

# PUBLIC OPINION AND DEMOGRAPHIC REPORT

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- 90 FAITH IN AMERICA
- 100 NO EXCUSES?
- 102 CLINTON AND FOREIGN POLICY
- 109 HEALTH CARE UPDATE
- 110 EUROPEAN UNION
- 112 CLINTON AND THE ECONOMY

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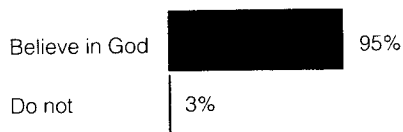
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The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research at the University of Connecticut helps compile the data used for this section. A nonprofit research facility, the Center maintains the largest and most comprehensive collection of survey data in the United States and seeks to promote their informed use.

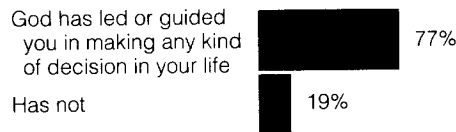
# FAITH IN AMERICA

America is a deeply religious nation (as the surveys below show). Over three-quarters say God has guided them in making decisions and that prayer is an important part of their daily lives. Fewer than 15 percent say that religion is not very important in their own lives or that religious values should not play a role in everyday decisions.

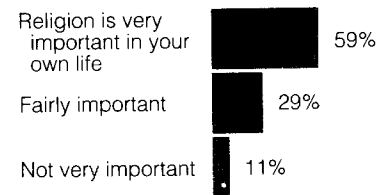
Question: **Do you believe in God?**



Question: **Has God ever led or guided you in making any kind of decision in your life, or not?**



Question: **How important would you say religion is in your own life—very important, fairly important, or not very important?**



Note: Sample=registered voters.

Source: Survey by the Tarrance Group and Mellman, Lazarus, Lake for *U.S. News & World Report*, March 5-7, 1994.

Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *USA Today* and CNN, March 28-30, 1994.

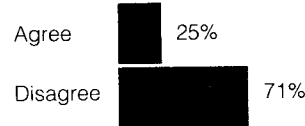
Question: **I am going to read you a series of statements that will help us understand how you feel about a number of things. For each statement, please tell me whether you completely agree with it, mostly agree with it, mostly disagree with it, or completely disagree with it.**

**Prayer is an important part of my daily life**



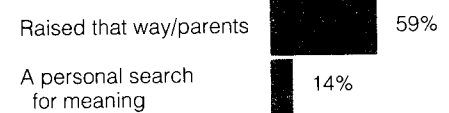
Question: **Do you agree strongly, agree moderately, disagree moderately, or disagree strongly with the statement...?**

**People's prayers do not have the power to change their circumstances**



Question: **How would you say you came to hold these beliefs about God? Was it...?**

**How you came to hold these beliefs about God**

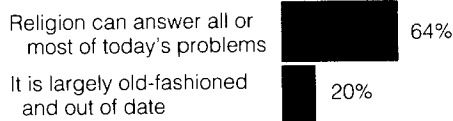


Source: Survey by the Princeton Survey Research Associates for the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press, September 10-13, 1992.

Source: Survey by the Barna Research Group, January 1992.

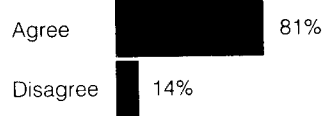
Note: Only responses getting 10% or more are shown.  
Source: Survey by the Tarrance Group and Mellman, Lazarus, Lake for *U.S. News & World Report*, March 5-7, 1994.

Question: **Do you believe that religion can answer all or most of today's problems or that religion is largely old-fashioned and out of date?**

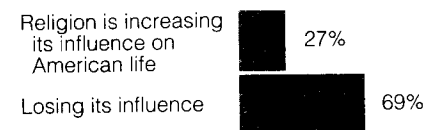


Question: **The following is a series of statements that some people in this country have made about various aspects of religion. Please listen as I read each one and tell me if you agree or disagree with the statement.**

**Religious values should play a role in everyday decisions**



Question: **At the present time, do you think religion as a whole is increasing its influence on American life or losing its influence?**



Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *USA Today* and CNN, March 28-30, 1994.

Note: Sample=registered voters.

Source: Survey by the Tarrance Group and Mellman, Lazarus, Lake for *U.S. News & World Report*, March 5-7, 1994.

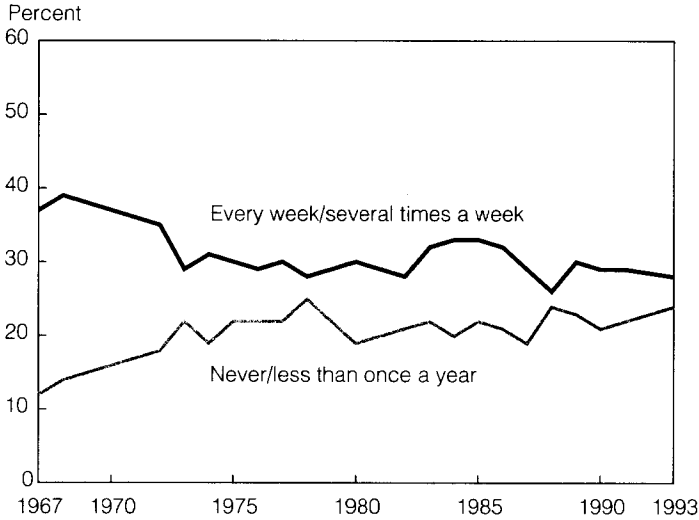
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for *USA Today* and CNN, March 28-30, 1994.

# Religious Practice

A quarter of Americans say they are involved in a Bible study or prayer group and slightly more say they attend church every week or several times a week. Fourteen percent say they watch religious shows on television regularly, while 45 percent say they never do.

