

CHAPTER 5

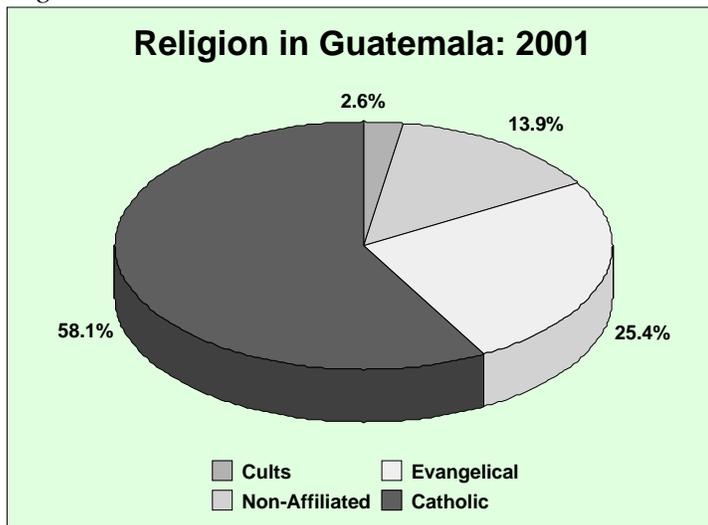
THE QUANTITY AND LOCATION OF THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH IN GUATEMALA: THE DEMOGRAPHIC STUDY OF RELIGION

Abstract of Results

Most of Guatemala enjoys a high presence of evangelicals as 25.4% of the total country population identifies themselves as evangelicals. The Interior of the country has a slightly higher percentage of evangelicals than the Capital, 27.8% and 25.1% respectively. There are few places or groups in the country that are not influenced by the Gospel.

This study confirmed that there are still large underevangelized population segments in northern Huehuetenango (10%-14% evangelical). There is also a general low incidence of evangelicals in the eastern part of the country; particularly the

Figure 5.1



Departments of Chiquimula (11%), El Progreso (16%) and parts of Zacapa (11%-23%). Guatemala City has a homogenous covering of evangelicals in all of the expected economic strata. The SEPAL team anticipated a far

lower number of evangelicals in the *asentamientos* (shanties) in Guatemala City, but discovered that these inhabitants are approximately 30% evangelical, which is nearly equal the rest of the lower and mid-middle classes in Guatemala City. The team also expected more evangelicals in the rural parts of the Department of Guatemala, but only 13% of the representative rural Mayan *municipio* considered themselves to be evangelical. A much lower percentage of evangelicals in the pioneer area of the Petén was expected. Surprisingly, 32% of the population of this area is evangelical and are primarily affiliated with Nazarenes, Assembly of God, and other classes of Pentecostals. The six largest evangelical denominations in Guatemala are: Assembly of God, Church of God-Whole Gospel, Prince of Peace, Central American Mission, Church of God-Pentecost, and Elim Mission. Five out of the six are Pentecostal.

Introduction

Listed below is the information included in this chapter:

- ◆ Overall percentage of evangelicals within Guatemala.
- ◆ Concentration and locations of the evangelical community.
- ◆ Quantification of evangelicals according to economic levels in Guatemala City.
- ◆ Quantification of evangelicals in distinct Indian groups.
- ◆ Population groups that have not yet been sufficiently evangelized.
- ◆ Ratios of evangelical Ladinos to evangelical Indians in sampled areas.
- ◆ Ratio of Ladinos to Indians in Guatemala.
- ◆ Quantity of self-identified persons within each religious group in Guatemala.

The General Incidence of Evangelicals in Guatemala: General Comments

Based upon personal interviews with 18,962 people throughout the Republic of Guatemala, this study has determined that 25.4% of the population self-identifies with an evangelical denomination. (The level of confidence for these percentages are within 0.5%.) For purposes of this study, evangelical is defined as a person who claims to be a Christian, and regularly attends an evangelical church at least once a month. An evangelical church is Trinitarian, non-Catholic, and not Adventist. These criteria are similar to those used in previous SEPAL studies.

Figure 5.2¹

Country Total of Evangelicals

Area	General Population	Portion of Gen. Population	Evangelicals	Wtd Ev %
Guatemala City	1,015,303			
Villa Nueva	363,574			
Petapa	78,041			
Total Urban area	1,456,918	12.80%	27.8%	0.0356
Interior of Guatemala	9,928,419	87.20%	25.1%	0.2187
Country Total	11,385,337	100.00%		25.4%

Populations are based upon INE year 2000 projections.

Religious studies based upon 18,962 personal interviews May, 2001.

Wtd Ev% signifies weighted evangelicals. The portion of evangelicals times the percent of evangelicals gives the fraction of weighted evangelicals. This type of calculation compensates for unequal distribution of evangelicals and unequal population densities.

See Appendix 5.1 for more explanation.

The general composition of religion throughout the country is: 58.1% Catholic, 25.4% Evangelical, 13.9% non-affiliated, and 2.6% sects or cults. Figure 5.1 contains the summary.

¹ All population figures are from the National Census Bureau, Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas (INE) Erin Rolando Díaz, ed., *Guatemala: Estimaciones de Población por Departamento según Edad y Sexo 1990-2010 y Estimaciones de Población por Municipio según Sexo 1990-2005* (Guatemala, Guatemala: INE-CELADE, 1997).

The Percentage and Concentration of Evangelicals in Guatemala City

Examining Guatemala City through Class Strata:
Ordered from Lower through Upper Classes

Within Guatemala City, the study was limited to population segments divided by economics, race, literacy, and occupation. When individuals were asked what race or Indian group to which they belonged, their answers indicate that the vast majority of individuals in Guatemala City considered themselves Ladinos and no longer wanted to be considered Indians. This was more pronounced as individuals rose in economic status. In the poorer sections of Guatemala City, more maintained their ethnic identity.

Lower/lower Classes and Asentamientos Are 29.2% Evangelical

The SEPAL team was particularly interested in surveying the lower/lower classes and *asentamientos* to determine if they were a neglected social stratum for the Gospel in Guatemala City. If there was an overlooked group, they would be among the miserable, or the poorest of the poor. In Zone 6, two of the newest *asentamientos* were surveyed, Proyecto 4-4 and Proyecto 4-10. In Zone 7, the new *asentamiento*, Bethania, was surveyed as well as one of the more notorious and violent ones in Zone 7. In the new area of Bethania, nearly 11% of the population still claim to be Indian in origin, mainly of the Cakchiquel and Quiché groups. The overall percentage of evangelicals in this area is 23.5%. However, only 8.5% of those who claimed to be Indian were evangelical. This is the most marked case in the Capital. Usually the few Indian families that continue to identify themselves by their Mayan culture, are much less evangelical than their Ladino counterpart population. In Zone 12, the older *asentamientos* contained only 1% Indian

population. This is likely the case because in time, the Indians are assimilated into the Ladino culture or, to a lesser degree, they move out of the more violent areas into safer environments. There are many poorer sections around the outskirts of the city that range between lower/lower and middle/lower class, but retain the feel of a *pueblo* from the Interior of the country.

Middle/lower Class Is 28.7% Evangelical

The middle/lower class surveyed was typical of much of Guatemala City. The survey was performed in Zone 19, called La Florida, which is an area that is between ten to twenty years old. Over time, the very poor slowly advanced economically, building themselves humble houses, a room at a time, or in some cases, a block at a time. In Zone 19, the Indian population was 11.0% of the total population. This area was one of the first resettlement areas in the 1970s from refugees fleeing from the Interior of the country during the long civil war. In this community there were a large number of churches of every denomination, with 31.8% of the population considering themselves evangelical.

The new, mushrooming *colonia* in San José Villa Nueva was studied. This is not part of Guatemala City proper, but is part of the adjacent sprawling urban area. This new *colonia* merited inclusion in the study because it is typical of many of the outskirts and general urban areas of Guatemala City. This is a mixture of middle/lower and upper/lower classes. Guatemala City is encircled by miles of new settlements similar to San José.

