

LICC RESEARCH  
REPORT 2023

A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF

# The frontline lives of 18–35s in the UK

licc.

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# Executive summary

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## **This LICC report presents a qualitative exploration of the experiences of 18–35-year-old Christians in the UK.**

Inspired by a report from Barna and Worldvision indicating that 73% of young adults raised in a Christian home have dropped out of church by the time they're 35<sup>1</sup>, this research explores the experiences of young adults who are staying in church. It seeks to better understand how they live out their faith on their 'frontlines' (ordinary places where they regularly engage with people who don't follow Jesus) so that the church in the UK might celebrate, learn from, and empower their discipleship.

This study found six characteristics and five questions that characterised these disciples. It makes three recommendations for church leaders and those involved in ministry to young adults.

## **The six characteristics of 18–35-year-old disciples**

1. They are an enriching and positive presence
2. Their relationships really matter to them
3. They are psychologically aware
4. They are conscientious contributors
5. Their personal relationships are the main influences on their discipleship
6. They primarily relate to God as shepherd or father

## **The five questions 18–35-year-old disciples are struggling with**

1. How do I share my faith without losing my friends?
2. How do I find purpose in my actual work?
3. How can I establish healthy rhythms?
4. How do I stay human in an inhuman system?
5. How can I make connections with mentors and peers?

## **Three recommendations for young adult discipling**

This report is designed to encourage conversation and collaboration in the UK church on how to grow young adults as whole-life disciples of Jesus. These recommendations were discussed at the report's launch webinar and are explored in more detail on our blog: [licc.org.uk/frontlinelivesblog](https://licc.org.uk/frontlinelivesblog)

### **1. Listen to – and celebrate – young adults' experiences.**

Their busy lives are the work of your church, scattered through the week. Tell their stories and pray for them.

### **2. Engage young adults' questions.**

Take a holistic view of the gospel and its application to the questions above.

### **3. Foster interdependence in your church community.**

Mixed small groups, mentoring schemes, and contributions to meaningful leadership and decision-making are ways to 'bind' (as per a rugby scrum) young adults to church.

<sup>1</sup>The Connected Generation: UK country report (2019) Barna Group, 23

# Participant demographics

## 20 total participants

### AGE

18 – 2  
20 – 1  
21 – 1  
22 – 2  
25 – 1  
26 – 3  
28 – 5  
29 – 2  
30 – 1  
31 – 1  
35 – 1

### LOCATION

Nottingham – 5  
London – 2  
Bristol – 2  
Oxford – 2  
Salford – 2  
Basingstoke – 2  
East Lothian – 2  
Birmingham – 1  
York – 1  
Worcester – 1

### ETHNICITY

White British – 11  
Black British – 2  
Chinese/Hong Kong – 2  
White British/European – 1  
White South African – 1  
Nigerian/British – 1  
Asian British – 1  
South American – 1  
*[As self-identified]*

### GENDER

Women – 11  
Men – 9

### DENOMINATION

We don't have complete data for this, but the sample included four denominations: New Frontiers, Elim, Church of England, and Church of God of Prophecy.

### FRONTLINES

A frontline is an ordinary place where you regularly engage with people who don't follow Jesus. More than 20 frontlines are represented, as some participants talked about more than one frontline.

- Medical (5): Therapist, Psychologist, Physiotherapist, Medical student, GP
- Call centre (2)
- Tech industry (2)
- Tour guiding
- Charity sector
- Hospitality
- Retail
- Design
- Postdoctoral student (break room)
- Accounting
- Year in industry (engineering)
- Looking for work (recent migrant)
- Between jobs (tech)
- Friendship/friendship groups (4)
- Student house
- Student study
- Sports/exercise with friends
- Parenting/out and about with baby

## All participants are resilient disciples.

All participants in this research could be described as resilient disciples. **Research** conducted by Barna in 2019 claims that around 4% of all 18–35-year-olds in the UK who grew up with some type of Christian background can be defined as 'resilient disciples'. Barna describes resilient disciples as people who identify as Christian and (1) attend a local church regularly and engage with their faith community above and beyond worship services, (2) trust firmly in the authority of the Bible, (3) are committed to Jesus personally and affirm his death and resurrection, and (4) express a desire for their faith to impact their words and actions.