Question: **How often do you attend religious services?**

## Religious service attendance



Source: Surveys by the National Opinion Research Center, latest that of February–April, 1993.

## Religious service attendance

	Never	Less than once a year	About once or twice a year	Several times a year	About once a month	2-3 times a month	Nearly every week	Every week	Several times a week
1967	6%	6%	9%	14%	8%	10%	10%	37%*	—
1968	7	7	9	11	8	10	9	39*	—
1972	9	9	11	14	7	9	6	29	6%
1973	14	8	13	15	6	8	8	21	—
1974	12	7	15	13	8	9	6	23	8
1975	15	7	12	14	7	9	7	23	7
1976	13	9	14	16	7	7	6	20	9
1977	14	8	13	13	7	9	6	22	8
1978	16	9	13	12	7	10	7	20	8
1980	11	8	16	15	7	8	6	22	8
1982	14	7	15	14	7	8	6	20	8
1983	14	8	13	12	7	10	5	23	9
1984	13	7	12	14	8	8	5	24	9
1985	15	7	15	12	7	8	4	25	8
1986	14	7	13	12	8	10	5	23	9
1987	12	7	14	16	8	10	5	21	8
1988	17	7	11	13	8	10	7	19	7
1989	16	7	13	12	8	8	5	23	7
1990	13	8	12	13	8	9	5	22	7
1991	13	9	13	12	8	10	6	23	6
1993	16	8	12	11	7	9	6	20	8

Note: \*In 1967 and 1968, "every week" and "several times a week" responses combined.

Question: **Have you attended a Sunday school class at a church during the last seven days? Are you currently involved in participating in a small group Bible study, fellowship group, or prayer group, other than a Sunday school class? Are you currently involved in regularly teaching a Sunday school class?**

Have attended a Sunday school class in the last seven days



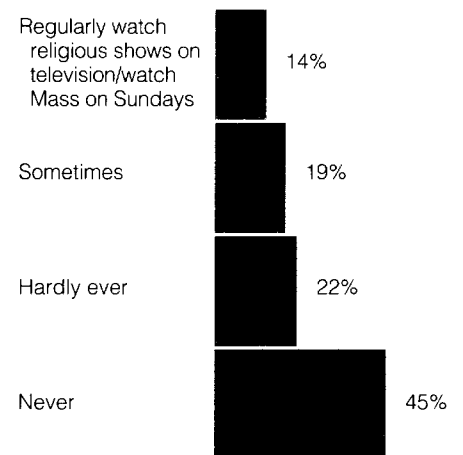
Are involved in a Bible study/fellowship/prayer group



Teach Sunday school class



Question: **I'd like to know how often you do any of the following. For each that I read tell me if you do this regularly, sometimes, hardly ever, or never.**



Source: Survey by the Barna Research Group, January 1992.

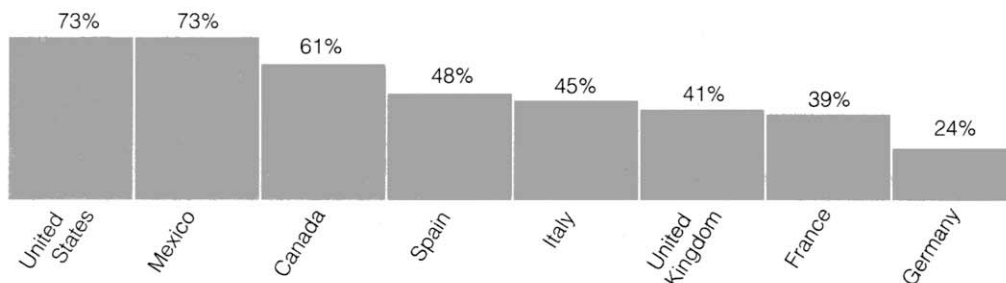
Source: Survey by the Princeton Survey Research Associates, January 6–13, 1994.

# International Comparisons

In terms of being a good influence on the way things are going in the country, the church ranks very high in the United States and Mexico. The church/organized religion is held in higher esteem than many other institutions in American life; it trails the military and the police.

Question: I'd like your opinions of some groups and developments in the (country name here). For each that I name, tell me if you think they are having mainly a good influence on the way things are going in this country or mainly a bad influence on the way things are going in this country.

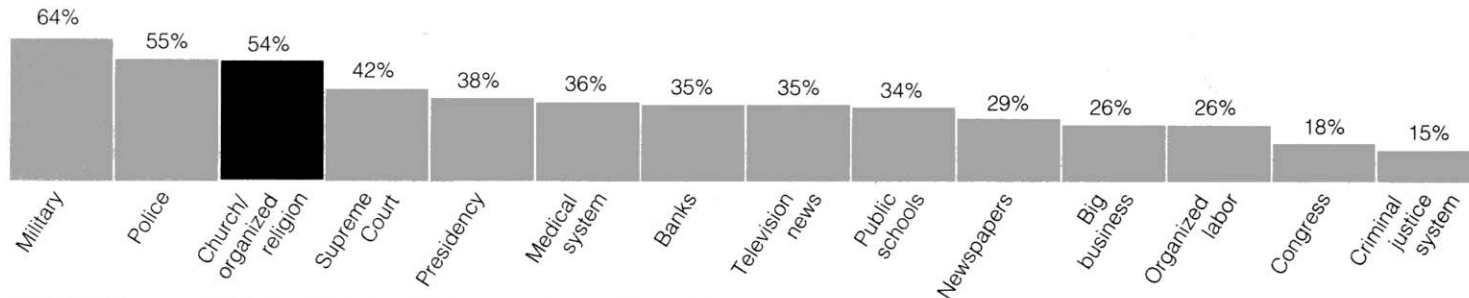
The Church/religion/religious authorities are having mainly a good influence on the way things are going in this country



Source: Surveys were coordinated by the Times Mirror Center for the People and the Press (U.S.) and conducted January 1994 by Princeton Survey Research Associates (U.S.), Environics Research Group (Canada), Liberation (France), the Emnid Institute (Germany), the CIRI Institute (Italy), El Norte (Mexico), Demoscopia (Spain), and Social Surveys (Gallup Poll) Ltd. (United Kingdom).

