

2026 American Worldview Inventory – Report #4

Most Adults’ Beliefs about Humanity and the Supernatural Stray from Biblical Teaching

Research from Dr. George Barna and the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University
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A significant aspect of every person’s worldview is their beliefs about humanity and the supernatural. New research indicates that while adults have clear perspectives on natural and supernatural beings and spirits, most Americans reject biblical perspectives on those matters.

In fact, of seven questions regarding humanity, a majority of U.S. adults adopted a biblical answer just once. Similarly, when asked their beliefs about the supernatural, a majority adopted a biblical perspective only once in seven questions, according to the latest report from the *American Worldview Inventory 2026* from the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University.

Key Findings from *American Worldview Inventory 2026: Report #4*

- A majority of U.S. adults adopted a biblical answer on only 1 of 7 questions about humanity and only 1 of 7 questions about the supernatural.
- Only 57% of adults believe humans are God's creation, made in His image, fallen, and in need of redemption—despite 70% identifying as Christian.
- Just 30% of adults hold the biblical view that people are born into sin and can only be saved by Jesus Christ. Among Catholics, that figure drops to 24%.
- Only 1 in 4 adults (27%) believes human life is sacred. An equal share says human life has no intrinsic value.
- A majority of Americans (52%) consider abortion morally acceptable—and only 1 in 3 adults (33%) describes themselves as passionately pro-life.
- Only half of U.S. adults (50%) believe God is the all-powerful, all-knowing Creator of the universe who rules it today—down from a clear majority at the start of the millennium.
- One in four adults strongly agrees that Jesus Christ sinned while on Earth. Among Notional Christians, roughly half of all churchgoers, more strongly agreed He sinned than strongly disagreed.
- By a nearly 2-to-1 margin, Americans are more likely to firmly believe the Holy Spirit is merely a symbol than to strongly affirm the Holy Spirit as a living entity.
- Twice as many adults strongly agree that animals, plants, wind, and water have unique spirits (35%) as strongly disagree (16%).
- Nine out of 10 American adults hold Syncretism (not Biblical Theism) as their dominant worldview.

Overview: American View of Humanity

Overall, CRC's research shows the typical American view of humanity is people were created by God, are fallen creatures, and need to be saved from the eternal consequences of their sins.

Americans are most likely to contend that people are born good but succumb to evil or sinful ideas and behaviors due to bad personal choices or the corrupting influence of society. Adults are generally undecided as to whether people are basically good or not.

The prevailing perception of U.S. adults is that the general purpose of life is about personal performance: achieving meaningful relational and societal outcomes is widely accepted as the optimal focus of one's time on Earth.

Few believe that human life itself is sacred—just one-quarter have adopted that view. The largest share has decided that human life derives its value from personal achievements and growth. It is not surprising, then, that with most adults contending that human life has no absolute value, only one-third of Americans claim to be “passionately pro-life.” A majority of Americans argue that abortion is either a morally acceptable choice or not a moral issue in the first place.

In summary: The American view of humanity is that human life was initially provided by God, but is ultimately and independently controlled by humans and disposable under certain conditions. Each person's value is evaluated on the basis of their choices and accomplishments.

Overview: American View of the Supernatural

Only half of U.S. adults believe in the existence of the God described in the Bible, and even fewer have a real, continuing relationship with that deity.

Most adults do not accept the idea of Jesus Christ living a sinless life during his 33 years on Earth, nor do they believe that either the Holy Spirit or Satan are supernatural beings that are alive and influence humanity. Relatively few adults worship many spirits other than the God of the Bible or an alternative Supreme Being/Higher Power. Even so, most Americans do not firmly reject the idea that plant and animal life, as well as the elements, each possess a unique spirit.

Specifics Regarding Human Beings

A breakdown of responses to the seven questions about human life posed in the research reveals a significant degree of consistency in the subgroups that most often align with—or reject—biblical teachings about the nature and state of humanity.

Created by God, Like God, But Fallen

The good news is that nearly six out of 10 adults (57%) describe human beings as created by God in His own image, but fallen and in need of redemption. That coincides with biblical teaching.

