

Perceptions of Jesus, Christians & Evangelism

Research Findings by Barna Group



THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND



in our villages, towns & cities



Research Study Overview

Answering the Big Questions

- ❑ What do UK adults know and believe about Jesus Christ?
- ❑ What do they really think of his followers?
- ❑ How often—if ever—do Christians talk about their faith in Jesus?
- ❑ And how do both Christians and non-Christians feel about those conversations?

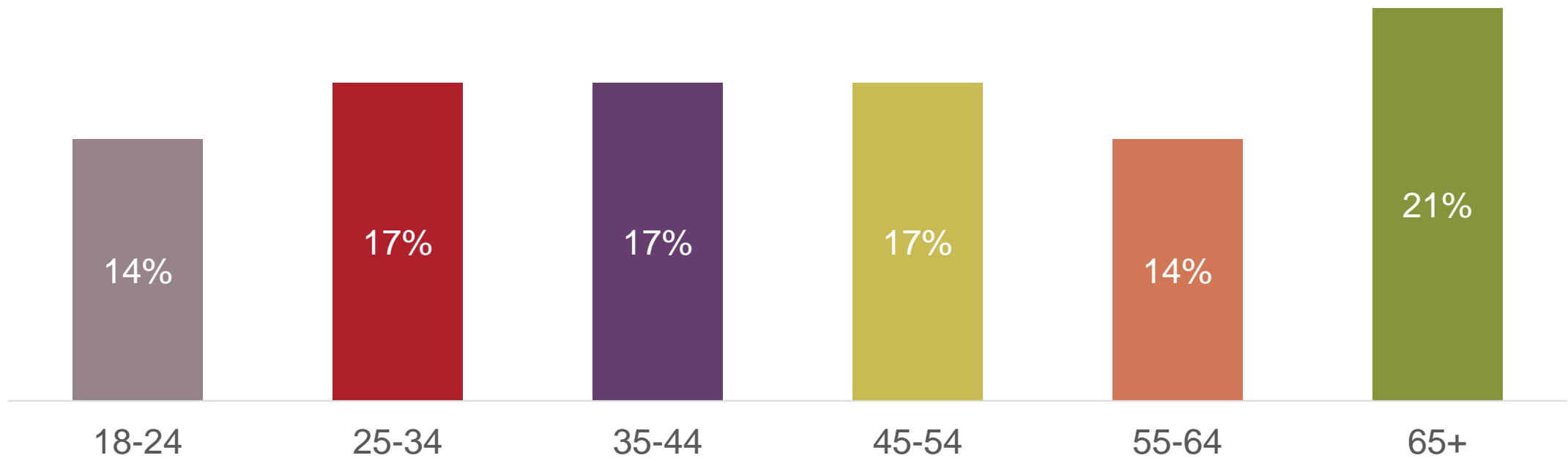
Research Study Overview

Data Collection Methodology

- ❑ A bespoke online survey among a nationally representative sample of 3,014 UK adults, plus an over sampling of 1,621 UK practising Christians.
 - Including 2,545 English adults and 1,592 English practising Christians
- ❑ The data were collected between the 12th and 29th July 2015 by ComRes.
- ❑ The national data were weighted to be representative of all UK adults aged 18+ by age, gender, region and socio-economic grade.
- ❑ The sample error on the national data is plus or minus 1.8 percent points at the 95% confidence level.
- ❑ The over sample data were weighted to be representative of all UK practising Christians by age, gender and denomination per the Church Census 2005.
- ❑ The sample error on the over sample data is plus or minus 2.4 percent points at the 95% confidence level.

Research Study Overview

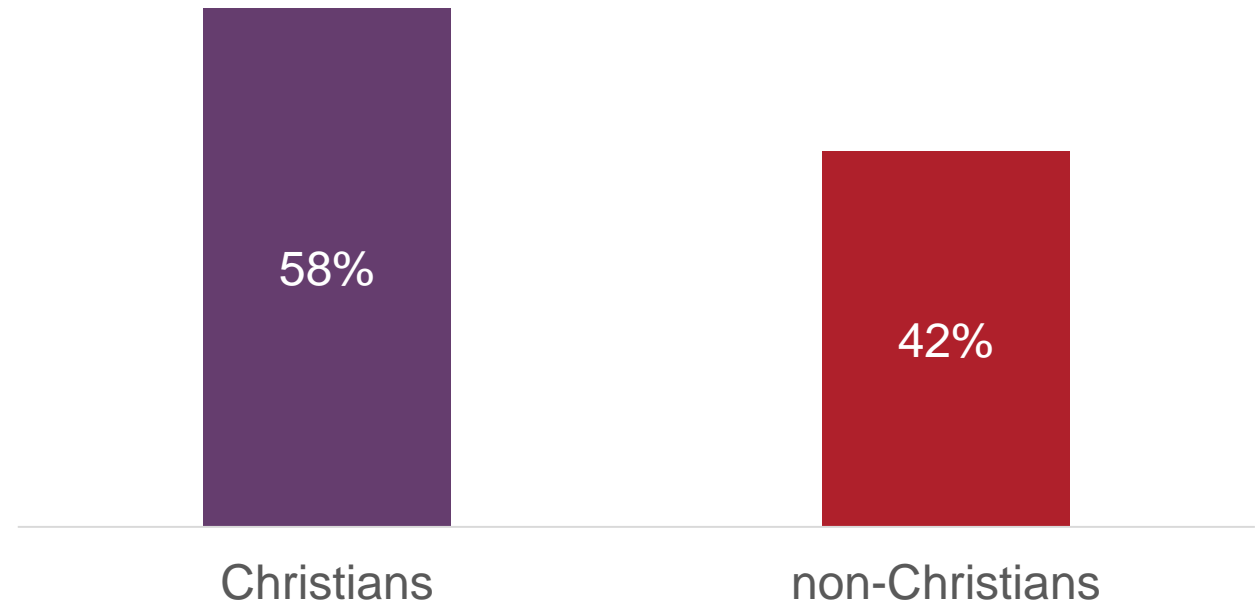
Defining the UK Audience – Age Groups



Research Study Overview

Defining the UK Audience

- ❑ **Self-identified Christians** say “Christian” best describes their religious faith (58%).
- ❑ **Non-Christians** chose any response other than “Christian” to best describe their religious faith (42%).

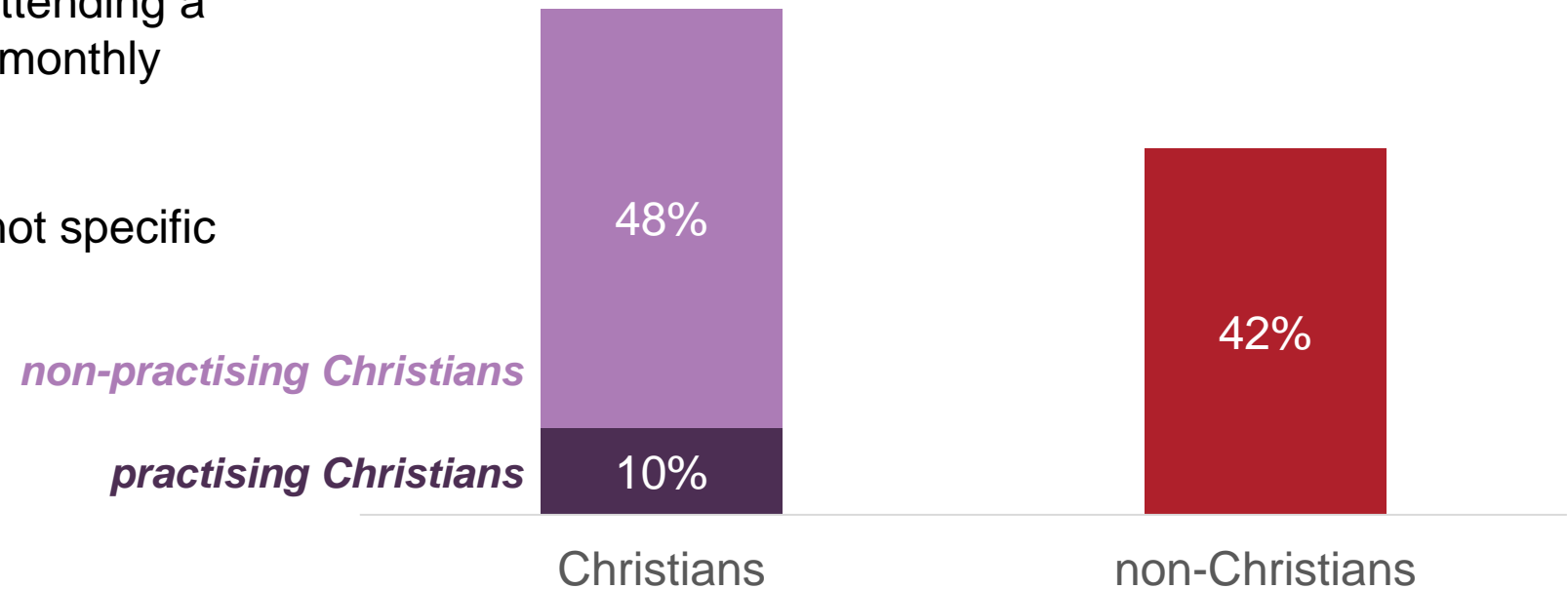


Research Study Overview

Defining the UK Audience

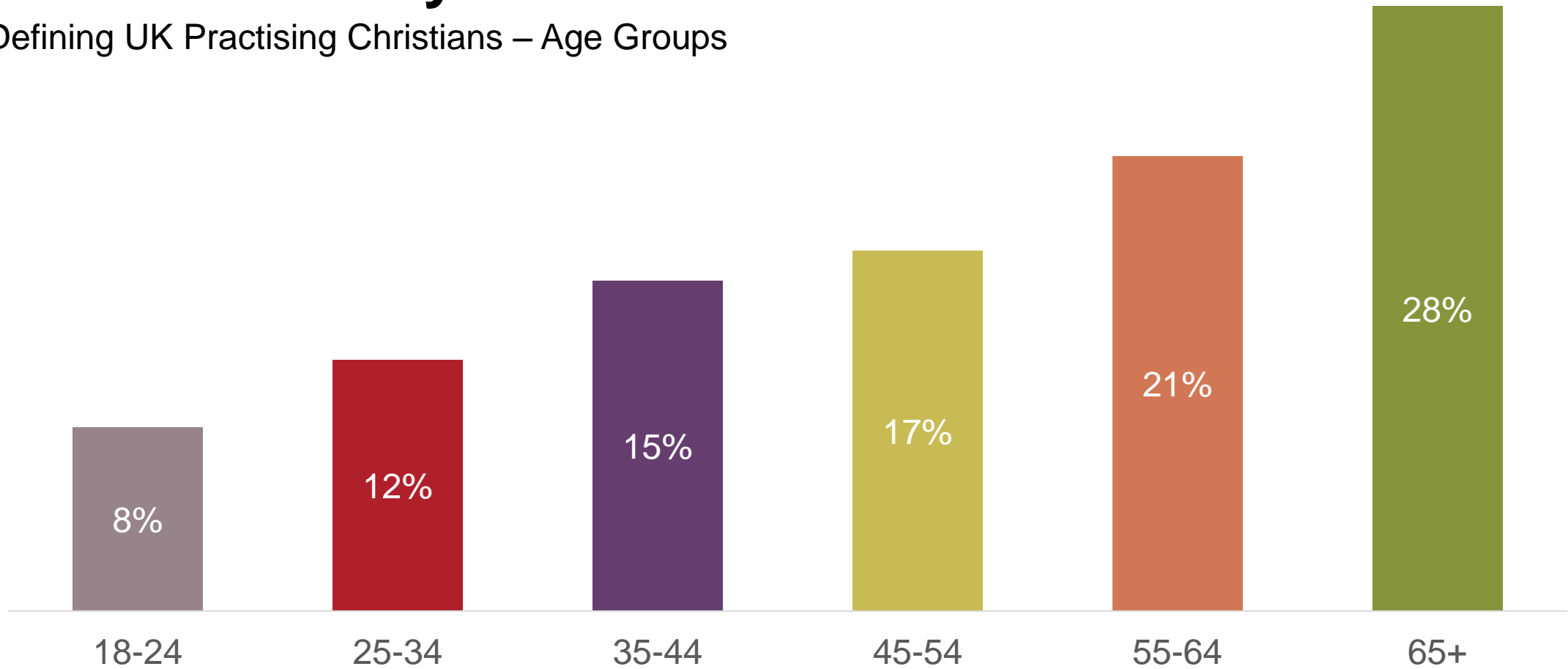
- ***practising Christians*** identify as “Christian” but also report praying, reading the Bible and attending a church service at least monthly (10%).