An interesting side note is that the literacy of the Indians in the Capital was found to be much higher than that of those residing within the Interior of the country. Further, the evangelical Indians had a higher level of literacy as compared to the non-Christian Indians.² The evangelical Ladinos had a similar level of literacy as the general population.³

Figure 5.3

Evangelicals by Class in the Greater Guatemala City Area

Class	City/Zone	% Evan	Pop. Segm	% of Urban	WtEvan
Lower/Upper	Guatemala Zone 14	15.3	29,265	2.00	0.00306
Middle/Upper	Guatemala Zone 15	14.3	29,265	2.00	0.00285
Middle/Middle	Guatemala Zone 6	16.4	73,163	5.00	0.00819
Middle/Middle	Guatemala Zone 11	22.3	73,163	5.00	0.01114
Lower Middle/MM	Guatemala Zone 7	28.7	78,041	5.33	0.01530
Lower/Middle	Guatemala Zone 12	25.1	78,041	5.33	0.01341
Lower/Middle	Urban San Miguel V. H. Petapa	34.6	78,041	5.33	0.01843
Upper/Lower	Guatemala Zone 18	30.4	292,653	20.00	0.06077
Middle/Lower	Guatemala San José Villa Nueva	25.7	182,908	12.50	0.03214
Middle/Lower	Guatemala Zone 19	31.8	182,908	12.50	0.03977
Lower/Lower	Guatemala Zone 12 <i>Asentamientos</i> old	32.1	182,908	12.50	0.04011
Lower/Lower	Guatemala Zone 6 and 7 <i>Asentam</i> new	26.2	182,908	12.50	0.03278
		Total	1,463,265	100.00	27.8%
Explanation of terms: % Evan = percentage of evangelicals in sampled strata; Pop. Seg = total general population in urban area for given class; % of Urban = total class breakdown is: Upper Class 4%, Middle/Middle 10%, Lower/Middle 16%, Upper/Lower 20%, Middle/Lower 25% and Lower/Lower 25%. See discussion in Chapter 4 on rationale for economic division of Guatemala City urban area.					

²For evangelicals: Literate n=30 and illiterate n=9 or 77% and 23% respectively. For non-evangelicals: (Church =11, 12, 13, 35, 32) Literate n=34 and illiterate=69 or 33% and 67% respectively.

³For evangelicals: Literate n=871 and illiterate n=58 or 94% and 6% respectively. For non-evangelicals: Literate n=2325 and illiterate=147 or 94% and 6% respectively.

Upper/lower Class is 30.4% Evangelical

The area surveyed in Zone 18 is about 15-25 years of age. It contains the usual single housing of one and two-story buildings that are interspersed with small businesses, many *tiendas* and several small churches; but not enough local churches to account for the population being 30% evangelical. Quite likely, many in this area travel by public transportation or their vehicles to churches outside the area. Surprisingly, this older area has a similar level of evangelicals as compared to new colonias of similar class.

Lower/middle Class Is 29.4% Evangelical

Three different areas within two lower/middle class zones were surveyed. There is a striking similarity between these areas of the same economic class even though they are located in very different parts of the City. The neighborhoods in Zone 7 of Ciudad de Plata and Tikal I are similar in age (about 20-30 years) and class. This sample shows that 28.7% is evangelical and has nearly a 2% Indian population. This part of the city was thought to be the strongest and oldest area for evangelicals. The section surveyed in Zone 12 is a neighborhood of about twenty years, is of the same class and has 25.1% evangelicals. The new area of San Miguel Villa Hermosa Petapa is a typical sprawling area of the city that is still under construction with 34.6% of its population claiming to be evangelical. In studies of the Interior of the country, many of the newer middle class neighborhoods similarly have a higher level of evangelicals than older areas. This is presumably because Christian families are more integral, with the father being more responsible toward his family. This propels Christian families to rise in the socio-economic scale.

Middle/middle Class is 19.3% Evangelical

In populations of higher socioeconomic class, the percentage of evangelical Christians begins to drop quickly. Most of the middle/middle class are small-business owners or professionals such as doctors or lawyers. Many of these households have two working parents, and the average educational level is around the twelfth grade.⁴ The surveyed sample in the solid middle/middle class Zone 6 indicates that 16.4% is evangelical and the middle class in the more heterogeneous Zone 11 is 22.3% evangelical. The neighborhood in Zone 6 surveyed is older than that of Zone 11.

Upper Class and Upper/middle Class are 14.8% Evangelical

Within Guatemala, there is a very small upper class. The upper/upper class consists of approximately eleven extended families who control Guatemalan politics from behind the scenes and own the vast majority of the large businesses in the country.⁵ This is totally a Catholic class.

Descending from the very highest class is the middle/upper class where approximately 14.8% is evangelical. Not only is there a lesser percentage of evangelicals among this group than other classes, but there is also a higher percentage of cults and non-Christian religions such as Orthodox Jews, Buddhists, and Muslims. Their range of non-church affiliation is on par with similar economic strata.

⁴For middle/middle class evangelical Ladinos in Guatemala n = 144 with 59 completing Grades 0-11, 54 completing Grades 12 and 13 with university studies.

⁵Licda. Nora Morales, Jefatura de Salud Quetzaltenango, personal communication with author, Quetzaltenango, Guatemala, 17 May 2001.

Figure 5.5 (page 137) is a summary of religious affiliation of the economic classes and areas surveyed.⁶ It shows that as the economic strata rise, the percentage of evangelicals decrease. Data for the chart is derived from Appendix 5A.6.

Figure 5.4

Religious Affiliation in Guatemala City 2001
(Economic strata ranked in ascending order)

Economic Strata	Location	% Evangelical	% Catholic	% No Affiliatn	% Cults	% of Urban
Lower/Lower	Zone 6 and 7 Asenta new	26.2	52.0	19.8	2.0	12.5
Lower/Lower	Zone 12 Asentamientos old	32.1	41.9	24.4	1.6	12.5
Middle/Lower	San José Villa Nueva	25.7	61.9	11.1	1.3	12.5
Middle/Lower	Zone 19	31.8	63.7	3.2	1.3	12.5
Upper/Lower	Zone 18	30.4	43.0	22.1	4.5	20.0
Lower/Middle	San Miguel V. H. Petapa	34.6	56.6	5.5	3.4	5.3
Lower/Middle	Zone 12	25.1	49.7	23.4	1.8	5.3
Lower Middle/MM	Zone 7	28.7	56.3	12.9	2.2	5.3
Middle/Middle	Zone 6	16.4	67.7	15.3	0.6	5.0
Middle/Middle	Zone 11	22.3	63.0	11.8	2.9	5.0
Lower/Upper	Zone 14	15.3	72.9	10.9	0.9	2.0
Middle/Upper	Zone 15	14.3	69.8	12.2	3.8	2.0
Weighted City Total		27.8%	57.3%	14.6%	2.6%	100.0%

General Concerns about Religion in Guatemala City

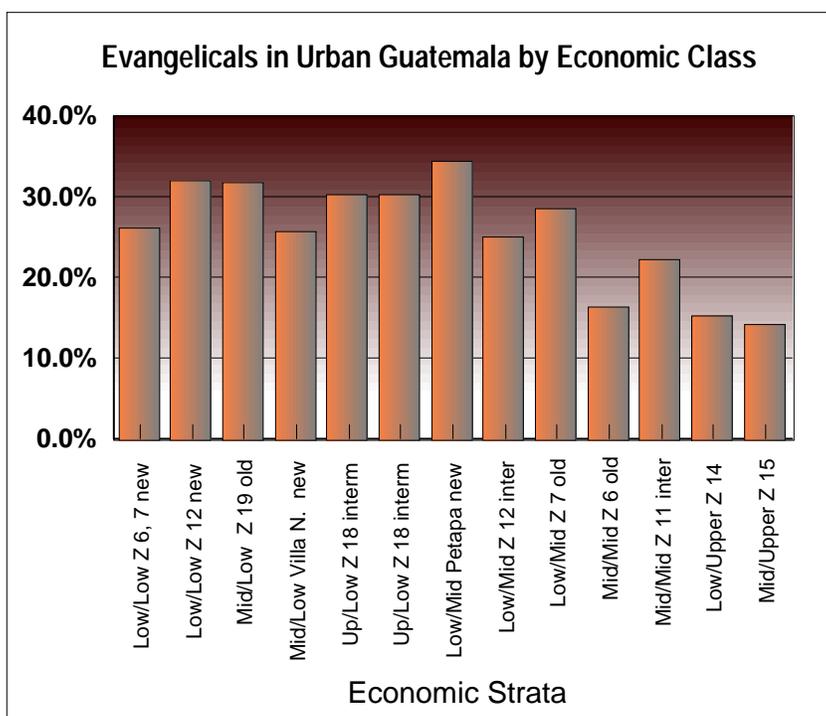
It was assumed that the lowest classes found in the *asentamientos* would be the least evangelized, but that assumption was not supported by the data. The Gospel has entered into all the common socioeconomic classes in a regular and homogeneous fashion, including the poorest of the poor. Without exception, the lowest classes are nearly 30% evangelical with the percentage diminishing to 15% in the upper/middle and lower/upper classes (See Figure 5.5). Additionally, the pattern is that the lower and middle classes have the highest level of acceptance of the Gospel.

⁶The chart is ordered by economic class similar to Figure 5.4, and the explanation for the urban percentage can be found in Figure 5.4.

Guatemala City is well covered in all sectors by the Christian media such as television, radio, print, and advertising. All the popular segments have easy access to the Gospel. Virtually all of the mega-churches have been started by Guatemalans or Central Americans, and the mega-churches are consistently reaching out to the upper/middle as well as the lower/upper class.

Guatemala City has a number of excellent churches with very good leadership, as

Figure 5.5



well as a wide variety of denominations.

Overall, the Evangelical Church in Guatemala City seems to be keeping up with the population growth of the poorer classes, but has difficulty in making sustained growth among the

middle classes and the upper classes.