Two segments of people had nearly perfect alignment with this view: people who possess a biblical worldview (100% of them maintain this perspective) and adults who qualify as disciples based on Jesus's teaching about who qualifies as a disciple (99%). Other segments with above-average alignment included SAGE Cons (93% of the Spiritually Active Governance Engaged Conservative Christians); 84% of theologically-identified born-again Christians; 76% of political conservatives; 68% of Texans; and 67% of blacks.

A substantial divide emerges across churches. About four out of five attenders of three church groupings embraced the biblical view of humankind: 81% attending non-denominational and independent Protestant churches; 80% attending charismatic or Pentecostal churches; and 79% attending evangelical churches. Considerably smaller proportions were found among those attending mainline Protestant (68%) and Catholic (66%) churches.

Among the segments of adults *least likely* to hold a biblical view of human life were political liberals (32%); LGBTQ adults (41%); residents of the northeastern states (45%, including only 38% of those who live in New York); and members of Gen Z (i.e. 50% of adults 18-22 years old).

As expected, the two dominant non-Christian segments evaluated also displayed very limited support for this perspective. Those groups were people attached to a non-Christian religion (37%) and just half as many (18%) of those who qualify as Don'ts (i.e. they don't believe in God, don't know if God exists, or don't care if God exists).

Born Into Sin, Saved by Christ

When asked to describe their view of the human condition, only three out of 10 adults (30%) held the biblical view that people are born into sin and can only be saved from its consequences by Jesus Christ.

Once again, there were a pair of people groups with abnormally high scores on this matter: adults who possess a biblical worldview (100% biblical alignment) and biblically-defined disciples (81%). Other groups highly aligned with that biblical view were SAGE Cons (81%); theologically-identified born-again Christians (60%); attenders of charismatic or Pentecostal churches (57%); and those who attend non-denominational or independent Protestant churches (51%).

Segments notably below-average in their alignment with this perspective included LGBTQ adults (19%); Asians (20%); Notional Christians (20%); and adults under 40 years of age (22%). The most prolific non-Christian segments also generated low support for this belief: 18% of adults associated with a non-Christian faith, and a mere 6% of the Don'ts.

One of the most unexpected gaps related to this belief was between Protestants and Catholics. While slightly less than half of the Protestants (48%) believed that people are born sinners and require the forgiveness of Jesus Christ to escape the penalties due from that condition, only half as many Catholics (24%) adopted that position. A majority of Catholics, in contrast, believed that people are not born bad or as sinners, but become that way due to cultural influence or inferior personal choices throughout life.

Human Life is Sacred

Even though most Americans agree that human beings were created by God in His image or likeness, only one out of four adults (27%) view human life as sacred. An equal proportion believes human life has no intrinsic value; another fourth of the adult public contends life may not be sacred but it has great value because of the human ability to reason or to make a difference in the world.

The only people groups for which a majority view human life as sacred were people with a biblical worldview; biblically-defined disciples; SAGE Cons; adults who attend either an evangelical or Pentecostal church; and individuals who are consistently pro-life.

Less than one out of every five people under age 40 and those who are in the Don'ts category believes that human life is sacred.

People Are Basically Good

Attitudes about the innate goodness of people are interesting. While a majority of Americans generally believe “people are basically good,” only one out of every six adults (16%) strongly believes that view. At the same time, only one out of five adults (22%) strongly disagree with the innate goodness of humanity. That leaves most adults waffling on the issue—leaning one way or the other, but not truly convinced.

Although this is a foundational element to comprehending human life and our relationship with God or other supernatural forces, most Americans have yet to figure out what they believe on this matter.

Only one demographic or theolographic group has a majority holding a strong belief—positive or negative—about the goodness of humans. Two-thirds of people with a biblical worldview (66%) strongly affirmed the biblical teaching that humans are not basically good. The only other segment that was close to having a majority position were biblically-defined disciples of Christ, among whom about half (49%) strongly maintained that humans are not essentially good.

