

Christ and
Business
Culture: Another
Classification
of Christians
in Workplaces
According to an
Empirical Study
in Hong Kong*

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We propose a new classification of Christians based on their levels of internal struggle and subsequent behaviors upon dealing with ethical issues in the workplace: Christian soldiers, panic followers, strugglers, and Sunday Christians.

Then, we develop a model of potential, evolutionary processes that these Christian types may follow using game-theory analysis. We argue that Sunday Christians and Christian soldiers are the only two possible Christian equilibriums in repeated game settings. Finally, we use an empirical data set, which was conducted in Hong Kong, to illustrate our classifications and suggest potential strategies to efficiently allocate resources within Christian churches.

Introduction

The study of Christian workplace ethics has exploded since the late 1990s. Hundreds of scholarly articles have been published in mainstream academic journals, especially in the area of business ethics.¹ Most of these studies can be classified into two major streams, depending on the focus of each article. The first stream focuses primarily on spiritual aspects of workplace ethics, speaking to how contemporary Christians should behave according to a biblical worldview. These studies are usually found in journals published by Christian institutions and seminaries.² Alternatively, the second stream focuses on analysis of stylized facts and observations to ethical behaviors.³ Nevertheless, articles from both streams aim to suggest and provide ways to improve and promote workplace ethics among Christians.

This article intends to view ethical issues from a rather different perspective. We want to propose a simple classification of Christians, with respect to workplace ethics, that is consistent with both reality and the Christian Bible. This classification is based on an empirical study of Hong Kong Christian workers that was conducted in 2003.

Christian typology has been studied as early as 1951; Niebuhr defined five different response strategies to cultural influence: Christ against culture, Christ of culture, Christ above culture, Christ and culture in paradox, and Christ the transformer of culture.⁴ In our analysis, however, we want to categorize working Christians into four different types, based on both their judgmental behaviors and internal-struggle levels when faced with ethical situations. We argue that there are multiple equilibriums but only two are stable in the long run. First, we use different Bible characters to depict each of the four Christian types proposed, then, using primary data, we demonstrate that our argument is also consistent with reality. First, however, we will take a look at workplace ethics from a biblical standpoint.

Biblical Teachings

The teachings of Christianity promote faithful obedience of servants to their masters. *AllaboutGod.com* has the following description on Christian workplace ethics:⁵

Each person is given a responsibility and we are to be “faithful” in that trust. The word “faithful” is translated from the Greek word “pistis” and it means to be steadfast to one’s word or promises, worthy to be believed, trustworthy, and having dependable speech. It is very interesting that we find this same word used to depict the faithfulness of God. “Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” (1 Thessalonians 5:24, KJV). This same word is used for the character of God and it therefore should be seen in those who are His children. The conclusion is that the basis for workplace ethics is that those in the workplace, both employer and employee, should see their lives as being a steward who is responsible to govern their actions by the viewpoint and the model of God’s faithfulness.

The other principle is found in a passage in Ephesians. “Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know

that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free. And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.” (Ephesians 6:5–9, NIV)

According to the Bible, Christians can be expected to be loyal and accountable under most everyday situations. Generally speaking, if this is true, it can be implied that faith has a positive influence on performance. On the other hand, however, Christian teaching clearly indicates that Christians should be holy because their God is holy. “No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and money” (Matthew 6:24, ESV); it is written, “You shall be holy, for I am holy” (1 Peter 1:16, ESV). In most denominational teachings, Christians need to prioritize God; God’s way is always the preferred way. Because God is holy, unethical management decisions are not to be followed. A practical example can be found in the book of Exodus 1:17 (ESV): “But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live.” The midwife for Moses’ birth was ordered by the king of Egypt not to keep any male infant alive. This action was not consistent with her personal beliefs. Using the contemporary English language, the midwife was ordered by her worldly boss to perform something against her faith; however, the midwife feared God and did not kill Moses. In other words, she did not obey the order from her worldly boss because it violated her religious beliefs; she put faith first by choosing not to carry out what she was ordered to do.

Therefore, when management’s decisions are not consistent with Scripture, Christians should not submit; they should reject such assignments. In other words, Christians are expected to reject assignments that are contrary to their beliefs, being loyal to their God, not their worldly bosses.

Apostle Paul’s Experience

The apostle Paul said in Romans 7:14–15 (ESV), “For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin. For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.” Our classifications hinged on this Bible verse. The apostle Paul is telling us how difficult it can be to make ethical decisions. He says that there is an internal, godly force (the Spirit) telling him what he is supposed to do, but in the end, he may not choose that action. In the same chapter verses, 15–24, Paul further preaches his difficulties when faced with ethical questions. The tension between his soul

and his flesh is so intense that he believes he is a wretched man. He begs to be rescued from his body of death. With a man as godly as the apostle Paul having confessed the challenges of ethical decision-making, it is not difficult to imagine how fierce a battle it is for contemporary Christians to live ethically in their work environments. One purpose of our study is to measure this interaction between behaviors and internal struggles.