The growing number of non-affiliated persons to any religion is alarming. In the SEPAL study of 1984, only 4% of the population was non-affiliated, whereas now 14.6% of the population identifies itself as non-affiliated. There is not a clear pattern of non-affiliation by economic class, outside of the very poorest who have the highest

non-church affiliation. This increase in the last twenty years is a portent, signaling major social problems for the present and future, unless there is a reversal of this trend. Quite likely a large component of these non-affiliated is from people passing through both the Catholic and Evangelical Church. The inability to convert, change, and disciple people profoundly will result in an immunization against the Gospel.

The Quantity, Location and Groupings of Evangelicals in the Interior of Guatemala

General Religious Groupings by Region and Culture

Guatemala is divided into eight regions by the Instituto Guatemalteco de Turismo (INGUAT), a government agency, using cultural and geographic affinities. Looking at the religious demographics through several perspectives or grids helps to gain a clearer understanding of the state of the church as well as to identify forgotten population groups. A grid classifies people by identifiable common characteristics. The two most common ways of classifying people are through ethnic grids and social grouping grids. Social groups are closely associated with economic strata and geographic culture. This research uses the grid of ethnicity and the grid of local culture.⁷ The culture in the Interior of Guatemala is extremely heterogeneous due to the rough geography of the country that has isolated the population in pockets. Thus, culture and language in Guatemala are profoundly affected by geography. The regional grid takes broad brush strokes of Guatemalan local culture and is helpful in visualizing obvious trends in Guatemala. After looking at population groups within general geographic areas, the grid of language is used

⁷ See Roger S. Greenway and Timothy M. Monsoma, *Cities: Missions' New Frontier* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000), 117-25.

to differentiate population segments. Figure 5.6 depicts the Regions of Guatemala with their respective Departments.

**Grid I. Regions: The General Geographic Evangelical Panorama
Treated in Descending Order of Evangelical Percentage**

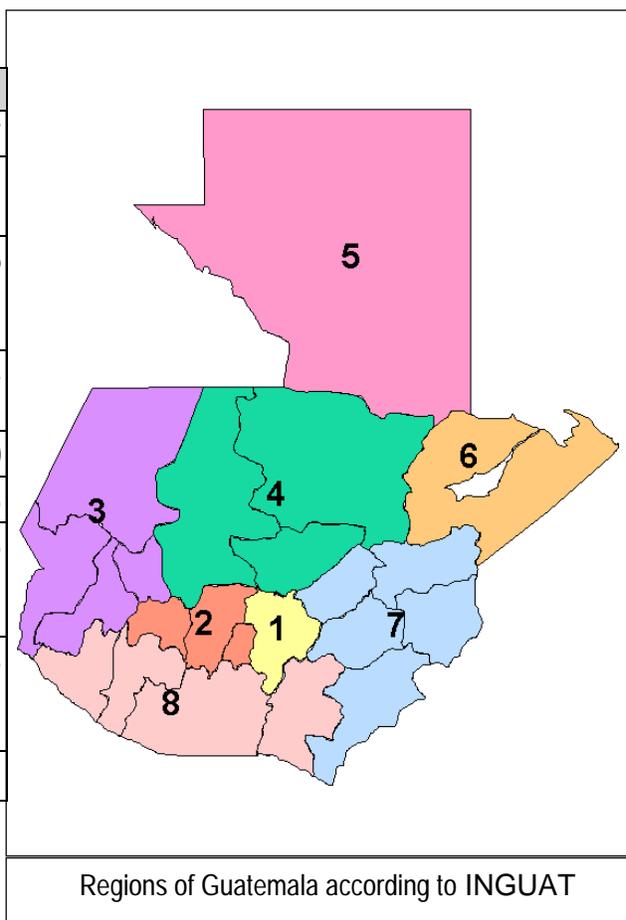
Both Regions 2 and 5 stand out as the highest evangelized areas in Guatemala. In these areas there is a vibrant evangelical church that enjoys overall good health. Correspondingly, these areas are more than 30% evangelical. The area around Lake Atitlán in Region 2 is one of the oldest areas of work for all of the major denominations. This area is highly indigenous and suffered greatly during the time of the 36-year civil

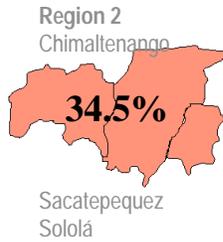
Figure 5.6

**Regionalization of Guatemala
Based upon INGUAT**

Region	Departments	Population ¹
1	Guatemala	2,578,527
2	Chimaltenango, Sacatepequez, Sololá	994,657
3	Quetzaltenango, Totonicapan, San Marcos, Huehuetenango	2,764,026
4	Quiché, Alta Verapaz, Baja Verapaz	1,606,564
5	Petén	333,390
6	Izabal	333,955
7	Jutiapa, Jalapa, Chiquimula, Zacapa, El Progreso	1,325,105
8	Escuintla, Suchitepequez, Santa Rosa, Retalhuleu	1,449,113
	Total	11,385,337

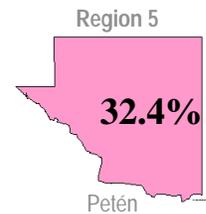
¹ Population figures are based upon Guatemalan National Institute of Statistics. Projected population for year 2000.





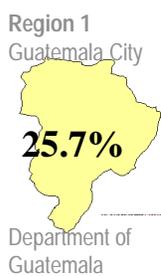
war. There is a strong, indigenized evangelical church in this area. In the case of Baptists, this area has been one of the few seed beds of good leaders. Years ago, Baptists had a Bible institute in Santiago Atitlán called "Pablo Bell", and the local leadership still talk of the solid base it left them.

Although there is a high incidence of evangelicals in the Petén (32.4%), groups outside of traditional churches such as Nazarene, Assembly of God, Church of God, and Baptists are left without much training. The large Pentecostal denominations have recognized this and are investing in leadership training. Coupled with the inherent homesteading nature of the Petén, the more homogenous population (recognizing that this is a relative term) and the weaker Catholic church culture, the strategies for reaching people for Christ in this area must be distinct from those used among the people where there is a strong, Mayan/Catholic culture.



The next regions with similar percentages of evangelicals are Regions 1, 3, 4, and

8. The cultures are distinct, with Region 1 comprising the Capital urban area and its



surrounding Department. The evangelical church in Region 1 is varied in area, socioeconomic classes, traditions, and culture. The rural part of Region 1 is economically tied to the Capital but is distinct in that it continues to be very Mayan in culture and practice. In many ways, it has more in common with most of rural Guatemala rather than Guatemala City. The urban area of

Guatemala City has a concentration of the finest leadership in all of the country. It is open to the message of the Gospel, but it also struggles with the materialism and secularism. These are prevalent in the developing cosmopolitan subculture and are

exacerbated by the importation of American culture. In 1989, only 4% of the population was not affiliated with any religion. Today, nearly 9% of this region is not affiliated with any church or religious group, and 14.6% of Guatemala City's population is not affiliated with any church. Note in Figure 5.7 that the non-affiliated percentage is less for the entire Region as compared to just Guatemala City.⁸ Additionally, the outlying rural areas of this Department are much less evangelical. This is due, in large part, to the presence of Mayan resurgence groups in the non-urban areas. Region 1 is 25.7% evangelical,⁹ but much of the remaining non-urban population is very indigenous, superstitious, and resistant to the Gospel.

Figure 5.7

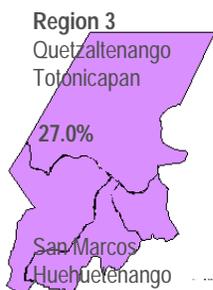
**Evangelicals, Catholics, Sects and Non Affiliated by
Region-Weighted Values**

	Evangelical	Catholic	Non-Affiliated	Cults
Region 1	25.7%	64.9%	9.0%	0.4%
Region 2	34.5%	47.7%	10.6%	1.7%
Region 3	27.0%	58.0%	11.4%	4.4%
Region 4	24.5%	65.4%	8.5%	1.6%
Region 5	32.4%	45.4%	19.7%	2.5%
Region 6	21.8%	46.6%	28.1%	3.5%
Region 7	18.5%	63.2%	16.6%	1.7%
Region 8	26.7%	49.4%	19.4%	4.7%
Country				
Weighted	25.4%	58.1%	13.9%	2.6%

⁸ Appendix 5.3 contains the underlying data.

⁹ Because Region 1 contains the very populated Guatemala City and its urban area, which are totally distinct from the rural Indian areas in the same department, the calculations for weighing the data are more involved. *Municipios* that are similar in culture, urban, or have a high level of Ladinos as compared to the Capital are: Guatemala, Palencia, Chinautla, Mixco, Chuarrancho, Fraijanes, Amatítlan, Villa Nueva, Villa Canales and Petapa with a total population of 2,250,813. The *municipios* more similar to San Pedro Sacatepequez with regard to traditional rural Indian culture are: Santa Catalina Pinula, San José Pinula, San José del Golfo, San Pedro Ayampuc, San Pedro Sacatepequez, San Juan Sacatepequez, and San Raymundo with a total population of 327,714. This gives a ratio of 85.8% for urban/capitalish culture and 14.2% rural, Mayan, Christo-pagan culture. This is the percentage used in weighting the calculations for Region 1.

