

Federal Election 2007

Benchmark Poll

Religious Affiliation and voting intentions

Analysis by

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Politics and Religious Affiliation

Introduction

This section of the report looks at the quantitative data from our survey pertaining to Christians, and how it relates to the total sample, as well as non-Christians, and within Christian denominations.

It finds some striking similarities between Christians and non-Christians in the population, as well as some significant differences.

Executive Summary

Christian respondents demonstrate very similar demographic characteristics in age, gender, occupation and income to the total sample. However, they are more likely to vote for the Coalition across the sample, with Coalition support being strongest amongst the evangelical protestant churches. Catholics as a group are strong Labor supporters.

This sample picks up a larger percentage of evangelicals than are present in the general population.

While it is impossible to generalize across the entire sample of Christians on most issues, it does appear to be true, no matter how they vote, that they are concerned about issues of morality, and care and compassion. The reasons that they give for their voting intentions reflect this, even when they are voting in opposite directions. It also seems to be the case that the more frequently someone attends church, the more likely they are to give their vote to an independent party, rather than a mainstream one.

In general they also appear to be more concerned about the Labor Party because of its policies than the general public. However, they are very attracted to Kevin Rudd and the evangelical segment is also drawn to candidates of similar beliefs. Rudd's Christianity works in his favour, but Howard's appears not to work in his.

Key findings are:

1. Christian respondents share similar demographic characteristics to the total sample, including such markers as the over-representation of teachers as respondents.
2. Anglicans and Catholics are under-represented in the survey, with Pentecostals being significantly over-represented.
3. The distribution of Catholics by age is similar to the total sample, Anglicans and Uniting Church are older than average, and the evangelicals are younger than average.

4. Anglicans and Catholics are less likely to be regular attenders, and Uniting church the least regular. By contrast 60% of Pentecostals claim to attend more than once per week.
5. Catholics are strongly Labor (50%), Anglicans tend more towards the Coalition (32% Labor and 32% Coalition), Pentecostals are the home of Family First (36%), and Labor does poorly with the rest, although this does not reflect directly in an increase in the Liberal vote, but rather flows to parties like Family First and the Christian Democrats.
6. Catholics appear to be swinging against the government more strongly than the other denominations, apart from Baptists. Uniting are also above the norm, and Pentecostals the least likely to swing.
7. Howard is viewed favourably by Christians in general, although narrowly (51% approve, 41% disapprove). There are significant differences between denominations. Evangelicals are strongly approving, Anglicans almost evenly divided, Uniting Church strongly disapproving and Catholics very strongly disapproving.
8. Rudd is viewed favourably by Christians in general. The highest disapproval figure is 31% amongst Presbyterians, and the lowest 16% amongst Catholics.
9. The desire as to who should win the election runs in line with voting intentions.
10. Expectations also are for Labor to win, apart from amongst Pentecostals.
11. While our complete sample believes that religious values have no place in political debate, a majority of Christians disagree substantially (64%). However 48% of Catholics do think religious values have no place in political debate, and only 42% think they do.
12. Most Christians believe that Christian values have had a positive impact on society (73%). Catholics are least likely to agree (64%) and Pentecostals the most likely (100%).
13. Most people, Christian or otherwise, are neither more nor less likely to vote for someone from their faith community (treating Agnostics and Atheists as a "faith"). However, 25% of Atheists and 22% of Christians say they are more likely to vote for a fellow-traveller, while 6% and 3% respectively say that they are less likely.
14. This generalization is not true of evangelical Christians where 39% (Presbyterians) to 90% (Pentecostals) were more likely to vote for someone of the same religious persuasion.
15. The tendency to support co-religionists increased with the frequency of church attendance.
16. Public profession of faith made the total sample less likely to vote for most politicians. Only Christians were positive with evangelicals being more positive.
17. Kevin Rudd suffers less from his profession of Christianity than other comparable politicians such as Howard, Vaile, Beazley, Costello, Boswell and Fielding.
18. The gap between Howard and Rudd is largest amongst Churches of Christ, Uniting Church, Anglicans and Catholics. Howard narrows this gap amongst Baptists, Presbyterians and Pentecostals. Atheists, agnostics and Buddhists are also more tolerant of Rudd's Christianity than Howard's.

Demographics

Age and Gender

The Christian demographic by age and gender is virtually indistinguishable from the total sample. It is slightly older and slightly more male dominated.

Age	Christianity			Christianity Total	Sample Total	National totals
	Female	Male	Other			
15-24	1%	3%	0%	4%	4%	17%
25-34	4%	7%	0%	11%	12%	18%
35-44	7%	11%	0%	18%	18%	19%
45-54	10%	15%	0%	24%	24%	17%
55-64	9%	17%	0%	26%	26%	12%
65-74	5%	9%	0%	14%	12%	9%
75+	1%	2%	0%	2%	3%	11%
Grand Total	36%	63%	0%	100%	100%	100%

Occupation

Again, Christians appear to share a similar demographic to the total sample. There are no significant differences. Interestingly this includes the over-representation of certain groups, like teachers. This suggests that there might be a constant propensity across occupation groups to participate in these surveys in similar proportions irrespective of their other attributes.