Question: I am going to read you a list of institutions in American society. Please tell me how much confidence you, yourself, have in each one—a great deal, quite a lot, some, or very little?

Have a great deal/quite a lot of confidence in...



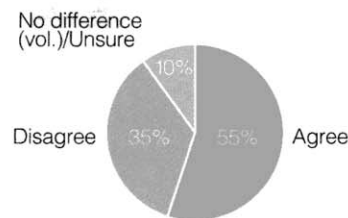
Source: Survey by the Gallup Organization for USA Today and CNN, March 25-27, 1994.

	Pray daily	Pray weekly	Attend church 2-3 times per month or more
Philippines	72%	94%	65%
Ireland	58	82	76
Poland	53	77	70
United States	44	65	44
Northern Ireland	43	71	59
Italy	37	61	50
Hungary	28	39	20
Netherlands	26	36	21
West Germany	21	37	15
Austria	20	41	25
Norway	18	28	9
Great Britain	17	32	16
Russia	10	13	4
East Germany	7	12	4

Source: Surveys for the International Social Survey Program, 1991.

Question: The following is a series of statements that some people in this country have made about various aspects of religion. Please listen as I read each one and tell me if you agree or disagree with the statement.

God is the moral guiding force of American democracy



Note: Sample=registered voters.

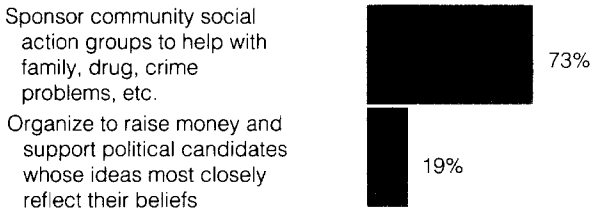
Source: Survey by the Tarrance Group and Mellman, Lazarus, Lake for U.S. News & World Report, March 5-7, 1994.

# Politics From the Pulpit

Solid majorities say that religion is losing its influence in America and that government has gone too far in taking religion out of public life. At the same time, as shown below, we are uneasy about religious leaders wielding political influence.

Question: **Here are some ways religious groups might organize to affect society. Some people think these things are good for religious groups to do, others think they are bad for them to do. For each one, would you tell me whether you think it would be...?**

## Good idea for society if religious groups...



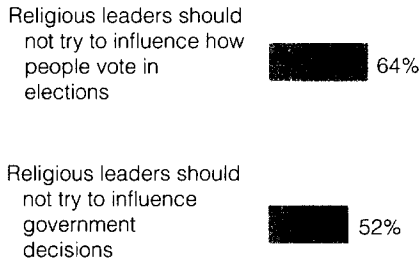
Source: Survey by the Roper Organization (Roper Reports 91-9), September 12-19, 1991.

Question: **Do you think it is...?**



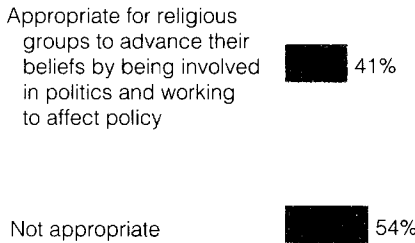
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, July 14-17, 1994.

Question: **How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following...?**



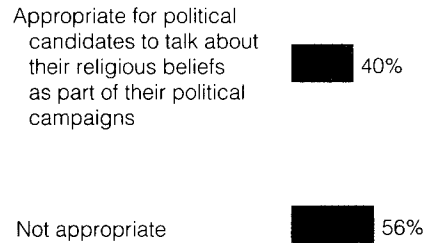
Source: Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, February-April, 1991.

Question: **Do you believe that it is...?**

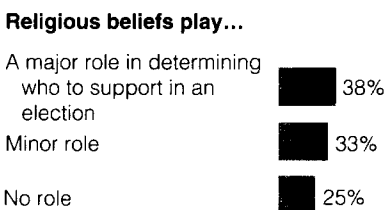


Source: Survey by NBC News/*Wall Street Journal*, July 23-26, 1994.

Question: **Do you think it is...?**

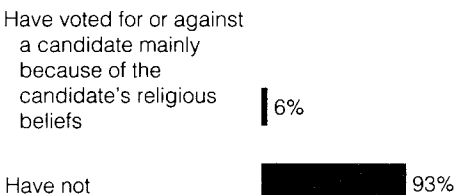


Question: **Some people allow their religious or spiritual beliefs to influence and shape their daily lives. For each of the following, please tell me whether your religious beliefs play a role in how you respond.**



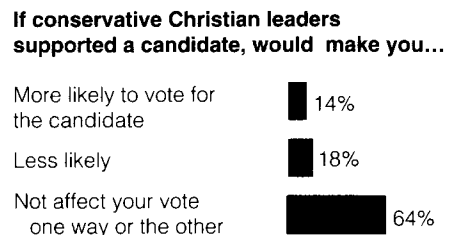
Source: Survey by the Tarrance Group and Mellman, Lazarus, Lake for *U.S. News & World Report*, March 5-7, 1994.