Regions 3 and 4 are the indigenous mountain areas and Region 8 includes a more coastal and mountain Ladino population. They are evangelized to the quantity of 27.0%, 24.5% and 26.7% respectively, each having a similar influence of the Catholic church



culture. Regions 3 and 8 of these areas have a strong, evangelical church with good leadership. However both of these areas lack significant Baptist presence. The Baptists of the West continue to be weak in the areas of leadership and sustained church growth. Region 3 is the most varied in cultures of all the regions. Because of the heterogeneous nature of the

mountainous Indian population, there remains to this day, pockets of underreached peoples, especially in the areas of Northern Huehuetenango. Although the entire region is predominantly indigenous, a wide variety of subcultures exist who have an inconsistent response to the Gospel. Both Regions 3 and 8 have the highest incidence of cults, which indicate these groups are actively "evangelizing" as well. This causes one to wonder about the quality of church indoctrination in order to have lost so many adherents of the churches to the cults.

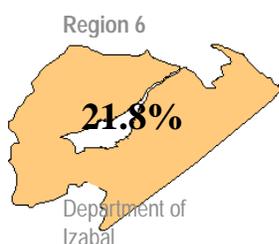


Only a portion of Region 4 has the vibrant Baptist life of the K'ekchí people group. Interestingly, within the K'ekchí people group, the traditional Pentecostal and Neo-Pentecostal groups have made little inroads as compared to their



works in the rest of the country. Wherever there are strong Indian populations in the mountains, there will be a heterogeneous population with regard to culture and religion, and Regions 3, 4 and 8 are no exception to that rule.

Region 6 is the Department of Izabal. A large number of the Indian population resides in the mountains north of Lake Izabal as well as a significant Creole population on

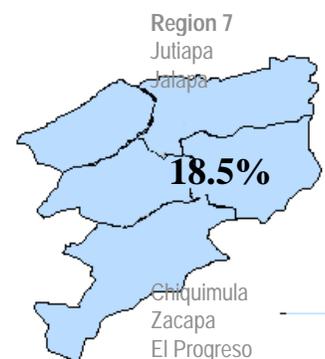


the coast. The vast majority of the regional population is Ladino. The region is 21.8% evangelical but more than 28% of the population is non-affiliated as compared to the Capital area which is 14.6% non-affiliated. This implies that both the Catholic Church and Evangelical churches are suffering at the hands of secularism.

Correspondingly, in this area, Baptists have a weak group of churches headed by struggling leadership that are not growing significantly.

Region 7 is markedly different from the Capital area in that the Catholic Church is conspicuously strong, with 63% of the population self-identifying with the Catholic church. Rural Spanish Catholicism is intrinsically part of the daily culture and is ingrained in the common life of people. At times, they are less than amiable toward evangelicals and their message.

Region 7 contains the famous Shrine of Sacapulas that attracts pilgrims from all of Central America. This region stands out significantly from the rest of the country, in that it is primarily a



Ladino area with a small westernized Indian population. According to the surveyors, many of the towns have the feel of the old West, gun-toting cowboy culture. Only 18.5% of the population consider themselves evangelical. However, when survey teams went into the smaller towns of this region to work, they were greeted by friendly and open groups of Catholics.

Grid II: Ethnic Groupings by Mayan and Ladino Regional Cultures
Treated in Descending Order of Evangelical Percentage

Figure 5.8 summarizes the data that describes the evangelical community in terms of Mayan and Ladino cultures. The first column, entitled "Total Population," indicates the total population of the region. The next two columns deal with the composite evangelical population in terms of Ladino and Mayan cultures with the sum of the two giving the entire evangelical population of the corresponding region. For example, the total percentage of evangelicals for Region 3 is 27%. This is composed of 6.8% Ladinos and 20.2% Indians. Why is there such a discrepancy between the percentage of Ladinos and Indians? The answer can be found in the columns, "% Total Ladino Population" and "% Total Indian Population." These describe the ratio of Ladinos to Indians in relation to the general population of the region. For example, for Region 3 the ratio of Ladinos to Indians is 28:71, or around 1:3. This corresponds to the ratio of evangelical Ladinos to Indians described earlier of 6.8:20.2, or around 1:3. This means that in Region 3, Ladinos are evangelized to the same degree as Indians. These conclusions are expressed in the last two columns, "% of Ladinos who are Evangelical" and "% of Indians who are Evangelical." For Region 3, 27.2% of the smaller Ladino population is evangelical and 26.9% of the larger Indian population is evangelical. In summary, the last two columns are useful in ascertaining if the major culture groups are evangelized or not. The columns in the middle show the overall percentage of evangelicals in a region, the region's percentage of Ladino population, and the overall percentage of Indian population. All values in this table are weighted.

Figure 5.8

General Cultural Analysis of Evangelicals by Region

Weight by Regions	Total Population	% of Evang who are <i>Ladino</i>	% of Evang who are Indian	% Evangelical	% Total <i>Ladino</i> Population	% Total Indian Population	% of Ladinos who are Evangelical	% of Indians who are Evangelical
Region 1	2,578,527	23.6	2.0	25.7	84.5	15.5	33.9	18.6%
Region 2	994,657	6.8	27.7	34.5	32.3	67.7	12.5	39.4%
Region 3	2,764,026	6.8	20.2	27.0	28.8	71.2	27.2	26.9%
Region 4	1,606,564	7.9	16.6	24.5	26.4	73.6	41.7	23.5%
Region 5	333,390	28.9	3.5	32.4	90.4	9.6	36.7	36.2%
Region 6	333,395	20.6	1.2	21.8	91.3	8.7	34.4	15.6%*
Region 7	1,325,105	18.1	0.4	18.5	90.7	9.3	21.3	5.0%*
Region 8	1,449,113	20.7	6.0	26.7	78.3	21.7	37.2	14.6%

* This percentages are based upon only the *municipios* where there was more than a 5% Mayan population. For less than 5%, the level of confidence is too low to make valid projections on such a small population.

Region 2 is the most evangelical Region in Guatemala, with 34.5% of the population being evangelical. Two-thirds of this densely populated rural area is Mayan. This region is composed of the Departments close to Lake Atitlan where some of the oldest, and most independent, evangelical works are located. This is the only region where the Indian culture is much more evangelized than the Ladino culture in the same area; 59% compared to 28%. This raises the question why the Gospel made itself at home so well in the hearts of the Mayan culture in this part of the country. Doubtless, there are lessons from the Evangelical Church in this region that should be applied to other Indian areas where the Gospel has not penetrated as deeply into the Mayan culture.

Region 5 is the Petén and is 32.4% evangelical. Only 10% of the population is Indian, with no difference in the percentage of evangelicals between that group and Ladinos. This similarity of acceptance of the Gospel partially can be explained because both groups have migrated similarly into the area within the past two generations, with

the resultant new culture being more of a pioneer Petén culture, as opposed to separate and distinct Indian and Ladino cultures.

In Region 3 (27.0% evangelical) the proportion of the Indian culture to Ladino culture is similar to that of Region 2. In this area, the proportion of evangelicals is equal among Ladinos and Indians. This is a healthy sign and is observable in many large churches throughout the West. Although there is always a level of discrimination between both races, there is discrimination between evangelicals in the West as compared to other parts of the country. However, lack of racial discrimination in this area is made up for by discrimination between the city and country folk. Most of the Western Ladino culture was Indian only one generation ago, and the Ladino blood here is less European than in the central, coastal, or eastern regions.¹⁰ Curiously, evangelical churches in the cities contradict church growth principles as they commonly have a blend of races and to a lesser degree, class. In Region 3, both Indians and Ladinos equally embrace and similarly contextualize the Gospel as they commonly worship and interact with each other! This is not the case in the Catholic Church in Region 3, as there remains a sharp distinction between race and class, and the two seldom interact on the same level.

One of the concerns brought out by this study in this part of the country, and especially in the rural, mountainous areas, was the high level of syncretism and Christo-paganism. These give a false measure of true Christianity.¹¹

Regions 8 and 1 (26.7% and 25.7% evangelical) are highly evangelized and have several things in common. First, the overall ratio of Ladino to Indian is 78:12 and 85:15,

¹⁰ Old photographs of the towns of the West as compared to Guatemala City clearly demonstrate the different racial roots of these regions.

¹¹ Religious syncretism and the internalization of the Gospel are discussed in Chapter 6.

respectively. They are overwhelmingly Ladino and the cultures are similar to each other. In these regions, an average of 36% of the Ladino population considers themselves evangelical, compared to only 17% of the Indian population. Again, one must ask why the Gospel has entered deeply into some Mayan groups, yet hardly touched others? What caused the Gospel so deeply to affect such a large percentage of the Ladino population in these two regions? In this region there is much more open antagonism and division between the races. It is likely that the contextualized Ladino Gospel has trouble bridging to the Indian culture. Is the religion of the dominant group considered a foreign Western religion by the minority group? Does the minority Indian population feel that by accepting the dominant "Ladino" religion, they lose their identity? Has the Gospel ever been contextualized purposely to the Indian population?