Practising Christian is not specific to any denomination.



Research Study Overview

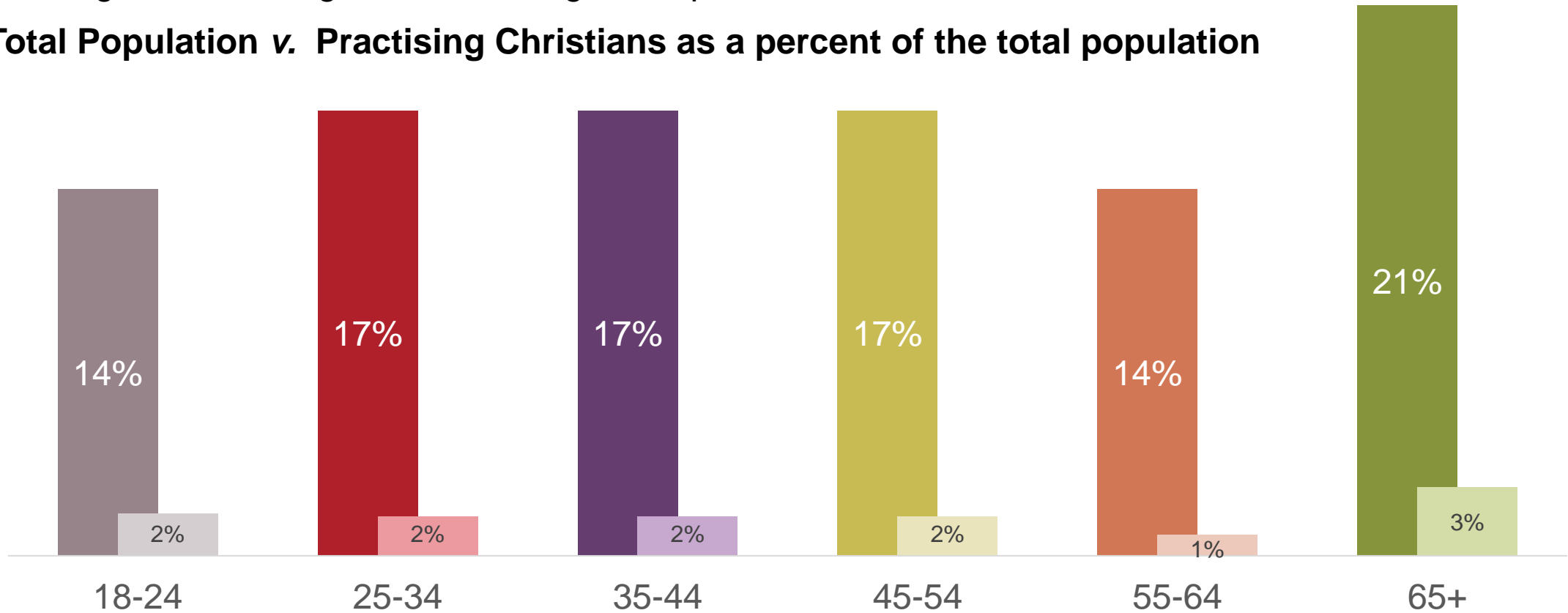
Defining UK Practising Christians – Age Groups



Research Study Overview

Defining UK Practising Christians – Age Groups

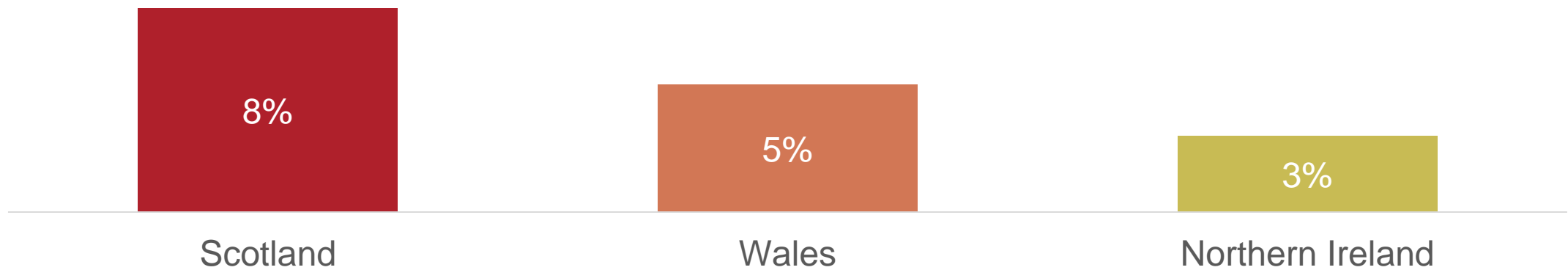
Total Population v. Practising Christians as a percent of the total population



**practising Christian per cents add to greater than 10% due to rounding.*

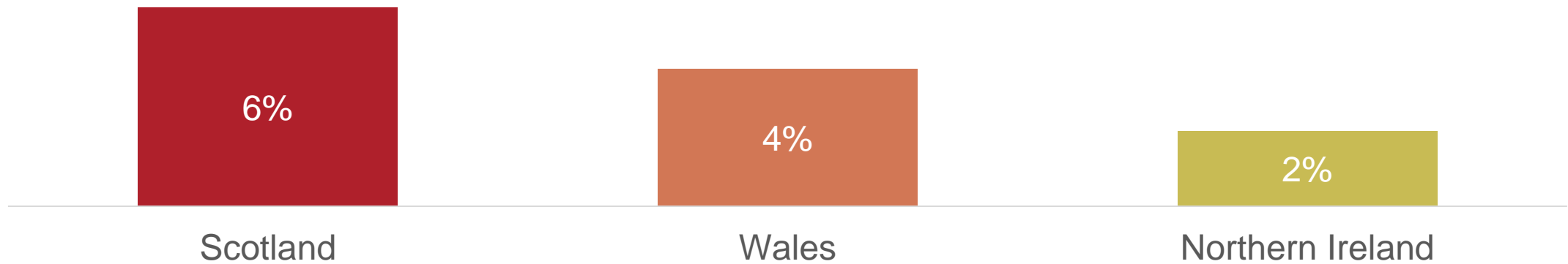
Research Study Overview

Defining the UK audience – The Nations



Research Study Overview

Defining UK Practising Christians – The Nations



Research Study Overview

Profile of UK Adults

Religious Identity	
Christian	58%
Atheist	12
Agnostic	9
Muslim	3
Hindu	2
Jewish	1
Buddhist	1
Sikh	*
Other	3
None of the above	11

Level of Education	UK	
	all UK adults	practising Christians
Secondary school, high school, NVQ levels 1 to 3, etc.	50%	18%
University degree or equivalent professional qualification, NVQ level 4, etc.	45	81
Still in full-time education	3	1
Don't know	1	1
Prefer not to say	1	*

* Indicates less than one-half of one percent.

Research Study Overview

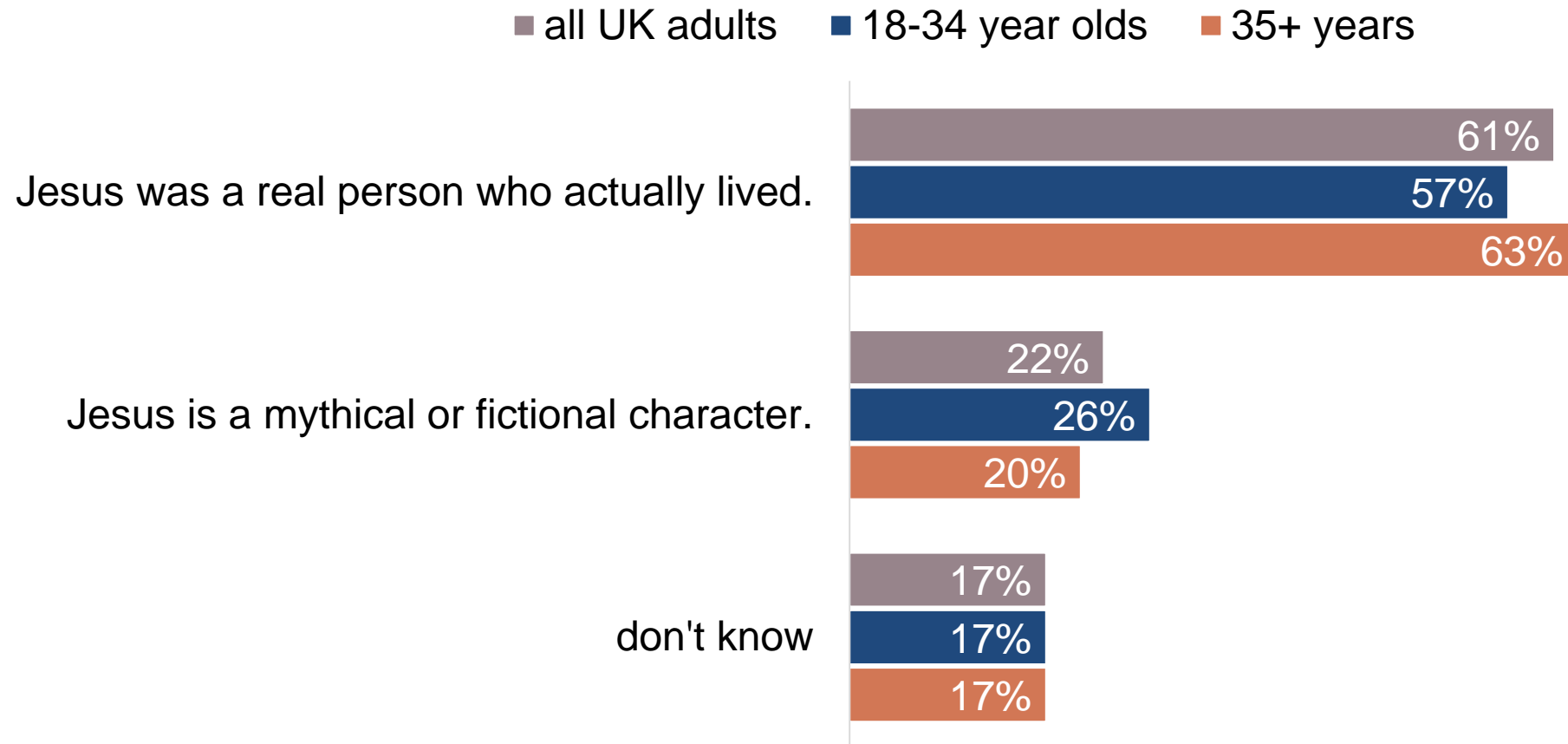
Profile of UK Adults

Industry / Career Sector	all UK adults	UK practising Christians
	Retired/not employed	32%
Retail	8	3
Education	7	21
Health	7	10
Professional, scientific & technical	5	7
Production	5	2
Construction	5	3
Transport & storage (inc. post)	4	1

	all UK adults	UK practising Christians
Arts, entertainment, recreation	4%	5%
Information & communication	4	6
Accommodation/food service	3	1
Finance & insurance	3	2
Business admin & support	3	4
Public admin & defence	3	4
Agriculture, forestry, fishing	1	1
Motor trades	1	*
Wholesale	1	1
Property	1	*