Question: **Have you ever voted for or against a candidate mainly because of the candidate's religious beliefs?**



Source: Survey by Yankelovich Clancy Shulman for *Time* and CNN, October 10, 1991.

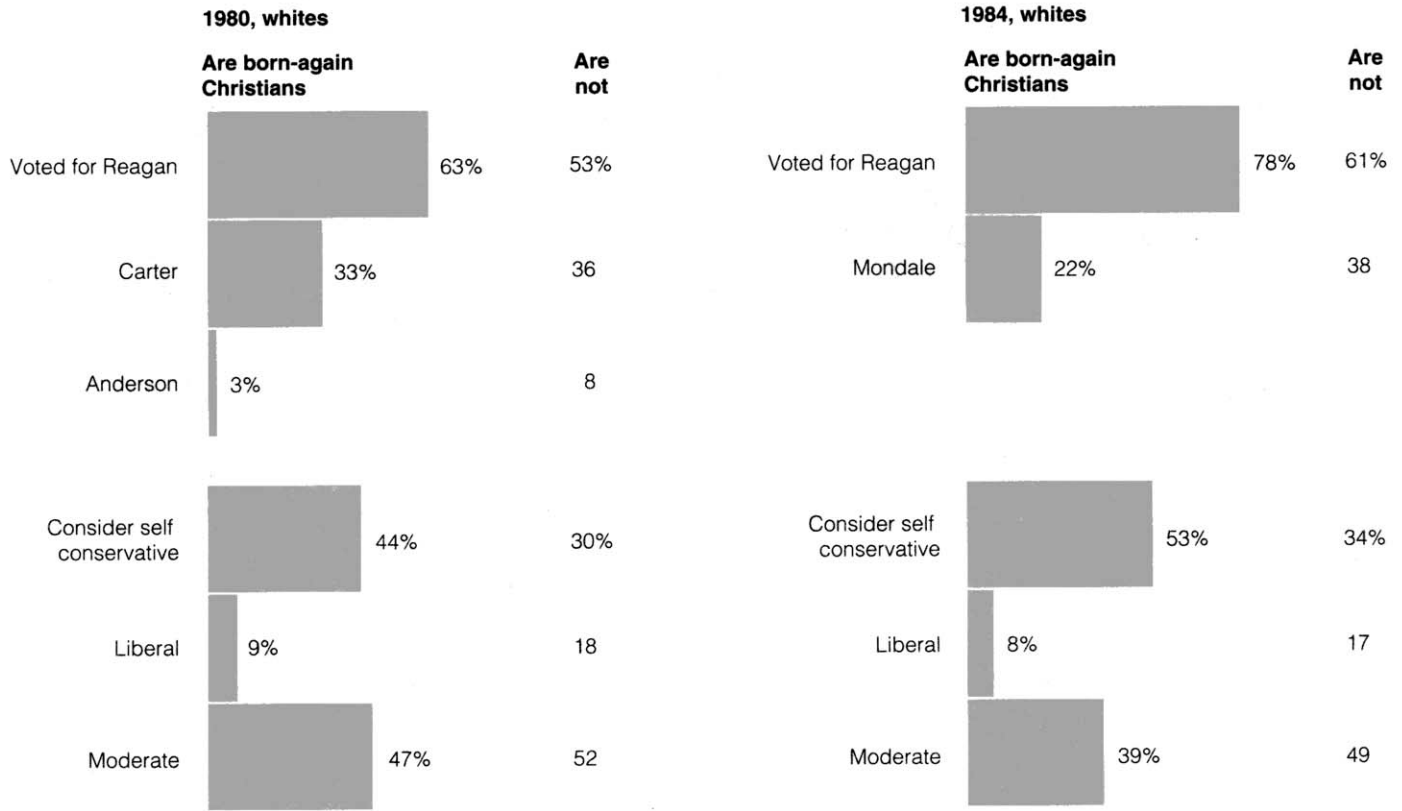
Question: **If conservative Christian leaders supported a candidate, would that make you more likely or less likely to vote for that candidate, or wouldn't it affect how you voted one way or the other?**



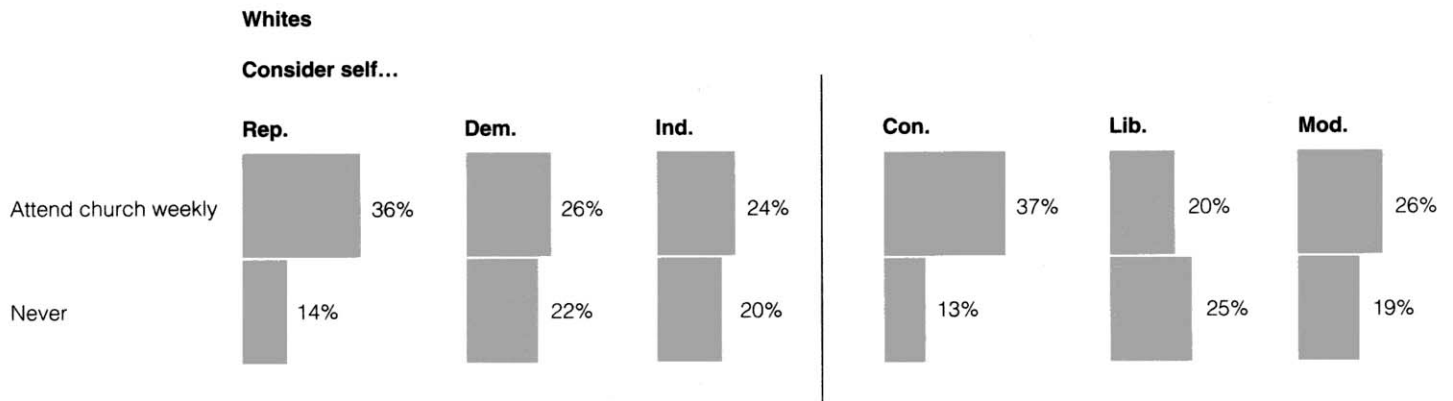
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, July 14-17, 1994.