Region 4 (24.5% evangelical) is much more Mayan than Ladino, 73.6% versus 26.4%, respectively. Region 4 has a similar discrepancy between the percentage of Ladino to Mayan evangelicals as compared to the Regions cited previously (41.7% to 23.5%). Rather than a plethora of evangelical churches working an area, the strongest churches in the K'ekchí areas are the Baptist, Nazarene, and Mennonite. Since most Pentecostals have just begun to enter into the monolingual K'ekchí Mayan culture, the Evangelical Church at large has not made its full impact with this large language group. On the other hand, there is much more Pentecostal involvement with the bilingual Quiché areas.

The next level of evangelicals was found in Region 6, the Department of Izabal, with 21.8% evangelicals. This is one of the smaller populations within the regions and is

nearly 91% Ladino. Further, this Department stands out as being the most secularized, with 28% not affiliated with any church.

Region 7 is the least evangelical with 18.5% evangelicals. The two Mayan groups, Pokomam and to a lesser degree Chortí, are a minority of the population, but they are only 5% evangelical. This region has a low incidence of evangelicals in some urban areas, but many of the villages and rural areas have little evangelical presence.

Grid III: Incidence of Evangelicals by *Municipio* and Culture

Regions with High and Consistent Incidence of Evangelicals in Population Groups

Regions 2 and 5 have the highest incidence of evangelicals and, logically, the incidence of evangelicals within the sampled *municipios* is high. In spite of some differences of the percentage of evangelicals by race, all races in these areas are highly evangelical as well. These two regions have an average of 33% evangelicals.

Region 8 is nearly 27% evangelical, but there are two pockets within this region with a low number of evangelicals. The first is the primarily Ladino, Casillas in Santa Rosa where only 11% of the total population is evangelical. Casillas borders Region 7 and has more characteristics and culture of the sparsely evangelized Region 7 as opposed to Region 8. In Retalhuleu, the *municipio* of San Sebastian has a surprisingly low percentage of Ladino evangelicals (17%) within a sea of strong evangelicism. There are no obvious explanations for this anomaly, but it is not justifiable to invest IMB personnel directly in this area, when the surrounding Guatemalan evangelicals should be mobilized to finish the task.

Pockets of Lostness with Regions with High but Inconsistent Incidence of Evangelicals

Because Region 3 is the most densely populated area outside of the Capital, and is heterogeneous in cultures and languages, this region was surveyed more than others. Out of the eleven randomly selected *municipios*, six were found to be greater than 30% evangelical. The two most evangelical *municipios* within the entire country lie within this region. San Juan Atítan, in the remote mountains of Northern Mam culture of Huehuetenango, is 53.8% evangelical. Cantel, a very indigenous town that speaks Western Quiché in Quetzaltenango, is 53.3% evangelical!

Regions 1 and 4 are similar to Region 3. They have an overall high incidence of evangelicals, wide variety of indigenous cultures, mountainous geography that separates sub-cultures, and large pockets of low percentages of evangelicals. (This section of the paper deals with the rural population of Region 1, which is a different culture than the Capital.) Five *municipios* have a low proportion of evangelicals in this set of regions.

The Cakchiquel population, in San Pedro Sacatepequez in the rural part of the

Department of Guatemala, is only 10% evangelical. Several other

**Region 1:
Low Level of
Evangelicals
10% Cakchiquel
within San Pedro
Sacatepequez**

large *municipios* in this area are similar. Though the rural part of the

Department of Guatemala is only 14% of the Department's

population, this still represents nearly 100,000 people.

Concepción Chiquirichapa, Region 3 (15% evangelical) a

municipio in Quetzaltenango, is nearly all Ostancalco Mam with little Ladino presence.

This area has few evangelical churches, forcing most of the evangelicals to attend outside

of their own town. Surveyors indicate that there were many vehicles, large houses, and other signs of wealth among this group.

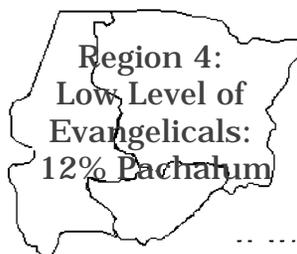
Large areas of lostness were found throughout the area in the *municipios* of San Mateo Ixtatan and San Miguel Acatan. They are located in the mountains of Huehuetenango with 12% and 10% evangelical community

respectively. San Mateo Ixtatan is the meeting place of the Chuj and Qanjobal, and San Miguel Acatan is the heart of Akateco, a dialect of Mam. Although both of these areas are bilingual, they are rapidly

losing their native language to Spanish. Language is one factor for

isolation to the Gospel as exemplified in several other Indigenous areas. Change in culture lags behind language change. As the language changes, the Pentecostals are typically the first to enter these areas. The underevangelized population within these *municipios* between Soloma and Barrillas could very well be 250,000 people.

In Region 3, Tacaná is another underevangelized area. This mainly Ladino town, in the midst of Mam country, is only 15% evangelical. Tacaná is a *municipio* at the extreme end of the road and is difficult to access. This isolation contributes to the lack of intercommunication and ministry with other evangelicals.



Region 4 has two areas of concern. One is the Indigenous population of Carchá where only 14% is evangelical. This, no doubt, should be a priority of the strong K'ekchí evangelicals to



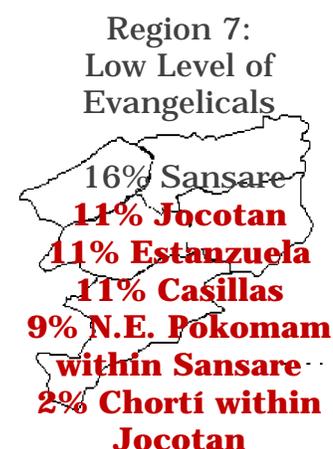
reach further into this important town. The Eastern Quiché population of Pachalum has only 12% evangelicals.

Pockets of Lostness in a Region with Moderately High but Inconsistent Incidence of Evangelicals

Region 6, the Department of Izabal, has a moderate level of evangelicals but the ethnic groups in the city of Puerto Barrios are only 15% evangelical. The city ethnic groups are a mixture of both K'ekchí and Garífuna.

Large Pockets of Lostness in a Region with Low Moderate and Very Inconsistent Incidence of Evangelicals

No matter what grid is used on Region 7, it consistently stands out. It is the least evangelical of the all the regions. In this region, 7 *municipios* were surveyed, 3 of which had 15% or less evangelicals. These were Jocotan, (11%), Estanzuela (11%), Sansare (15%); and included is the nearby Casillas (11%). Only Jocotan has a significant Indian population, the Chortí, with only 2% of them claiming to be evangelical. The ethnologue states there are nearly 30,000 Chortí.¹² Another low percentage of indigenous population is Northeast Pokomam in Sansare where only 8.6% of this Indian group is evangelical.



¹² *Ethnologue: Area: Americas*. <http://www.sil.org/ethnologue/countries/Guate.html>. Accessed 23 March 2001.

Grid IV: Areas Covered by Major Indian People Groups

General Comments about the Ethnic Groups in Guatemala

The study of languages in Guatemala is fascinating, complicated, incomplete, and full of contradictory information. According to the ethnologue of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, there are 51 different languages spoken in Guatemala.¹³ According to Roberto Soto, the Academy of Mayan Languages of Guatemala has determined there are 21 distinct Mayan languages in Guatemala.¹⁴ The Summer Institute of Linguistics categorizes certain language patterns as distinct languages, whereas the Academy of Mayan Languages categorizes the same language patterns as dialects within a specific language. The Summer Institute indicates there are 2.5 million Mayans within their language categories. According to the Pan American Health Organization, "Indigenous peoples, classified linguistically into more than 21 different groups, represent 43% of the country's population. Speakers of Quiché represent 29% of the total indigenous population; Kakchiquel, 25%; K'ekchí, 14%; Mam, 4%; Pokomchí, Pokomam, and

Figure 5.9

Total Indian Population per Region
(Weighted Calculations, August 2001)

	Population	% Indian	Indian Pop
Region 1	2,578,527	15.5	399,672
Region 2	994,657	67.7	673,383
Region 3	2,764,026	68.2	1,885,066
Region 4	1,606,564	73.6	1,182,431
Region 5	333,390	9.6	32,005
Region 6	333,395	8.7	29,005
Region 7	1,325,105	9.3	123,235
Region 8	1,449,113	21.7	314,458
Total	11,384,777	40.7	4,639,254

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ricardo E. Lima Soto, *Aproximación a La Cosmovisión Maya* (Guatemala: Universidad de Rafael Landívar, 1995), 102.

