

Christian Action Ministry Newsletter

Involving the Christian in Community Action

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By
Kay Trudell

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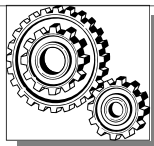
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Looking for your thoughts and feedback

Let us know how we are doing and what you would like us to pursue

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If you would like to be added to our mailing list, please call 655-0280, email, or contact our website



In the Works

Are you interested in becoming involved? CAM is looking for interested and active people to act as liaisons to their church, helping to keep the Christian community informed. Contact CAM at 372-6442.

I spend time on the computer and iPhone trying to keep up with the news of the world --- religious, political, and cultural. I also read print media extensively, use social media, and do research in these areas for different purposes and groups. Sometimes I stumble across an article that floors me because the information is not generally known. The following is research from such an article. Will it be of interest to Christians? Absolutely! I was shocked when I read it. I had no idea, and I am betting most of our CAM newsletter readers do not know either. Remember the phrase “Shock and Awe” from the war against al-Qaeda? What might be a more appropriate phrase for the information below stems from how shocked I was when I read it --- because I think the statistics are awful. Hang on to your hats, Christians. Fasten your seat belts.

In 2015, the Pew polling and research organization released an exhaustive study on the state of religion and religious belief in the United States of

America. These are the latest figures from Pew, which is a generally respected polling organization along with Gallup, Barna, Zogby, etc. The title of the article by Michael Lipka in which they introduced the results of their latest poll was “**Americans’ Faith in God May Be Eroding**”. Attention-getting? You bet. It sure grabbed mine.



The first question asked of respondents was: “Do you believe in God or a Universal Spirit? How certain are you of this belief?” People taking the poll were asked to state wheth-

er they were *absolutely certain, fairly certain, not certain, or not at all/do not believe* (in God or a Universal Spirit). I will rank order the answers as Pew Research Center did, by putting the *absolutely certain* and *fairly certain* groups together. The groups expressing the most to least belief in God or a Universal Spirit will be listed in descending order. Please bear in mind that the word “God” here does not always mean the Judeo-Christian God or Jesus Christ.

- 90% - Jehovah’s Witness
- 86% - Mormon
- 84% - Muslim
- 81% - Protestant Christian
- 64% - Catholic Christian
- 61% - Orthodox Christian
- 41% - Hindu
- 37% - Jewish
- 36% - Follow no religion in particular/none
- 29% - Buddhist
- 7% - Agnostic
- 2% - Atheist (Really? 2% of atheists believe in God??)

There are also some interesting sub-categories. Among Protestant Christians, evangeli-

“A system of morality which is based on relative emotional values is a mere illusion, a thoroughly vulgar conception which has nothing sound in it and nothing true.”

Socrates

cals demonstrated 88% belief in God while mainline Protestants scored only 66% belief. Historically Black churches demonstrated an 89% belief in God.

When I read that only 88% of evangelicals, who are supposed to be Bible-believing, born again Christians, actually believed in God, I was shocked. That figure should be 100%. And mainline Protestants and Catholics shocked me even more, with belief-in-God statistics as demonstrated by numbers only in the mid 60 to 80 percent range. How is this even possible? These people are Americans, not North Koreans or Iranians or Saudi Arabians. More Muslims here believe in God than mainline Protestants and Catholics! How can this be?

I am afraid the Bible gives us the answer. It is called the “Great Falling Away” of the last days. What other explanation is even possible? America, the nation that sent more missionaries to the four corners of the Earth than any other, is now in need of missionaries herself, and indeed, other countries are sending them here. Unfortunately, not all of them are Christian missionaries. Some are Muslim. In fact, in April 2017 the Christians of Australia called for a week of prayer and fasting for America. Thank you. We are in sore need of it.

And why do we as Christians not know these statistics? Perhaps part of the reason is that we have insulated ourselves inside our churches and do not go forth to confront a lost and dying world with the truth of the message of salvation and all that it entails. Evangelicals do especially well at preaching the Gospel to people we invite into our churches, but most of us will not go out of the church building to engage the world. Did you ever work in prison ministry? Evangelize on the street? Pass out Bible tracts at a gay pride parade? Picket or pray in front of an abortion clinic? Participate in “40 Days For Life”? Work in a center for women with unwanted pregnancies? A soup kitchen? A homeless shelter? Participate in a march in Montpelier in support of a moral issue, or testify in front of the Vermont Legislature on a moral issue? Speak up at your own town meeting or in front of your school board? Run for office as a Christian? Vote? Or were we staying inside the safe and comfortable four walls of our churches instead of engaging the culture?

We do have some great programs for people in our church buildings, especially in the areas of youth ministry and substance abuse, but we need to do even more by going outside the actual building. For example, in Vermont, how many of us have ever preached the gospel openly on Church Street in Burlington, or in

whatever the main center of your town or city is called? Have you ever distributed gospel tracts or passed out Bibles in public? Engaged in an online chat room discussion with an avowed and hostile non-believer and presented the actual Gospel openly? Presented the Gospel in a discussion in a political chat room online? In the workplace? Been mocked and abused in any of these circumstances, and kept coming back and trying again? Social media is one of the open doors for one-to-one evangelization. And others in the chat room or thread also see what you have written to the one person you are engaging. We might not do it perfectly, or choose the best words all the time, but we should wade in there and try. That is better than doing nothing. Evangelicals are not the majority of the U.S. population in any case, so we need to be very salty salt and very bright light, and go forth into the fray. Too often, we Christians who believe in God with all our hearts do not engage with non-Christians in a salty manner because we do not want to “offend” anyone. It is too late for that. We must be bold. Get out there and engage. Speaking up, even imperfectly, is better than not saying anything at all. And if you are insulted online when you talk about Jesus, don’t quit. Keep at it. Scripture says we will be insulted for the sake of His name. Above all, try to discern the truth. There is

much false information presented in secular media today.