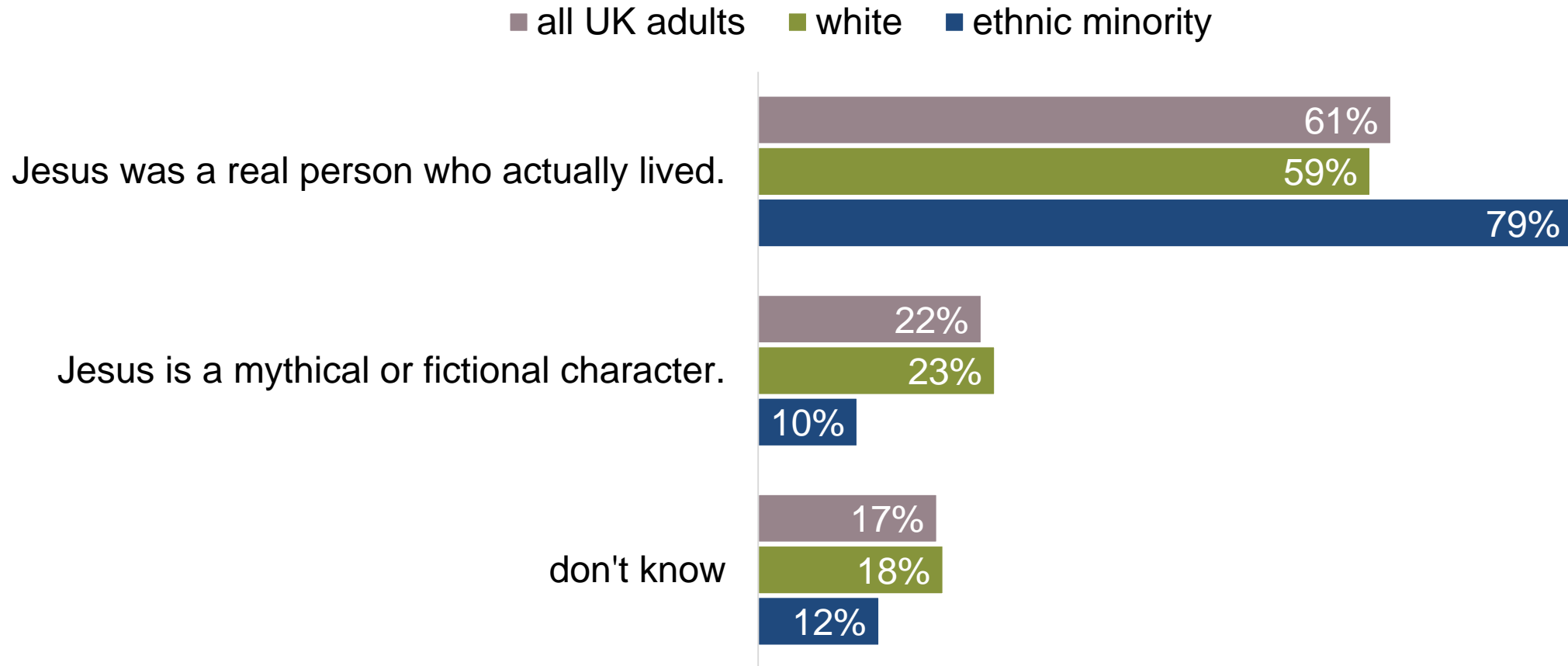
* Indicates less than one-half of one percent.

Six in 10 UK adults believe that Jesus was a real person.



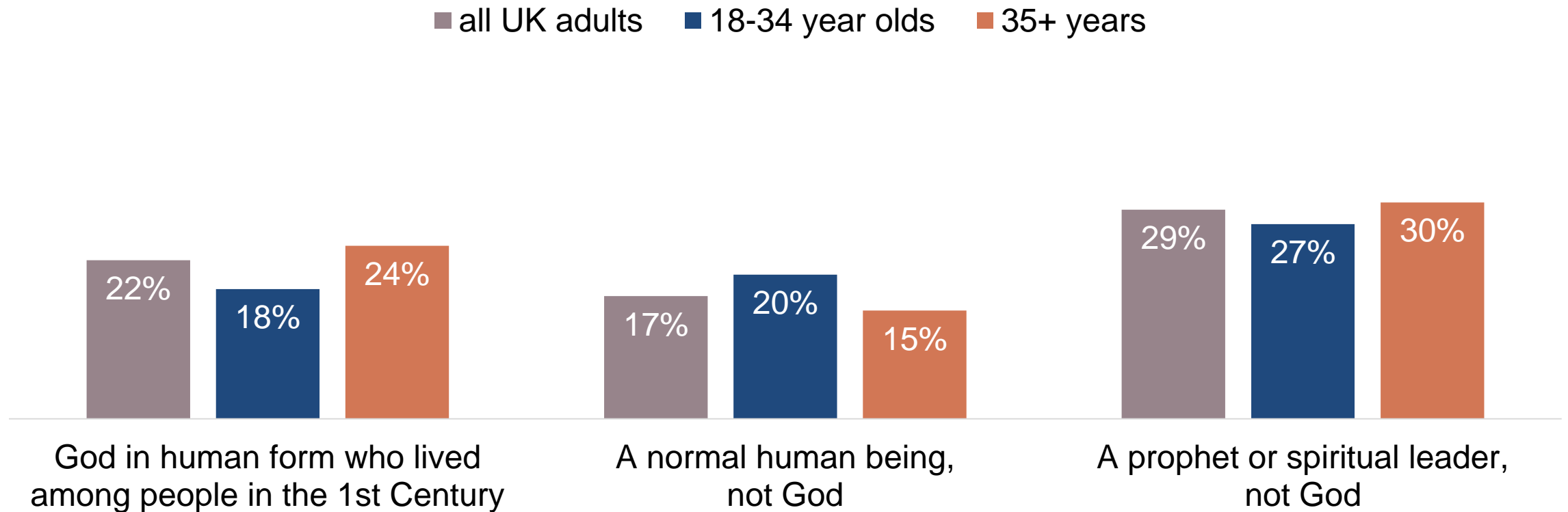
More than two out of every five UK adults who are not practising Christians (43%) either do not believe Jesus was a real person who actually lived or they are unsure if he was real or not.

Six in 10 UK adults believe that Jesus was a real person.

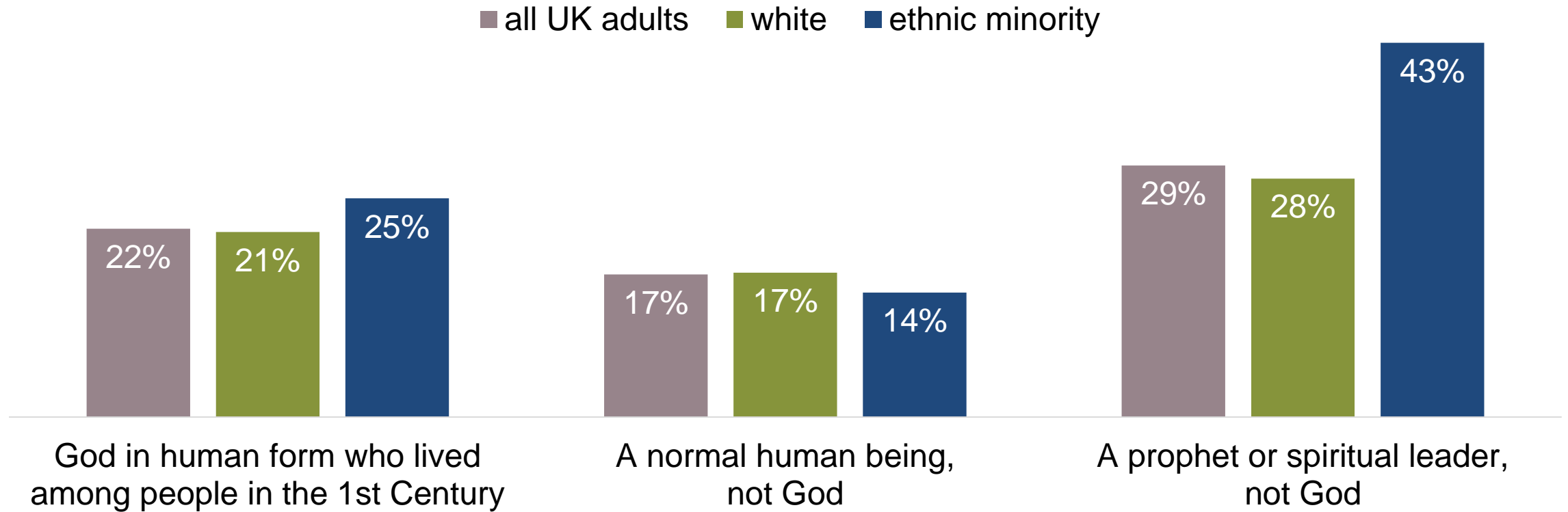


4 out of 5 Asian and Black UK adults believe Jesus was a real person.

Approximately 1 in 5 UK adults believe Jesus was God in human form who lived in the first century.

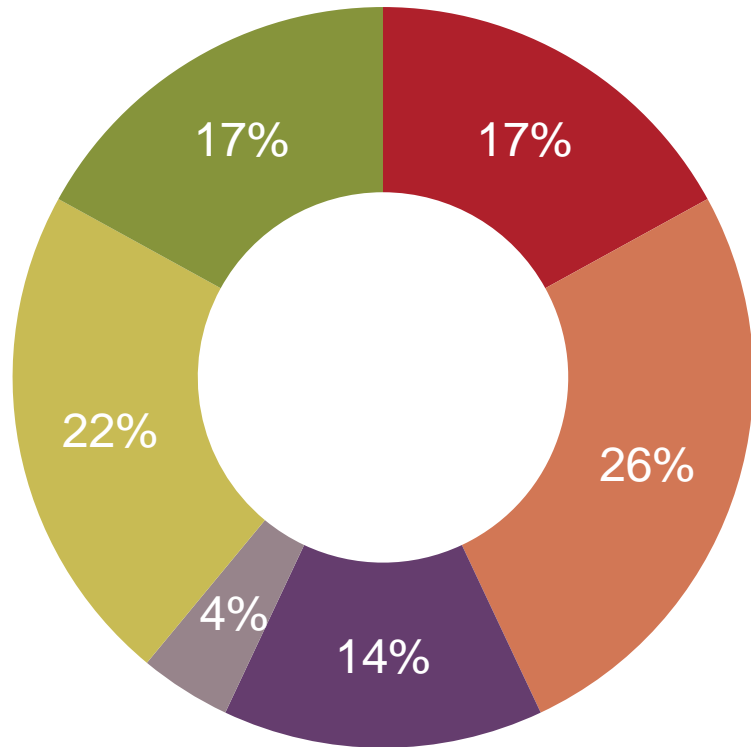


A quarter of non-white adults and more than half UK black adults believe Jesus was God in human form who lived in the first century



Asian UK adults are more likely to say Jesus was just a spiritual leader or prophet (50%).
Black UK adults are more likely to believe in Jesus' divinity, God in human form (53%).

44%* of all UK adults believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

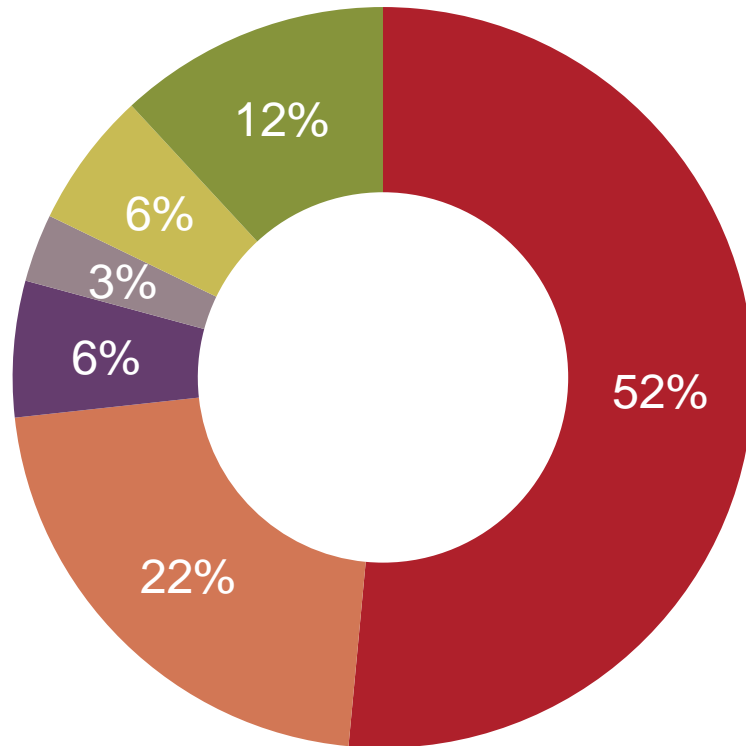


- I believe the resurrection of Jesus from the dead happened word-for-word as described in the Bible
- I believe in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, but the story in the Bible contains some content which should not be taken literally
- I do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead
- Not sure if the resurrection is true or not
- Believe Jesus is fictional
- Not sure if Jesus is real or fictional

*Based on rounded per cents, 17.4% + 26.2% = 43.6%

The vast majority of black UK adults believe Jesus was a real person and that he was raised from the dead.