Tzutuhil, 24%; and other languages, 4%. About 32% of the indigenous population speaks only a Mayan language."¹⁵ Research results, shown in Figure 5.9, indicate that 41% of the population¹⁶ consider themselves to be a part of an Indian group. The percentage of Indians continues to drop with each census, and in many areas the youth are losing their Mayan language and cultural roots.¹⁷ Figure 5.10 shows the 21 different major language groups in Guatemala according to material from the Summer Institute of Linguistics' 1995 data, the classic language family groupings by Terrance Kaufman, and old population figures of Indian groups.¹⁸ There is no better current information on the quantities of the Mayan groups outside of these two sources.¹⁹

Evangelicals by People Group

Generally, where there is a mixture of Ladino and Indian groups, the latter groups are significantly less evangelized, but there are exceptions.²⁰

The ethnocenters of the following language groups were surveyed: Cakchiquel, Cakchiquel East, Tzutuil, Quiché Totonicapan, Quiché West, Quiché Central, Quiché

¹⁵ (PAHO) *1999 Basic Country Health Profile 1999* <http://www.paho.org/english/SHA/prflgut.htm> accessed 28 August 2001.

¹⁶ Figures 5A.3.7 and 5A.3.8 in Appendix 5 contain survey results.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Terrance Kaufman, *Idiomas de Mesoamerica* (Guatemala: Seminario de Integración Social Guatemalteca, "José Pineda Ibarra", 1974), 23.

¹⁹ INE data only distinguishes between Ladino and Indian, as opposed to one of the specific Indian groups. Other publications are motivated by politics and have inflated figures such as Alfredo Tay Coy's, *Análisis de Situación de la Educación Maya en Guatemala*. (Guatemala: Editorial Chosomaj, 1994).

²⁰ Some of the *municipios* with a high percentage of Indian population showed a dramatically higher percentage of the Ladino population that claimed to be evangelicals as compared with the corresponding Indian populations such as those found in Totonicapan (43% and 23%), Cantel (83% and 52%), and San Miguel Ixhuacan (71% and 32%). [Totonicapan and Cantel are Quiché and San Miguel Ixhuacan is located in the heart of Central Mam.] Conversely, in the mountains of San Marcos, the case was found to be exactly the opposite, with Indian population embracing the Gospel more than the Ladino population, 30% to 15%. The remaining *municipios* were found to be more congruent in regard to the level of evangelicals, or the populations were noted to be nearly homogenous, so as to make meaningful comparisons impossible.

Figure 5.10**A Summary of Languages and Ethnic Groups in Guatemala**

Language Branch	Main Language	Dialect (SIL)	Population (Kaufman)	Population (SIL)		
	Mopán		1,000	2,600		
Chol	Chortí		33,000	31,500		
Kanjobal	Chuj	San Mateo Ixtatán	13,000	22,130		
		San Sebastian Coatán		19,458		
Mam	Kanjobal	Eastern	40,000	20,130		
		Western		24,037		
	Acalteco		13,000			
	Jacalteco	Eastern	12,000	10,200		
		Western		27,062		
	Teco		1,000			
	Mam	Central	350,000	100,000		
		Northern		155,800		
	Quiché		Tajumulco		35,000	
			Todos Santos		20,000	
Tacaneco				20,000		
Tectiteco				2,600		
Rabinal				37,300		
Aguacateco				10,000	16,700	
Ixil			Chajul	20,000	15,000	
			Nebaj		35,000	
				San Juan Cotzal		12,000
Quiché			Uspanteco		2,000	2,000
	Quiché	500,000		216,910		
		Central		6,500		
		Eastern		100,000		
		Joyabaj		54,298		
		San Andrés		19,728		
		West Central		250,000		
	Sipacapense			6,000		
	Sacapulteco			36,823		
	Tzutujil	Eastern	60,000	48,100		
		Western		33,800		
	Cakchiquel	Central	340,000	132,200		
		Eastern		85,900		
		Northern		16,000		
		Santa María de Jesus		9,900		
		Santo Domingo		5,200		
		South Central		73,300		
		Southern		43,000		
		Southwestern,		8,000		
		Western		69,000		
Pokomam		Central	17,000	8,600		
	Eastern		12,500			
	Southern		27,912			
Pokomchí	Eastern	25,000	24,100			
	Western		30,000			
K'ekchí		300,000	335,800			
Garífuna			16,700			
Total			1,738,000	2,347,558		
Total Ethnics from SEPAL study 2001			4,639,254			

Eastern, Quiché Southwest, Mam Ostancalco, Mam Central, Mam Northern, Chuj, Qanjobal, Akateko, Sakapulteco, Pokomchí, Kekchí Western, and Chortí. Trends from the ethnocenters can be extrapolated to similar contiguous cultural and linguistic areas. In many cases, the proliferation of a Neo-Mayan culture is encouraged and supported by outside groups, particularly from Europe. These groups have focused on several popular areas as they have attempted to "preserve" Mayan culture through non-governmental organizations, political action groups, education, health care, and environmental projects. Unfortunately, many of these groups are openly hostile to Christianity, as they view Christianity to be an outside contaminant to the pure, unspoiled Mayan culture. Some of these same groups such as Christian Aid, Hivos, Helvatas and the acrid monthly, *laCuerda*, also are infiltrating Mayan culture with women's rights philosophies and a radical homosexual agenda. Surveyors observed that the strongest areas of Euro-Mayan resurgence are in popular tourist areas such as Todos Santos, Lake Atitlan, Chichicastenango, Alta Verapaz, and the "cultural centers" close to the Capital.

The Quiché language covers the largest geographical area, with several dialects and subcultures. Many areas are being quickly transformed into a Ladino culture, while others maintain their traditions. The nine Quiché *municipios* studied have a relatively high percentage of evangelicals. The lowest percentages are found in Pachalum (12%) which is the exception, followed by San Antonio Suchitepequez (23% evangelical). Cantel has 52% evangelicals, which is one of the highest proportions of evangelicals encountered in the research.²¹ The Quiché language group is well covered with a high level of evangelicals, but at the same time is suffering from a high degree of syncretism. In the Cakchiquel group, four *municipios* were surveyed, with three having more than

²¹ Summary data is in Figure 5.12 and source data is in Appendix 5A.3.1.

