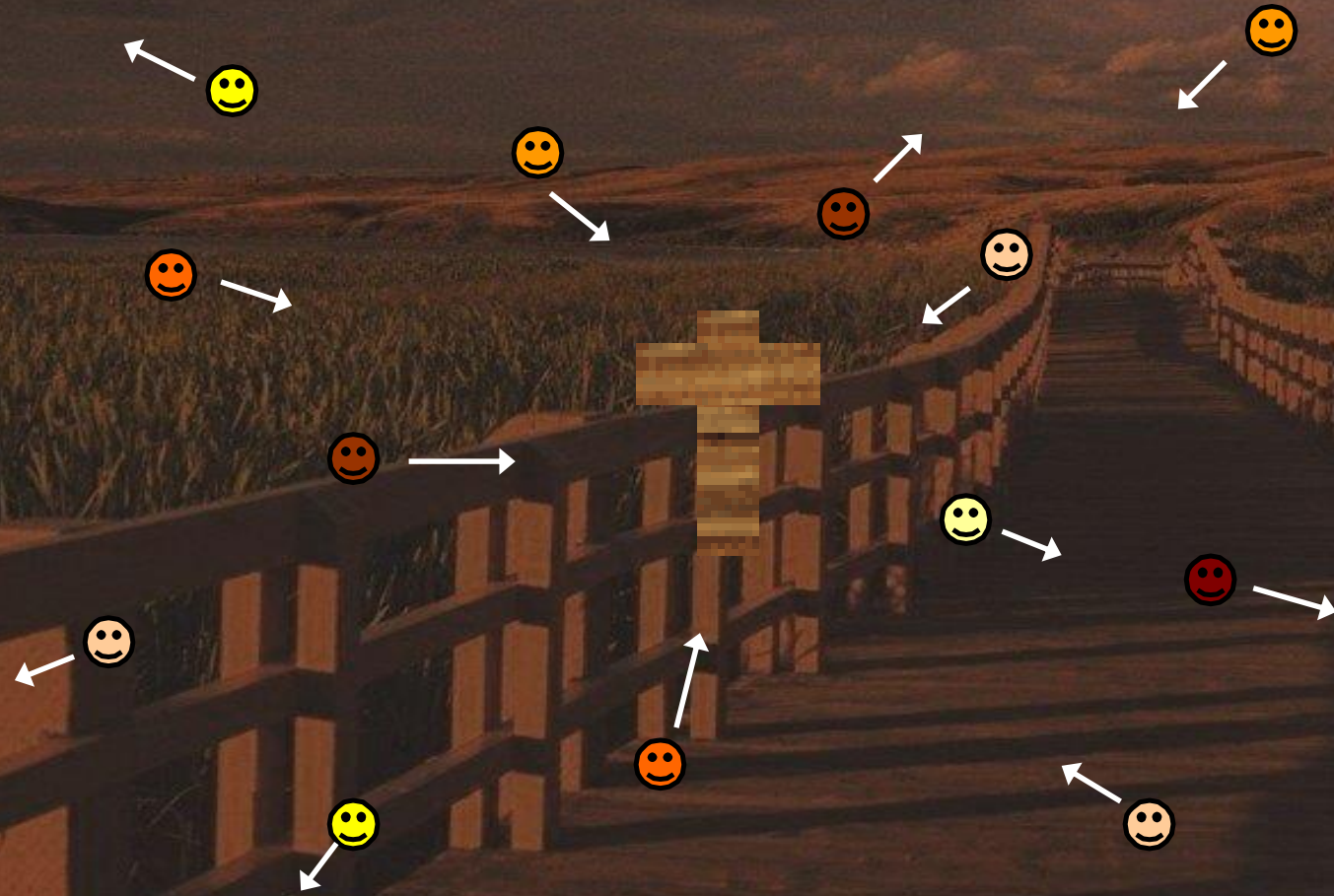
Christian community

Who are on the way?



Bounded set ? Or..

Who are on the way?



Bounded set ? Or.....Centred Set?

Who are on the way?



Bounded set ? Or.....Centred Set?