Contrary to expectations, only one-quarter of the people who regularly attend evangelical churches (27%) and one-third of those who frequent a Pentecostal congregation (34%) embraced the biblical position that people are sinners and therefore cannot be described as good in their essence. Christians are so confounded on this matter that a mere one in three of those who read the Bible daily (34%) strongly affirmed that people are not basically good. Regular church attendance did not seem to clarify perspectives on this matter, as regular church attenders were just as likely to strongly agree that people are essentially good as to strongly disagree with that assessment.

Abortion Is Morally Acceptable

Related to views about the sacredness of life, the research shows that a slight majority of adults (52%) considered abortion to be a morally acceptable act. A strong majority of at least six out of 10 people in several segments attach moral acceptability to aborting a child: adults under 40 years of age, Asians, LGBTQ adults, people associated with a non-Christian religion, and the Don'ts. The data also indicated that residents of New York and California were also far above average in morally approving abortion.

There were just a few segments of people displaying at least a 60% majority who deem abortion to be morally unacceptable. Those were people with a biblical worldview; biblically-defined disciples; theologically-identified born-again Christians. Segments that did not reach the 60% threshold include parents of young children; Catholics; people attending evangelical, mainline, or non-denominational Protestant churches; those who read the Bible daily; and adults who attend church services every week.

Passionately Pro-Life

As would be expected, there was substantial overlap between the people who rejected abortion as morally acceptable and those who strongly agreed that they could be accurately described as passionately pro-life.

All told, only one out of three adults (33%) strongly affirmed that they are “passionately pro-life.” At the same time, only half as many adults (18%) strongly disagreed that they could be described in that manner. Once again, a large share of the population (about half) fits in the “mushy middle,” refusing to take a strong stand on whether they are passionately pro-life. This appears to be yet another instance where tens of millions of Americans have been either unwilling or unable to take a firm stand on a high-profile, long-debated moral behavior.

The usual suspects emerged as those most likely to self-identify as passionately pro-life: adherents of the biblical worldview, biblically-defined disciples of Christ, theologically-identified born-again Christians, and individuals who regularly attend Bible-prone Protestant churches (i.e., evangelical, Pentecostal, and independent/non-denominational communities of faith). An unexpected segment producing a majority embracing the “passionately pro-life” label was people 60 and older.

Likewise, the usual suspects turned out in opposition to being called passionately pro-life: LGBTQ adults, Gen Z, and the Don’ts.

Worldview Regarding Human Beings							
Biblical perspective on human beings	All adults	Theologically Identified, Born-again Christians	Notional Christians	Catholics	Protestants	Gen Z & Millennials	Gen X, Boomers & Elders
Humans: God’s creation, in His image, morally fallen, need redemption	57%	84%	60%	66%	75%	51%	61%
People are born into sin; can only be saved from their consequences by Jesus Christ	30	60	20	24	48	22	35
Human life is sacred	27	44	25	36	34	17	35
Strongly disagree: people are basically good	22	28	17	14	28	23	20
Strongly disagree: abortion is morally acceptable or not even a moral issue	47	64	46	58	56	42	51
Strongly agree: you are passionately pro-life	33	48	34	39	44	27	37
Universal purpose for all people: knowing, loving, serving God with all heart, mind, strength, and soul	34	60	29	35	50	25	40
Source: <i>American Worldview Inventory 2026</i> , Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University; N = 2,000 adults, nationally representative sample; conducted January 2026.							

Purpose in Life

A widespread teaching in biblical circles is that every person has a “universal” purpose (i.e. a shared, common purpose related to God) and a specific or unique purpose (i.e. a special calling, supported by appropriate gifts and resources, from God). The shared or universal purpose is often described as knowing, loving, and serving God with all of one’s heart and soul, mind, and strength (as taught by Jesus to his followers in Mark 12:30, among other passages).

Most Americans believe there is a universal purpose for humanity; only 4% rejected the concept. The confusion comes with how people define that universal purpose. Most Americans believe that purpose revolves around self-satisfaction, but even then, there is limited agreement.