Actions are measured by constructing an obedience scale that describes how contemporary Christians behave. A Christian with a high obedience level is more likely to obey the world when making ethical decisions than a Christian with a low obedience level. In a pure Christian perspective, a low obedience level is preferred; whereas, in the pure modern management perspective, a high level of obedience is preferred. For simplicity, we look at cases where there is a non-negotiable, unavoidable ethical dilemma (defined as situations where Christians are asked to perform tasks that are inconsistent with their personal beliefs).

A struggle scale is constructed to measure the level of ease one experiences when making ethical decisions. When a Christian has a high level of struggle, this means the decision-making process is relatively hard, and *vice versa*. The higher the level of struggle a Christian experiences, the easier it will be for him or her to accept alternatives. This may create disastrous social problems if a significant portion of the workforce has been consistently under high levels of internal struggle.⁶ At the same time, the more frequently one is exposed to ethical dilemmas, the more likely it is that he or she will experience less internal struggle when faced with similar choices. In other words, high-struggling-equilibrium types that we will classify may not be stable in repeated game settings.

The obedience and struggle scales quantify the degree of struggle experienced by Christians when making ethical decisions. This technicality of measurement is not the focus of this article; therefore, the quantification process employed will be omitted.⁷ By crossing these two scales, we can classify four different types of Christian in the workplace. Each type will be discussed in more detail in section 3 of this article. The remainder of this article is organized as follows: Section 2 is the literature review on classifications, section 3 discusses our classification and the biblical rationale behind it, section 4 gives a simple theoretical model on the type evolution in repeated game settings, section 5 talks about our data, and we conclude in section 6.

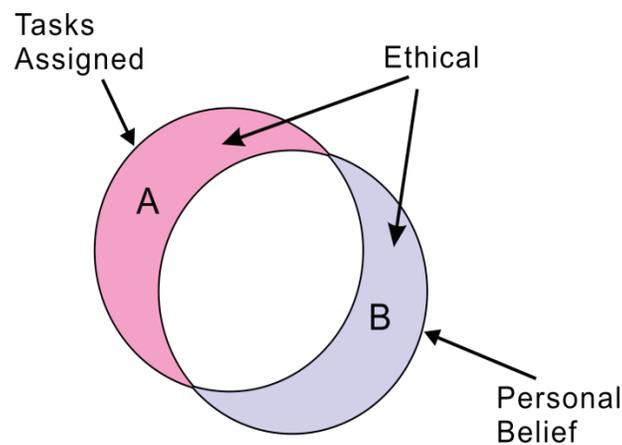
Literature Review

There are no widely accepted definitions of business ethics. Lewis (1985) mentions that typical definitions of business ethics refer to the rightness or wrongness of behavior, but not everyone agrees on what is morally right or wrong, good or bad, ethical or unethical. To complicate the problem, nearly all available definitions exist at highly abstract levels. He argues that defining business ethics is like nailing Jell-O to a wall. The current article, however, narrows down the definition to cases where employees are asked to perform tasks that are against their personal beliefs.

Definition

An ethical decision occurs when employees are asked to perform a task that is not consistent with their personal beliefs (see figure 1).

Figure 1
Definition of Ethical Situations

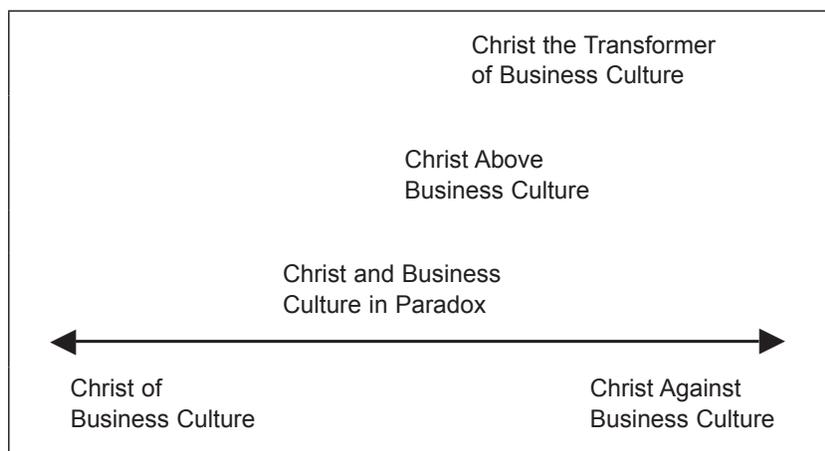


As shown in figure 1, there are two non-overlapping areas: A and B. Region A represents situations where Christians are assigned tasks that violate their personal beliefs. This is the primary ethical situation that we refer to in this article. For instance, an accounting clerk is being asked to lie in order to delay payment to a supplier. Christians are supposed to be honest, but because the clerk is assigned a dishonest task, it is inside his or her circle of assigned tasks but outside of his or her circle of personal beliefs. Therefore, this is an example of a situation located inside region A. Region B, however, represents situations where Christians have

to deal with ethical issues that are not assigned to them. For example, Scripture⁸ says it is a sin if a Christian fails to do the right thing. When a troubled colleague needs a helping hand, Christians are supposed to help, acting in testimony to God's will; however, this task of helping may not be assigned by their earthly boss. Under our definition, this is an example of an ethical situation in region B. Nevertheless, the focus of this article primary relates to situations in region A, with discussions concerning region B awaiting future research.