## Participants are minimally familiar with LICC.

Participants had either not heard of LICC, or had only engaged at a minimum level. This was an intentional sampling choice, as we wanted to learn from 18–35-year-olds who haven't already been significantly influenced directly by LICC.

# Methodology

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Between November 2022 and January 2023, we interviewed 20 18–35-year-old Christians based in England and Scotland. We used semi-structured interviews, all conducted over the phone (apart from one, which was conducted via Zoom). These interviews provide some structure to the conversation and help the interviewer focus on exploring areas they want to explore, while at the same time allowing for the conversation to flow and for unplanned and unexpected insights to emerge. If something comes up that seems of particular relevance to the interviewer, they are able to probe and explore this area further.

With some variance, these conversations lasted 45–75 minutes each. One participant was interviewed twice as they wanted to share more than they were able to in the time allotted.

We made reflective notes throughout the process of interviewing all of the participants. Once all the interviews had been completed and transcribed, we spent time reading over them to identify themes. Each theme was then given a code, and all interview transcriptions were coded accordingly.

Only themes that came up for a significant number of participants were selected for further exploration. For each theme that was chosen, we explored what each participant had said that was relevant to that theme, and pulled quotes that particularly exemplified the trends. In the process of writing up these findings, some themes have been merged into one, as they are closely related and/or are mutually reinforcing.

At the end of the study, all participants were invited to a presentation of the findings and given an opportunity to comment on them. Five of the participants were able to make the meeting, and the consensus was that the findings felt like a good reflection of their views and experiences.

The vast majority of the interview questions were very open. This was an intentional choice, as we did not want to lead participants to talk about particular topics – we wanted them to talk about what was significant to them, within the confines of talking about their faith and life on their frontlines.

# Application

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Readers might wonder why certain topics are not present here, such as climate change, racial justice, the cost of living, and debates around gender and sexuality. These interviews were very much focused on the participants' personal frontlines and the ways in which they are thinking about and living on these frontlines as disciples. In that context, with a few exceptions, these subjects did not arise in the course of the conversations. But just because a topic did not arise, that doesn't mean it isn't significant for these individuals; just that they did not think about it or raise it in the conversation.

This was an exploration of the faith and lives of 18–35-year-olds, but that does not mean the issues covered are exclusively the experience and concerns of this age group. Many of their thoughts, feelings, and experiences will overlap with those of Christians both older and younger than themselves. What we can say with confidence is that these issues are significant to them, but not necessarily exclusively so. Though much is made of differences between generations, there is always substantial overlap between them, as well as differences.

A man with a beard, wearing a red baseball cap and a tan work shirt, is looking down at a clipboard in his hands. He is in a warehouse or industrial setting, with metal shelving units visible in the background. The lighting is soft and focused on the man.

FINDINGS PART ONE:

**What matters  
to 18–35-year-old  
disciples?**

**What are they  
doing well?**

# They are an *enriching* and *positive* presence.

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18–35s are doing a great job of making a positive difference on their frontlines, and it's something they see as significant. It came up in almost every conversation.

As a collective, they strongly embody the first five of the 6Ms (see below), and also do quite a good job of the sixth – evangelism. They describe displaying many of the characteristics of Christ and the fruits of the Spirit. They really love the people around them – both in emotion and action. Their concern for friends and colleagues goes beyond merely wanting them to be happy: they expressed a desire for people's overall wellbeing, including emotional, relational, and spiritual wellbeing.