Revisiting the stories that made us

- *The emerging postmodern culture promotes story as re-enchantment.*
 - Facts are told from a perspective, as is history but our stories are with listening to
 - Personally testimony honestly shared is valued
 - New and old mythologies give meaning to life
- *The new spiritualities – especially Paganism – weave meaning from story – what stories do Christians need to rediscover and re-imagine?*
 - UK: Arthur and Glastonbury – Patrick and the Celtic saints. But not colonial church or the crusades...
 - But be careful of the national identity being spoken of!

Expressing faith in fresh ways

- *Re-imagined language*
 - Humble apologetics
 - Avoiding religious jargon – sin, redemption, salvation, Eucharist.... But finding ways to speak afresh of what they mean
 - God talk and issues of power and gender
 - Parables and ambiguous evangelism
- *Re-imagined Church*
 - Vulnerability and the lessons of Jesus - sending out the disciples as guests – refusing the way of power
 - Incarnation within our different cultures leading to many expressions with shared family likeness
 - Going to where people are not expecting them to come to us
 - A place for both the traditional and the new – City centre, resource churches and good local churches along with fresh expressions





Forest Church



Welcome to a site made for and by people exploring a journey in community with the Mystic Christ towards personal transformation and the renewal of creation.



Urban Springtime and the element of Air
This is the third in a series of articles on exploring earth-centred... [more](#)



Sensio Divina
The contemplative exercise of Lectio Divina, or Divine Reading,... [more](#)



Devising 'rituals' for Mid Wales Forest Church.
Four times a year, close to the sun festivals of solstice... [more](#)

Forest Church Tweets

[candradelemarec](#):
Mushrooming in the Forest with New Forest Forest Church [fb.me/7aV8hUFv3](#)
13 Oct 14

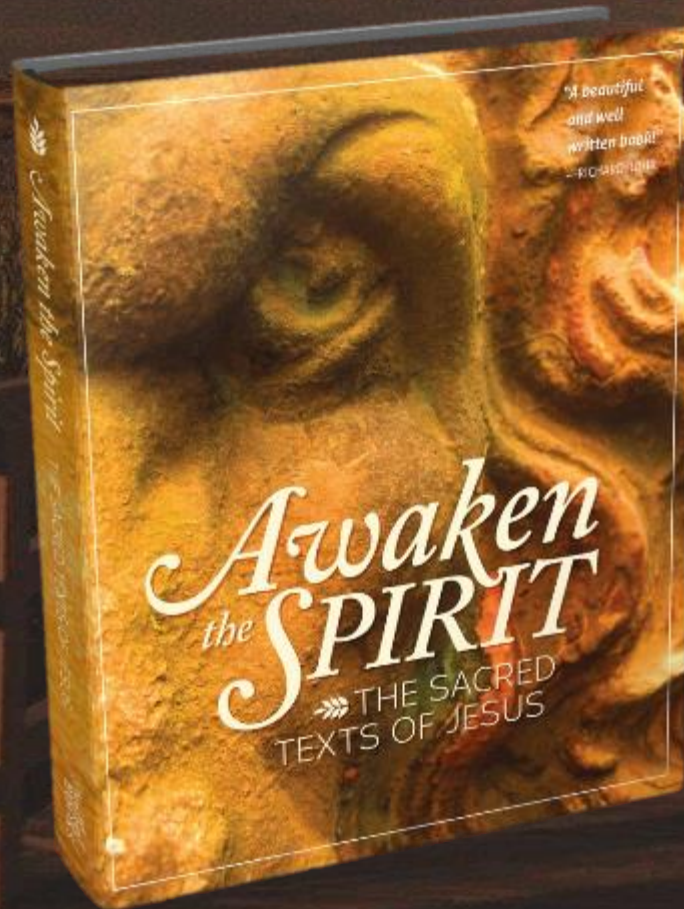
[fainamarita](#):
Forest church. #Ruissalo #Turku #Finland #forest #church #nature #marriage [pic.twitter.com/zjBrajMWS5](#)
13 Oct 14