As mentioned earlier, Niebuhr (1951) defines five different types of ethical dilemma relating to culture: Christ against culture, Christ of culture, Christ above culture, Christ and culture in paradox, and Christ the transformer of culture. The most extreme types are Christ against culture and Christ of culture. Christ against culture refers to the view of radical Christians who stress the presence of evil in culture seeing Christ only in opposition to it. Christ of culture is at the other end of the spectrum. These Christians do not see any contradiction at all between Christ and culture. The remaining three types are between the two extremes. Siker (1989) adapts Niebuhr's framework by adapting his five strategies into five subsets: Christ against business culture, Christ of business culture, Christ above business culture, Christ and business culture in paradox, and Christ the transformer of business (see figure 2). These early analyses are single dimensional and not adequate for studying contemporary Christian behavior.

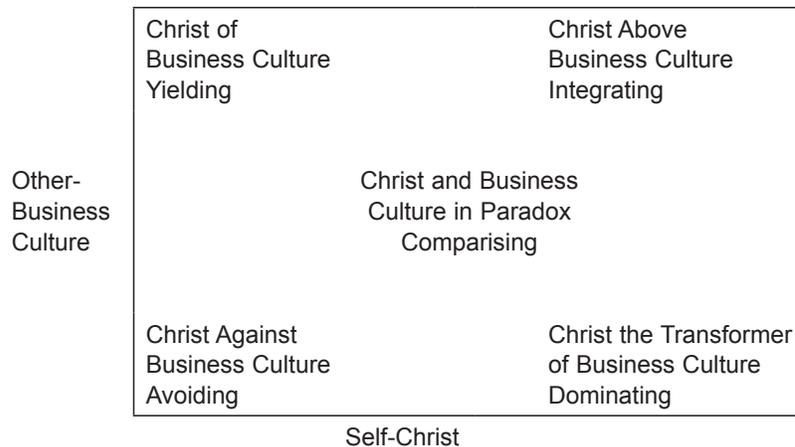
Figure 2
Niebuhr's Typological Framework
(Figure borrowed from Lee, McCann, and Ching, 2003.)



Despite the fact that Niebuhr’s work is among the most influential in relation to social ethics of the twentieth century, his typological framework has been criticized by many Christian scholars (for example, John Howard Yoder and Craig Carter). Among the five classifications, the Christ against culture type has received the most criticism. Carter (2006) provides a careful summary of criticisms against Niebuhr’s model, especially from a theoretical perspective. Our article, however, does not deal directly with the classification of different social ethics issue types. Instead, we classify Christians based on their observable actions, and unobservable internal struggles, while dealing with conflicting ethical issues.⁹

Lewicki, Saunders, and Minton (2001) propose another way to identify Christian types based on their negotiation styles. Their model has two dimensions. They argue that individuals weigh self-interest against company interest upon making related decisions. Using these two parameters, they derive five Christian types: yielding, avoiding, compromising, integrating, and dominating. Lee, McCann and Ching (2003) further incubate Lewicki et al’s (2001) analysis with Niebuhr’s model. They combine Niebuhr’s Christian types with Lewicki et al’s two-dimensional model and propose a new typological framework (see figure 3).

Figure 3
Lee, McCann, and Ching’s New Typological Framework
 (Figure borrowed from Lee, McCann, and Ching, 2003.)



These analyses provide an excellent model for studying behavioral business ethics within a Christian perspective; however, the essence of internal struggles has not been thoroughly examined. We believe an individual’s behavior can be significantly influenced by his or her level of internal struggle.¹⁰ The higher the level of internal struggle, the more likely a person is to adjust judgmental behaviors. The major contribution of this article is to propose a new classification that integrates internal struggle with external behavior.

Our Proposed Types

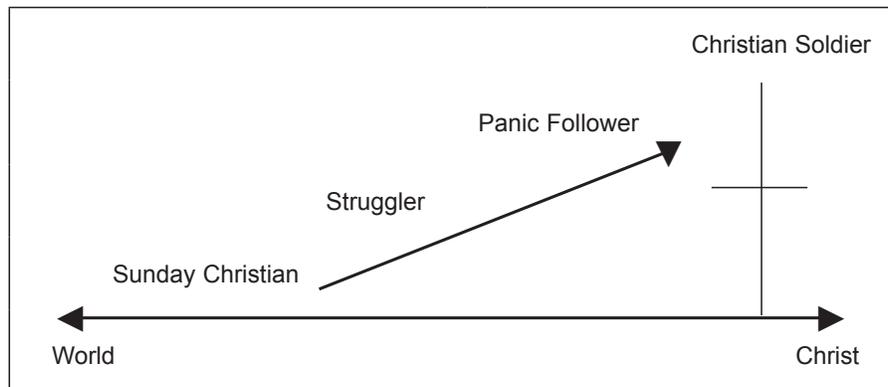
We identify four different types of Christians, based on how ethical issues are dealt with in the workplace by crossing their levels of internal struggle with their levels of obedience (see figure 4). If a Christian performs an assigned ethical task that is not consistent with his or her personal beliefs, we say that this person has a high level of obedience. However, if a Christian rejects an assigned ethical task due to personal beliefs, he or she has a low level of obedience. The internal struggle level is independent of the obedience level. The struggle level measures relative ease of making a decision, regardless of the outcome. In other words, the internal struggle levels and the obedience levels are independent of each other.