## The 6Ms of Fruitfulness

- 1) Modelling godly character
- 2) Making good work
- 3) Ministering grace and love
- 4) Moulding culture
- 5) Being a Mouthpiece for truth and justice
- 6) Being a Messenger of the gospel

## Examples:

- Not complaining or gossiping about a really difficult boss, even though his colleagues spent a lot of time doing this – and what they were saying was true.
- A student doctor recognising there are things the 'proper doctors' don't always have time to do, and then taking the initiative to do those things that make a significant difference to patients, like taking time to explain to an elderly patient who might be confused about what the doctor has said.
- A mum with a baby who recognises her weekly visit to the supermarket is a time to show grace and love to her fellow shoppers.
- A postdoctoral student who sees the break room as a place to bring truth and justice into discussions when people are being unfair or one-sided.
- Someone who is part of a regular martial arts class, who recognises the way many of the guys speak about women is disrespectful and dehumanising. He is seeking to change the culture by speaking about women in a much more respectful way.

## Counterpoint:

There were a few comments about participants feeling like they aren't living particularly distinctively or obviously Christianly in their contexts (though, interestingly, two of them are people referenced above as positive examples!). One said they weren't sure you'd be able to pick her out from the crowd. Another said beyond being an interested student, she wasn't sure people would notice much different about her compared to anyone else in hospital. And the guy doing a year in industry talked about how he moans to other people about being given pointless jobs.

**...but they aren't  
always confident  
about it.**

# Their *relationships* really matter to them.

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Whatever questions we asked about their frontlines, 18–35s' responses almost always came back to their relationships. They speak about their friends and colleagues with great affection, even when they recognise brokenness and sin within these people.

They place a strong emphasis on building healthy relationships with the people around them, and are proactive in seeking the good of others. Interestingly, because their relationships matter to them so much, this can make evangelism hard for them. They worry that if they offend their friends, or if their friends think they are weird, or that they have an agenda, this could lead to breakdown in the relationship.

## Examples:

- One participant talked about the importance of creating space for good conversations with her friends during exercise times, such as going for a bike ride or climbing. It's a significant aspect of taking part in those activities, and she is very deliberate in trying to encourage people and create a safe space for them to talk.
- A participant who works in a café talked fondly about her customers and how she loves to connect with them and show love to them through hospitality.
- A student talked about the times he spends talking to fellow students before and after class and how these are significant times of connection. For him, it was important to be kind, respectful, and to find points of agreement with them, even when he disagreed with them.
- Interviewer: *'If God was doing your quarterly review, what do you think he would say about you as a Christian in the workplace?'* GP: *'I think it would be how well I love my patients, and how much they feel valued and heard and seen when they consult with me.'*

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## Counterpoint:

Three of the participants talked about maintaining distinctions between work colleagues and friends – they articulated some desire to keep 'work' and 'life' separate. Interestingly though, all three of these talked positively about times they connect with their colleagues and one of them was in the process of arranging to invite a colleague over to her house for dinner.

**...but sometimes  
they still keep a  
distance at work.**



# They are psychologically aware.

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Throughout these conversations, all participants demonstrated a high degree of psychological awareness. They think of themselves and those around them in psychological terms.

We live in times where the field of psychology influences many areas, such as marketing, recruitment, management, and discussions in the mainstream media and on social media. It's the air they have grown up breathing. They inhabit the age that American sociologist Philip Rieff labelled 'psychological man'.

Participants used psychological language to describe themselves in many ways: their strengths and weaknesses, things they do and don't enjoy, environments they are most or least likely to thrive in, and the ways they are most likely to have a positive impact on people around them. We didn't sense they were using labels to make excuses, nor to limit their possibilities. It was more that they were wanting to live and serve in areas in which God has wired them for, or they were recognising areas that were especially hard for them and where they might need support.

## Examples:

- *'I'm a very extroverted person... I don't work as well at home; I'm more easily distracted. I find it really exhausting to be alone all the time, as an extrovert. And the combination of all those things means I suit working in an office really well.'*
- [Talking about working from home] *'I'm quite introverted, so that kind of served me in that sense, in that I could just stay at home, get my work done, be in my pyjamas kind of thing. But to be doing that for a long period of time wasn't good for my mental health. I would say a double-edged sword, that one.'*
- The martial artist shared how he's naturally quiet, and that he uses his heart for people and his listening skills to create space for people to share what's going on in their lives.
- The postdoctoral student said he is very emotion-led and that he often prays God will help him manage his emotions and give him the right emotions to respond to situations. He shared how he is able to use his emotional energy to draw out people in conversations who might normally be a bit shy or awkward.