# The Politics of Religious America

On election day, pollsters ask Americans whether a series of labels applies to them. This enables us to look at how voters who call themselves "born-again Christians," for example, voted. The data below from the last four elections show this group solidly in the GOP and conservative camps.

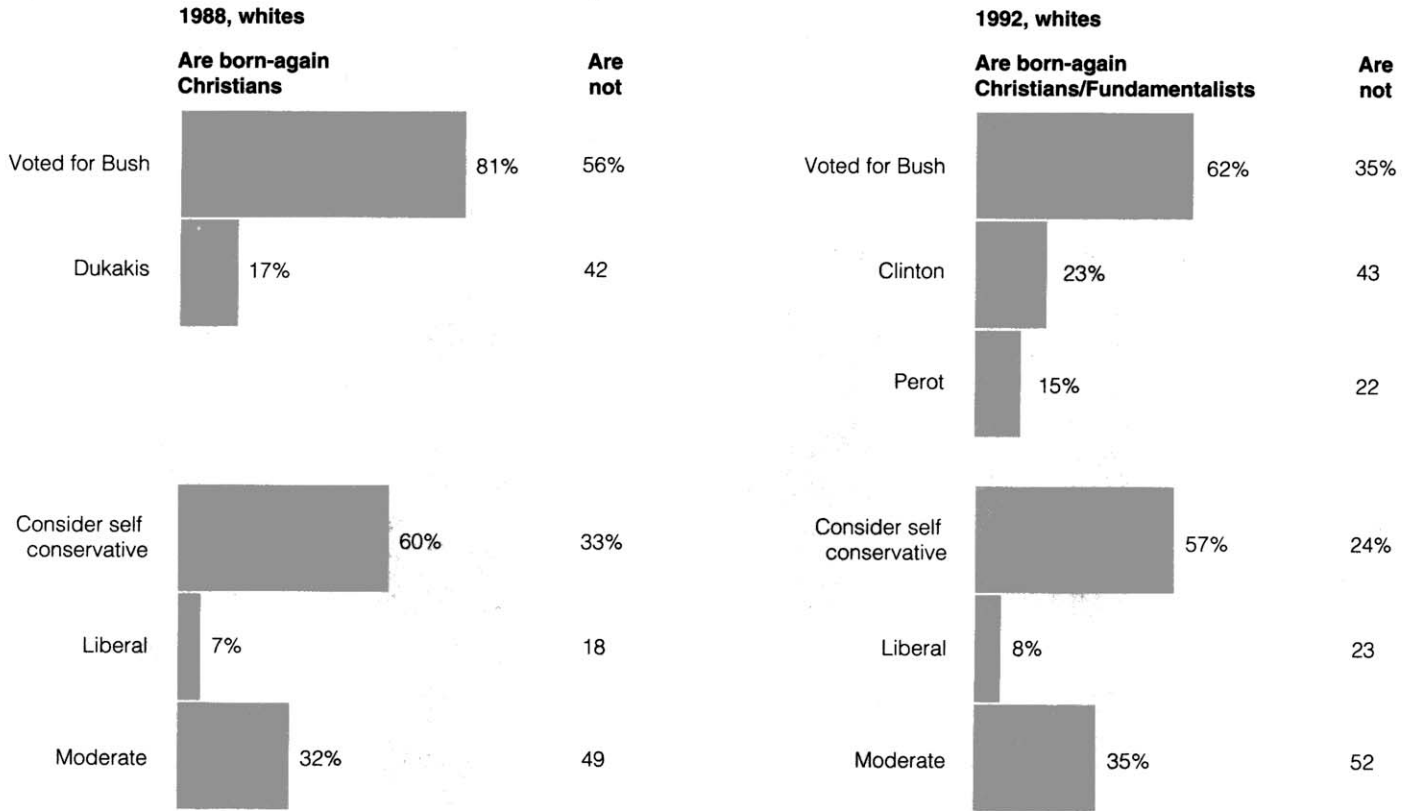


**Note:** Twenty-two percent of voters in 1980 and 19% in 1984 indicated they were born-again Christians.  
**Source:** Surveys by CBS/*New York Times*, November 4, 1980, and November 6, 1984.



**Source:** Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, February–April, 1993.

The data at the bottom of this spread show that Republicans and conservatives are more likely to attend church weekly than are other groups. Indeed, those with conservative leanings of all political stripes tend to attend more regularly than those with moderate or liberal leanings.

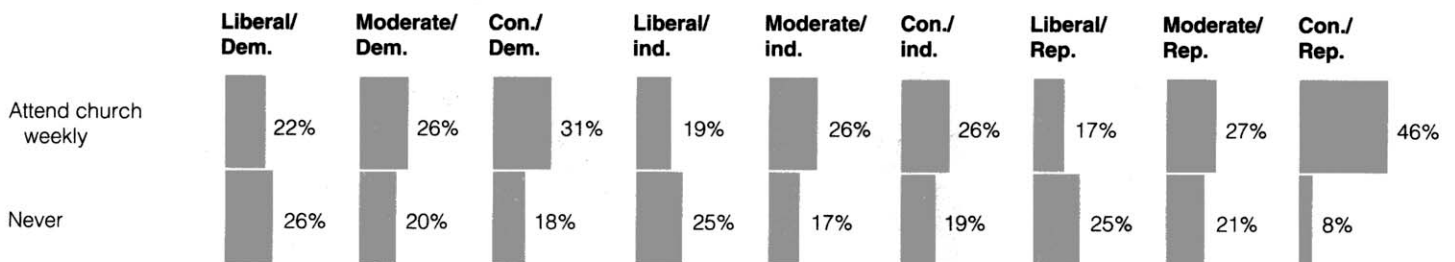


**Note:** Ten percent of voters said they were born-again Christians.  
**Source:** Survey by CBS/*New York Times*, November 8, 1988.