Teachers tend to disproportionately vote Green or Labor in our samples. As teachers are generally supposed to be more left-wing than the general population, and as the sample tends towards the left, one explanation was that the over-representation was caused by a tendency of left-wing voters to be active in these sorts of surveys.

While Christian teachers are less left-wing than teachers in general, that they make up the same proportion of the Christian sample as they do the total sample suggests that teachers are more likely to fill these surveys in, irrespective of their political beliefs.

Count of Occupation	Religion	
Occupation	Christianity	Total
Accountant/Auditor	1%	1%
Administrative Assistant	3%	2%
Analyst	1%	1%
Architect	0%	0%
Artist/Musician/Actor/Entertainer	1%	1%
Associate	0%	0%
Broker/Trader/Advisor	1%	1%
CEO/President/Chairman	1%	1%
CFO/COO/CTO/CIO/CMO	0%	0%
Clergy	5%	3%
Clerical worker	2%	2%
Computer professional	2%	3%
Consultant	3%	3%
Director	2%	2%
Doctor	2%	1%
Educator/Teacher/Professor	13%	12%
Engineer	3%	2%
Entrepreneur	1%	1%
Government official	4%	4%
Health care worker (other than doctor)	4%	4%
Homemaker	4%	3%
I do not wish to answer	2%	3%
Lawyer/Judge	1%	1%
Manager	5%	5%
Military Officer	0%	0%
Other	9%	10%
Partner/Principal/Owner	2%	2%
Researcher	2%	3%
Retired	17%	16%

Sales Manager/Account Executive	1%	1%
Scientist	1%	1%
Service provider	1%	1%
Skilled laborer	1%	1%
Student	4%	4%
Supervisor	1%	0%
Technician	1%	1%
Writer/Editor	1%	2%
Grand Total	100%	100%

Income

Again, there are only negligible differences between the Christians and the total sample.

Income	Christianity	Total Sample	National
\$1-\$39	2%	2%	1%
\$40-\$79	2%	2%	2%
\$80-\$119	2%	2%	3%
\$120-\$159	2%	2%	5%
\$160-\$199	2%	2%	9%
\$200-\$299	7%	7%	12%
\$300-\$399	6%	6%	9%
\$400-\$499	7%	7%	8%
\$500-\$599	7%	7%	8%
\$600-\$699	7%	7%	6%
\$700-\$799	8%	8%	5%
\$800-\$999	13%	13%	7%
\$1,000-\$1,499	22%	21%	7%
\$1,500 or more	13%	15%	4%
Grand Total	100%		

State

Christians are slightly more over-represented in Queensland than the total sample, but the distribution is essentially the same.

State	Christianity	Total Sample	National
NSW	26%	28%	34%
NT	1%	1%	1%
QLD	37%	34%	19%
SA	5%	6%	8%
Tasmania	3%	2%	2%
VIC	14%	15%	25%
WA	12%	11%	10%
ACT	3%	3%	2%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%

Seat

This list displays seats in terms of the percentage of the Christian sample that comes from them and places a list of seats with the percentage that they represent of the total sample beside the first list. Both are sorted in descending order of percentages. While there are some differences between the two lists, they are remarkably close together, although the seat of Isaacs is missing entirely from the Christian list.

Seat	Christianity	Seat	Total Sample
Ryan	2.86%	Ryan	2.98%
Brisbane	2.54%	Griffith	2.66%
Griffith	2.54%	Brisbane	2.56%
Canberra	2.48%	Sydney	2.10%
Petrie	2.29%	Canberra	2.07%
Blair	1.91%	Fraser	1.68%
Fraser	1.78%	Adelaide	1.51%
Dickson	1.72%	Moreton	1.51%
Moreton	1.72%	Petrie	1.51%
Oxley	1.72%	Grayndler	1.47%
Longman	1.65%	Dickson	1.40%
Stirling	1.52%	Wide Bay	1.40%
Bennelong	1.33%	Blair	1.37%
Wide Bay	1.33%	Oxley	1.30%
Bonner	1.27%	Fisher	1.23%
Casey	1.21%	Melbourne	1.23%
Fisher	1.21%	Stirling	1.23%
Eden-Monaro	1.14%	Bradfield	1.19%
Groom	1.14%	Eden-Monaro	1.19%
Herbert	1.14%	Leichhardt	1.19%
Tangney	1.14%	Longman	1.19%
Berowra	1.08%	North Sydney	1.19%
Cowan	1.08%	Bonner	1.12%
Forde	1.08%	Fremantle	1.12%
Hasluck	1.08%	Lilley	1.12%
Hinkler	1.08%	Bennelong	1.09%
Bass	1.02%	Berowra	1.09%
Canning	1.02%	Macquarie	1.09%
Lilley	1.02%	Melbourne	1.09%
Sydney	1.02%	Ports	1.09%
Bradfield	0.95%	Perth	1.09%
Hume	0.95%	Forde	1.05%
Leichhardt	0.95%	Wentworth	0.98%
Maranoa	0.95%	Herbert	0.95%
Swan	0.95%	Kingsford	0.95%
		Smith	0.95%
		Batman	0.91%