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## Counterpoint:

Around half of participants talked about mental health issues. Most were talking about themselves, though some also talked about supporting friends with mental health challenges. Mental health is very much at the forefront of their minds. It was often talked about in the context of work – mainly how their work impacts their mental health. Most mentioned practical steps they have taken, such as speaking to their managers, making lifestyle changes, and even changing roles.

**...but they still struggle with their mental health.**

# They are conscientious contributors.

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Whether talking about their studies, their relationships, or their work, the vast majority of participants exhibited high levels of conscientiousness: they apply conscious effort to what they are doing and take it very seriously.

In the interviews, participants would often speak with great satisfaction when talking about ways they have been able to make a contribution – whether to their workplace, their colleagues, or to their customers, clients, or patients. This seemed to be one of the main things that made them happy. The inverse was true for times where they felt they were being prevented from making their best contribution.

## Examples:

- A therapist described how she takes more notes than required, partly to help her do a better job of spotting possible themes between sessions, and partly in the unlikely event her notes were required for legal reasons.
- A checkout assistant who pays special attention to customers and doesn't try to rush them along as quickly as possible, even during acutely busy times.
- A worker within a charity who makes particular effort to ensure great services are offered to young people from disadvantaged backgrounds – and gets very frustrated when he feels others in the organisation don't always deliver excellence.
- *'As a medical student, you spend most of your time either in the library or on the ward, generally being ignored and trying not to get in the way of very important doctors who are trying to save people's lives. You spend a lot of your time being ignored, and you're not ever really part of the team. The best day for me as a medical student is where I get to be helpful.'*
- *'I felt useless at the start, as you start to build up skills, you feel like you can't contribute. I understand I'm here to develop myself, but I never want to just do something for the sake of getting better at it – I want to contribute to the company... Being a helpful person... [Sometimes my team leader gives me] silly things to do, and I don't like that.'*

# Their *personal relationships* are the main influences on their discipleship.

Participants place a strong value on the support, wisdom, encouragement, and prayer of other Christians – both their peers and those older than them.

Partway through the interview, we would ask participants a question like this: ‘You’ve described some of the ways you’re living out your faith in everyday life, and it sounds like you’re doing X, Y, and Z really well. What are some of the things that help you to be this kind of person and to keep living this way?’ With very few exceptions, their answers included some kind of relational input, and this tended to be the first thing they thought of.

Examples they mentioned include small groups, parents, friends, spouses, church leaders or ministry leaders, and mentors or role models. This came out in participants’ feedback after their interviews as well: most of them expressed thanks for the conversation, and talked about how it had been really useful to have somebody ask them questions about their life in their faith. It facilitated time for them to think out loud and reflect.

## Examples:

- *‘Having friends who are trying to be authentic in the places they are working in – you can talk quite openly about the difficulties you’re facing in those places... It is helpful to have people who are older than you and have more life experience, but also people who are going through the same life experience, so that you can talk through things together and work out things together.’*
- *‘The basis of our friendship is mutual encouragement and discipleship, so it’s kind of at the foundation of our relationship, which means in our messages we talk about prayer or talk about God’s hand in the situation.’*
- *‘They [leaders of the young adults’ group] are really good, and that keeps me going – knowing that there are other young Christians who are at work like me, or who are at uni – that type of thing, who go through challenges and stuff. It’s encouraging to know that you’re not by yourself. I get a lot of support from that and a lot out of that... When I meet with the lads in the morning, it sets the tone for the day. And you pray for those lads, because they have things they’re facing in their day-to-day life. But also knowing they’ve prayed for you is really, really encouraging.’*

## Counterpoint:

After relationships, their next biggest inputs were spiritual practices – particularly Bible study and prayer. The way they spoke implied a high view of Scripture, and at least half the sample mentioned the Bible.