**Note:** Nineteen percent of voters indicated the term applied to them.  
**Source:** Survey by Voter Research & Surveys for ABC News, CBS News, NBC News, and CNN, November 3, 1992.

**Whites**

**Consider self...**



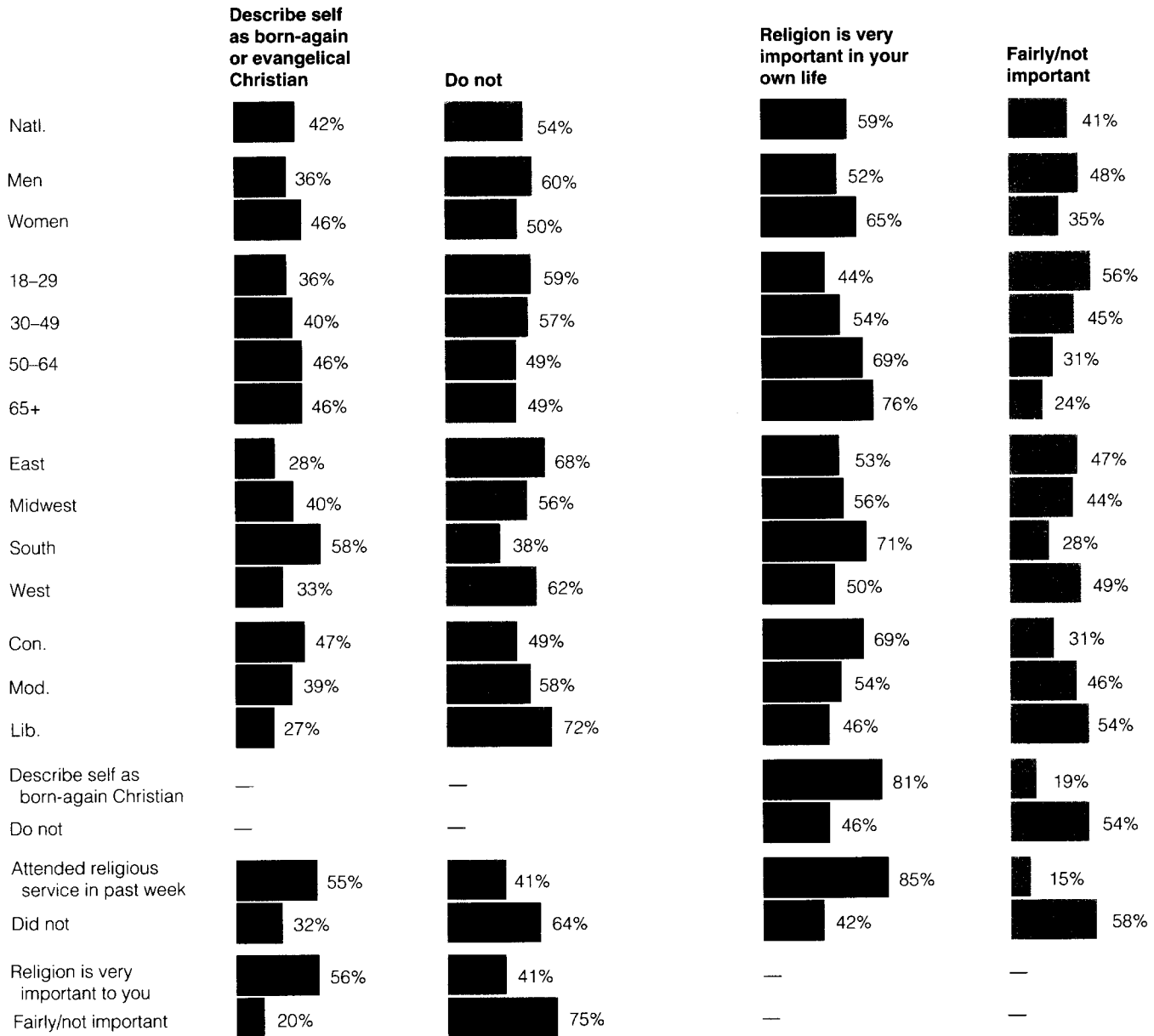
**Source:** Survey by the National Opinion Research Center, February–April, 1993.

# Demographics

About 40 percent of Americans identify themselves as born again, and six in ten say religion is very important in their lives. Women, older Americans, and people in the South anchor religious America.