[Rev_VY](#):
Had fun making an autumn nature mobile @SoulSpaceBD #forestchurch :-)
#funinthewoods <->
[pic.twitter.com/NG284mhHS](#)
28 Sep 14

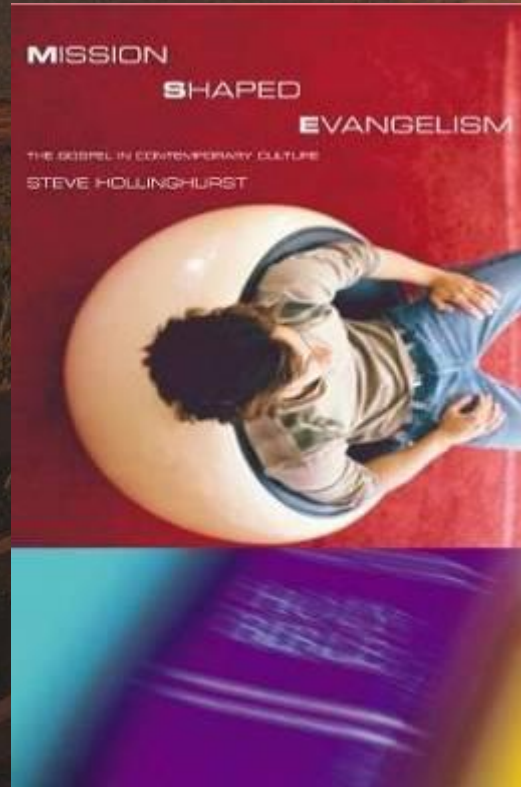
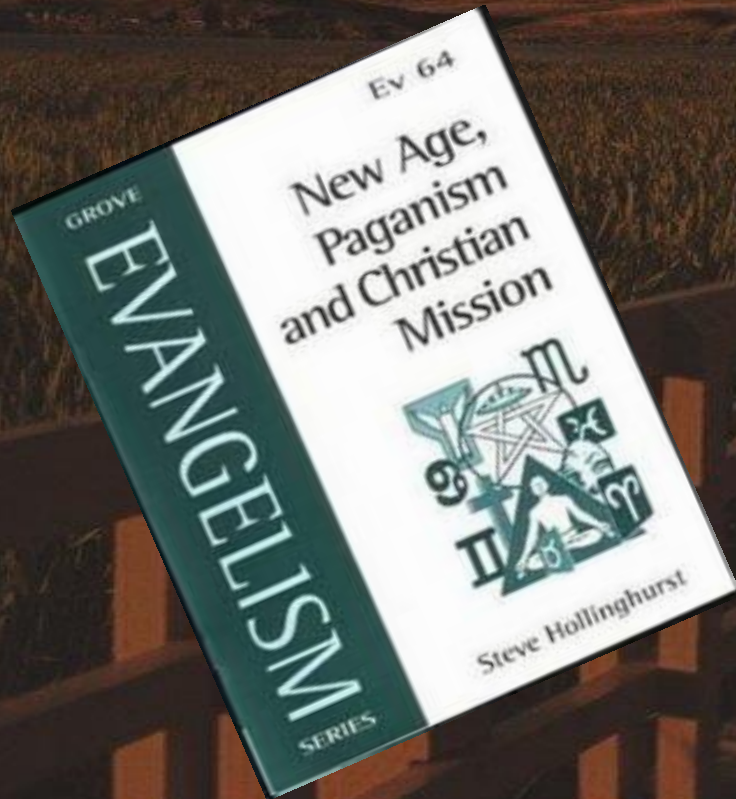
[Forest Church, find out more ...](#)



<http://awakenthespiritbook.com/> available also
from stevehollinghurst@hotmail.com



Resources



Christian mission is

- *Not getting people to Church*
but getting people to be Church
- *Not taking God to people*
but seeing what God is already doing in their lives
- *Not first about getting people into heaven*
but getting heaven into people
- *Not saving people from the world*
*but allowing God to transform them
as part of a plan to transform the world also*

**Your Kingdom come your will be done
on earth as it is in heaven**