*‘I think that’s the power of the Bible. It’s living. It really is. It stimulates so much conversation.’*

*‘Every time I read [God’s] word there’s always something that speaks to me in one sense or the other. So reading the word is definitely something that helps me.’*

**...but Bible study and prayer are also significant.**

# They primarily relate to God as *shepherd or father.*

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Participants talked a lot about God's goodness, his provision, their sense that he is guiding them through life, that he comforts them in their struggles and hurts, that he's strong, and that he's shaping them.

Though they only directly referred to God as father on a couple of occasions, and no specific reference was made to God as shepherd, the lens through which they view God, and the way they relate to him is consistent with those two metaphors.

## Examples:

- *'Sometimes I really do feel God saying "don't worry, you've got this, and I've got you, it's fine".'*
- *'Sometimes you get a bit doubtful of your own ability and skill, so trusting that God has put me in this place and that he has opened the doors to lead me to this point. When impostor syndrome sets in, it's turning back to God. I know you speak your truths over me, so I'll choose to believe those.'*
- *'I think a lot of my relationship with God has helped me with that, because it's given me a sense of peace in times of – you know, I've seen that when people are waiting for results very anxiously. And I said to my supervisors "I'm not worried about it; it will come when it comes".'*
- *'Being God, and being my Father, I think he would say that he loves me and that he is very pleased with me. Because that's what he's like.'*



FINDINGS PART TWO:

**What questions  
are 18–35-year-old  
disciples asking?**

**What are they  
struggling with?**

 theCrucial  
believes. grow. serve. hope. life. well.

# How do I *share my faith* without losing my friends?

We did not ask about sharing faith, yet it came up in virtually every conversation. It predominately came up when we asked about what they think God would say to them if he were doing their quarterly review, any challenges they are facing, how they would like to grow, or areas in which they would like support. Sharing faith is a big deal for them.

Because they care so much about relationships, and because they are very aware of other's feelings and relational dynamics, they worry that if they say too much about their faith, it could make people feel uncomfortable and jeopardise their relationship.

Within the sample of 20, there were gradations of ability and heart for sharing the gospel. We would describe two participants as 'evangelists' – those who have made very deliberate choices to regularly and intentionally share their faith. At the other end of the spectrum, there are two or three who said they don't really share their faith. Many display a reticence in their evangelism, but most, perhaps even all, recognise talking about their faith is an important part of being a disciple of Jesus. Some explicitly stated it's the most important thing we can do as Christians. They would like wisdom in knowing how to talk about their faith and have less fear in doing so. They want to have good conversations about Jesus that won't weaken their relationships. This is an area in which they would like to grow.

## Sub-questions:

- How do I share my faith in busy environments not conducive to conversation?
- How do I share my faith in places 'where God isn't allowed', e.g. within the NHS?

## When answering this question, keep in mind:

- They're probably doing a good job of representing Jesus where they are (see first five Ms on page 6).
- Their relationships really, really matter to them.
- They are very aware of themselves and of others at a psychological and emotional level.
- People close to them know they are Christians.
- They've probably said something on their frontline about their faith, subtly or openly.
- The most common response of non-Christians on their frontlines could best be defined as 'positive indifference' – not hostile, but not that interested either.

## Examples:

- *'Sometimes I think I would like to be braver in representing those ideas at work – less afraid of standing out in that respect.'*
- [About taking conversations deeper] *'I think a lot of it would be a fear about what they would think, or if they would become uncomfortable.'*
- Speaking in the context of having a really good opportunity to talk about her faith, but choosing in the moment not to take it: *'Why am I so scared to share God with her? I love her... But I'm worried it's going to ruin our friendship!'*

# How do I *find* purpose in my actual work?

We asked specifically about finding purpose in their work in most interviews – though issues connected to purpose came up at other points as well. Although participants found purpose in their work, most participants did not articulate finding purpose in the actual work itself, though many are ‘making good work’.

They most commonly find purpose in their work by seeing work situations as opportunities to live distinctively as Christians, and to be loving in the ways they interact with others. In this sense, they primarily see work as a platform to witness to others through their character and behaviour.