% among Black UK adults

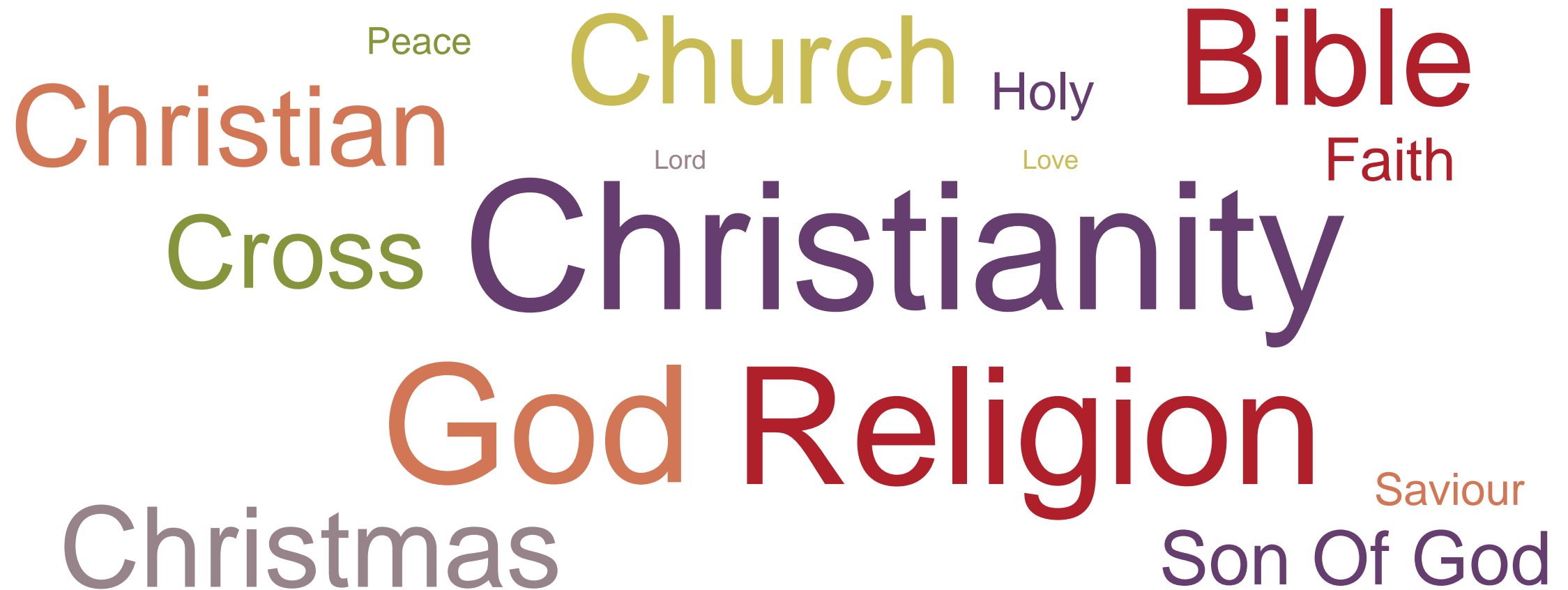


- I believe the resurrection of Jesus from the dead happened word-for-word as described in the Bible
- I believe in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, but the story in the Bible contains some content which should not be taken literally
- I do not believe in the resurrection of Jesus from the dead
- Not sure if the resurrection is true or not
- Believe Jesus is fictional
- Not sure if Jesus is real or fictional

Words that come to mind among all UK adults when Jesus Christ is mentioned.



Among non-Christian UK adults, words that come to mind when Jesus Christ is mentioned.



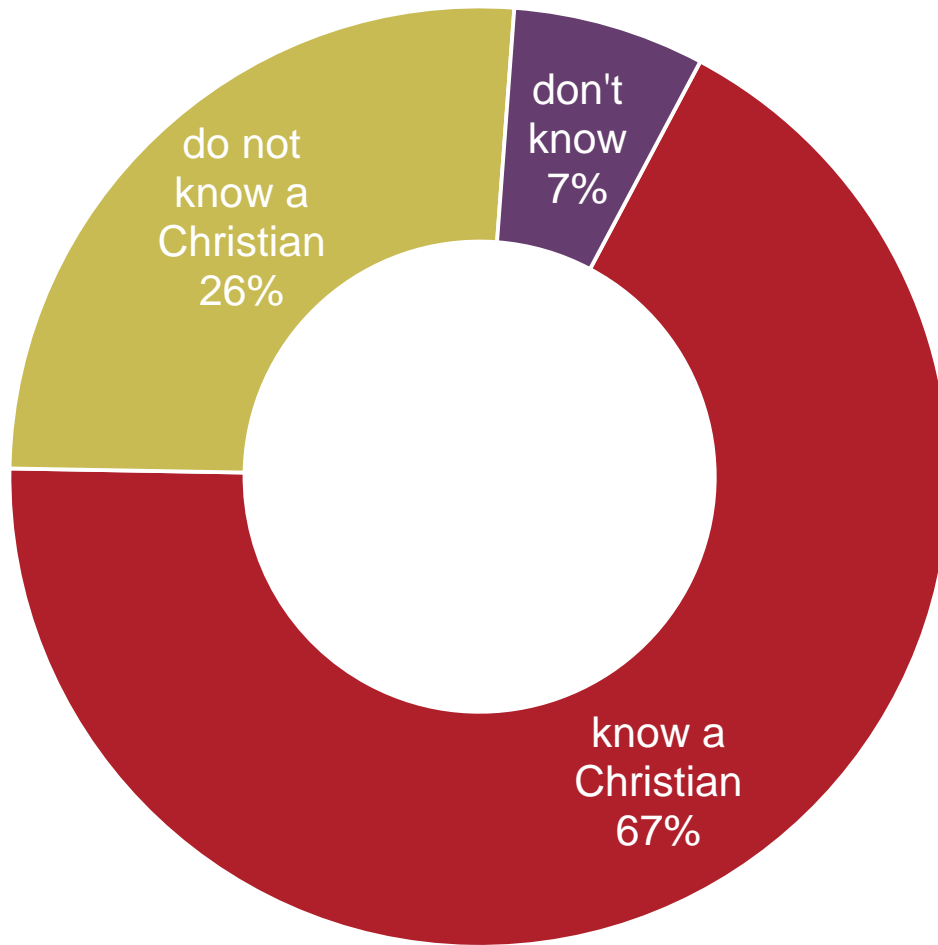
Words chosen by UK adults to describe Jesus

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%

** respondents could choose multiple options.*

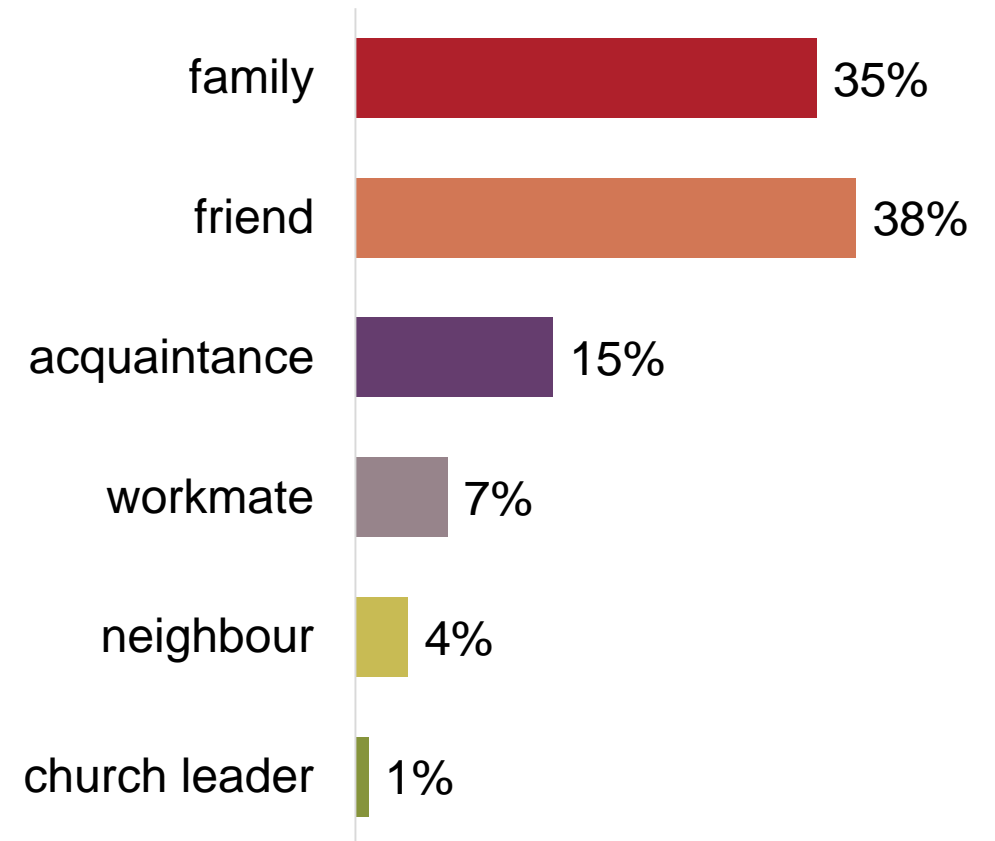
Non-Christians' Perceptions of Christians

Most UK non-Christians say they know a Christian.



Relationship with Christian

% among non-Christians who know a Christian

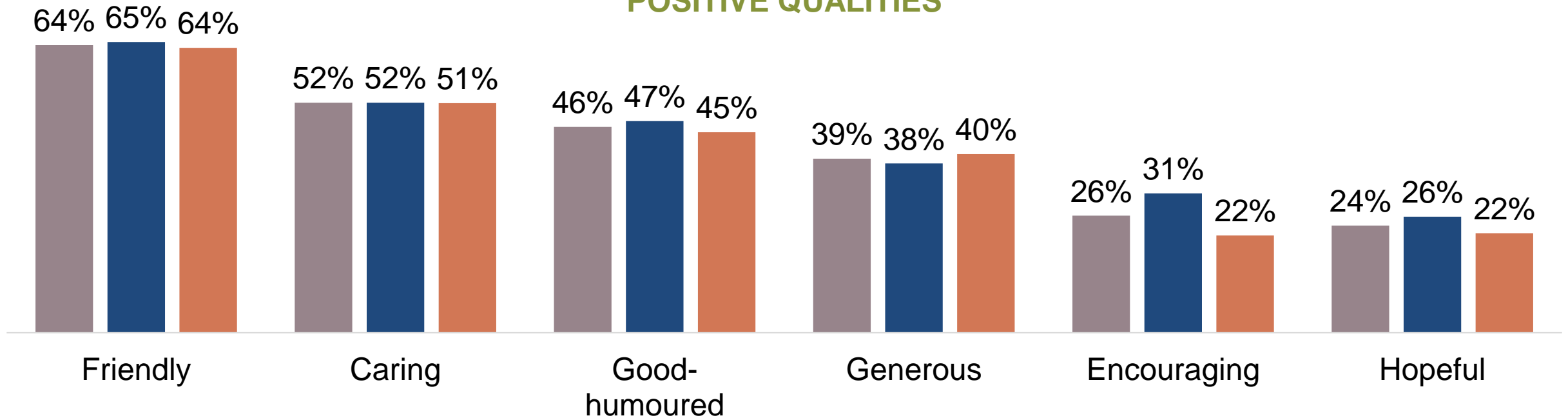


UK non-Christians attribute more positive than negative qualities to the Christians they know.

% among UK non-Christians who know a Christian

■ all UK adults ■ 18-34 year olds ■ 35+ years

POSITIVE QUALITIES



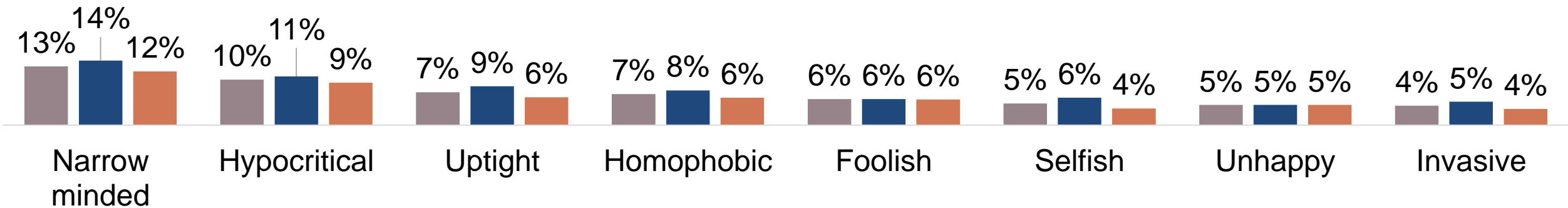
* respondents could choose multiple options.

UK non-Christians attribute more positive than negative qualities to the Christians they know.