Adelaide	0.89%	Boothby	0.91%
Capricornia	0.89%	Fairfax	0.91%
Cunningham	0.89%	Groom	0.91%
Deakin	0.89%	Hinkler	0.91%
Forrest	0.89%	Cunningham	0.88%
Moncrieff	0.89%	Forrest	0.88%
Bowman	0.83%	Sturt	0.88%
Fairfax	0.83%	Hume	0.84%
Fremantle	0.83%	Maranoa	0.84%
Gilmore	0.83%	Tangney	0.84%
Perth	0.83%	Casey	0.77%
Braddon	0.76%	Calare	0.74%
Macquarie	0.76%	Capricornia	0.74%
Mitchell	0.76%	Newcastle	0.74%
Moore	0.76%	Bowman	0.70%
North Sydney	0.76%	Canning	0.70%
Ballarat	0.70%	Curtin	0.70%
Calare	0.70%	Kooyong	0.70%
Franklin	0.70%	McPherson	0.70%
McPherson	0.70%	Bendigo	0.67%
Melbourne			
Ports	0.70%	Cowper	0.67%
Parkes	0.70%	Denison	0.67%
Pearce	0.70%	Franklin	0.67%
Fadden	0.64%	Hasluck	0.67%
Kennedy	0.64%	Jagajaga	0.67%
New England	0.64%	Kennedy	0.67%
Paterson	0.64%	Moncrieff	0.67%
Richmond	0.64%	Moore	0.67%
Warringah	0.64%	Pearce	0.67%
Charlton	0.57%	Cowan	0.63%
Chisholm	0.57%	Hindmarsh	0.63%
Dawson	0.57%	Richmond	0.63%
Gwydir	0.57%	Swan	0.63%
Kingsford			
Smith	0.57%	Ballarat	0.60%
Lindsay	0.57%	Bass	0.60%
Lowe	0.57%	Deakin	0.60%
Newcastle	0.57%	Gilmore	0.60%
Rankin	0.57%	Mayo	0.60%
Bendigo	0.51%	Warringah	0.60%
Boothby	0.51%	Chisholm	0.56%
Denison	0.51%	Dawson	0.56%
		New	
Grayndler	0.51%	England	0.56%
Kooyong	0.51%	Rankin	0.56%
O Connor	0.51%	Wills	0.56%
Port Adelaide	0.51%	Brand	0.53%
Wentworth	0.51%	Lowe	0.53%
Banks	0.44%	Mitchell	0.53%
Cook	0.44%	Fadden	0.49%

Corangamite	0.44%	Paterson	0.49%
Curtin	0.44%	Braddon	0.46%
Kingston	0.44%	Charlton	0.46%
Makin	0.44%	Goldstein	0.46%
Maribyrnong	0.44%	Gwydir	0.46%
Melbourne	0.44%	Lindsay	0.46%
Solomon	0.44%	Makin	0.46%
Sturt	0.44%	Parkes	0.46%
Brand	0.38%	O Connor	0.42%
		Port	
Cowper	0.38%	Adelaide	0.42%
Goldstein	0.38%	Solomon	0.42%
Greenway	0.38%	Cook	0.39%
Hindmarsh	0.38%	Indi	0.39%
Hughes	0.38%	Kingston	0.39%
Indi	0.38%	Lyne	0.39%
Lyne	0.38%	Page	0.39%
Macarthur	0.38%	Riverina	0.39%
Mayo	0.38%	Wakefield	0.39%
Menzies	0.38%	Dunkley	0.35%
Page	0.38%	Higgins	0.35%
Riverina	0.38%	Kalgoorlie	0.35%
Robertson	0.38%	Mackellar	0.35%
Wakefield	0.38%	Maribyrnong	0.35%
Wills	0.38%	Barton	0.32%
Aston	0.32%	Corangamite	0.32%
Bruce	0.32%	Flinders	0.32%
Dunkley	0.32%	Greenway	0.32%
Gippsland	0.32%	Hughes	0.32%
Kalgoorlie	0.32%	Murray	0.32%
Lalor	0.32%	Shortland	0.32%
Murray	0.32%	Aston	0.28%
Parramatta	0.32%	Barker	0.28%
Throsby	0.32%	Gippsland	0.28%
Barton	0.25%	La Trobe	0.28%
Blaxland	0.25%	Lalor	0.28%
Farrer	0.25%	Macarthur	0.28%
Higgins	0.25%	Parramatta	0.28%
Holt	0.25%	Banks	0.25%
Hunter	0.25%	Corio	0.25%
Lingiari	0.25%	McEwen	0.25%
Lyons	0.25%	McMillan	0.25%
McMillan	0.25%	Robertson	0.25%
Reid	0.25%	Throsby	0.25%
Barker	0.19%	Bruce	0.21%
Corio	0.19%	Dobell	0.21%
Dobell	0.19%	Gellibrand	0.21%
Flinders	0.19%	Grey	0.21%
Grey	0.19%	Hunter	0.21%
Hotham	0.19%	Lingiari	0.21%
Jagajaga	0.19%	Menzies	0.21%

