

RELIGIOUS TIES AND...

Big Changes from the New Deal Party System...

1944

	Vote for President			Party Identification of Voters		
	% of the 1944 Electorate	% for Roosevelt	% for Dewey	% Dem.	% Rep.	% Ind.
All Whites	97	52	48	40	35	25
Whites, "Born-Again Christians/Fundamentalists"			—NA—			
Whites, attend church each week	36	50	50	41	34	25
White Protestants, attend church each week	22	39	61	34	46	20
(White Protestants, not attending each week)	48	47	53	37	41	23
(White Catholics)	19	69	31	52	15	33
White Catholics, attend church each week	13	68	32	52	14	34
(White Catholics, not attending each week)	6	70	30	52	18	30
All White Northern Protestants	59	39	61	28	48	24
White Northern Protestants attend church each week	17	28	72	21	58	22
All White Southern Protestants	12	71	29	73	15	12
White Southern Protestants attend church each week	6	70	30	71	13	15
All Blacks	3	79	21	56	18	26
Blacks, "Born-Again Christians/Fundamentalists"			—NA—			
Blacks, attend church each week			—NA—			
Jews	5	86	14	40	15	45
Religion: "None"			—NA—			

Source: Pre- (late October) and post- (late November) election surveys conducted by the National Opinion Research Center, University of Chicago.

Editor's Note: Throughout most of US history, there's been a strong link between religious group affiliation and party preferences. For much of the 19th and the first half of the 20th century, Catholics were primary supporters of the Democratic party, and northern Protestants the core backers of the Whigs and then the Republicans. Of course, religious identity here was closely correlated with ethnic identity (old stock/Protestant, new stock/Catholic), and the ethnic element was evidently the more influential. Special historical experiences and memories also entered the picture, accounting for the alliance of white Protestants in the south with Catholics in the North.

...PARTISAN PREFERENCE

...(illustrated with 1944 data) to Today's

1992

	% of the 1992 Electorate	Vote for President			Party Identification of Voters		
		% for Clinton	% for Bush	% for Perot	% Dem.	% Rep.	% Ind.
All Whites	85	39	40	20	34	38	28
Whites, "Born-Again Christians/ Fundamentalists"	15	23	62	15	23	52	24
Whites, attend church each week	33	31	53	16	31	44	25
White Protestants, attend church each week	17	27	59	14	26	50	24
(White Protestants, not attending each week)	20	39	37	23	34	42	24
(White Catholics)	22	42	37	22	41	32	26
White Catholics, attend church each week	11	39	41	20	42	32	26
(White Catholics, not attending each week)	12	44	33	24	40	33	26
All White Northern Protestants	21	36	44	20	29	47	24
White Northern Protestants attend church each week	10	28	57	15	23	55	23
All White Southern Protestants	12	30	53	17	32	44	24
White Southern Protestants attend church each week	7	26	61	13	31	42	27
All Blacks	10	83	10	7	75	8	17
Blacks, "Born-Again Christians/ Fundamentalists"	3	86	11	3	79	8	13
Blacks, attend church each week	4	85	9	6	79	7	13
Jews	3	80	11	9	65	13	21
Religion: "None"	6	59	19	22	40	18	42

Source: 1992 VRS exit poll.

Much of this old order has vanished. White Protestants in the North and South vote much the same—for the Republicans. Catholics are no longer distinctively Democratic. And, for the first time in US history in the modern era, frequency of church attendance and partisan choice have come to be closely connected. As the above data show, all groups of black Americans, including church-goers, are heavily Democratic. Among whites, though, Republicans now do far better with the “churched” part of the electorate than with the “less churched” and “unchurched.”