Those who were able to identify God’s purposes in the actual work itself were those who could see how their work directly benefited others (particularly those working in healthcare, or helping the environment). Those in other domains – such as tech, design, and accounting – were less able to articulate God’s purpose for them in the actual work.

## Examples:

- *‘I was talking to my mum, and I said to her I love my work, but I also don’t know what eternal worth my tours have. What am I doing? I’m taking people around [location] for two hours and giving them a good time and entertaining them and giving them a good laugh. And that’s great, but what eternal worth does that have? Eternally what does that matter? And my mum says – which really stuck with me and this is where my adventure started a few months ago – she said, “Well, if you do it to the glory of God, then it does have eternal worth”. And that really stuck with me, because it’s so obvious, but it’s so subtle. If I do what I do – if I tell funny stories, and I do it all for the glory of God, then what I do does have eternal significance.’ [She went on to share several stories of ways that she is making a difference in that particular place]. (Tour guide)*
- Interviewer: *‘Do you think God has purpose for you in the work you do?’* Participant: *‘I don’t know [said in a pretend crying voice]... I really feel in my heart he has something better, something different. So, I see I can have purpose in the way I serve in this role, but the actual role – I don’t think so.’ (Accountant)*

# How can I establish healthy rhythms?

A significant number of participants shared examples of how they have made an intentional effort to build rhythms into their life, including both spiritual practices and more broadly healthy lifestyle habits. Lifestyle habits included intentional times to: exercise, spend time with friends, spend time outdoors, engage in recreational activities and creative pursuits, eat well, stay hydrated, and get enough sleep.

Spiritual practices they were pursuing included:

- Reading the Bible
- Prayer
- Reflection and meditation
- Meeting with other Christians

They talked about their underlying motivation in terms of physical and mental wellbeing. Because they are so aware of issues around wellbeing, stress, mental health, and work-life balance, spiritual practices and healthy habits seem to be good points to connect with them. They also recognise the impact habits have on their relationship with God and how they show up their frontlines. They don't need to be convinced these things are important: motivation seemed quite high, though they described varying levels of actual habit-forming success. They are already doing some of these things, and they would like to grow further, developing new habits and strengthening existing ones.

## Examples:

- *'I can foresee when [being around people all the time] could be a problem, and I manage it by going for a run by myself, so it doesn't become a problem. And then I can feel like I can be fully present and engage with people again.'*
- *'My own personal prayer time and personal times of worship as well. I find that God really strengthens me.'*
- One participant talked about the struggles of adapting to full-time work – how he is often tired, and struggles to switch between home mode and work mode. He talked about how he used to go to the gym, but that's fallen by the way. He expressed a desire to have better routines in his life.
- *'I'm somebody who's always on the go, so I really appreciate and value being able to exercise, being able to move, kind of having achievements and targets... I also really connect to God with nature when I'm outside, so I suppose tying my love of movement to the fact that I exercise... I think person it helps me to connect with God.'*



# How do I stay human in an inhuman system?

A significant number of participants talked about struggles with their mental and emotional health, and specifically those caused by or contributed to by their work and workplace.

The types of struggles they reported include:

- Feeling tired, exhausted, or emotionally flat
- Feeling constrained by their roles, work environments, and processes
- Feeling like they can't serve customers/service users sufficiently due to constraints
- Not doing work that suits who they are, their abilities, interests, or things they relate to
- Not feeling known by colleagues – due to remote working or busy work environments
- Feeling anonymous and insignificant within big, impersonal organisations
- Lacking purpose – not seeing how their roles make a positive difference to others

Many participants also highlighted things that mitigate the challenges, like making the most of interactions with colleagues and customers, spiritual practices, healthy habits, supportive Christian networks and relationships, such as friends, small-group, and family, and focusing on their team, rather than the whole organisation.