Mackellar	0.19%	Reid	0.21%
Wannon	0.19%	Blaxland	0.18%
Werriwa	0.19%	Farrer	0.18%
Batman	0.13%	Hotham	0.18%
Chifley	0.13%	Lyons	0.18%
La Trobe	0.13%	Wannon	0.18%
McEwen	0.13%	Chifley	0.14%
Shortland	0.13%	Holt	0.14%
Calwell	0.06%	Werriwa	0.14%
Fowler	0.06%	Fowler	0.11%
Gellibrand	0.06%	Isaacs	0.11%
Gorton	0.06%	Calwell	0.07%
Mallee	0.06%	Gorton	0.04%
Prospect	0.06%	Mallee	0.04%
Watson	0.06%	Prospect	0.04%
Grand Total	100.00%	Watson	0.04%
		Grand Total	100.00%

Religious Belief

This table compares the percentages expressing religious belief in our survey to the national figures from the ABS Census. Our total sample under-represents Christians. There is a complication in that the ABS does not distinguish between atheism and agnosticism. 15% of Australians say they have “no religion” meaning according to the ABS note that it “[i]ncludes 'No religion nfd', 'Agnosticism', 'Atheism', 'Humanism' and 'Rationalism’”. A further 10% do not state a religion. This makes the ABS figures problematic as it is possible that some of the 10% are in fact religious but do not want to make a declaration in their return.

Religion	Sample	National
Agnostic	14%	
Atheist	21%	
Buddhism	2%	2%
Christianity	59%	67%
Hinduism	0%	1%
Islam	0%	1%
Judaism	1%	0%
Other religion	3%	0%
Grand Total	100%	

Denomination

This table compares the percentages in each denomination in our survey against the national figures from the ABS Census. This indicates that Catholics are heavily under-represented in our survey, followed by Anglicans. Baptists, Churches of Christ and Pentecostals are heavily over-represented.

Count of Denomination		
Denomination	Total	
Anglican	19%	30%
Baptist	12%	2%
Catholic	23%	39%
Church of Jesus Christ of LDS	1%	0%
Churches of Christ	5%	0%
Congregational	0%	
Greek Orthodox	0%	
Lutheran	1%	2%
Other	8%	
Pentecostal	16%	2%
Presbyterian	7%	5%
Russian Orthodox	0%	
Salvation Army	1%	1%
Seventh-day Adventist	0%	0%
Uniting	8%	10%
Grand Total	100%	

Voting Intention

Vote if an election was held next weekend.

Christians tend to be more likely to vote Liberal, National, Christian Democrats, and Family First than the total sample. They are also less likely to vote Greens and Labor, and slightly more likely to be undecided.

First_Pref	All Christians	Total Sample
Christian		
Democrats	11%	7%
Democrats	2%	3%
Family First	12%	9%
Greens	11%	18%
I haven't decided	7%	5%
Independent	2%	3%
Labor	29%	32%
Liberal	22%	19%
National	5%	4%
Grand Total	100%	100%

Christian vote by denomination

We have dissected this vote by denomination. There are some interesting divergences between the denominations. Moderately frequent Anglican church-goers are the most likely to vote Liberal, with those who go more than once a week the least likely. Labor support amongst Anglicans is most likely amongst least frequent church-goers. The highest frequency church-goers are more inclined towards the Greens and smaller parties such as Family First and the Christian Democrats.

Other patterns are evident amongst the other denominations. In general it appears that the smaller protestant churches exhibit a greater tendency to vote Liberal and a lesser tendency to vote Labor with more frequent church attendance, except for those who go more than once a week. This last group seems more inclined to also take their vote to the smaller political parties.