Figure 4
Our Proposed Types of Christians

		Struggle Level	
		High	Low
Obedient t Level	High	Christian Type 1 “Struggler”	Christian Type 2 “Sunday Christian”
	Low	Christian Type 3 “Panic Follower”	Christian Type 4 “Christian Soldier”

In a pure Christian theological viewpoint, these types can also be related using figure 5:

Figure 5
Our Classification of Christian Types



We argue that there are invisible downward pulling forces in figure 5. In fact, in section 4 we propose a model of stability for these Christian types. We find out that strugglers and panic followers do not exist in the long run. Further, if churches do not pay attention to these two Christian types, they are likely to regress to becoming Sunday Christians in the long run.

Christian Type 1: The Strugglers

The strugglers struggle with the decision-making process, but, in the end, they submit themselves to management. In the eyes of their colleagues, they are loyal servants, willing to obey direction in spite of personal beliefs. They are exactly the type of Christian the apostle Paul described in Romans 7:19 (ESV): “For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I keep on doing.”

Besides the apostle Paul, the wealthy young man who asked Christ how to get into heaven was also a struggler. He desired to follow Christ but could not forgo his belongings. Pontius Pilate is another example. Some may argue that Pontius Pilate was not a Christian; however, his world-famous act of washing his hands of Christ’s judgment demonstrates a classic example of someone who has gone through exceptional internal struggles, yet in the end has made a decision contrary to his personal beliefs.

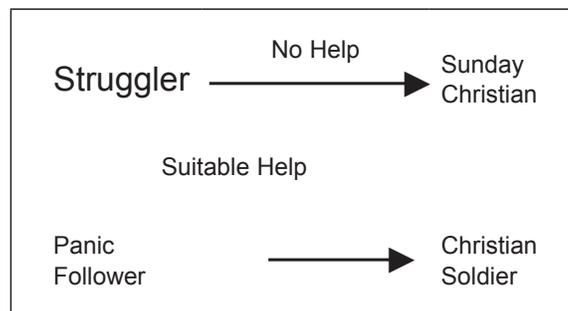
There are also cultural and social influences that enable strugglers. For example, firms may require employees to sign agreements that ensure that tasks are completed as directed. Peer pressure can be another significant factor affecting their

existence; strugglers tend to avoid differentiation from peers. On one hand, they want to stand up for Christ; however, on the other hand, they may worry about becoming ostracized. Therefore, having too many strugglers can potentially result in disastrous social and economic outcomes.

In any repeated game settings, the strugglers' equilibrium is not likely to be stable. Some may regress, or progress (evolve) to other types, depending on circumstances. Without any external help, their level of struggle is likely to diminish; they become less and less sensitive to the Holy Spirit's influence and eventually slip into type 2 Sunday Christians. Alternatively, given suitable assistance and counseling, they can become Christian soldiers by way of the panic follower step (see figure 6).

Figure 6

Possible Evolution of Strugglers



Christian Type 2: The Sunday Christians

Sunday Christians do not struggle at all when making ethical decisions; they can easily follow management directives. They manage to separate their faith and business behavior successfully. With regard to ethical issues, Sunday Christians are no different from their non-Christian coworkers. They are like those extreme Pharisees referred to by Jesus in the Gospels.

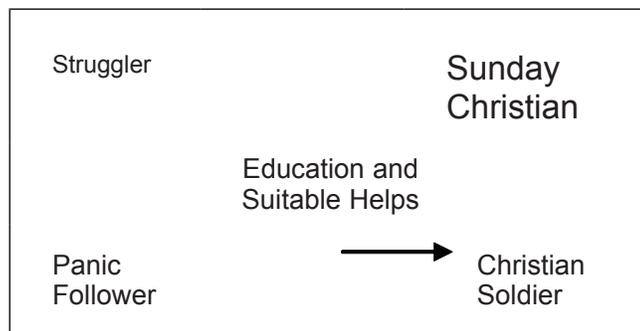
We also argue that Jude Thaddaeus is not unlike a Sunday Christian. He was one of Christ's disciples, yet he sold Jesus to the Romans. In fact, the Bible does not indicate that he struggled with making his original decision at all (*ex ante*). We find, upon making an ethical decision, that he is capable of separating his faith from his business (collect money and sell Jesus).