One participant, who works in a call centre, provided rich insight into her struggles:

*'To be honest, my work is very stressful for me. I think the shifting goalposts and competing deadlines are stressful... I think stress for me looks like not sleeping well, I guess like the wheels start to fall off my life a little bit... I don't necessarily lose interest in the things I like doing, but I'm just too exhausted to contemplate doing them...It could be significantly less stressful, but the changes that would need to be made are way above my pay grade – and above my manager's pay grade, and above my manager's manager's pay grade. In terms of efficiency, there are some pain points that can't be seen further up the ladder...Sometimes, in the name of efficiency they don't see how they make our lives harder... I think a lot of companies have to be almost robotic in the way they're set up or it won't work. You know, the intricacies of the human experience do not translate well across huge companies.'* (Call centre worker)

## Examples:

- Talking about how she feels at the end of the work day: *'It's not like I'm upset about anything; I would say deflated... I just feel like I can't keep it up really any more. Like I'm just tired mentally, and just need time to be a bit flat... My job is all mental work, and I'm just tired.'* (Accountant)
- *'[Company name] is just massive; it's just overwhelming sometimes. Sometimes you can be in a Teams call and there's 400 people in it! Sometimes it's too much... I think it's a challenge of how do you find yourself within that.'* (Student in a year in industry)
- *'It's pretty soul-destroying really. It's so loud and bright. It is quite overwhelming and the workload is never-ending. Although I enjoy doing repetitive work, the same issues keep coming up over and over and over again, which need to be dealt with. You don't really get to talk to other colleagues beyond the general greetings...'* (Retail worker)

# How can I *make connections* with mentors and peers?

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Most participants talked about the positive influence of both their peers and those older than them. Some of them spoke very movingly about the impact of Christian friends and role models. When they described people who have influenced or supported them, they mentioned:

- Their character – they display love, humility, and integrity
- They are supportive, caring, and want the best for them
- They offer practical wisdom
- They sometimes have domain-specific knowledge and experience

When we asked participants how they might like an organisation to support them in their discipleship, the question tended to catch them on the back foot. But a number of participants said they would like opportunities to:

- Connect with other Christians more generally
- Connect with Christians in their age-category, sometimes specifying those who work in the same/similar fields
- Connect with older Christians who have domain-specific knowledge that they could share with them, and be supported by them

## Examples:

- *‘Something that helps me to get involved with something – I guess knowing that I’m not the only person. Even an event you hold... Where people get to network and hang out... Then you know you’re not the only one.’*
- *‘A phone call like this is fantastic, but you can’t do this for everyone in the country [laughs].’*
- *‘I think when you get people on the stage talking about their experience in their workspaces and how they are being a disciple of Jesus in different work spheres, that’s also very helpful to hear stop just hearing other people – they don’t have to be in the same workspace, just that they are called and that they are working for God in different environments.’*



# Three recommendations for young adult disciplemaking

# Recommendations and next steps

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## Listen to – and celebrate – young adults’ experiences.

Frustrated that young adults are flakey, too tired or too busy to serve at church? Let’s reframe that: young adults’ busy lives are the work of your church, scattered in the world Monday to Saturday, bringing salt and light across a multitude of frontlines. Let’s publicly tell their stories, encourage them, and pray for them. Have you considered integrating a practice like **This Time Tomorrow** into your regular church services?

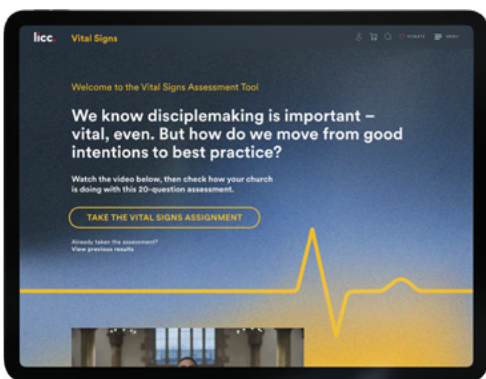
[licc.org.uk/ttt](http://licc.org.uk/ttt)



## Engage young adults’ questions.

We must take a holistic view of the gospel and its application to the questions young adults are asking. For too long, a sacred-secular divide has insidiously shaped our church cultures and gospel proclamation. Getting beyond this divide takes thought, intentionality, and commitment. But it starts with a manifesto: read and share Mark Greene’s essay **The Great Divide** to expand your vision of a gospel that speaks to the questions young adults are actually asking, not just the questions we wish they were.