Figure 5.11

Summaries of Evangelicals in the Interior of Guatemala in Stratified Random <i>Municipios</i> by Ethnic Group, Data from August, 2001										
Department	Region		% of Population Group who are			% Pop <i>Ladino</i>	% Pop Indian	Ethno-Cente	Primary Indian Group	Total Pop of Municipio
	<i>Municipalidad</i>		%Evan gelical	% <i>Ladino</i> Evangelica	% Indian Evangelic					
Guatemala	San Pedro Sacatepequez	1	12.7%	27.4%	9.9%	17.1%	82.9%	Yes	Cakchiquel East	31,271
Sacatepequez	Sumpango	2	25.7%	33.3%	25.0%	20.9%	79.1%	Yes	Cakchiquel	27,753
Chimaltenango	Zaragoza	2	20.8%	27.6%	39.2%	90.1%	9.9%		Cakchiquel Central	17,410
Sololá	Santa Cruz Del Lago	2	30.4%	INSIG.PO	29.3%	3.3%	96.7%	Yes	Cakchiquel	3,453
Sololá	Santiago Atitlan	2	48.4%	INSIG.PO	47.9%	3.6%	96.4%	Yes	Tzutuul	29,380
Totonicapan	Totonicapan	3	26.0%	43.4%	23.1%	24.9%	75.1%	Yes	Quiché Toto	103,173
Totonicapan	San Francisco El Alto	3	45.4%	INSIG.PO	43.9%	1.5%	98.5%	Yes	Quiché Toto	49,068
Quetzaltenango	Concepci Chiquirichapa	3	15.3%	INSIG.PO	15.0%	1.7%	98.3%	Yes	Mam Ostancalco	21,349
Quetzaltenango	Cantel	3	53.3%	83.3%	52.2%	6.8%	93.2%	Yes	Quiché West	31,457
San Marcos	San Mig Ixtahuacatan	3	33.9%	71.4%	32.0%	5.1%	94.9%	Yes	Mam Central	33,323
San Marcos	Tacaná	3	15.4%	14.9%	30.2%	92.3%	7.7%		Mam Central	70,823
San Marcos	Pajapita	3	40.6%	51.5%	INSIG.P	99.4%	0.6%			15,557
Huehuetenango	San Miguel Acatan	3	10.0%	INSIG.PO	10.1%	0.7%	99.3%	Yes	Akateko (Mam)	23,500
Huehuetenango	San Juan Atitan	3	53.8%	INSIG.PO	53.8%	0.0%	100.0%	Yes	Mam Northern	16,552
Huehuetenango	San Mateo Ixtatan	3	11.9%	INSIG.PO	11.6%	0.0%	100.0%	Yes	Chuj, Qanjobal	31,411
Huehuetenango	San Juan Ixcay	3	30.3%	31.0%	30.0%	13.9%	86.1%	Yes	Qanjobal	20,737
El Quiché	Santa Cruz Del Quiché	4	32.2%	55.0%	31.4%	91.5%	8.5%		Quiché Central	46,608
El Quiché	Nebaj	4	35.9%	41.7%	35.8%	10.2%	89.8%	Yes	Quiché Central, Ixil	51,643
El Quiché	Sacapulas	4	30.0%	65.0%	28.3%	9.4%	90.6%	Yes	Sakapulteco(Quic)	33,714
El Quiché	Canillá	4	29.6%	47.2%	25.1%	32.8%	67.2%		Quiché Eastern	3,231
El Quiché	Pachalum	4	30.3%	46.6%	11.8%	77.6%	22.4%	Yes	Quiché Eastern	8,121
Baja Verapaz	Rabinal	4	22.8%	28.5%	24.3%	48.4%	51.6%		Achí	29,342
Alta Verapaz	San Cristóbal	4	21.9%	46.2%	20.8%	10.3%	89.7%	Yes	Pokomchi	40,706
Alta Verapaz	San Pedro Carchá	4	16.0%	36.7%	14.5%	12.4%	87.6%	Yes	K'ekchi Western	159,574
Alta Verapaz	Fr Bartolomé Las Casas	4	32.3%	30.4%	34.9%	30.9%	69.1%		K'ekchi Central	39,471
Petén	San Andrés	5	32.4%	36.7%	36.2%	90.4%	9.6%		K'ekchi Northern	15,103
Izabal	Puerto Barrios	6	23.3%	44.3%	15.2%	84.1%	15.9%		Garífuna	92,507
Izabal	Morales	6	20.3%	24.2%	INSIG.P	98.8%	1.2%			89,359
El Progreso	Sansare	7	15.8%	19.2%	8.6%	81.0%	19.0%		Pokomam N.E.	10,841
Chiquimula	Jocotan	7	10.9%	18.2%	2.0%	74.1%	25.9%	Yes	Chortí	36,747
Zacapa	Zacapa	7	23.5%	23.7%	INSIG.P	100.0%	0.0%			58,771
Zacapa	Estanzuela	7	11.3%	11.1%	INSIG.P	100.0%	0.0%			11,201
Zacapa	Usumatlan	7	20.9%	27.3%	INSIG.P	100.0%	0.0%			9,958
Jalapa	San Pedro Pinula	7	18.3%	18.2%	INSIG.P	96.7%	3.3%			43,162
Jutiapa	Yupiltepeque	7	19.3%	27.9%	INSIG.P	98.4%	1.6%			11,572
Escuintla	Tiquisate	8	38.6%	56.3%	INSIG.P	97.1%	2.9%			38,562
Escuintla	Palin	8	23.6%	41.3%	18.5%	64.3%	35.7%		Pokomam South	24,914
Santa Rosa	Casillas	8	10.9%	16.6%	INSIG.P	98.9%	1.1%			21,977
Santa Rosa	Oratorio	8	21.3%	32.2%	INSIG.P	96.4%	3.6%			19,352
Suchitepequez	San Antonio Such.	8	23.9%	26.6%	22.7%	79.0%	21.0%		Quiché SW	36,162
Suchitepequez	San Miguel Panan	8	41.0%	34.7%	43.6%	54.7%	45.3%		Quiché, Cak., Tzut	7,984
Retalhuleu	San Sebastian	8	24.1%	15.1%	22.8%	58.3%	41.7%		Quiché SW	21,654
Retalhuleu	El Asintal	8	30.9%	60.7%	29.1%	55.4%	44.6%		Mam, Quiché	25,401
									Tot Sample area	1,513,854

70% Indian populations. The majority of the Cakchiquel areas are approximately 30% evangelical, with the exception of San Pedro Sacatepequez, which is only 10% evangelical. Outside of this major area of eastern Cakchiquel, this Indian group is highly evangelical.

Within the Mam language group, the four studied areas show a random pattern of evangelical coverage. The extreme southern tip of the Mam area in Concepción Chiquirichapa was found to have only a 15% evangelical presence. The western extreme of the Mam indigenous group found on the descending slopes of the Sierra Madres, was discovered to be 29% evangelical in El Asintal. This area is a mixture of Quiché, Mam and Ladino, with most of the population speaking predominantly Spanish. Central Mam shows 31% evangelicals and Northern Mam in San Juan Atitan was found to be 54% evangelical. Historically, all the Mam area has been worked heavily by the Central American Mission (CAM).

As mentioned earlier, the area around Lake Atitlan is known for its high level of evangelicals, and Santiago Atitlan is no exception for the Tzutuil Indian group. Surveys indicate that 48% of this population in this area are evangelical. Indeed, this is one of the most church-ed groups seen in the study of Guatemala. Although there are other *municipios* with higher percentages of evangelicals, there was not an area studied that had such a large percentage of evangelicals, both in the main town, as well as the *aldeas*. In the neighboring Tzutuil *municipios*, there were similar numbers of churches. This Indian group has the highest incidence of evangelicals in the country. Surveyors noted that in this area, people are highly bilingual, with Spanish utilized on the street in commerce and

tourism. Several of the older Christian leaders lamented to the surveyors that usage of the Tzutuil language is quickly changing, as the younger generation uses their indigenous language less and less, and are mixing it heavily with Spanish. This trend is accelerated in this area due to the vast influxes of transportation, communication and tourism.

The K'ekchís are a large Indian group that was sampled in two areas.²² Of all of the large and populous Indian areas studied, the K'ekchí are unique in that they are distinctly monolingual, as well as more separated from the general Guatemalan culture. San Pedro Carchá was surprising, in that this populous *municipio* was discovered to have a lower percentage of evangelicals than anticipated. Data show that only 16% of the Indian population self-identified itself as evangelical, as contrasted with 37% of the Ladino population. This indicates that even in this unique area, there continues to be a vast discrepancy between the acceptance of the Gospel by Indian groups versus Ladinos.

One of the more isolated areas surveyed was San Miguel Acatán, which is in the center of the Akateko (part of the Mam family of languages) language area. Although many areas around Northern Huehuetenango have been heavily and successfully worked by CAM, this seems to be one in which the Gospel has not entered significantly, with only 10% of the population being evangelical. Albeit this is a remote area, new roads, communications, media, and immigration are rapidly connecting it to the rest of the world. In the pueblos, the majority of the younger generation speak fluent Spanish and a few even speak English. The *aldeas* have a higher level of monolingual Akateco,

²² San Pedro Carchá was chosen because it was the eastern edge of the Baptist stronghold in the K'ekchí language. Because Carchá was not part of the original random sample, results of all the *aldeas* of Carchá are not included in the final data. In the *aldeas*, strong Baptist work exists. In this way, the results are not tilted heavily toward any one denomination.

requiring the Spanish speaking surveyors to procure the services of interpreters in order to complete their job.

Another Indian group studied was discovered to be two groups instead of one. The SIL ethnologue was used to determine ethnocenters. The ethnologue indicates that San Mateo Ixtatan is Chuj; but in this case, surveyors discovered it is the converging grounds of the Chuj and Qanjobal groups. This highly indigenous area is only 12% evangelical.

Personal communications with professionals in the health department and government of Huehuetenango indicated that the Chuj are a remote and primitive people, and are considered to be a "savage" culture. Two social workers related that the Chuj are referred to as the "people of the trees," underscoring their primitive lifestyle.

An ethnocenter of the Qanjobal group is San Juan Ixcoy where 30% of the population consider themselves to be evangelical. This is an area that was difficult to survey as the surveyors could not communicate in the *aldeas* without interpreters. In the central towns, there was a good deal of Spanish spoken, but the Mayan languages are still dominant in this area.

The Pokomchí fall into the typical pattern of most of the Indian groups in the mountains, in that they are much less evangelized than their Ladino neighbors. In San Cristobal, Alta Verapaz, a center of the Pokomchí language, 21% of the Pokomchí are evangelicals, as compared to 46% of the Ladino population. Many of the pastors in this highly evangelized area of the country consider themselves Ladino. They attract both the

indigenous and Ladino cultures to their churches, but their congregations are predominantly Ladinos.