Our readers might be interested to know that Pew said the drop in belief in God in America was sharpest among Millennials, the group most often consumers of social media, a place where many Christians will not go because it is so worldly. But isn’t that a wonderful potential field for bold evangelization? The group that calls itself the “Nones” or “Nothing in Particular” grew from 22% in 2007 to 33% in 2015. Among these religiously unaffiliated people, 36% were *absolutely certain* God existed in 2007, but only 27% believe that now.

Where is strength of belief and stability most common? The answer: among highly observant groups such as evangelicals, members of the historically Black Protestant tradition, Mormons, Jews, and Muslims. Although the article I read did not break down the Jewish community into subsections, I would also suspect this is true among the more Orthodox members of the Jewish community such as Chabad in Burlington. Some other demographics come into play as well. More Blacks (83%) than Whites (61%) or Hispanics (59%) are *absolutely certain* that God exists. More women (69%) than men (57%). More older Americans (70%) than younger Americans under age 30 (51%). Also, less well-educated Americans (66%)



“Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, lie, and say all kinds of evil things about you because of Me.”

Matthew 5:11, GOD’S WORD Translation

“Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and insult you, and scorn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Man.”

Luke 6:22, New American Standard Bible

compared to Americans who have graduated from college (55%). Apparently, colleges are doing a good job of secularizing our youth.

Other polling organizations have spotted a similar “long-term decline” or trend as well. For example, in a 1994 Gallup poll, 96% of Americans said they believed in God. The figure dropped to 86% in 2014. Again, the figures do vary from

polling group to polling group, depending on the wording of the questions asked. But there is a downward trend among all of the polls which does not bode well for America. Please remember that America was founded on Judeo-Christian principles. All 56 signers of the U.S. Constitution believed in God, and 52 of the signers were Christians. Even the Deist signers (small minority) believed in God. There were no

atheist signers of the U.S. Constitution.

The fact that more Muslims in America believe in God than mainline Protestants, Catholics and Jews in America should leave readers of this newsletter reeling in shock. We had better be about the Father’s business in all ways (as Paul said), including evangelizing on social media. We need to get on our faces before God and ask

Him to help us to be bold witnesses for Jesus in these last days. The future of America depends on it.

Kay Trudell is a Director of the Christian Action Ministry and attends Community Bible Church

“The 10 Least Religious States in America”

Excerpts from an essay by Tony Owusu, October 2014, on an online site called The Street.

10th least religious: Washington, DC - Only 32% of inhabitants describe themselves as “very religious”. Lean Democrat: 72 %. Lean Republican 14%.

5th least religious: Oregon - Only 31% of inhabitants describe themselves as “very religious”. Lean Democrat: 45 %. Lean Republican 38%.

4th least religious: Massachusetts - Only 28% of inhabitants describe themselves as “very religious”. Lean Democrat: 52 %. Lean Republican 31%.

3rd least religious: Maine - Only 27% of inhabitants describe themselves as “very religious”. Lean Democrat: 43 %. Lean Republican 37%.

2nd least religious: New Hampshire - Only 24% of inhabitants describe themselves as “very religious”. Lean Democrat: 41 %. Lean Republican 45%.

1st least religious: Vermont - Only 22% of inhabitants describe themselves as “very religious”. Lean Democrat: 52 %. Lean Republican 33%.

(The top two most religious states in this article were identified by Mr. Owusu as Mississippi (61% identify as very religious) and Utah (60% identify as very religious).

Why does this spiritual vacuum exist in New England? 80% of the five least religious states in the U.S. are located here! And as for Vermont, what a shame to be the least religious state.

We need to pray for Vermont and the United States of America!



What can I do?



*Faith without
works is dead
James 2:17*

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Looking for your thoughts and feedback

CAM has been publishing this newsletter for 27 years. We receive comments in the form of verbal communications and occasionally a written letter for the articles that appear in our newsletter, or for special speakers we have brought in. Generally the comments are encouraging but we have been taken to task on occasion for articles that someone feels are not politically correct, or that deal with a hot button issue.

At the top of this page is our website and our email address. Our newsletters are archived on the website and we reply to email that we get. However, we are asking you to take a little extra effort and contact us with what types of articles or informational seminars you would be interested in. We are also looking for individuals who would be willing to receive a packet of newsletters and distribute them in their churches. Is our semi annual candidate survey helpful?

And lastly, if you could assist us financially with a tax-free donation so we can continue to provide this newsletter at no cost, we would appreciate your help: CAM Network, Inc. PO Box 1067, Williston, VT 05495.

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Next Meetings

August 8, 7:00 pm
Parkinson home
Hinesburg, Vt.

September 12, 7:00 pm
Community Bible Church
So. Burlington, Vt.

**Making A Difference
In**