Some Sunday Christians may regularly repent of their sins during worship on Sundays. In Jude Thaddaeus's case, he committed suicide. Christianity is a forgiving religion; however, that does not negate meaningful repentance. If any society experiences increasing numbers of Sunday Christians, it may create

negative externalities upon that society’s other Christian types. This negative externality is captured in the model we later propose.

Sunday Christians may not be sensitive to certain ethical issues. In order to help them evolve to Christian soldiers, education is a likely necessity. Hopefully, churches can pay more attention to the needs of these Sunday Christians, enabling them to evolve to our highest type—Christian soldier—which may be attained through the struggler and panic follower steps (see figure 7).

Figure 7
Possible Evolution of Sunday Christians



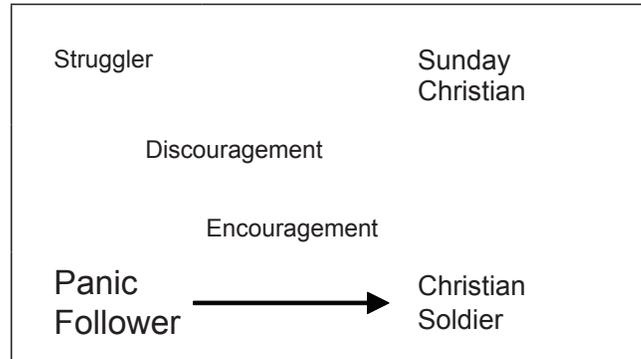
Christian Type 3: Panic Followers

Panic followers struggle with ethical decisions, but in the end, they will follow their faith instead of contrary direction from management. These followers panic throughout the decision-making process but are willing to remain steadfast, regardless of consequences. Having strong moral support is crucial for this evolving group of Christians.

Moses, who was ordered to bring the Israelites out of Egypt, is one example of a panic follower. He was searching for excuses, but in the end, he took up his task and led the Israelites out of Egypt. Jonah is another classic example. He was ordered to go to Nineveh but chose otherwise. It was not until a big fish swallowed Jonah, keeping him for three days and nights, that he finally submitted himself to the Lord and did what was ordered.

Panic followers are similar to Christian soldiers, but they are a group that requires more care. On one hand, they can evolve to be Christian soldiers if given adequate attention and involvement (fellowships, for example), but, on the other hand, they can as easily turn into strugglers if earthly greed¹¹ takes over (see figure 8).

Figure 8
Possible Evolution of Panic Followers



Christian Type 4: Christian Soldiers

Christian soldiers are the most Christlike type in our classification.¹² They follow their faith with little or no struggle. In other words, they have integrated faith into their everyday business lives. We have to point out that Christians of this type may be dangerous if their denomination’s teachings are inaccurate or misunderstood.

Joseph, Abraham, and Daniel are examples from the Bible that illustrate the Christian soldier type. Joseph was put into temptation when working as a slave in Egypt. Although he was jailed for doing so, he refused to obey what his master’s wife had asked of him, instead remaining true to his beliefs. Without doubt, Abraham was ready to sacrifice Isaac; he understood that everything is from the Lord, and God may take anything back at any time. Daniel, after the king ordered that no one could worship any gods, defiantly continued to worship the Lord publicly. He clearly feared God more than anything else. Using our model, Christian soldiers are those who have strong biblical foundations and are expected to have received complete discipleship training.

We have so far presented our four theoretical classifications of Christian types. In reality, we understand that a Christian’s ethical behavior can be case specific. In other words, he or she can be a Christian soldier with one circumstance, and a struggler with another. Therefore, we may need to develop hybrid Christian types that are more attuned to circumstantial situations. In fact, with these four theoretical types, we can create numerous case-specific combinations.

These four purely distinct types may not all exist in repeated game settings. Those types with a high level of struggle are unlikely to remain in the long run. In the next section, we will propose a simple game to study the stability of these types.

Stability of Types

In this section, we want to argue that strugglers and panic followers are unlikely to be stable in the long run. We apply a simple framework of game theory to demonstrate our argument. Technically, we need to implement a cost associated with internal struggle levels, and this cost is assumed to increase with time. This cost allows them to switch from a high internal struggle type to a low internal struggle type. Some switch quickly while others switch more slowly. This speed of change depends on the Christian's personal experience, and some other exogenous factors. It should be noted here that this model can be applied to other Christian analysis,¹³ not just Christians in the workplace.

The Game

The game is played in a business setting, and there are five types of players: non-Christian, strugglers, Sunday Christians, panic followers, and Christian soldiers. The notations are defined as follows:

Player	Type	Distribution Probability at the t^{th} Round
Non-Christians	0	$P_{0,t}$
Strugglers	1	$P_{1,t}$
Sunday Christians	2	$P_{2,t}$
Panic Followers	3	$P_{3,t}$
Christian Soldiers	4	$P_{4,t}$

Define t as the number of rounds the game is played. It is noted that

$$\forall t, \sum_{j=0}^4 p_{j,t} = 1$$

There are two possible strategies any player can choose: (follow God or follow the world).

