



centre for
public christianity

Suite 702, 121 Walker Street
North Sydney, NSW 2060, Australia
T +61 2 9955 0077
F +61 2 9955 0055
info@publicchristianity.org
www.publicchristianity.org

Towards the public understanding
of the Christian faith

New survey finds over half of Australians think Jesus rose from the dead

A survey commissioned by the Centre for Public Christianity (CPX) to coincide with the release of the *Life of Jesus* historical documentary has found that only 11% of Australians doubt that Jesus was a real historical figure and 42% believe he had divine powers, even though they don't call themselves 'born-again's'.

The figures have surprised the Directors of CPX, Dr John Dickson (an ancient historian) and Dr Greg Clarke (a literary scholar).

"On the one hand, I'm surprised that even 11% think Jesus never existed, because all mainstream historians say he did," says Dickson. "On the other hand, I was stunned to see that nearly half of Aussies (45.2%) who *aren't* 'born-again's' still believe that Jesus did rise from the dead". 53.8% of the total number surveyed think Jesus rose from the dead.

Greg Clarke thinks that *The Da Vinci Code* is probably to blame for the fact that only half of us (53.6%) know that the records of Jesus' life are found in the New Testament section of the Bible.

The survey by McCrindle Research took a representative sample of 2500 Australians to find out what we know about Jesus and Christianity.

This survey wanted to explore the understanding of average Australians, particularly non-church goers and so the results produced are from those who are non-religious, or of a religion other than Christianity, or may identify themselves with Christianity but are not evangelical or "born again" Christians.

Bizarrely, 31% of Australians think that Jesus lived 'B.C'—before he was born, so to speak. "It seems that we don't know where our dating system comes from!" says John Dickson.

Most Aussies have some idea of what Jesus taught, with around 90% saying it had something to do with love, peace or compassion. Most of us can identify famous sayings of Jesus, although a quarter (25.6%) think that Jesus, rather than Benjamin Franklin, said "God helps those who help themselves".

4% of Aussies confuse Easter with Christmas, but the majority of us know that Easter has something to do with the death of Jesus (57%) and his reported resurrection from the dead (87%).

The *Life of Jesus* documentary, which airs on Channel 7 at 1pm on Good Friday (10th April), unpacks what historians agree upon about Jesus' life, death and reported resurrection.

To interview John Dickson call 0419 416 327 or (02) 9955 0077

To interview Greg Clarke call 0432 541 113 or (02) 9955 0077

For a review copy of *Life of Jesus* DVD, call Vaughan Olliffe on (02) 9955 0077

Visit lifeofjesus.tv and publicchristianity.org for more information.

Contact McCrindle Research on 0411 500 090 or at www.mccrindle.com.au