First_Pref	Anglican	Baptist	Catholic	Church of Christ	Pentecostal	Presbyterian	Uniting	Total
Christian								
Democrats	3%	17%	1%	14%	16%	21%	1%	5%
Democrats	4%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	4%	3%
Family First	1%	14%	2%	0%	37%	3%	0%	4%
Greens	16%	7%	14%	0%	0%	9%	16%	13%
I haven't	6%	0%	9%	0%	5%	15%	3%	7%

decided								
Independent	0%	3%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Labor	38%	28%	55%	57%	5%	24%	41%	41%
Liberal	23%	21%	10%	14%	32%	18%	22%	18%
National	9%	10%	4%	14%	5%	9%	12%	8%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Preferences

48 percent of Christians favour the Coalition to win, with 40 percent favouring Labor. Labor's strongest support is amongst Catholics, followed by Uniting Church and Anglicans. Pentecostals are the biggest supporters of the Coalition, followed by Presbyterians, Baptists and Churches of Christ.

Count of Preference	Preference			Grand Total
	Coalition	I haven't decided	Labor	
Anglican	40%	13%	47%	100%
Baptist	64%	11%	26%	100%
Catholic	25%	11%	65%	100%
Churches of Christ	63%	12%	25%	100%
Pentecostal	73%	13%	13%	100%
Presbyterian	66%	13%	21%	100%
Uniting	33%	14%	53%	100%
Grand Total	48%	12%	40%	100%

Preference versus first preference vote last election

These tables give the best guide to who is most likely to swing. I've commented after each table. What this shows is that the Christian vote is possibly slightly more likely to swing than the sample as a whole. 34% of those who preferred Liberal last election will either preference Labor this election, or are undecided. In the total sample this figure is 31%.

Last election	Coalition	I haven't decided	Labor	Grand Total
Christian				
Democrats	85%	15%	0%	100%
Democrats	8%	6%	86%	100%
Family First	55%	25%	20%	100%
Greens	3%	5%	93%	100%
I don't recall	14%	36%	50%	100%
Independent	19%	21%	60%	100%
Labor	2%	6%	92%	100%
Liberal	67%	14%	20%	100%
National	83%	9%	9%	100%
Other	25%	13%	63%	100%
Grand Total	20%	9%	71%	100%

Heading in the right direction?

Christians generally have similar concerns to other voters, but with subtly different emphases. They are interested in the Economy over Change. They have a similar interest in People to the entire sample. They are more interested in Values (40% more).

The major points are:

1. Two big issues are also “Economy” and “Change”.
2. Christians much more likely to cite “Economy” than the total (18.4% v 10%)
3. Christians also associate “Economy” with “strong”. They also associate it with “low”, which generally refers to unemployment or interest rates.
4. As with the broad group there is a tendency to see the economy and the environment as being in opposition to each other.
5. “Change” also refers to climate change. It is mostly a Labor and Greens concept.
6. It is also associated with Education, Iraq, War, Water, Industrial (relations) and Economy.

Issues

Christians have similar concerns to general voters, but they are broader in nature and less focussed on the environmental issues.

Major points:

1. Themes are “Values”, “Water” and “People”. “Water” is less central, indicating that they have a broader suite of issues that concern them than the general populace.
2. “Water” is mentioned most frequently, followed by “Change” (climate change). They also rank the economy fairly highly – more highly than Labor voters, but less than Liberals.
3. “People” is linked to a wide variety of issues. Previous research indicates that it is a proxy for caring about consequences of actions. The word is normally more frequently used by Labor voters than Liberals (6.7% to 4.7% in the total sample). It essentially replaces “poor” in the larger sample. Suggests that Christians are less concerned about how wealthy individuals are, and more concerned about a broader range of issues.
4. They are slightly less interested in the economy than the total sample, but twice as likely to mention “family”.

Approvals

Howard is more approved of by Christians than the total sample, however Catholics and Uniting Church members are net disapproving.

Howard_Approve	Anglican	Baptist	Catholic	Churches of Christ	Pentecostal	Presbyterian	Uniting	Grand Total
Approve	22%	40%	11%	46%	46%	42%	18%	29%
Disapprove	14%	13%	18%	8%	10%	12%	17%	14%
I do not wish to answer	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%
Neither approve nor disapprove	9%	9%	6%	10%	5%	7%	10%	8%
No opinion	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Strongly approve	22%	27%	14%	25%	33%	26%	15%	22%
Strongly disapprove	33%	9%	51%	11%	6%	12%	39%	27%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Approve	44%	68%	25%	71%	79%	68%	33%	51%
Total Disapprove	47%	22%	69%	19%	15%	24%	56%	41%
Net Approve	-3%	46%	-45%	52%	64%	44%	-23%	10%

All denominations approve of Rudd on a net basis. Catholics and Uniting Church approval ratings are similar to their disapproval ratings for Howard, and the undecided portion is larger. Rudd has a clear advantage here.