Even though Jesus clearly and simply proclaimed humanity's shared purpose, Americans generally are not buying it! Just one-third of the nation's adults (34%) have adopted Jesus's vision for our lives (i.e., all people, regardless of their culture, socioeconomic status, or faith, exist to fully know, love, and serve God). The other two-thirds of adults believe that the shared purpose of all people is one of a variety of possibilities, the most popular of which are to create a more humane society, or to foster a happier, more comfortable, or more fulfilling life for themselves.

The same subgroups that typically embraced biblical teaching did so regarding a universal purpose. Similarly, the segments that were usually most resistant to biblical principles displayed that same resistance in reference to the Christ-defined universal purpose.

Specifics Regarding Supernatural Spirits and Beings

In addition to examining beliefs and behaviors related to human beings, the Cultural Research Center's research also explored beliefs and behaviors concerning supernatural beings and spirits. Specifically, the research touched on the God of the Bible, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, Satan, and other supernatural spirits.

View of God

Although the 2025 edition of the *American Worldview Inventory* annual tracking research provided a deep dive into people's beliefs about deities (those reports can be accessed [here](#)), the 2026 survey shows that only half of adults (50%) believe that God is best described as "the all-powerful, all-knowing, perfect, and just Creator of the universe who rules that universe today."

The idea that the God of the Bible is the sole, omnipotent, Creator deity is no longer the dominant theological view of Americans, as it was until shortly after the start of the new millennium.

The *AWVI 2026* found that more than one out of four adults embraced atheist or agnostic positions concerning deity, and another quarter of the respondents aligned with polytheistic or narcissistic views of deity (e.g., there are many gods, every person is divine, people can become divine beings on Earth by achieving a heightened state of consciousness, etc.).

What types of people are most likely to retain the view that God is unique, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, and the Creator and Ruler of the universe? The most common advocates are adults with a biblical worldview (100%); biblically-defined disciples of Jesus Christ (98%); theologically-identified born-again Christians (82%); those who attend Protestant (68%) or Catholic churches (60%); and people 60 or older (60%).

What segments of Americans are most likely to maintain an alternative view of God? Naturally, two-thirds of the people associated with faiths other than Christianity and nine out of 10 Don'ts lead the charge. Other segments that widely embrace alternative God views are two-thirds of Asians and LGBTQ adults. A solid majority of Gen Z and Millennials (60%) also side with different notions of deity than the biblical view of God.

Befriending God

Biblical Christians are known for promoting the idea of developing a relationship with God. The philosophy of positively and personally interacting with an omnipotent and holy being provides an important insight into the nature of that supreme being as well as human standing in comparison to that god.

Most Americans do not believe they have a continual, vibrant connection with God. In total, less than half of adults (45%) describe a personal relationship with Him that is “real, interactive and central in your life, but always a work in progress.” Another one out of five (19%) claim to have a connection with Him, but describe it as “respectful and hopeful but experienced at arm’s-length”—i.e., neither close nor growing. The remaining three out of 10 (36%) reject any type of personal relationship with God or even the existence of a divine power.

Adults most likely to have an interactive and central relationship with God are generally those most deeply devoted to their Christian faith (e.g., have a biblical worldview, are biblically-defined disciples or theologically-identified born-again Christians). The skeptics of close, personal God-man relationship are led by those who are not connected to the Christian faith, Asians, LGBTQ adults, and people under the age of 40.

The Holiness of Jesus Christ

A foundational tenet of the Christian faith is that Jesus Christ was both divine and human, and managed to resist sin during His entire time on Earth. Even though seven out of 10 adults describe themselves as Christian, most Americans waffle on the matter of the holiness of Christ. One out of four strongly agree that Jesus sinned while He was on Earth. One out of three strongly disagree with that claim. The most common position is somewhere in-between, as 43% either agree or disagree just somewhat, or do not know what to think on this matter.