[licc.org.uk/great-divide](http://licc.org.uk/great-divide)



## Foster interdependence in your church community.

‘Binding’, as in a rugby scrum, is a picture of up-close-and-personal interdependence, in which the whole is stronger than the parts. Mixed-age small groups, mentoring schemes, and contributions to meaningful leadership and decision-making are ways to ‘bind’ young adults to church. If you’re a church and ministry leader and want to strengthen your community in ways that involve young adults, use our free **Vital Signs** online assessment tool to gain a view on what you’re doing well already, as well as where there might be room for improvement.

[licc.org.uk/vital-signs](http://licc.org.uk/vital-signs)

# Appendix: Interview questions

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These interviews were conducted in a semi-structured way. These questions were a starting point.

## OPENING QUESTIONS

- During a typical week, where are some of the places you interact with people who aren't Christians?
- Out of those places, where do you think you most fully live out your faith?

## IF THEY CHOOSE A FRONTLINE THAT ISN'T WORK:

- Why did you choose that place?  
(If further prompt required: In what ways are you living out your faith in that place?)
- Why do you think this is the place where you are able to most fully live out your faith?
- What has helped you/is helping you to do that?
- Are there any particular challenges you are facing in this place, or any questions you find yourself wrestling with?
- Do you have much of a sense of what God's purpose for you in this place might be?
- Time permitting, shift the conversation to work (if they are not currently working, ask them about previous work experience, their experience of not being employed, and of job-hunting/working out what to do next. And if they haven't done any paid work yet, just ask about the second two of these three).
- To start with, can you say how you feel about your work generally?
- Do you think your faith makes a difference to how you think about your work and how you do your work? Explore why they've answered that way.
- [Preface question – recognising that they may or may not have reviews at work, that they might have different experiences of them, and also emphasising that God is gracious.] If God was doing your quarterly review, what do you think he would say about you as a Christian in the workplace?

- How would you like to grow as a Christian in your workplace?
- [Briefly explain LICC's mission] How do you think an organisation like LICC could help younger Christians to be the kinds of people they want to be at work?

## IF THEY CHOOSE WORK AS THEIR MOST FRUITFUL FRONTLINE:

- Can you say a little bit about your work – what a typical day or week looks like?
- How do you feel about your work?
- Do you think your faith makes a difference to how you think about your work and how you do your work? Explore why they've answered that way.
- [Preface question recognising that they may or may not have reviews at work, that they might have different experiences of them, and also emphasising that God is gracious.] If God was doing your quarterly review, what do you think he would say about you as a Christian in the workplace?
- To what extent do you have a clear sense of God's purpose for you in your work?
- Is there anything that has helped you/is helping you live out your faith more fully at work?
- What's it like being a Christian in your workplace? Are there any aspects of being a Christian at work you find particularly difficult, or are there things that make it hard for you to be who you want to be there?
- How would you like to grow as a Christian in your workplace?
- [Briefly explain LICC's mission.] How do you think an organisation like LICC could help younger Christians to be the kinds of people they want to be at work?



### Joe Warton

**Freelance researcher,  
writer, and coach**

Joe Warton was part of the LICC team for over 10 years, where he conducted research, gathered stories, and helped create resources. He now works as a freelance researcher, writer, and coach – who specialises in helping people connect their faith with their everyday life and work. You can find Joe on LinkedIn, or email him at [joe.warton@gmail.com](mailto:joe.warton@gmail.com).

## ABOUT LICC

# Imagine if every Christian lived their life as Jesus would.

It would change the world. But most Christians have neither the vision nor the tools for the task.

That's where LICC comes in. We're catalysing a movement that empowers Christians to live as disciples of Jesus in daily life.

Working with individuals, church leaders, and those who train them, we delve into the Bible, think hard about contemporary culture, and listen carefully to God's people.

What we do comes out of what we learn: resources, events, training, stories, and more – all to help people show the difference Jesus makes right where they are.