Rudd_Approve	Anglican	Baptist	Catholic	Churches of Christ	Pentecostal	Presbyterian	Uniting	Grand Total
Approve	43%	33%	45%	38%	31%	31%	46%	39%
Disapprove	9%	16%	8%	17%	19%	23%	15%	13%
I do not wish to answer	0%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Neither approve nor disapprove	16%	27%	18%	23%	30%	26%	15%	22%
No opinion	2%	2%	1%	1%	4%	2%	0%	2%
Strongly approve	19%	12%	20%	14%	6%	8%	17%	15%
Strongly disapprove	10%	9%	8%	6%	8%	8%	7%	8%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Approve	63%	44%	65%	52%	37%	39%	63%	53%
Total Disapprove	19%	25%	16%	23%	27%	31%	21%	22%
Net Approve	43%	20%	49%	30%	10%	7%	41%	31%

Hesitation Howard

Amongst Christian voters integrity appears to be the major issue affecting Howard. That, and a lack of humility.

Major points:

1. Howard's seen as being dishonest and arrogant. "Lies" is one major theme, and "Lack" another.
2. There is a third theme "Hesitation" as in "No hesitation". While Howard invokes strong anti-feelings, this category comprises those who favour him unequivocally.
3. Lack is coupled with a number of concepts "compassion", "vision", "interest", "honesty", "principles", "integrity", "morality". "Arrogance" is frequently associated with it. When it is used by Labor voters. It appears to be a judgement on his performance, where he has not come up to the mark. Possibly reflects the fact that he has been in power for so long and has made so many decisions which at some level or another has upset many respondents.
4. Liberal voters couple "lack" with a lack of "planning", "taxation reform", "direction".
5. Family First voters twin lack with mostly social issues. Howard has failed to pin the blame on the states for their obvious failures in health and education and this comes around on him in this context.

Verbatims:

"His increasing demonstration of political greed and expediency in the face of what would most benefit the Australian people"

"I don't believe that he has any idea how a normal family lives. He and the party are so out of touch with how the normal people survive."

"he comes across as having his own agenda and not listening to the people."

"he has failed to inspire individuals and created more selfish people"

Rudd Hesitation

Major themes with Christians are different. They're alarmed at the Labor Party (related to, but less specific than Unions) and a lack of various qualities they'd like to see in Rudd or attributes they'd like him to have.

Major points:

1. The major themes are "Lack", "Party" and "Values".
2. The Labor Party is associated with being un-Christian, bad for the economy, unions, gay rights, abortion, divorce.
3. Unions are a subset of "Party" and of particular concern to Liberal voters in the group. Similar concerns are reflected amongst Labor voters, but in smaller numbers.
4. Concerns about the economy seemed to also be tied to union control (not concern about interest rates). Liberals are 2.5 times more likely to worry about the economy than Labor voters.
5. "Lack" relates mostly to lack of experience (47.5% or references also contained "experience" and 10.6% contained "policies").
6. Rudd is generally respected for his Christianity, but there are doubts about his sincerity, given the company that he keeps, and his ability to act in a Christian way.

Verbatims:

"He worries me in regards to setting (& explaining) policy and fear he is a favourite of economic rationalisation (egs Dr Death when in Qld & the current ""magic"" green coal soln)" Labor

"Kevin Rudd is the only thing going for the labour party. They don't have a good track record for economic stability and good governance." Liberal

"...the Labour party policies are clearly anti-Christian (or they dont bother to reply when asked for a position on issues that matter to Christians), Kevin Rudd is a Christian... how is this going to work?" Family First

"Labour party policies are in general against the Christian ethic and in favour of unions and minority groups." Christian Democrat

"Based upon the behaviour and policies of the ALP led states, they can't be trusted on any ""moral"" issue. Even though Rudd professes to be a Christian, historically he has always voted along party lines on policies such as abortion, stem cell research etc."

Desires

These figures indicate that what Christian voters want to happen corresponds fairly closely with their voting intentions.

Desires	Churches							Grand Total
	Anglican	Baptist	Catholic	of Christ	Pentecostal	Presbyterian	Uniting	
Coalition	39%	62%	25%	62%	72%	61%	35%	47%
Labor	47%	25%	65%	27%	14%	23%	59%	41%
Neither (Hung Parliament)	6%	4%	5%	4%	5%	3%	3%	5%
Unsure	8%	9%	5%	7%	8%	13%	4%	7%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Expectations

All denominations, with the exception of Pentecostals, expect Labor to win, although a high percentage are unsure. This is in line with the general sample and is not particularly helpful to Labor as it makes them the front-runner.

Expectations	Anglican	Baptist	Catholic	Churches of Christ	Pentecostal	Presbyterian	Uniting	Grand Total
Coalition	23%	30%	23%	30%	38%	29%	23%	28%
Labor	51%	42%	54%	45%	29%	36%	51%	45%
Neither (Hung Parliament)	4%	7%	4%	7%	7%	8%	9%	6%
Unsure	22%	21%	19%	18%	25%	27%	17%	21%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Separation of Religious Values

The total sample agrees that religious values have no place in political debate.