One of the most striking discoveries is there are some adult segments for which this question produced “reverse splits”—meaning that while the nation overall leaned more toward strongly disagreeing with the sinfulness of Christ, there are subgroups of the public in which more members leaned toward asserting that Christ committed sins. Those segments included several that were expected, such as polytheists and LGBTQ individuals. People from the Gen Z and Millennial generations, and people without any college education, also displayed reverse splits.

However, one of the “reverse splits” groups was shocking: Among Notional Christians, those who are adults who call themselves Christian but are not theologically-identified born-again believers—31% strongly agreed that Christ was a sinner versus 21% who strongly disagreed. Their presence on this list is especially meaningful given that they represent roughly half of the adults attending Christian churches on any given weekend.

A few other segments had “even splits,” where the number who strongly agreed in the sinfulness of Christ was equal to the number who strongly rejected that characterization. Two groups in that category were unexpected: adults who attend evangelical churches and blacks.

The Existence of the Holy Spirit

By nearly a two-to-one margin, Americans were more likely to firmly believe that the Holy Spirit is not a living entity but is merely a symbol of God’s power, presence, or purity than to strongly reject that characterization.

More than one-third of adults (36%) strongly agreed with that view, while only one-fifth (20%) strongly disagreed. Roughly half of the populace is stuck in the mushy middle, holding no position regarding the reality of God's Holy Spirit.

While most of the population groups studied featured a larger share of their members strongly agreeing that there is no such thing as the Holy Spirit, the identity of some of those segments is alarming.

Among the groups rejecting the biblical teaching about the Holy Spirit were the theologically-identified born-again Christians (34% strongly agreed, 30% strongly disagreed); Millennials (29% vs. 18%, respectively); people attending evangelical churches (40% vs. 25%); those at mainline Protestant churches (36% vs. 20%); and adults engaged with non-denominational and independent Protestant congregations (39% vs. 26%). Among the demographic segments with the biggest gaps between the strongly agree and strongly disagree advocates were blacks (42% vs. 12%, respectively) and Catholics (37% vs. 17%).

Another unexpected outcome was the virtually even split among biblically-defined disciples (45% strongly agreed the Holy Spirit is a symbol while 44% strongly disagreed). That emerged in sharp contrast to the unique decisiveness of adults with a biblical worldview, among just 14% strongly agreed that the Holy Spirit is symbolic, while 76% strongly disagreed with that view.

The Existence of Satan

While the data indicated that Americans are ill-informed concerning the existence of the Holy Spirit, there was also considerable misunderstanding about the existence of Satan.

On the whole, about half of the public took a strong stand, with a slightly larger proportion (27%) leaning toward strongly agreeing that Satan does not exist but is a symbol of evil and negative spiritual influence. A slightly smaller percentage (25%) strongly disagreed that Satan is merely symbolic. That left almost half of the public uncertain regarding the reality of Satan.

Christian churches are attended by roughly half theologically-identified born-again Christians and half notional Christians. Those two groups leaned in different directions regarding the existence of Satan.

Notional Christians were more likely to view the devil as symbolic (32% strongly agreed, 14% strongly disagreed) compared to the reverse perspective among the born-again group (38% vs. 24%). People with a biblical worldview were indisputably in the "Satan is real" camp (87% vs. 9%, respectively), as were the biblically-defined disciples (55% vs. 29%).

Among the other splits that were eye openers were the following:

- Catholics are nearly twice as likely to deny the existence of Satan as to strongly affirm it (29% vs. 16%)—which leaves a majority of Catholics in the mushy middle.
- Evangelical church attenders were roughly evenly split (35% strongly agreed, 33% strongly disagreed) whereas their common theological counterpart in biblical Christianity—Pentecostal churches—leaned persuasively in favor of believing the devil is real (21% rejected his reality, 38% affirmed it). Mainline Protestant churches were also evenly divided, whereas the non-denominational and independent Protestant churches were decidedly in the "Satan exists" camp.