% among UK non-Christians who know a Christian

■ all UK adults ■ 18-34 year olds ■ 35+ years

NEGATIVE QUALITIES



** respondents could choose multiple options.*

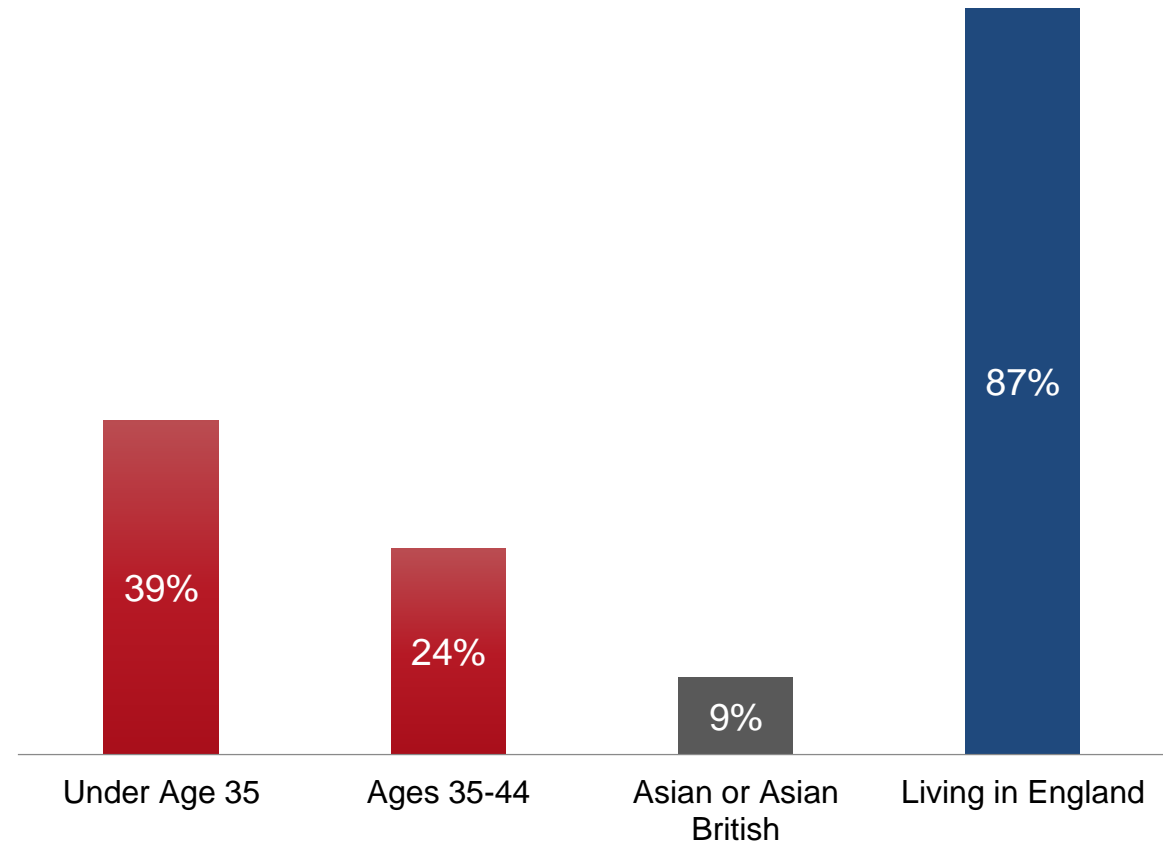
Who are the 33% who do not know a practising Christian?

These individuals are more likely than average to be...

- ❑ Under the age of 35 (39%)
- ❑ Ages 35-44 (24%)
- ❑ Asian or Asian British (9%)
 - Pakistani (3%)
 - Indian (3%)
- ❑ Living in England (87%)
 - East of England (12%)
 - London (14%)

These individuals are less likely than average to be...

- ❑ Ages 55+ (19%)
- ❑ Black or Black British (0%)
- ❑ Living in Northern Ireland (1%)



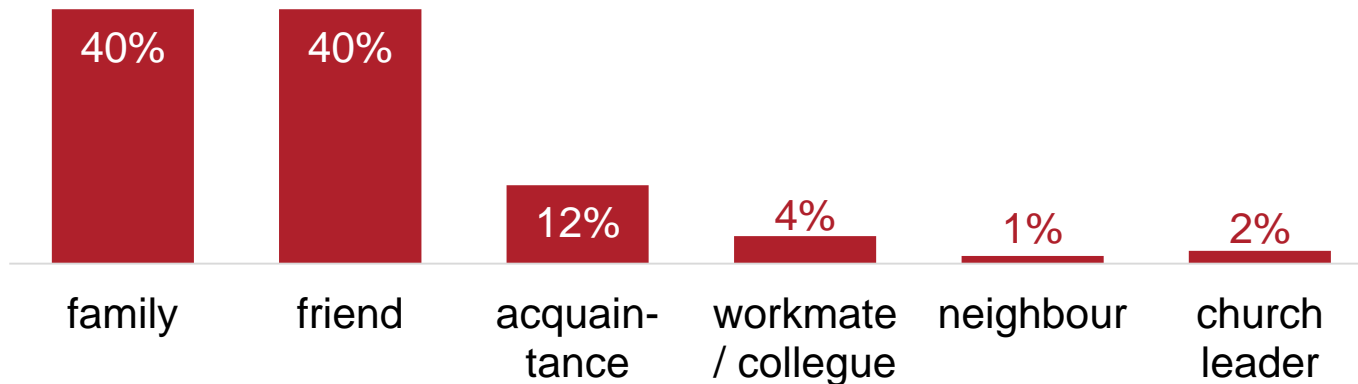
Non-Christians' Experience with Evangelism

More than half UK non-Christians who know a Christian (57%) have had a conversation with them about Jesus—or 38% of all UK non-Christians

Conversations tend to be between family and friends.

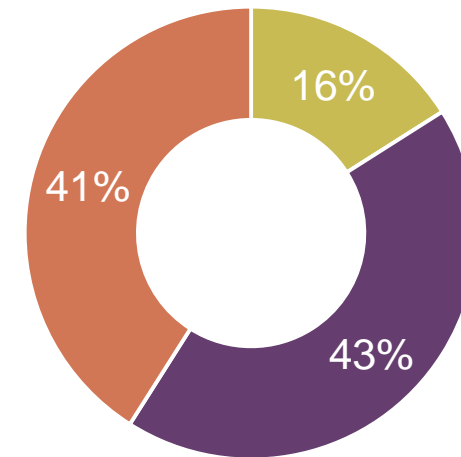
Non-Christians Describe their Relationship with the Practising Christian Who Shared with Them about their Faith in Jesus

% know a practising Christian and talked about Jesus with this person



% among UK non-Christians who had a conversation with a Christian about their faith

- Felt sad that I did not share their faith
- Felt glad that I did not share their faith
- don't know



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

18-34 year old non-Christians respond more positively than older adults to conversations about Jesus.

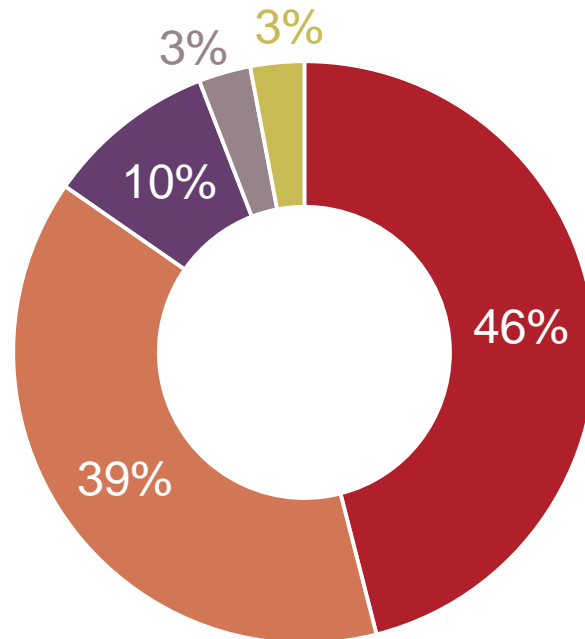
Positive Experiences	Negative Experiences
Wanted to know more about Jesus Christ, 22%	52%, Did not want to know more about Jesus Christ
Open to an experience or encounter with Jesus, 23%	47%, Not open to an experience or encounter with Jesus
Felt sad that I did not share their faith, 18%	39%, Felt glad that I did not share their faith
Felt more positive towards Jesus Christ, 29%	25%, Felt more negative towards Jesus Christ
Felt closer to the person in question, 31%	30%, Felt less close to the person in question
Felt comfortable, 49%	35%, Felt uncomfortable



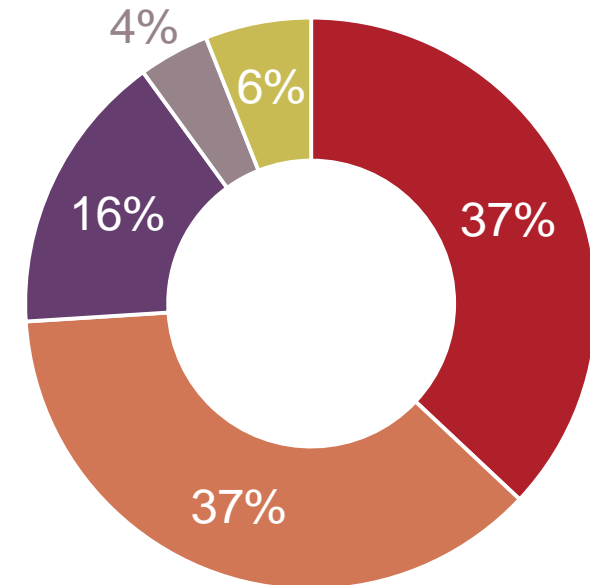
Christians' Experience of Evangelism

UK Practising Christians feel a responsibility to evangelise and believe talking to non-Christians about Jesus is part of this responsibility.

Have a responsibility to talk to non-Christians about Jesus.
% among UK practising Christians



Talking to non-Christians about Jesus Christ is evangelism.
% among UK practising Christians



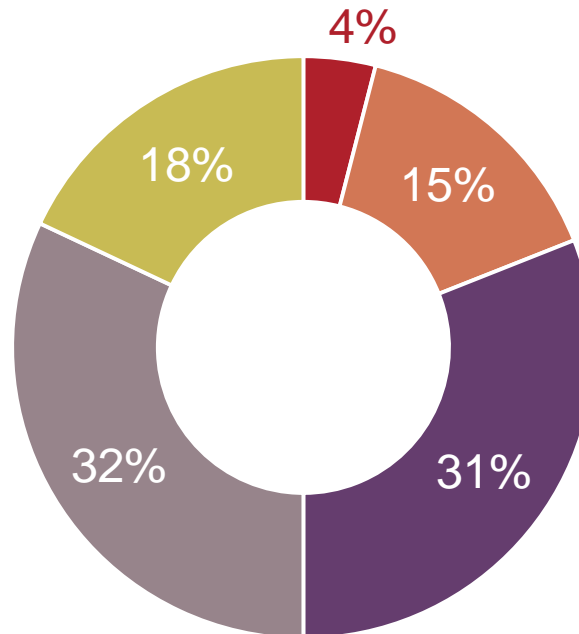
- strongly agree
- tend to agree
- tend to disagree
- strongly disagree
- don't know

Ethnic minority UK adults are more likely to believe they have a responsibility to evangelise (91%, strongly + tend to agree)

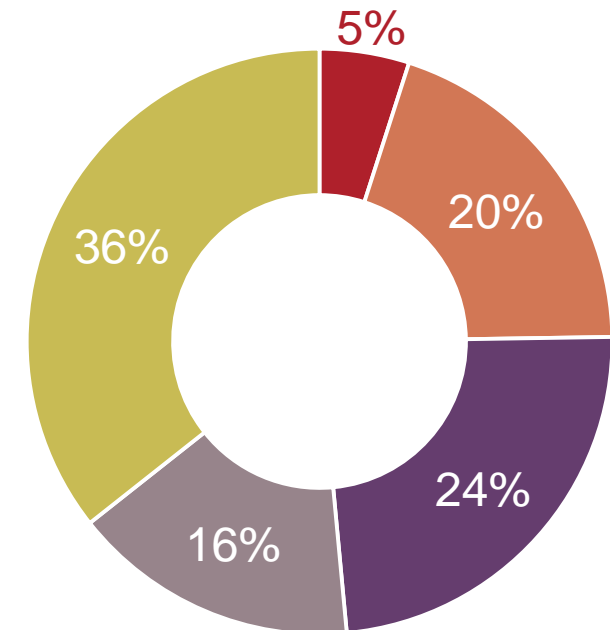
UK Non-practising Christians do not think evangelism is their responsibility.