Separation	Total
Agree	11%
Disagree	14%
Neither agree nor disagree	8%
Strongly agree	41%
Strongly disagree	25%
Unsure	1%
Grand Total	100%
Total Agree	52%
Total Disagree	39%
Net Agree	14%

However, Christians disagree.

Separation	Agnostic	Atheist	Buddhism	Christianity	Grand Total
Agree	15%	9%	10%	10%	11%
Disagree	7%	4%	13%	21%	15%
Neither agree nor disagree	9%	7%	8%	8%	8%
Strongly agree	67%	77%	68%	18%	39%
Strongly disagree	2%	2%	1%	43%	27%
Unsure	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Agree	82%	86%	78%	28%	49%
Total Disagree	9%	6%	14%	64%	42%
Net Agree	72%	80%	64%	-36%	7%

Catholics are the least likely to think that religious values have a place in political debate with the more evangelical protestant churches believing very strongly that they do have a place.

Separation	Anglican	Baptist	Catholic	Churches of Christ	Pentecostal	Presbyterian	Uniting	Grand Total
Agree	13%	3%	20%	4%	1%	7%	13%	10%
Disagree	20%	24%	19%	18%	23%	17%	27%	21%
Neither agree nor disagree	12%	5%	10%	6%	2%	3%	12%	8%
Strongly agree	24%	6%	28%	8%	1%	17%	29%	18%
Strongly disagree	29%	61%	22%	62%	72%	56%	18%	42%
Unsure	2%	0%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Agree	37%	10%	48%	12%	3%	23%	41%	28%
Total Disagree	49%	85%	42%	80%	95%	73%	45%	64%
Net Agree	-12%	-75%	6%	-68%	-92%	-50%	-4%	-36%

Christian Values Impact

The total sample believes that Christian values have had a beneficial impact, seeming to contradict the answer to the previous question. This suggests that they may have two different concepts of religious values in their mind when answering this question.

Values_Impact	Total
Negative	18%
Neither positive nor negative	25%
Positive	30%
Strongly negative	10%
Strongly positive	15%
Unsure	3%
Grand Total	100%
Total Positive	45%
Total Negative	27%
Net Positive	17%

The overall positive view of Christian values from the whole sample is created by the strong endorsement of them by Christians. Agnostics and Buddhists are on balance ambivalent, while Atheists believe on balance that they have been negative.

Values_Impact	Agnostic	Atheist	Buddhism	Christianity	Grand Total
Negative	21%	25%	24%	7%	16%
Neither positive nor negative	28%	36%	27%	16%	25%
Positive	32%	17%	27%	40%	31%
Strongly negative	12%	17%	10%	2%	9%
Strongly positive	3%	1%	10%	32%	16%
Unsure	3%	4%	2%	2%	3%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Positive	35%	18%	37%	72%	48%
Total Negative	34%	42%	34%	10%	25%
Net Positive	1%	-24%	2%	62%	23%

Every denomination affirms the benefits to our society of Christian values, including Catholics who wanted them excluded from public debate.

Values_Impact	Anglican	Baptist	Catholic	Churches of Christ	Pentecostal	Presbyterian	Uniting	Grand Total
Negative	13%	0%	9%	0%	0%	6%	5%	8%
Neither positive nor negative	13%	7%	22%	14%	0%	12%	15%	15%
Positive	42%	21%	45%	29%	14%	36%	51%	41%
Strongly negative	0%	0%	3%	14%	0%	3%	1%	2%
Strongly positive	30%	71%	19%	43%	86%	39%	26%	32%
Unsure	3%	0%	2%	0%	0%	3%	1%	2%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Positive	72%	93%	64%	71%	100%	76%	77%	73%
Total Negative	13%	0%	11%	14%	0%	9%	7%	9%
Net Positive	59%	93%	53%	57%	100%	67%	70%	64%

More likely to vote for someone of the same religious persuasion?

In general we tend to approve of people who are similar to us. 21% of total respondents were more likely to vote for someone of the same religious persuasion, most were indifferent one way or the other, and for some reason 6% were less likely.

Religion_Same	Total
Less likely	2%
More likely	12%
Much less likely	3%
Much more likely	10%
Neither more nor less likely	72%
Unsure	2%
Grand Total	100%
Total more likely	21%
Total less likely	6%
Net more likely	16%

We looked at this split into the different religions, viewing agnosticism and atheism as being species of religions. In this case Atheists and Christians were most likely to vote for a fellow-traveller and least likely to vote against. However, the vast majority of all groups were unmoved, one way or the other.