- Generationally, three segments (Gen Z, Gen X, and Boomers) were closely divided. Both the Millennials and Elders (i.e., those born prior to 1946) were comfortably leaning toward firmly denying the existence of Satan.
- On the racial and ethnic front, blacks led the way in the denial of a real Satan (40% compared to 14% who strongly disagreed he is merely symbolic). Another surprise was that Asians were the only ethnic group that leaned toward accepting Satan as real. Whites and Hispanics were evenly divided.

Worldview Regarding Supernatural Spirits and Beings							
Biblical perspective on supernatural beings and spirits	All adults	Theologically Identified, Born-again Christians	Notional Christians	Catholics	Protestants	Gen Z & Millennials	Gen X, Boomers & Elders
Strong disagree: on Earth, Jesus Christ was fully divine and fully human; He committed sins, like people	32%	49%	21%	28%	38%	24%	37%
Strong disagree: animals, plants, wind, and water have unique spirits, like humans do	16	27	10	14	22	10	20
God is the all-powerful, all-knowing, perfect, and just Creator of the universe, rules it today	50	82	47	60	68	40	56
Strong disagree: Satan/the devil is not a living entity; is a symbol of evil and negative spiritual influence	23	38	14	17	31	18	28
Strong disagree: Holy Spirit is not a living entity; is a symbol of God’s power, presence or purity	22	30	11	17	24	18	26
Your relationship with God is real, interactive, central, always a work in progress	45	71	42	53	59	35	53
You never worship a spirit, other than the God of the Bible	67	77	58	70	66	54	76
Source: <i>American Worldview Inventory 2026</i> , Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University; N = 2,000 adults, nationally representative sample; conducted January 2026.							

The Existence of Other Spirits

Survey respondents were asked if they believed that “animals, plants, wind, and water have a unique spirit.” While half of all adults were indecisive, among the half that took a stand, people were twice as

likely to strongly agree that those entities have unique spirits (35%) as to strongly disagree with that notion (16%).

An overwhelming majority of the groups examined leaned heavily toward affirming the unique spirits of those entities. The only segments in which more people leaned toward rejecting the existence of unique spirits for wind, water, plants, and animals were adults with a biblical worldview (67% strongly denied such spirits, 8% firmly agreed those spirits exist); biblically-defined disciples of Jesus (40% strongly disagreed those spirits exist, 28% strongly argued that they do); and people in their late seventies or older (42% strongly disagreed, 17% strongly agreed).

People attending evangelical churches were more likely to affirm than to reject the existence of these alternative spirits by a 3:2 ratio. In all other Protestant church groups studied, a larger share affirmed the unique spirit of plants, wind, animals, and water than denied it.

Worshiping Alternative Spirits

The only question about supernatural beings and spirits for which a majority provided a biblical response concerned the personal worship of spirits other than the God of the Bible. In total, two-thirds of adults (67%) said they never worship other spirits—twice as many as said they do engage in such worship.

Of those who said they consistently worship other spirits at least once a week—constituting one out of five adults (18%)—the groups most likely to participate in such worship were people aligned with non-Christian faith groups (30%), blacks (27%), Hispanics (25%), and Millennials (25%). Unexpectedly, adults attending evangelical churches were not far behind (24%).

The Need to Refocus Christians

Dr. George Barna, the Director of Research at the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University, explained that the purpose of the Center’s annual worldview research is to help parents, church leaders, and Christian school educators identify areas of belief and behavior where Christians are missing the mark.

“The theological disposition of Americans consists largely of safe statements and bland moral and spiritual guesses breeding lifestyles that are indistinguishable from those of people with distinctly different points of view and spiritual direction,” Barna commented.

“Embarrassingly few self-described Christians have either studied or reflected on their alleged faith substantially enough to develop genuine, deeply-held biblical convictions and commitments. In fact, the data reveal that to millions of self-identified Christians, the Christian faith is not a Bible-based faith. That alleviates the need to know and relate their life to scriptural principles and laws,” he said.

Responding to concerns about the implications of the survey findings, Barna pointed out that we can only improve society if we better understand it and then hold it accountable to biblical principles.