Have a responsibility to evangelise.
% among UK non-practising Christians

- strongly agree
- tend to agree
- tend to disagree
- strongly disagree
- don't know



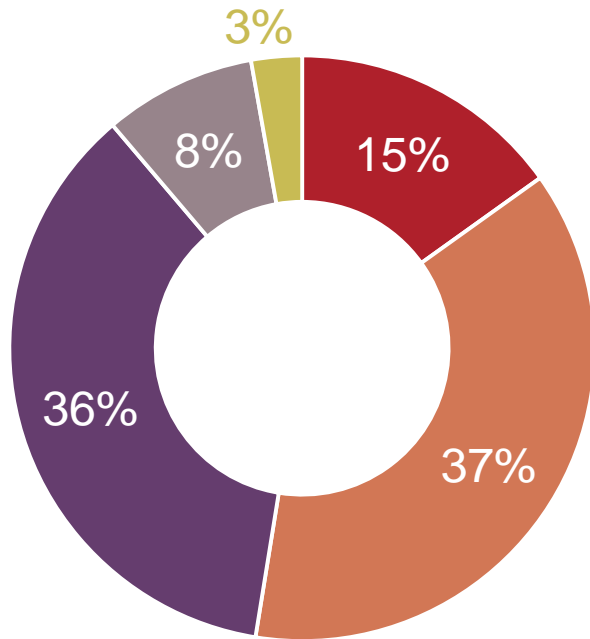
Talking to non-Christians about Jesus
Christ is evangelism.
% among UK non-practising Christians



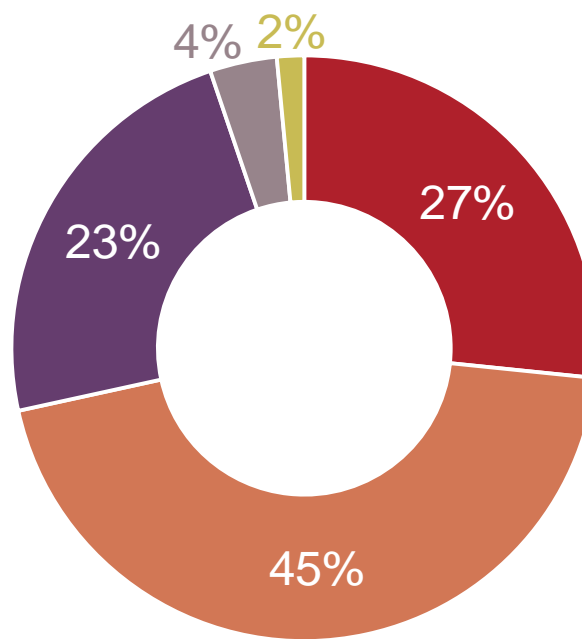
UK Practising Christians look for opportunities to talk about Jesus Christ and feel comfortable doing so.

■ strongly agree
 ■ tend to agree
 ■ tend to disagree
 ■ strongly disagree
 ■ don't know

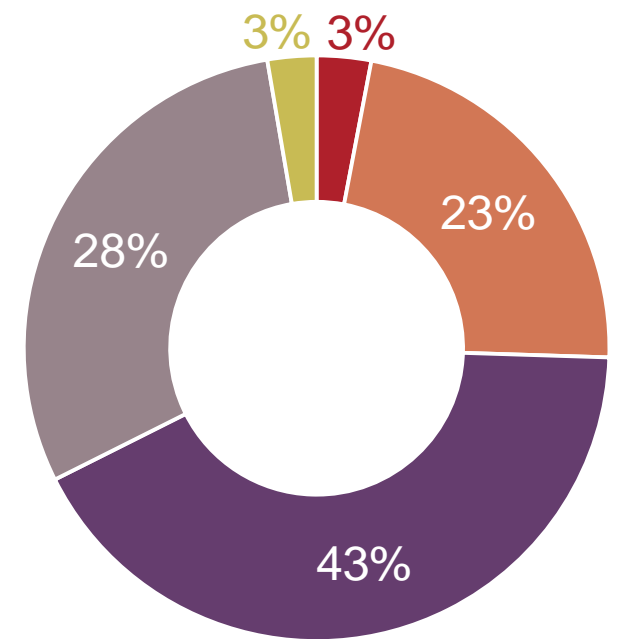
Always looking for opportunities to talk about Jesus with others.
% among practising Christians



Comfortable talking to non-Christians about Jesus.
% among practising Christians



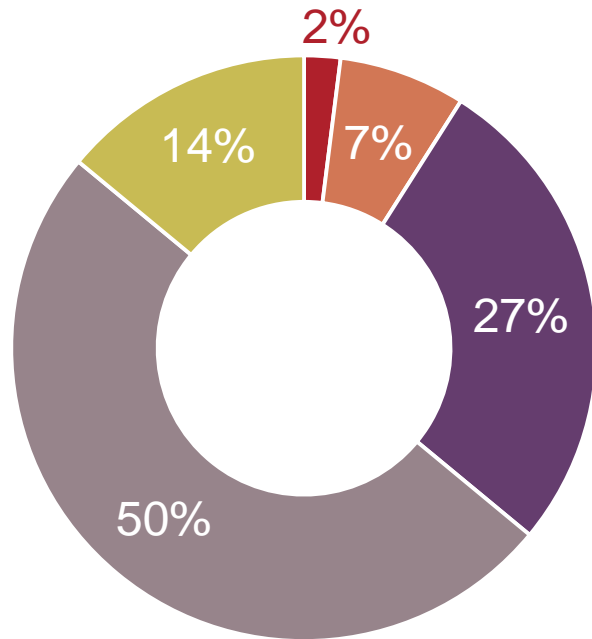
Feel **unable** to take up opportunities to talk about Jesus.
% among practising Christians



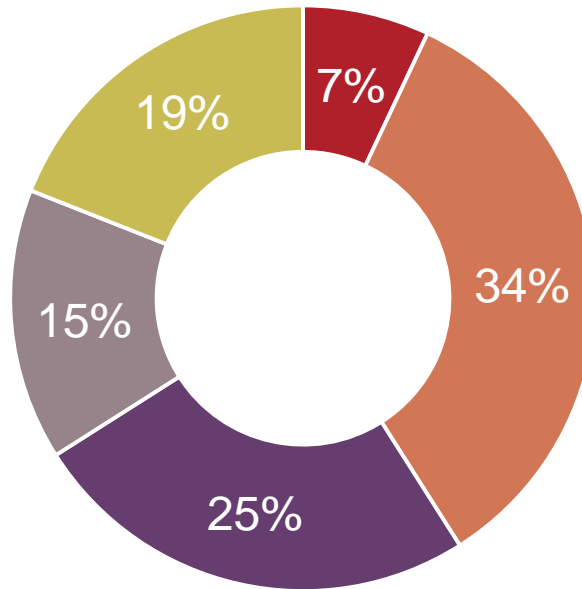
UK Non-practising Christians seldom seek out opportunities and lack the confidence to talk about their faith even when the opportunity presents itself.

■ strongly agree
 ■ tend to agree
 ■ tend to disagree
 ■ strongly disagree
 ■ don't know

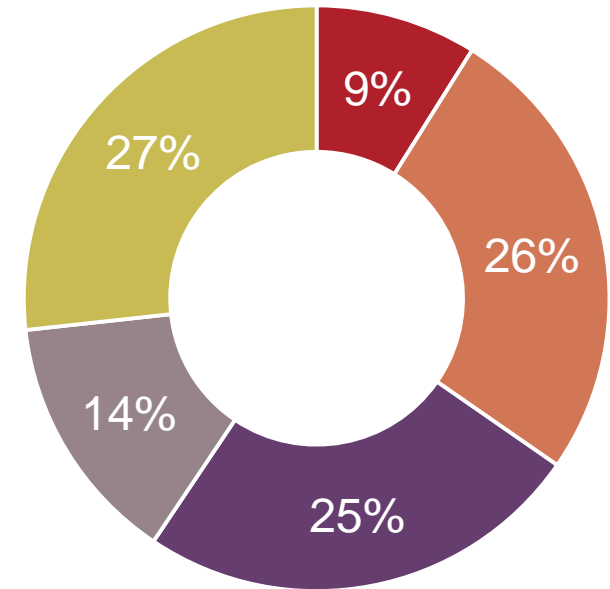
Always looking for opportunities to talk about Jesus with others.
 % among non-practising Christians



Comfortable talking to non-Christians about Jesus.
 % among non-practising Christians



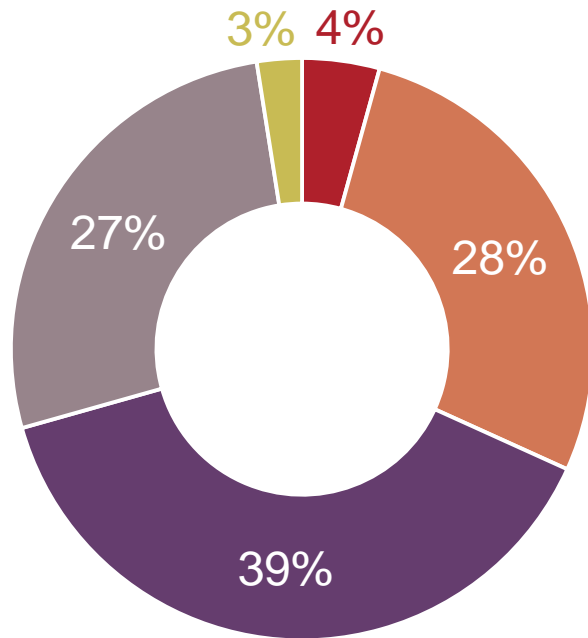
Feel **unable** to take up opportunities to talk about Jesus.
 % among non-practising Christians



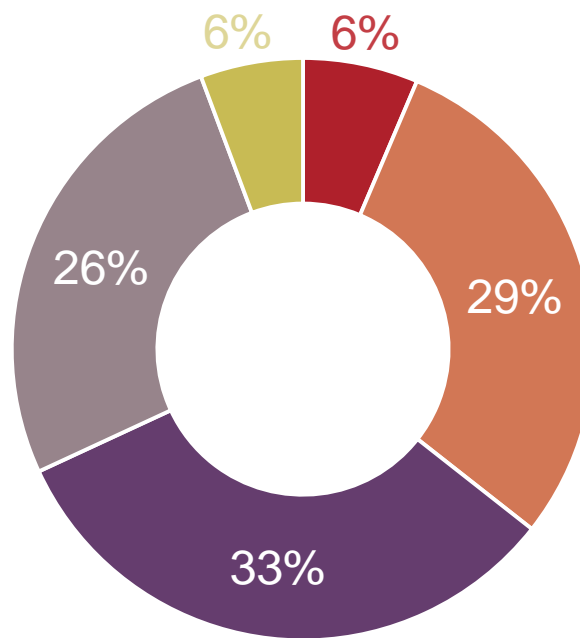
The majority of UK practising Christians feel confident talking to non-Christians about Jesus.

■ strongly agree
 ■ tend to agree
 ■ tend to disagree
 ■ strongly disagree
 ■ don't know

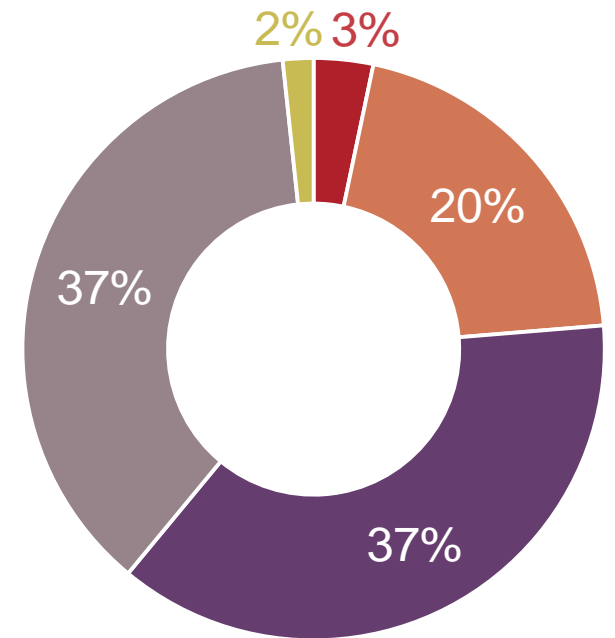
Afraid of causing offence when talking to non-Christians.
% among practising Christians