Question: **Would you describe yourself as a born-again or evangelical Christian?**

Question: **How important would you say religion is in your own life—very important, fairly important, or not very important?**



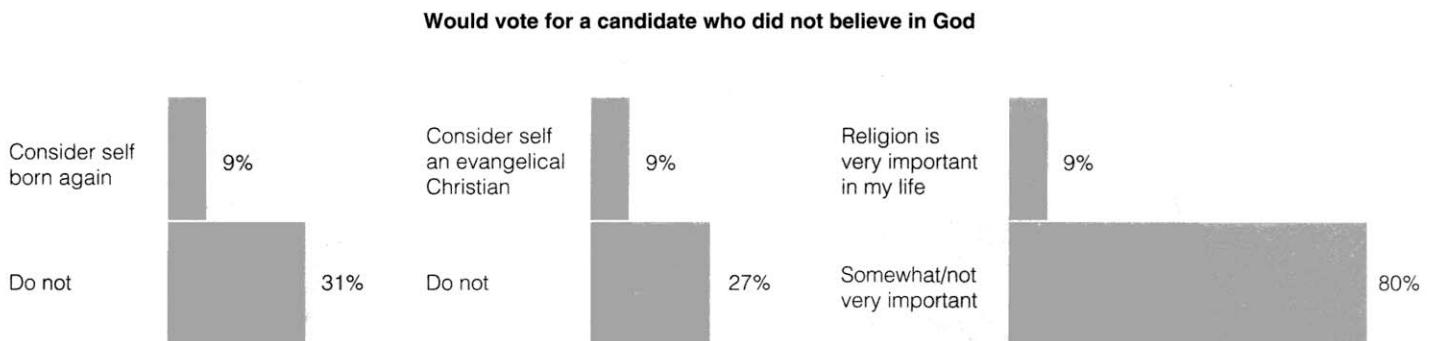
**Note:** Data from several surveys conducted in 1993 were combined.  
**Source:** Surveys by the Gallup Organization, latest that of October 28-30, 1993.



# The Views of Religious America

Not surprisingly, those who identify with religion bring very different views to issues than those for whom religion is not as important. Of those who say religion is very important in their lives, only 30% say abortion should always be legal. For those who say religion is somewhat or not very important, 76% say abortion should always be legal.

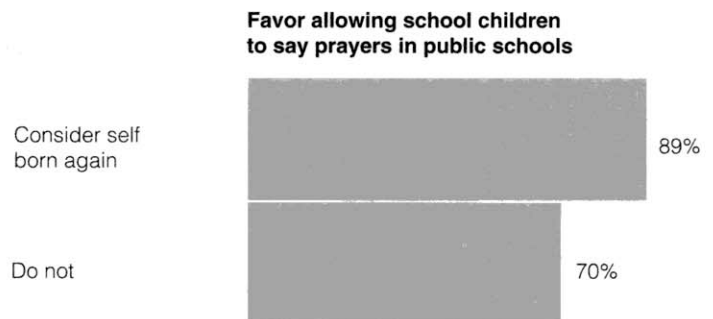
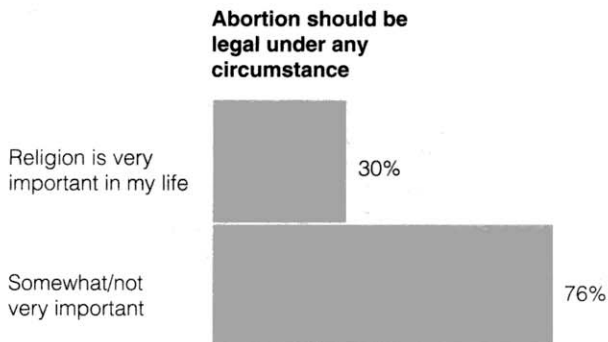
Question: **Would you vote for a candidate who did not believe in God?**



**Note:** All respondents—23% would, 72% would not.

Question: **Which of these views best represents your views about abortion: A woman should be able to get an abortion if she decides she wants one no matter what the reason; abortion should only be legal in certain circumstances such as when a woman's health is endangered or when pregnancy results from incest; abortion should be illegal under all circumstances?**

Question: **Do you favor or oppose allowing school children to say prayers in public schools?**



**Note:** Among all respondents, 43% said abortion should be legal under any circumstance.

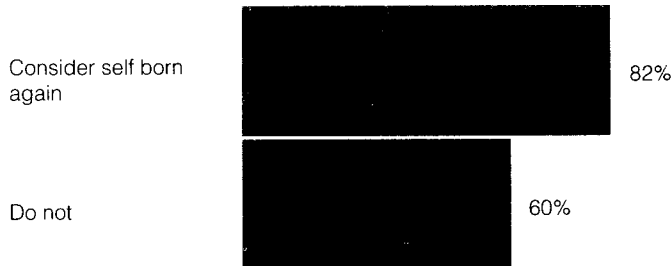
**Note:** Among all respondents, 77% favored allowing children to say prayers in public schools.

**Source:** Survey by Yankelovich Partners for *Time* and CNN, January 22–25, 1993.

Those who consider themselves born again are more likely than those who don't to say the Supreme Court and Congress have gone too far in keeping religious values out of our lives and laws. Religious commitment affects views profoundly.

Question: **A number of criticisms and suggestions are being made these days. Will you tell me for each of the following whether you mostly agree or mostly disagree with each one...?**

**Mostly agree, the Supreme Court and Congress have gone too far in keeping religious and moral values like prayer out of our laws, schools, and many areas of our lives**

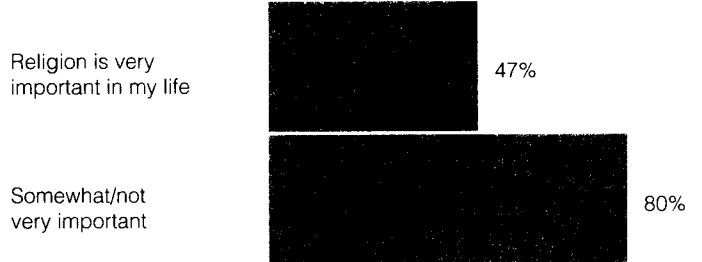


**Note:** Sixty-eight percent of all respondents mostly agreed.

**Source:** Survey by Yankelovich Partners for *Time* and CNN, January 22-25, 1993.

Question: **Do you favor or oppose public high schools providing students with contraceptives such as condoms?**