Types 0, 1, and 2 always choose (follow the world), while types 3 and 4 always choose (follow God).

Each player is supposed to interact with another player of an unknown type in each round. After the interaction, each player can observe only the behavior of the other player but not the other player's type.

After completion of each round, any player may switch type according to the following rules:

1. When a type 0 interacts with any other types, he remains a type 0.
2. When a type 1's opponent follows the world (i.e., interacts with a type 0, 1, or 2), he may become a type 2 with probability α in the next round.
3. When a type 1's opponent follows God (i.e., interacts with a type 3 or 4), he may become a type 3 with probability α in the next round.
4. When a type 2 interacts with any other types, he remains a type 2.
5. When a type 3's opponent follows the world (i.e., interacts with a type 0, 1 or 2), he may become a type 1 with probability α the next round.
6. When a type 3's opponent follows God (i.e., interacts with a type 3 or 4), he may become a type 4 with probability α the next round.
7. When a type 4 interacts with any types, he remains a type 4.

It should be noted here that α can also be viewed as the speed of conversion. The higher the speed of conversion (α), the more quickly convergence occurs. When α equals zero, no convergence will result. When α equals one, convergence is fastest. Because we assume a high cost associated with high internal struggle types, α is positive. Incubating α into our analysis only adjusts the speed of convergence, but it does make things more complicated; therefore, from now on, we will concentrate on the extreme case where $\alpha = 1$. In other words, by observing what their counterpart does, Christians will switch type with a probability equal to one.

The Outcome

The result is tabulated in the following diagram ($\alpha=1$).

	0	1	2	3	4
	$p_{0,t}$	$p_{1,t}$	$p_{2,t}$	$p_{3,t}$	$p_{4,t}$
0	0,0	0,2	0,2	0,1	0,4
$p_{0,t}$					
1	2,0	2,2	2,2	2,1	3,4
$p_{1,t}$					
2	2,0	2,2	2,2	2,1	2,4
$p_{2,t}$					
3	1,0	1,2	1,2	4,4	4,4
$p_{3,t}$					
4	4,0	4,3	4,2	4,4	4,4
$p_{4,t}$					

Therefore, the distribution in $t+1$ becomes:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Type 0} & \quad p_{0,t+1} = p_{0,t} \\ \text{Type 1} & \quad p_{1,t+1} = p_{0,t} \cdot p_{3,t} + p_{1,t} \cdot p_{3,t} + p_{2,t} \cdot p_{3,t} \\ \text{Type 2} & \quad p_{2,t+1} = p_{2,t} + p_{1,t} \cdot p_{0,t} + p_{1,t} \cdot p_{1,t} + p_{1,t} \cdot p_{2,t} + p_{1,t} \cdot p_{3,t} \\ \text{Type 3} & \quad p_{3,t+1} = p_{1,t} \cdot p_{4,t} \\ \text{Type 4} & \quad p_{4,t+1} = p_{4,t} + p_{3,t} \cdot p_{3,t} + p_{3,t} \cdot p_{4,t} \end{aligned}$$

As t increases, $p_{1,t} \rightarrow 0$, and $p_{3,t} \rightarrow 0$.

This model predicts that type 1 and type 3 Christians will eventually become extinct, leaving only types 0, 2, and 4 remaining. This is an important prediction from this model. Players may switch from types 1 and 3 to types 2 and 4 over time. The final distribution of Christian types depends on their initial distribution.

One thing we want to emphasize is that this model assumes no external assistance or encouragement from the church or other Christians. We can add in an exogenous probability that reflects such influence in future studies.

This model implies that panic followers and strugglers will evolve or regress with time, potentially becoming Christian soldiers or Sunday Christians. Should a Christian church or community have a large number of strugglers and panic followers, it is advisable that pastoral coworkers pay close attention before it is too late. The next section is a case study regarding the classification of our Christian types, illustrating how severe and urgent the situation is. The data set, collected at the end of 2003, consists of 767 questionnaires completed by Christians in Hong Kong.¹⁴

Our Data

Because technical details are not the theme of this article, we will only present a simple description of our results in this section. Details about our technical analysis can be found at Lee, Chan, and Yeung (2007). As mentioned earlier, we applied the above classification of Christians and found that 30.0 percent of the participants are type 1 Christians, 28.5 percent are type 2 Christians, 23.9 percent are type 3 Christians, and 17.6 percent are type 4 Christians (see table 1).

Table 1
Hong Kong Christian Classifications (Total Sample = 767)

		Struggle Index	
		High	Low
Obedient t Index	High	Christian Type 1 Strugglers N = 198 (30.0%)	Christian Type 2 Sunday Christians N = 188 (28.5%)
	Low	Christian Type 3 Panic Followers N = 158 (23.9%)	Christian Type 4 Christian Soldiers N = 116 (17.6%)

Most of our respondents are type 1 Christians. They exhibit a high obedience level (they will follow management’s direction), but they also have a high struggle level, both of which take time to reconcile. The quantity of type 2 Christians is not far behind. They will obey decisions made by management and comply without an intense level of struggle. The overall sum of these two types is 58.5 percent. This indicates that close to 60 percent of Hong Kong’s Christians will obey management directives, even though they may struggle with the decision-making process.