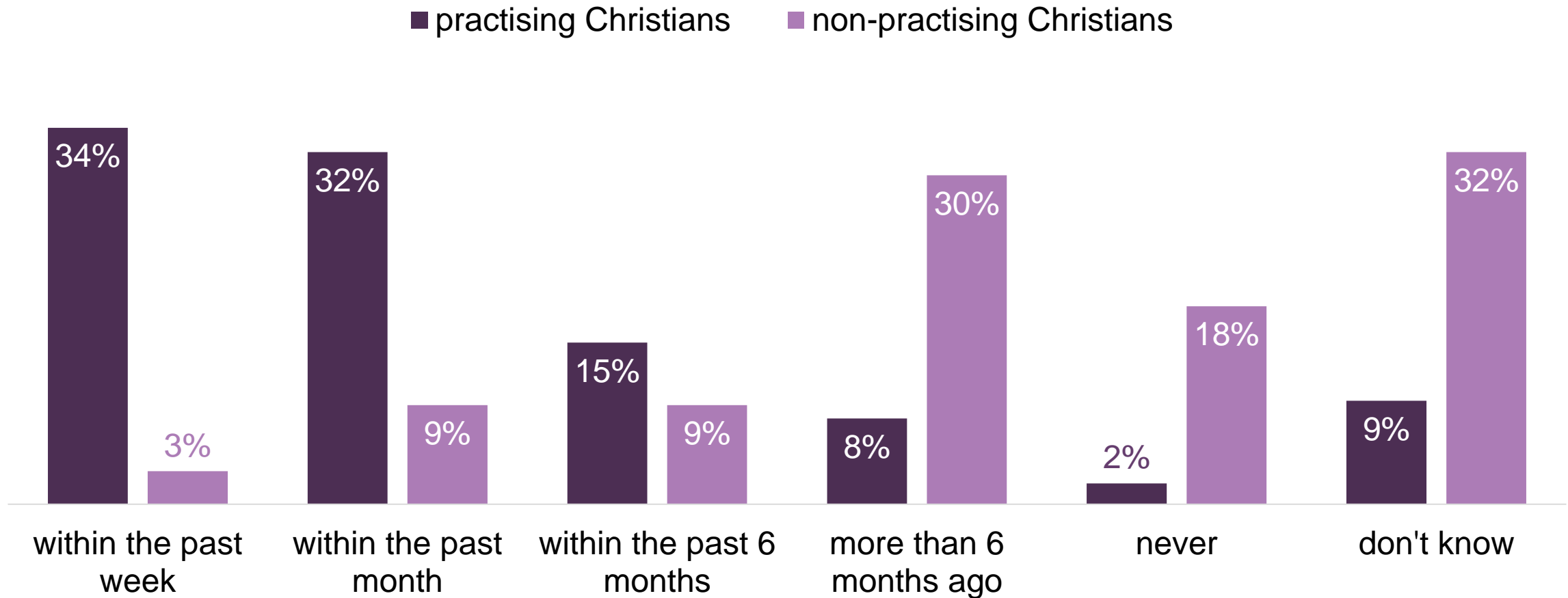
Think others are better suited to talk to non-Christians about Jesus.
% among practising Christians



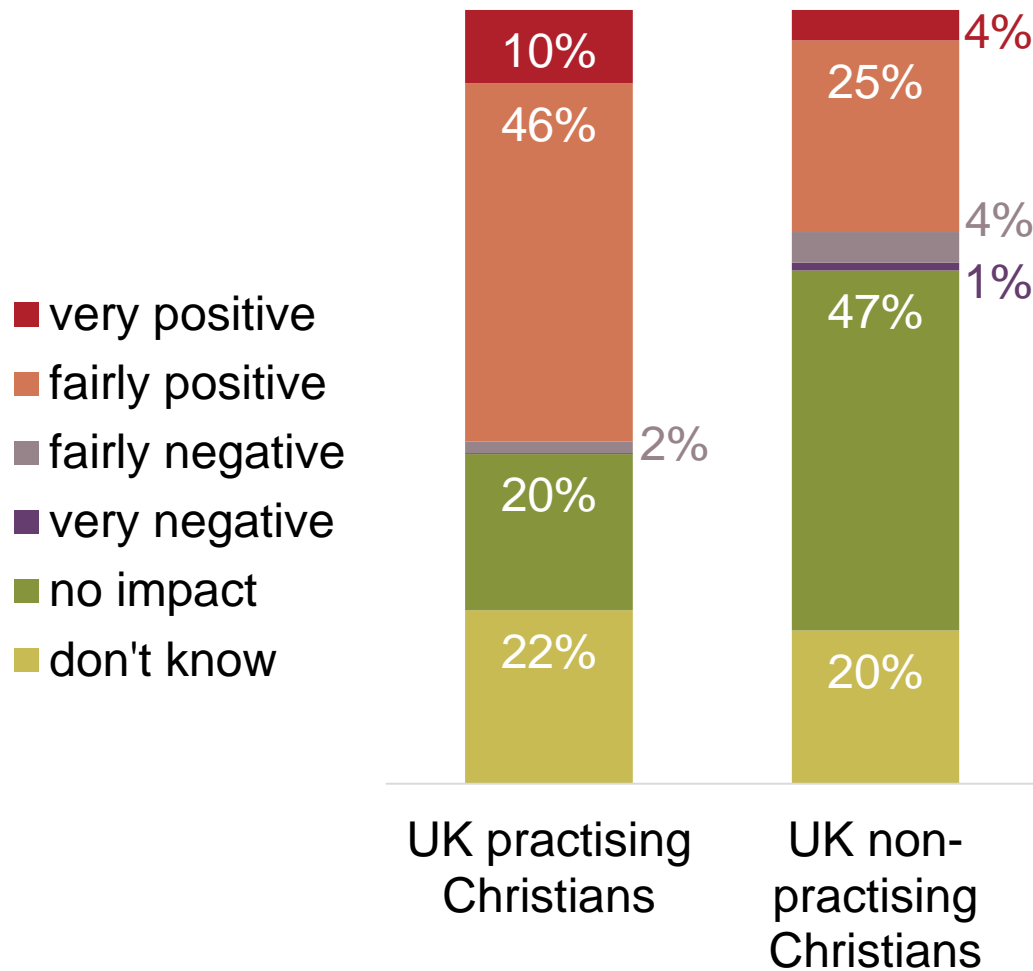
Do not know how to talk to non-Christians about Jesus.
% among practising Christians



Two-thirds of UK practising Christians have talked about Jesus to a non-Christian in the past month.

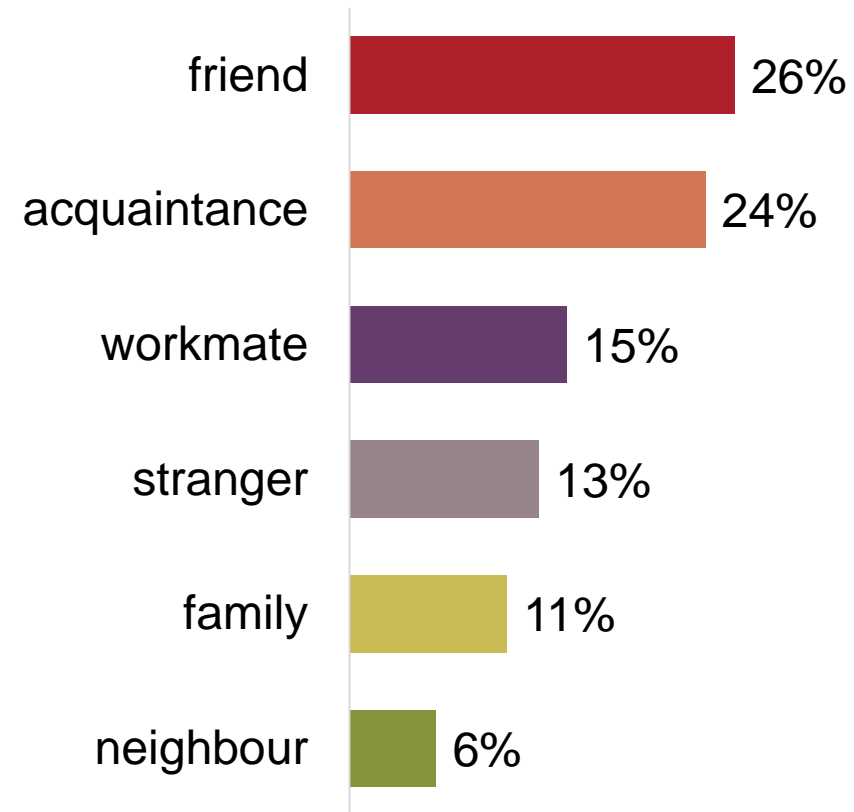


UK practising Christians tend to be optimistic about the impact of their evangelism efforts.



Relationship with Non-Christian

% among UK practising Christians who talked about Jesus with a non-Christian



Non-Christians and practising Christians were asked to describe what happened after having a conversation about Jesus.

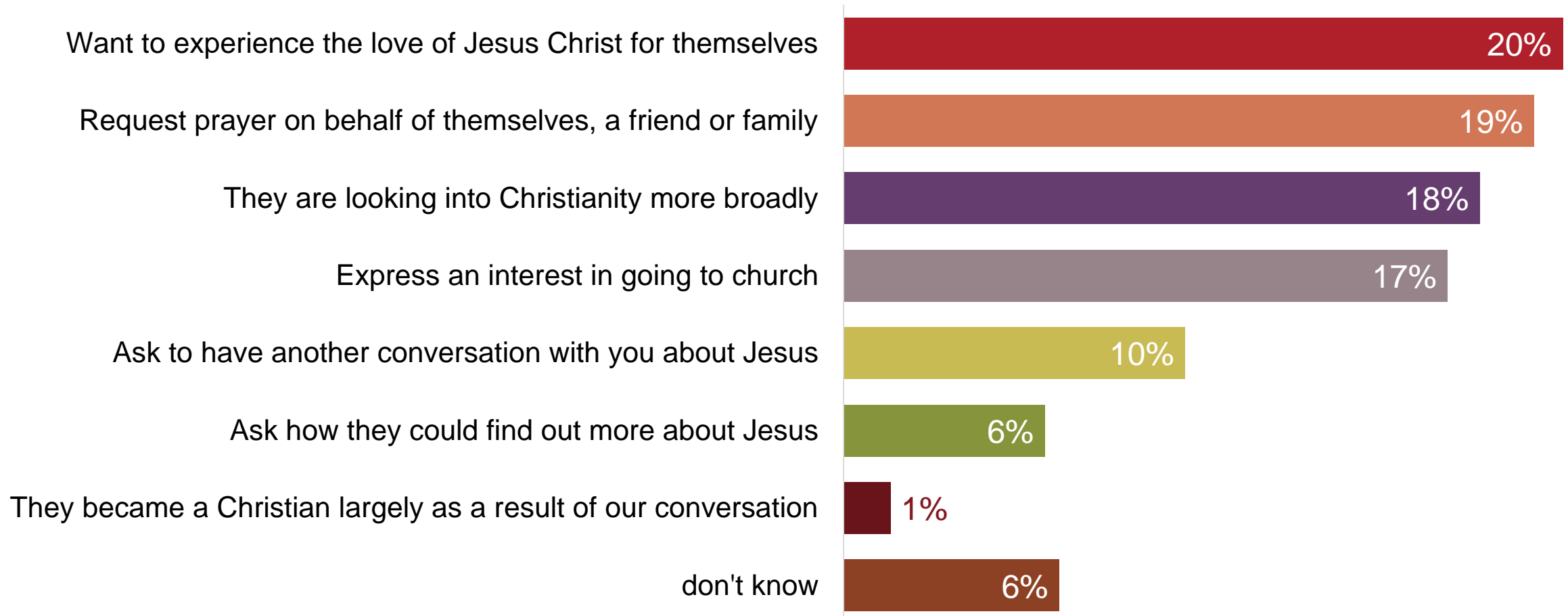
The Christian asked the non-Christian...	how UK practising Christians remember it	how UK non-Christians remember it
<input type="checkbox"/> If he or she wanted prayer on behalf of themselves, or for someone else	27%	19%
<input type="checkbox"/> To come to a church event	20%	15%
<input type="checkbox"/> To come to a church service	15%	18%
<input type="checkbox"/> If she or he was willing to talk about Jesus Christ again sometime	14%	16%
<input type="checkbox"/> If he or she wanted to experience the love of Jesus Christ for themselves	8%	13%
<input type="checkbox"/> If he or she wanted to attend a course about Christianity / Jesus	8%	7%

* respondents could choose multiple options.

UK Non-Christians' response to the conversation about Jesus.