Religion_Same	Agnostic	Atheist	Buddhism	Christianity	Grand Total
Less likely	4%	1%	2%	2%	2%
More likely	10%	15%	10%	12%	12%
Much less likely	3%	4%	7%	2%	3%
Much more likely	5%	10%	5%	13%	10%
Neither more nor less likely	77%	67%	73%	69%	70%
Unsure	0%	2%	2%	2%	2%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total more likely	15%	25%	15%	26%	23%
Total less likely	7%	6%	10%	3%	5%
Net more likely	7%	19%	5%	22%	18%

However, there are significant differences within denominations. Anglicans and Uniting Church were fairly similar to the total sample, while Catholics were even less tribal. However, Pentecostals and Baptists heavily favoured co-religionists, with Churches of Christ and Presbyterians falling in the middle of the religious sample.

We also examined the results by frequency of attendance and found that those who attended most frequently were most likely to support co-religionists. As the more evangelical churches recorded higher frequencies of attendance, this result would be partly affected by this and in part may reflect their greater group identification.

Church Attendance of Candidate

Across the entire sample church attendance by a candidate made voters less inclined to vote for them.

Regular_Attender	Total
Much more likely	4%
More likely	5%
Neither more nor less likely	65%
Less likely	10%
Much less likely	14%
Unsure	2%
Grand Total	100%
Total more likely	9%
Total less likely	24%
Net more likely	-16%

This was particularly so amongst atheists and agnostics. Almost 50 percent of atheists would be less likely to vote for a church-goer.

Regular_Attender	Agnostic	Atheist	Buddhism	Christianity	Grand Total
Much more likely	0%	0%	2%	9%	5%
More likely	0%	0%	0%	11%	5%
Neither more nor less likely	68%	51%	68%	72%	65%
Less likely	15%	16%	10%	4%	10%
Much less likely	15%	29%	20%	3%	13%
Unsure	1%	4%	0%	1%	2%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total more likely	0%	0%	2%	20%	10%
Total less likely	30%	45%	29%	6%	23%
Net more likely	-30%	-45%	-27%	14%	-13%

Again there were significant differences between the denominations. Anglican, Catholic and Uniting church respondents were generally un-concerned, one way or the other. Pentecostals, Baptists and Churches of Christ were significantly more likely. However, amongst Churches of Christ there was also some resistance towards voting for co-religionists.

Attitudes toward particular politicians with religious beliefs

This table looks at how sympathetic the public religious positions of 8 separate ALP, Family First, Liberal and National Party politicians made them to the entire sample. Thinking of politicians and their religious views made voters less sympathetic towards them. The average position for Coalition politicians was around 60%, with Howard the least sympathetic on 68%. There were two Labor politicians in the sample – Beazley and Rudd. Beazley was viewed in this context unsympathetically by 47%, but Rudd by only 39%. Rudd stood out because 22% of voters said they were more likely to feel sympathetic towards him because of his religious views. For all other politicians the percentage was between 10 and 13 percent.

Sympathy	Howard	Rudd	Vaile	Costello	Beazley	Boswell	Fielding
1	7%	9%	4%	5%	4%	5%	8%
2	5%	12%	6%	8%	8%	5%	5%
3	19%	39%	31%	23%	41%	29%	20%
4	10%	13%	15%	13%	16%	14%	8%
5	57%	26%	44%	50%	32%	47%	59%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sympathetic	13%	22%	10%	13%	12%	10%	13%
Unsympathetic	68%	39%	59%	63%	47%	61%	66%
Net Sympathetic	-55%	-17%	-49%	-50%	-35%	-51%	-53%

Howard's biggest negatives were with Anglican, Baptist and Uniting Church respondents. Pentecostals were the most sympathetic towards him.

Rudd does best with Churches of Christ and worst with Catholics in net figures. However, the differentials between his ratings and Howard's are informative. Relatively speaking he is best off with Churches of Christ, followed by Uniting Church, Catholics and Anglicans. The gap is smaller amongst Baptists and Presbyterians, and Pentecostals.

Rudd	Anglican	Baptist	Catholic	Churches of Christ	Pentecostal	Presbyterian	Uniting	Grand Total
1	16%	23%	10%	60%	25%	14%	9%	14%
2	16%	23%	14%	0%	25%	18%	28%	19%
3	41%	31%	46%	40%	15%	43%	42%	41%
4	10%	8%	8%	0%	15%	7%	6%	8%
5	16%	15%	22%	0%	20%	18%	15%	18%
Grand Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Sympathetic	33%	46%	24%	60%	50%	32%	37%	33%
Unsympathetic	27%	23%	30%	0%	35%	25%	21%	26%
Net Sympathetic	6%	23%	-6%	60%	15%	7%	16%	6%

As a control we've also looked at Howard's and Rudd's ratings amongst Agnostics, Atheists and Buddhists. These three groups were much more tolerant of Rudd's

Christianity than Howard's. Unfortunately we have no way of knowing why this is the case.