

Church Revitalisation

A 10 Week Online Training Course
Session Six : working on the social dimension



A HEALTHY CHURCH



centred on
the gospel



where Christians learn :

- to love God
- to love others



within its
cultural context

These features are valid for both
aspects of a local church



GATHERED CHURCH



SCATTERED CHURCH

Organised events

MAIN
CHARACTERISTIC

Personal initiatives

Edification and training events for church members.

- Services
- Small group meetings
- Discipleship

+ Outreach events

Doing good and sharing the gospel in these 4 relational networks :



Family



Place of work or study



Local community



Leisure time / friends

Attractional church

EVANGELISM

Missional church

Revitalisation = a healthy church

A healthy church is a group of redeemed Christians who are learning

- to love God
- to love people
- in their cultural context

In other words, revitalisation = **reconnecting** your church

A three dimensional approach to building a healthy church

1. The spiritual dimension (loving God)
2. The social dimension (loving others)
3. The societal dimension (in its cultural context)

The Social Dimension

Improving relationships within the church and with unbelievers

- ❖ Loving others (the second commandment)
 - ❖ Show an interest in them / listen to them
 - ❖ Do good to them / encourage them

Reconciled with God, our aim is to be human, as God restores His image in us (2 Corinthians 3.18 / Romans 8.29)

Improving relationships among believers

« A new commandment I give you : Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another » (John 13.34-35)

And this love will also extend to people outside God's family

- ❖ Galatians 6.10
- ❖ 1 Thessalonians 3.12 et 5.15

Improving relationships with unbelievers

“Doing good and sharing the gospel in our four relational networks

- family
- community
- work / education
- leisure and friends”

From the early days of the church, the gospel was spread by ordinary Christians

- Acts 8.1-4 cf 11.19-21

The Social Dimension

Three surveys carried out in France concerning evangelism in this context

1. Among Evangelical pastors
2. Among the general population in France
3. Among people converted from a totally non-Evangelical background

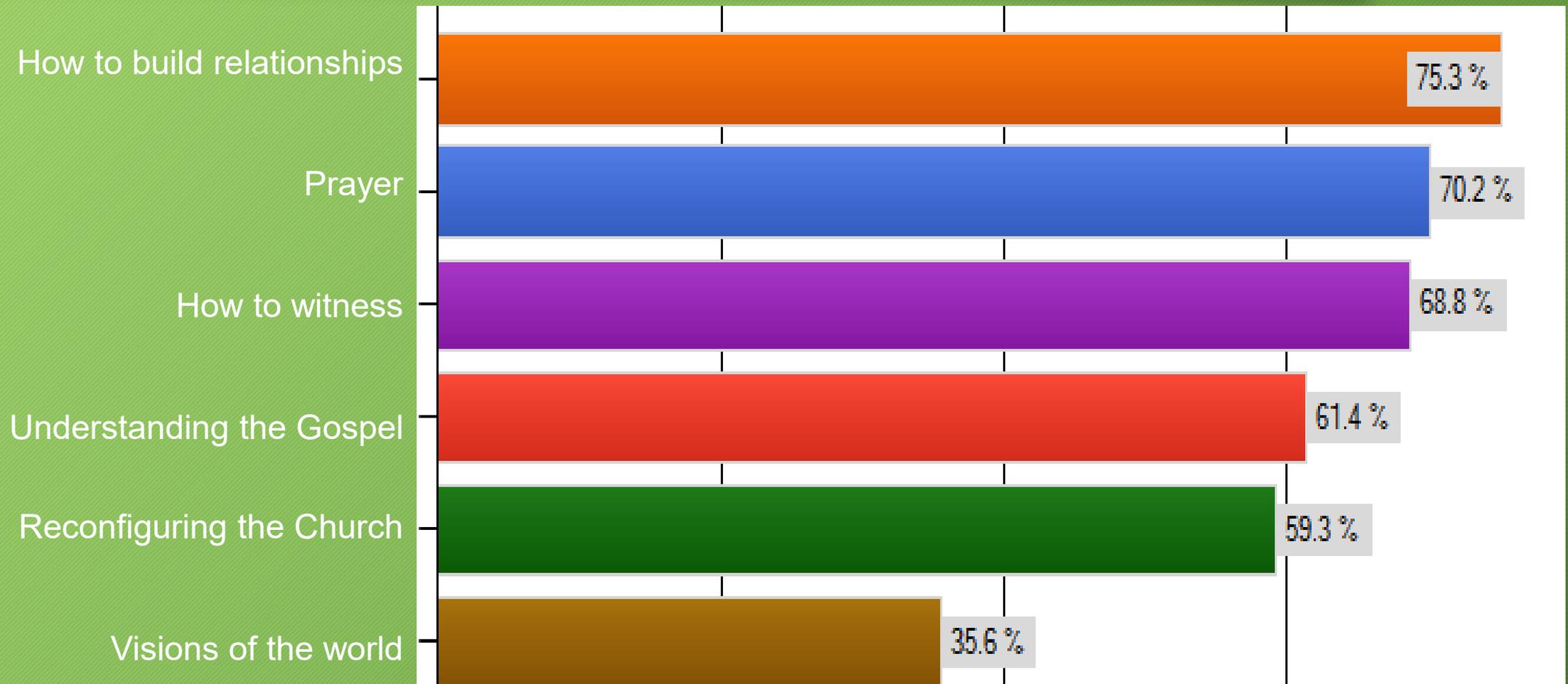
1) Survey of Evangelical pastors in France

What are the best ways to evangelise today?

		Somewhat agree	Totally agree	Total
1.	Building relationships with non-Christians	73,9	13,7	87,6
2.	Identify evangelists	31,2	42,8	74
3.	Local social action	37,1	36,5	73,6

1) Survey of Evangelical pastors in France

What training is necessary?



2) A professional survey in France carried out for the CNEF *“How would you like to learn about a religion?”*

Survey of **1106 people** aged **18 or over**. Representativity by sex, age, profession, and stratification by region and type of dwelling place (rural, small town, medium sized town, city).

- ❖ Internet 35% (18-24 y.o. 45%)
- ❖ Talk over a coffee 23% (18-24 y.o. 37%)

The importance of hospitality

- Being approached in the street 2%
- Information in their letter box 1%

3) A survey among people recently converted from a totally non-Evangelical background 89 responses (46 men et 43 women)

Factor # 1 55 responses. A relationship with a Christian in their circle of friends and acquaintances

Factor # 2 28 responses. Feeling welcomed and accepted

Factor # 3 20 responses. Being supported and listened to, free to ask questions

Factor # 4 14 responses. Clear teaching

Factor # 5 14 responses. Small groups

3) A survey among people recently converted from a totally non-Evangelical background

Summary of the qualitative analysis : two important factors

- Relationships are extremely important: this is seen in the fact that the majority of respondents indicate that contact with someone close to them was a decisive factor, as well as in the many responses that mention a caring welcome.
- Being listened to, being able to ask questions and receiving clear and understandable instruction.

The Social Dimension

Two practical aspects to work on

- ❖ Hospitality - the example of Jesus : “He came”
 - Luc 19.10 - the aim
 - Luc 7.34 - the means
- ❖ Talking about the Gospel : Colossians 4.5-6 / 1 Peter 3.15
 - «Out of the outflow of his heart his mouth speaks» (Luc 6.45)