In addition, 23.9 percent of our respondents are type 3 Christians. They do struggle with their decisions, but in the end, will decide not to fully obey management directives. Combined with type 1 Christians, our results indicate that 53.9 percent of Christians experience a high level of struggle when confronted with ethical issues in the workplace.

Our data indicates a relatively even distribution of Christian types, overall. This suggests that multiple equilibriums exist in the short run. Combined with our proposed model, this implies two possible future developments. If churches or Christians do not put an emphasis on teaching ethical business practices, it is possible that other types may regress to type 2 Christians (Sunday Christians). On the other hand, if churches or Christians devote more resources toward teaching ethical business practices, other types will likely evolve to type 4 Christians (Christian soldiers).

We apply multinomial logistic regression to our analysis in an effort to determine factors that potentially contribute to the existence of each Christian type;¹⁵ more specifically, our analysis may be used to develop strategies that facilitate the evolution of Christians to Christian soldiers. These are four major ways:

Finding 1

Males struggle less than females when dealing with ethical issues in their work environment. One possible explanation is that females are more sensitive to workplace ethics than their counterparts. Another is that males are likely to relax and neglect ethical concerns.

Using the language of our model, because males struggle less means α (converging speed) for males is higher than for females. This indicates that churches may need to put a priority on resources provided to males because they may switch more quickly than females.

Finding 2

The more result-oriented a Christian is, the more likely it is that they will obey and follow management directives.

This indicates that churches should put more emphasis on making quality value judgments. Caring and education are integral to mitigating result-oriented Christians.

Finding 3

The larger or more rigorous a workplace, the easier it is for Christians to obey and follow management decisions.

This is an interesting finding. If possible, it may be prudent for young Christians to start work in smaller, rather than larger, work environments. We believe the real reason behind this finding is the percentage of Christians working within a company. If the company has a low Christian-to-non-Christian ratio,¹⁶ it becomes difficult for Christians to voice their opinion and effect change.

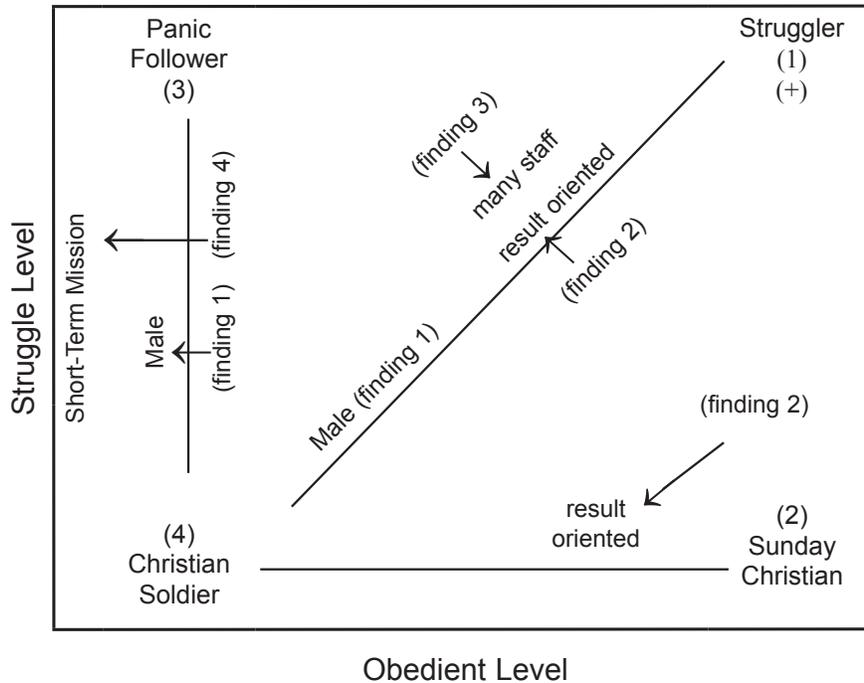
Finding 4

The more short-term missions or visitations performed by the Christian, the lower the struggle index.

By encouraging panic followers to participate in short-term missions and visitations, they can be switched to Christian soldiers. We argue that given scarce resources, it is more efficient for churches to devote resources that transform panic strugglers into Christian soldiers than any other type. These activities include organizing short-term mission trips, visitation teams, as well as regular fellowship or cell-group gatherings.

The following graph summarizes our four findings and avenues for helping various Christian types evolve into Christian soldiers.

Figure 9



Conclusion

We have classified Christians into four different types based on their behaviors and levels of internal struggle, in ethical situations:¹⁷ Christian soldiers, panic followers, strugglers, and Sunday Christians. Christian soldiers and panic followers act on their faith while strugglers and Sunday Christians do not. Christian soldiers and Sunday Christians make their behavioral decisions with relative ease, whereas panic followers and strugglers do not.