How Practising Christians Remember It

% among UK practising Christians who have spoken with a non-Christian



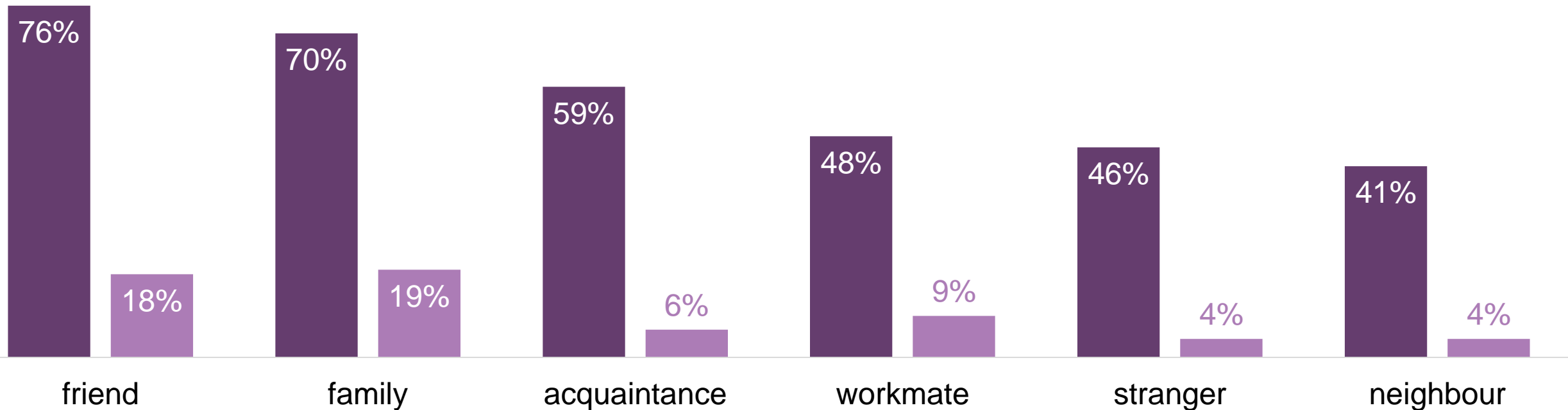
** respondents could choose multiple options.*

Over the past five years UK practising Christians have been the most active in sharing their faith with friends and family.

Relationship with the non-Christian they talked to

% among Christians who shared about Jesus in the past five years

■ UK practising Christians ■ UK non-practising Christians

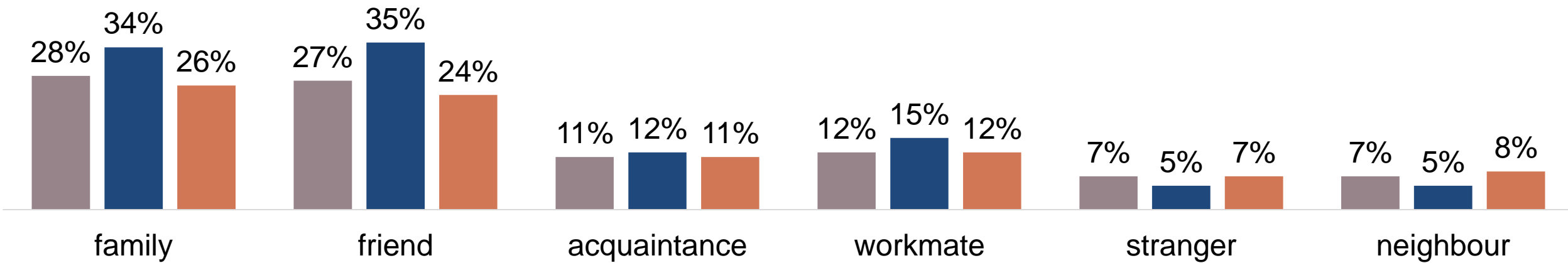


18-34 year olds are somewhat more active than older Christians in the UK when it comes to talking about their faith.

Relationship with the non-Christian they talked to

% among Christians who talked about Jesus with a non-Christian in the past five years

■ all UK Christians ■ 18-34 year olds ■ 35+ years



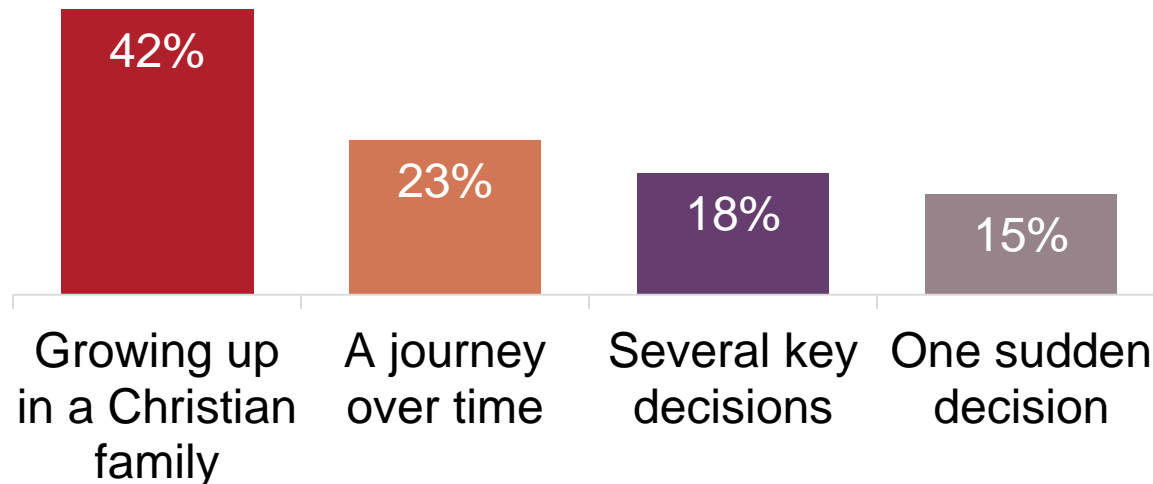
A Christian's Faith Journey

Many UK practising Christians attribute their faith to growing up in a Christian home.

93% of UK practising Christians have been a Christian for 11 years or more.

Personal Faith Journey Descriptions

% among practising Christians



Top Positive Influences

- ❑ Growing up in a Christian family, 41%
- ❑ Attending church services, 29%
- ❑ Reading the Bible, 28%
- ❑ Conversations with a Christian they knew well, 27%
- ❑ An experience of the love of Jesus, 23%
- ❑ A spiritual experience you could not explain, 17%

All Influences that Led to Conversions among UK Practising Christians

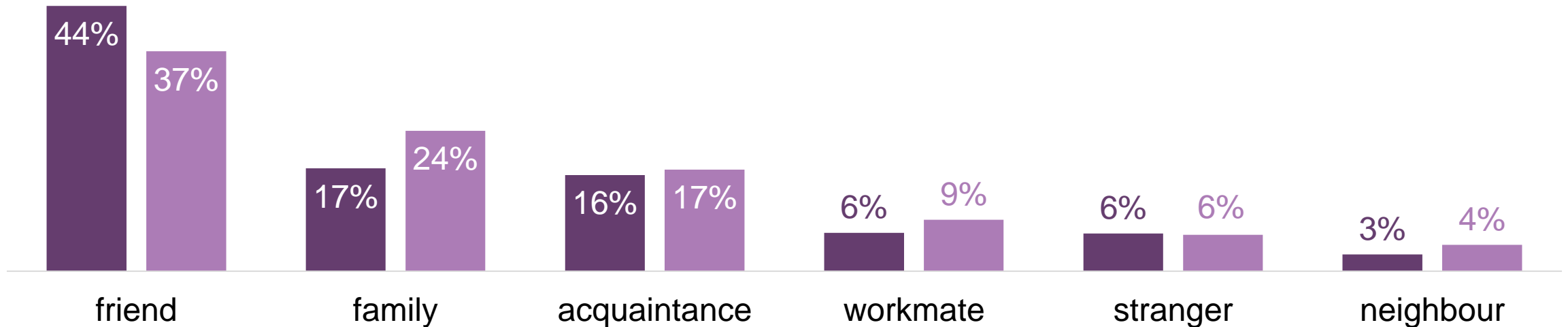
Growing up in a Christian family	41%	Visiting/praying in open churches (i.e., not during a service)	5%
Attending a church service(s), other than a wedding or funeral	29%	Christian media (TV, radio, books, websites, etc.)	4%
Reading the Bible	28%	Going to an introduction to Christianity course like Alpha or Christianity Explored	4%
Conversation(s) with Christian(s) you knew well	27%	Dreams or visions	3%
An experience of the love of Jesus Christ	23%	Newer forms of church such as messy church or café church	1%
A spiritual experience you could not explain	17%	A church wedding or funeral	1%
A particular life event, whether positive or negative	16%	Specific Christians on social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, etc.)	*%
Conversation(s) with Christian(s) you did not know well	9%	Other	8%
Christian Union or other university program	6%	none of the above	*%
An individual church's outreach program (e.g., parent and toddler group, food bank)	5%	don't know	*%

* Represents less than one-half of one percent

Most UK practising Christians credit their friends for introducing them to Jesus.

Relationship with the Person who Introduced them to Jesus

■ UK practising Christians ■ UK non-practising Christians

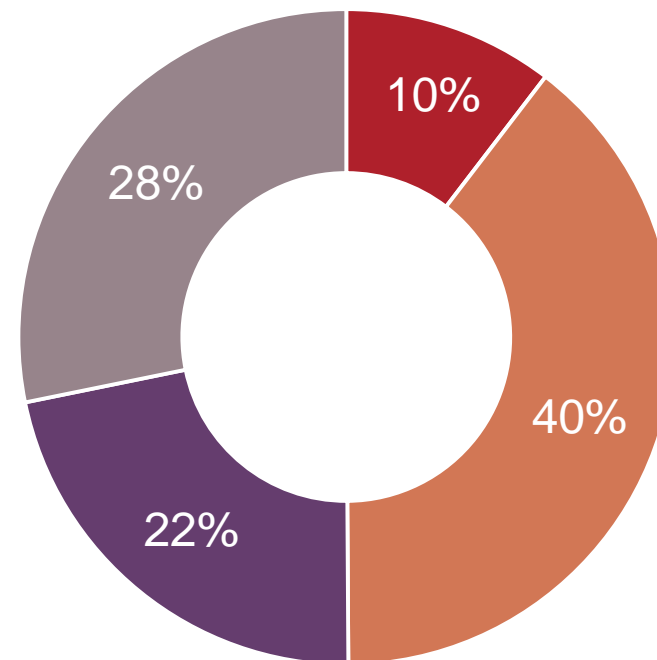


UK practising Christians are more likely to have been brought to faith by someone younger than themselves.

% among Christians who came to faith because a conversation with another Christian.

% among UK practising Christians

- More than 10 years older
- More than 10 years younger
- About the same age
- Don't know

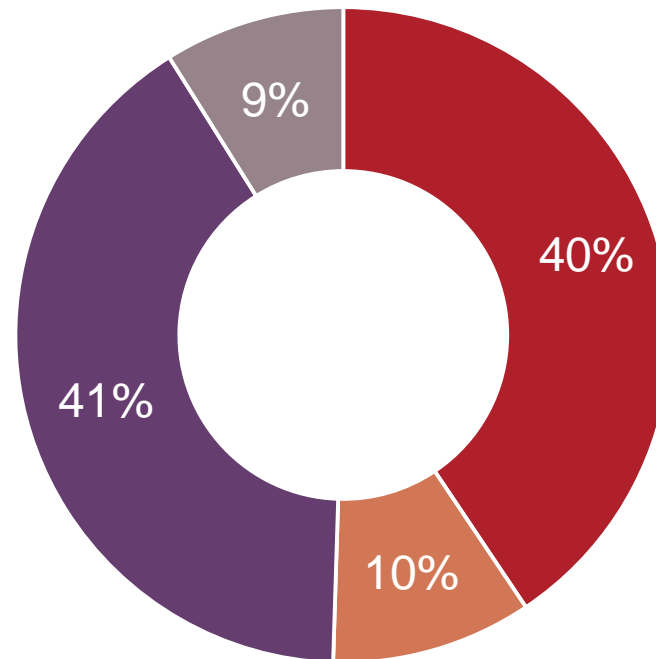


UK non-practising Christians are more likely to have been brought to faith by someone older than themselves or someone who is about the same age.

% among Christians who came to faith because a conversation with another Christian.

% among UK non-practising Christians

- More than 10 years older
- More than 10 years younger
- About the same age
- Don't know



UK Practising Christians recall the conversation that brought them to faith in a very positive light.

Positive Experiences	Negative Experiences
Felt more positive towards Jesus Christ, 90%	1%, Felt more negative towards Jesus Christ
Wanted to know more about Jesus Christ, 85%	2%, Did not want to know more about Jesus Christ
Open to an experience or encounter with Jesus, 83%	3%, Not open to an experience or encounter with Jesus
Felt comfortable, 82%	10%, Felt uncomfortable
Felt closer to the person in question, 81%	1%, Felt less close to the person in question
Felt sad that I did not share their faith, 47%	2%, Felt glad that I did not share their faith