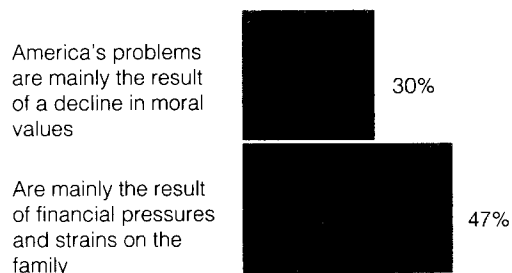
**Favor public high schools providing students with contraceptives such as condoms**



**Note:** Fifty-seven percent of all respondents favored providing contraceptives.

Question: **Homosexuality should be considered a socially permissible lifestyle. Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with this statement?**

**Agree homosexuality should be considered a socially permissible lifestyle**

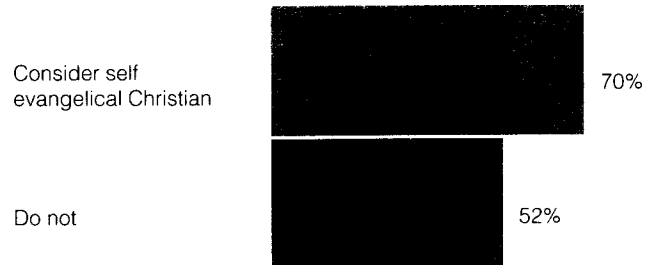


**Note:** Thirty-nine percent of all respondents agreed with this statement about homosexuality.

**Source:** Survey by NBC News/*Wall Street Journal*, June 10-14, 1994.

Question: **Do you favor or oppose making it mandatory for public schools to teach the Biblical version of how the world was created as well as the Darwinian evolutionary science which is taught now?**

**Favor making it mandatory for public schools to teach the Biblical version of how the world was created as well as Darwinian evolutionary science**



**Note:** Fifty-five percent of all respondents favored this.

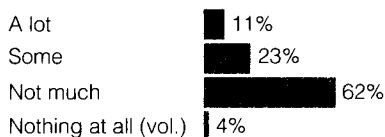
**Source:** Survey by Yankelovich Partners for *Time* and CNN, January 22-25, 1993.

# The Religious Right

For some political and religious activists, the term *religious right* has meaning, but it's not clear that it does for much of the country. Polls that ask people if they are members of the religious right produce very different responses. Most Americans say they don't know much about the religious right or its positions.

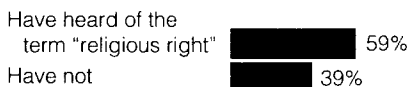
Question: **How much have you heard or read about conservative Christian groups that are active in politics, sometimes called the religious right—a lot, some, or not much?**

Have heard or read... about conservative Christian groups that are active in politics, sometimes called the religious right



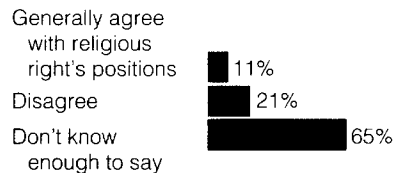
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, July 14–17, 1994.

Question: **On another subject, have you heard the term "religious right," referring to evangelical or fundamentalist Christians who are conservative politically and active in politics?**



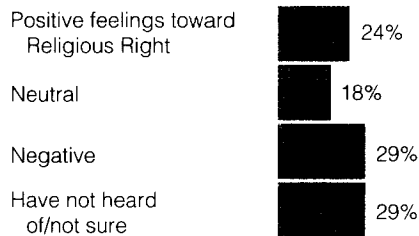
Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, June 23–26, 1994.

Question: **From what you have heard or read, would you say you generally agree or disagree with the religious right's positions on most social and political issues, or don't you know enough about them to say?**



Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, July 14–17, 1994.

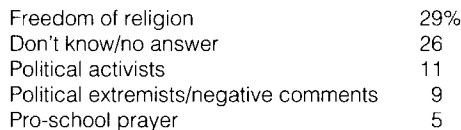
Question: **There has been a lot of discussion lately about the Religious Right, which refers to conservative Christian groups active in politics. I'd like you to rate your feelings toward the Religious Right as either very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, or very negative. If you have never heard of the Religious Right, please say so.**



Note: Eleven percent had very positive feelings and 16 percent had very negative ones.  
Source: Survey by NBC News/*Wall Street Journal*, June 23–26, 1994.

Question: **There's been talk recently about the religious right in politics. When you hear the term "religious right," what comes to mind?**

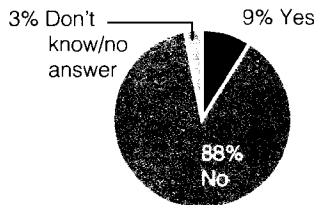
What comes to mind when you hear the term "religious right"



Note: Nothing else was listed by more than 4 percent of those surveyed. The Republican Party was mentioned by less than half of one percent.  
Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, July 14–17, 1994.

Question: **Do you think of yourself as a member of the religious right movement, or don't you?**

Think of self as member of the religious right movement

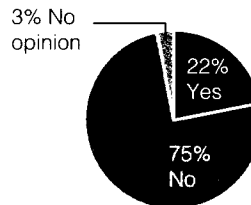


Note: The difference in the proportions of respondents saying they identify with the "religious right" may be the result of different introductory questions used in the two polls shown above. CBS/*NYT* asked questions about religion in society and politics, while ABC/*WP* did not ask any questions about religious activity prior to asking whether people had heard about the religious right and then whether they identified with it.

Source: Survey by CBS News/*New York Times*, July 14–17, 1994.

Question: **Do you consider yourself a member of the religious right, or not?**

Consider self a member of the religious right



Source: Survey by ABC News/*Washington Post*, June 23–26, 1994.