We also proposed a model regarding the possible evolution of these Christian types. In our framework, panic followers and strugglers will not exist equally in repeated game settings. Because it is costly to maintain high levels of struggle, panic followers and strugglers will switch types over time.

We further illustrated our classification using empirical data collected in Hong Kong. We found that distribution of these Christian types is comparatively even. However, there is a majority of Christians (58.5%) who have high levels of struggle when dealing with ethical issues. If our proposed model is correct, a majority of Christian types will be converted to some other forms in the future. Therefore, it is crucial for Christians and churches to prepare themselves for ethical challenges in their work environments. For instance, our empirical results

indicate that having Christians participate in discipleship programs, short-term missions, and fellowship is more efficient than participation in revival meetings and workshops. Lee, Chan, and Yeung (2007) discuss more on how to equip Christians against contemporary business ethical issues in greater depth.

Notes

- * We want to thank Raymond Yeung and the Hong Kong Professional People Association for their support in making the “Christian in the workplace” dataset available. We also wish to thank Sam Reimer, Stephen Dempster, Robert MacDonald, and other anonymous editorial review members of the *Journal of Markets & Morality* for their insightful comments. We are especially grateful for Kevin Vautour for his help in editing. All remaining errors are our own.
1. For example, a special issue of the *Business Ethics Quarterly*, vol. 7, no. 2 (March 1997) has been devoted to religion and business ethics—an issue described as “enlarging the conversation” by exploring the inclusion of religious approaches in discussions of business ethics.
 2. For example, H. H. Friedman, “Biblical Foundations of Business Ethics,” *Journal of Markets & Morality* 3 (2000): 43–57; and J. C. Knapp, “Faith, Profit and Decision Making: Christians in the Corporation,” Wheaton, Ill.: Wheaton College Center for Applied Christian Ethics (2004).
 3. For example, R. C. Ford and W. D. Richardson, “Ethical Decision-Making: A Review of the Empirical Literature,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 13 (1994): 205–21; T. W. Loe, L. Ferrell, and P. Mansfield, “A Review of Empirical Studies Assessing Ethical Decision Making in Business,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 25 (2000): 185–204; J. G. Longenecker, J. A. McKinney, and C. W. Moore, “Religious Intensity, Evangelical Christianity and Business Ethics: An Empirical Study,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 25 (2004): 373–86.
 4. We understand that Niebuhr’s typology has created controversial debates in recent years. Some Christian scholars (such as John Yoder and Craig Carter) disagree with Niebuhr’s work, but some of those criticisms have been refuted by other scholars such as D. A. Carson. However, the focus of our study is not to classify different types of ethical issues but to classify different types of Christians in ethical situations.
 5. See <http://www.allaboutgod.com/workplace-ethics.htm>.
 6. For example, stress and depression may lead to suicide, theft, and so forth in extreme cases.
 7. For information on how to quantify internal struggles, see: S. K. Lee, A. Chan, and W. M. Yeung, “Holistic Struggles, Judgmental Behaviors in the Workplace: An

Empirical Study of Hong Kong Christians,” *Contemporary China Research Papers*, no. 2 (August 2007).

8. James 4:17 (ESV): “So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.”
9. In fact, Niebuhr’s typology is not relevant to our study, even if there is some superficial similarity at points. We would like to thank Stephen Grabill for helping us to clarify that point.
10. Proverb 4:23 (ESV): “Keep your heart with all vigilance, for from it flows the spring of life.”
11. We argue that as observations of unethical conduct increase, internal struggle levels consequently decrease, resulting in a regressed type. The more frequently a panic follower observes earthly benefits being awarded to those who perform assigned tasks without conviction, the more likely he or she will change behaviors and regress to the strugglers type. This driving force is considered to be earthly greed.
12. We assume an evangelical Christian point of view, and Christians are defined to be those who are born again.
13. For example, this model can be used to explain the convergence or divergence of different traditions among different denominations.
14. The primary data was collected between June and December of 2003—funded by the Hong Kong Professional Service organization (HKPES). We randomly selected 500 local, Christian churches in Hong Kong via systemic sampling, with 41 agreeing to participate in this study. We also invited four other Christian organizations to participate in this project. In the end, we secured 41 churches and 4 Christian organizations to participate in our survey; 1,890 questionnaires were either sent by mail or hand delivered by HKPES staff. In total, we received 767 completed questionnaires from these 40 churches and 4 Christian organizations. The response rate is 40.58 percent.
15. Details can be found at Lee, Chan, Yeung, “Holistic Struggles.”
16. Because the overall number of Christians in Hong Kong is less than 10 percent, bigger companies are expected to have a smaller Christian-to-worker ratio.
17. Our analysis is based on an empirical data set conducted in Hong Kong. We understand that this classification may not be compatible with Christians in other Western nations. Nevertheless, we believe our proposed classification provides applications to Christian churches worldwide on how to encourage and promote integration of faith in the workplace.

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