“For instance, devoted, biblical Christians won’t like what the most common views about mankind reveal about Americans,” said Barna. “An objective spiritual profile of Americans portrays us as narcissistic, unappreciative of the gift of life, and consistently unbiblical in our views and behaviors related to both humanity and the supernatural.”

“Further analysis discovered that there is a relative handful of people groups usually in-tune with and supportive of biblical Christianity, and a different handful of segments who are consistently dismissive

of and oppositional to biblical Christianity,” explained the ACU professor and researcher. “The segments most in line with biblical teaching are those with a biblical worldview, biblically-defined disciples of Jesus, theologically-identified, born-again Christians—no surprises so far—but also people 75 or older.”

Barna then noted that the segments least in tune with biblical perspectives on humanity and the supernatural included the Don'ts, people associated with non-Christian faiths—both expected to make this list—but also Catholics, Asians, LGBTQ individuals, people under 40 years of age, and residents of New England, New York, and California.

Reflecting on the nature of American Christianity today, Barna noted that his research shows many disturbing patterns.

“Increasingly, American Christianity is based on feelings rather than biblical truth or knowledge. Stuningly few adults in national survey after national survey qualify as biblically-defined disciples. That relates to the small percentage of adults who have established knowing and imitating Christ as their chief goal in life. More often, people’s chief objective—even among regular churchgoers or people who say they are deeply committed to their faith—is to experience life on their terms, in the quest for control, popularity, comfort, or pleasure,” Barna explained.

The author of numerous bestselling books regarding the intersection of faith and culture, Barna then addressed the big picture of the nation’s religious condition.

“Americans meander through life with a broad assortment of vague religious beliefs and volatile religious behaviors. That religious amnesia has produced a nation where the dominant worldview—adopted by nine out of 10 adults—is Syncretism, not biblical Christianity. Dismissing the importance of biblical truth principles and a holy lifestyle has led to tens of millions of regular church attenders settling in as notional Christians—people who embrace the label and the idea of Christianity but refuse to study, meditate, work, and sacrifice in ways that cultivate genuine Christ-like lives.”

Barna expressed his disappointment in the response of the American Church to its present dilemma. “American culture is clearly influencing churches and congregants more than the Christian community influences the culture. Although that condition is no secret in Christian leadership circles, there seems to be little commitment to altering that reality. Have we forgotten that you cannot give what you do not have? Do we not realize that you only reproduce who you are? How can we justify continuing to obsess on church attendance and giving statistics as measures of success, to the exclusion of reliable evaluations of discipleship, when we also know that you get what you measure? Unless visionary and courageous Christian leaders, in families, churches and schools, confront these realities, America will continue down the road of false and anemic biblical Christianity.”

Barna called on Christian leaders—parents, pastors, and teachers, in particular—to prepare for the beginning of the new ministry year in the Fall. “Imagine the spiritual momentum that could be generated if all of those leaders devoted themselves to an energetic, focused effort to renew believers in the fundamentals of biblical faith. As America celebrates its 250th anniversary of the freedom to pursue the genuine Christian faith without interference and manipulation, what a tremendous homage it would be to the nation’s founders, and to those who have fought and even died to maintain that freedom, to return to its spiritual roots and both strengthen and deepen that commitment to biblical faith.”

About the Research

The data referred to in this report are taken from three national surveys conducted by the Cultural Research Center. The most recent is the 2026 edition of the *American Worldview Inventory (AWVI)*, an annual survey that evaluates the worldview of the U.S. adult population (age 18 and over). The 2026 survey incorporated a national sample of 2,000 adults who belong to a national research panel and whose demographic profile reflects that of the U.S. adult population. The data was collected using a dual-mode approach, including interviews conducted both by telephone and online. The survey interviews were conducted in January of 2026.

A survey of 2,000 randomly sampled individuals is considered to have a maximum sampling error of approximately plus-or-minus 2 percentage points, based on the 95% confidence interval. Additional levels of undeterminable error may occur in surveys based upon non-sampling activity.

