

Knowledge of Bible 'in decline'

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Knowledge of the Bible is declining among people in the UK, according to academics from Durham University.

The National Biblical Literacy Survey found that young people believe the Bible is old-fashioned and for people like EastEnders' character Dot Cotton.

More than 900 people from faith and non-faith backgrounds were surveyed, with fewer than one in 20 able to name all of the [Ten Commandments](#).

But the study showed many still turn to the Bible at times of emotional stress.

The researchers said their findings showed the Church and politicians could no longer make assumptions about people's knowledge of the Bible, which in under 45s is in decline.

No assumptions

The study revealed that 62% of respondents did not know the parable of the Prodigal Son and 60% could not name anything about the story of the Good Samaritan.

One respondent said David and Goliath was the name of a ship, while another thought Daniel - who survived being thrown into the lions' den - was the Lion King.

The study was funded by a consortium of national churches, charitable trusts and Bible agencies.

Younger interviewees told researchers that the Bible was "old-fashioned", "irrelevant" and "for Dot Cottons" - in reference to the churchgoing character in the BBC One soap.

The Rev Brian Brown, a Methodist minister and visiting fellow in media and communication at St John's College, Durham University, said: "The Church and political leaders should take serious note of the findings and recognise that we cannot make the assumptions we used to make about the Bible and its place in contemporary people's lives and culture."

But he added: "Many respondents said they still turn to the Bible for support and guidance at key moments."



The Bible is more for Dot Cottons, young people told researcher

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