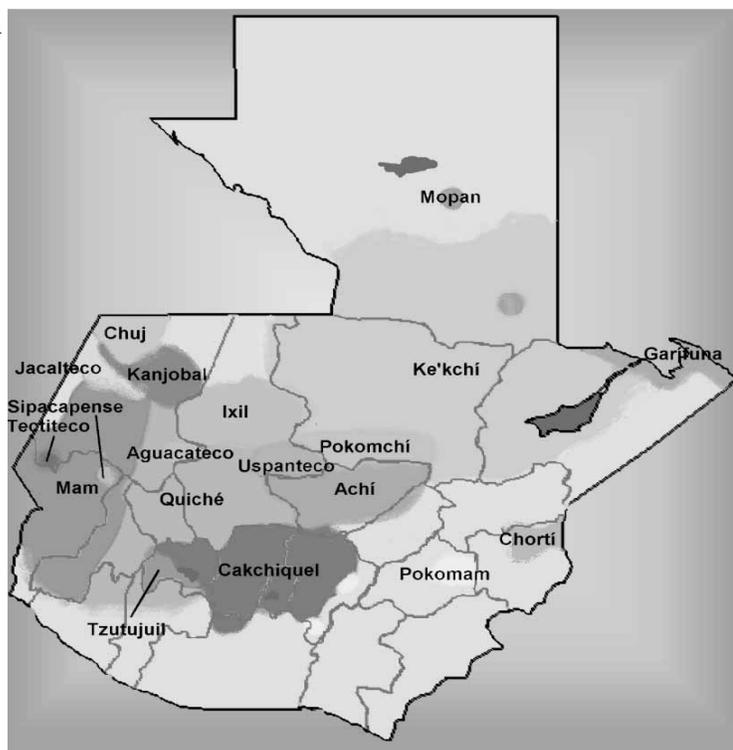
The Achí were surveyed, with the subsequent finding that in the area of Rabinal, Alta Verapaz, there is a high level of evangelicals. Approximately 24% of the Achí population identified themselves as evangelicals, which is a similar level of 29% of the Ladino population being evangelical.

The Pokomam cover the wide geographic area that extends from the southeastern and northeastern edges of the Department of Guatemala. This area also stretches through the large Ladino populations of El Progreso and enters into the purer Indian areas of the Department of Baja Verapaz. The Pokomam was found to have a low percentage of

evangelicals. Since this indigenous group is mixed with the Ladino population in this particular area, this researcher considers that the heart of this language group was not sampled, yet they averaged around 13% evangelical in this specific area.

The surveyors touched the southernmost part of the

Figure 5.12
Major Language Distributions Through Guatemala



Ixil language group when they studied the town of Nebaj, finding that 36% of the Ixil/Quiché population considers itself evangelical. Anecdotal accounts indicate that as one travels northward into the more isolated Ixil country, this percentage drops quickly.

Near the Honduran border reside the Chortí Indian group, which is largely mixed with the Ladino population. Although surveyors entered into the center of the Chortí area, only 26% of the population considered themselves Chortí. Among the Chortí, only the elderly women spoke monolingual Chortí, and even expressed to the surveyors that they wished they could speak Spanish. That desire has come true for their grandchildren, as nearly all the Chortí younger population in this study area spoke fluent Spanish. In the lowly evangelized *municipio* of Jocotan, only 2% of the Chortí consider themselves evangelical, with only 10% of the mixed population considering themselves evangelical.

The Garífuna are a Caribbean-Creole language group. They are encountered in Puerto Barrios and its surrounding areas. This group is primarily rural, making the study of this group in Puerto Barrios outside of its primary ethnocenter. The results are provisional, at best. The Garífuna in the Puerto Barrios area are 15% evangelical, while their Ladino counterparts are 44% evangelical.

Overall Religious Affiliations in Guatemala

Figure 5.13 gives an ordered distribution of the major religious groups in Guatemala. This chart gives an idea of the loyalties or identification of the general population to various religious groups.²³ This is not church membership, which is

²³ See Appendix 5 for a discussion of data and its treatment.

distinct. The general numbers are based upon weighted country wide samples. Data based from the calculations of the queries assume either a large denominational presence or a relatively homogenous distribution within a Region.

Figure 5.13

Group or Denomination	Population	Percentage of Total Population	Group or Denomination	Population	Percentage of Total Population
<i>Catholic</i>	6,614,881	58.10%	Friends, Quakers	23,347	0.21%
<i>Non-Affiliated</i>	1,582,562	13.90%	Church of God, Prophecy	22,984	0.20%
Assembly of God	600,540	5.27%	Evangelical Mission, HolyS	18,790	0.17%
Church of God, W- Gospel	487,984	4.29%	Calvary Ministries	17,730	0.16%
Independent	188,421	1.65%	Verbo	14,640	0.13%
Prince of Peace	179,038	1.57%	House of God, Evangelical	14,109	0.12%
<i>Seventh Day Adventist</i>	175,849	1.54%	Agua Viva	11,693	0.10%
Central American Mission	162,175	1.42%	Voice of God	11,047	0.10%
Church of God, Pentecost	136,743	1.20%	<i>Maya</i>	11,016	0.10%
Elim	105,435	0.93%	Church of Christ	8,841	0.08%
Nazarene	102,345	0.90%	Bread of Life	8,283	0.07%
Pentecostal, other	91,866	0.81%	Shalem	7,938	0.07%
Baptist	75,648	0.66%	House of Prayer	5,905	0.05%
Presbyterian	65,800	0.58%	Israelite	5,856	0.05%
Bethany	60,000	0.53%	Family of God	5,684	0.05%
<i>Mormon</i>	55,441	0.49%	Voice in the Desert	5,438	0.05%
<i>Jehovah's Witness</i>	45,962	0.40%	Methodist	5,360	0.05%
Miel	43,929	0.39%	Mennonites	4,872	0.04%
Church of God, New	28,129	0.25%	others	352,244	3.10%
Church of God, Galilee	25,705	0.23%	Totals	11,385,337	100.00%
<i>Italics represent non-evangelical groups.</i>					

Final General Comments

Some of the glaring observations is that Indian groups are generally less evangelized than their neighboring Ladinos and the Indian populations are usually half as

literate as their Ladino counterparts.²⁴ Interestingly, once an individual becomes part of the Evangelical Church, his literacy exceeds that of the population in general.

Surveyors have observed that, in *municipios* containing a more bilingual population, the church services are usually held in Spanish. This is also confirmed by results from the Pastoral Interviews.²⁵ The medium sized churches in the towns attract people from the *aldeas*, as these churches usually are more polished with a more experienced leadership. Those who speak Spanish in the *aldeas* also are attracted to this type of church.

Christian radio is a powerful communication tool, entering 90% of Christian homes.²⁶ The radio is the teacher and pastor for many evangelicals as well as the Bible Institute for a substantial number of pastors. There are very good and biblically sound radio stations, but the majority of the frequencies expound an allegorical or non-biblical preaching. This profoundly influences the doctrinal soundness and ethics of the Christian community.

Conclusions from General Demographic Data

Few conclusions should be drawn from the geographic Grid I alone. Grid I gives broad information as past studies of evangelicals in Guatemala have done. This grid shows a high presence of evangelicals throughout most of the country, with the exception

²⁴ See Appendix 5A3.1.

²⁵ A surprisingly low percentage of churches preach exclusively in Indian languages. Of the major Indian groups, K'ekchi has the highest percentage of churches in a Mayan language at 53% and the Quiché had the lowest percentage of Indian preaching with only 7% of churches preaching totally in a Mayan language. See Appendix 5.5 for a full discussion of language usage in evangelical churches.

²⁶ n = 2098 with 1855 responding affirmative to "Do you regularly listen to Christian radio?" Query is to evangelicals and is not adjusted for gender or weighted.

of Region 7. One could be tempted to come to the conclusion that there is no need for mission activity due to the overall healthy percentages of evangelicals. Mission strategists cannot ignore the high incidence of evangelicals in Guatemala. The task, role, and quantity of North American missionaries needed in light of an adolescent national church must be considered carefully. Mission strategists must be cognizant if they are applying pioneer mission techniques to highly evangelical areas, or are putting efforts into the maturity, expansion, and mobilization of the Guatemalan Church.

Data from Grid II, Ethnic Groupings by Mayan and Ladino Regional Cultures, shed more light upon the makeup and the complexity of evangelicals within the Interior of the country. The most vibrant indigenous works are in Region 2 around Lake Atitlán. Years ago, the concerted effort to reduce the Gospel into Mayan languages started in this Region, and Wycliff Bible Translators was born out of this effort. Over the years, this part of the country has become more bilingual, but continues to retain its Mayan culture. Apparently, when there is less distinction of race, the Gospel takes root faster, as in Region 3. Evangelicals in Region 3 blur the cultural barriers in contrast to the general population and the Catholic Church. Region 7 raises a double concern in that it is the least evangelized, and the small indigenous population essentially is not touched by the Gospel. In this part of the country, there is strong prejudice against the Indians. Usually where there is prejudice it fosters hatred in both directions. It would be wise for a North American team of missionaries to initiate work with the Indian groups in this area as it could be difficult for Guatemalans to open the doors to the Chortí and Pokomam. In

addition to the Mayan groups, attention must be directed toward the Ladino population in this area as well.

Both Grids III and IV show specific areas where there is a low incidence of evangelicals. Areas can include various people groups. Grid IV indicates specific people groups that are in need of more Gospel presence. The lack of the Gospel in these studied groups are due, in part, to geographical and/or cultural isolation. Another profound factor is that rural Indian groups are much less educated and literate than Ladinos, and this has a bearing upon the level of acceptance and internalization of the Gospel.

This chapter in isolation depicts a bright picture for evangelicals, but it must be taken into context with the plateaued growth rate and the issues of syncretism as outlined in Chapters 6 and 7.