About the *American Worldview Inventory*

The *American Worldview Inventory* is the first-ever annual national survey conducted in the United States measuring the incidence of both biblical and competing worldviews. Each year's reports, released to the public at no cost via CRC's website (www.CulturalResearchCenter.com) throughout the year of the survey, are also compiled in book form and produced at the beginning of each subsequent year, published by Arizona Christian University Press. Those books are available at CRC's [Publications page](#) or on Amazon.

About the Cultural Research Center

The Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University in Glendale, Arizona, conducts the annual *American Worldview Inventory* as well as other nationwide surveys regarding worldview and cultural transformation. National studies completed by the Cultural Research Center (CRC) have investigated topics related to family, values, lifestyle, spiritual practices, and recent election-related activity and political views.

One of the groundbreaking efforts by CRC has been the worldview-related surveys conducted among the ACU student population. The first-of-its-kind *ACU Student Worldview Inventory* is administered to every ACU student at the start of each academic year, and a final time just prior to graduation. The results of that student census enable the University to track and address the worldview development of its students from a longitudinal perspective.

Research studies conducted by CRC are led by Dr. George Barna. Barna is a veteran of more than 40 years of national public opinion research, having previously guided the Barna Group (which he sold in 2009), and the American Culture and Faith Institute. His research findings have been the subject of more than 60 books he has authored or co-authored, many of which have become national bestsellers. His most recent bestseller is [*Raising Spiritual Champions: Nurturing Your Child's Heart, Mind and Soul*](#) (Arizona Christian University Press, 2023).

Like ACU, CRC embraces biblical Christianity. The Center works in cooperation with a variety of Bible-centric, theologically conservative Christian ministries and remains politically non-partisan. Further information about Arizona Christian University is available at www.ArizonaChristian.edu.

About the ACU Worldview Assessment

The [ACU Worldview Assessment](#) is a powerful online tool designed to measure and strengthen a person's worldview. Developed by Dr. George Barna and based on 40+ years of research, this 15-minute assessment reveals how a person's beliefs and behaviors align with biblical truth—and how to grow spiritually.

The ACU Worldview Assessment measures worldview beliefs and behaviors in five basic categories (Bible, Truth, and Morals; God, Creation, and History; Faith Practices; Sin, Salvation, and God Relationship; and Lifestyle, Behavior, and Relationships). It also evaluates the “Seven Cornerstones” of the Biblical Worldview. Dr. Barna's exhaustive worldview research shows that if these seven basic worldview concepts—or cornerstones—are in place, a person is far more likely to possess or develop a biblical worldview. Only the ACU Worldview Assessment identifies and measures these worldview-building basics.

The ACU Worldview Assessment is a *practical tool* for evaluating and improving worldview. And there is a specifically tailored version of the ACU Worldview Assessment for every need:

- **The ACU Worldview Assessment for Individuals** -Designed specifically for adults to identify their worldview and discover areas for spiritual growth and personal worldview development.
- **The ACU Worldview Assessment for Students** – Created by Dr. Barna in collaboration with ACU professors and other educational experts, to measure the worldview of students in grades 4, 8, and 12, using a pre- and post-test format. The student assessments are specifically designed for each grade level, making the questions age-appropriate and easier to understand, while maintaining the integrity of the results.

Dr. Barna's extensive research into childhood worldview development shows that an individual's worldview is essentially formed by age 13. This highlights the importance of strategic worldview training, especially in Christian schools, using the ACU Worldview Assessment to measure worldview development along the way.

- **The ACU Worldview Assessment for Churches, Ministries, and Groups** – This version of the assessment is designed for use by churches, ministries, and other groups of adults.
- **The ACU Worldview Assessment for Colleges and Universities** – Designed in a pre- and post-test format tailored for Christian colleges and universities to use each academic year to assess the worldview of their students, and understand the effect of their university's teaching and community on their student's worldview development.

Visit www.ACUWorldview.com to experience the ACU Worldview Assessment. And learn more about the new assessment in our full report, [“Arizona Christian University Unveils Groundbreaking Worldview Assessment from Dr. George Barna and the Cultural Research Center.”](#)