



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 25, 2023

Recent Studies Reveal Hopeful Signs Among Believers

The two latest surveys [conducted by George Barna](#), director of research at the Cultural Research Center at Arizona Christian University, reveal, upon close inspection, encouraging signs among those who claim Jesus Christ as their savior and Lord.

Among the seven “cornerstones” of what Barna calls a “Biblical Worldview,” there have been statistically significant improvements among four of them in the last three years. In two of them, there was no change, and in only one was there a statistically significant decline.



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Barna said that most people experience little change once they reach adulthood, but “the recent shifts underscore the possibility of positive change in worldview” among American adults.

This is critical at a time when the core foundational values of the American culture are under severe and deliberate attack by the enemies of freedom. Those attacks challenged worldviews that were held in calmer, safer, and more predictable times.

Here are the seven “cornerstones” of the American Christian, and the change among believers since the start of the Covid pandemic:

1. Believing God is omniscient, omnipotent, perfect, and just, and is the creator and eternal ruler of the world: no change
2. Realizing that all humans are not basically good; everyone, including you, is a sinner: five-point improvement
3. Knowing Jesus Christ is the only means to salvation, through our confession of sin and reliance on His forgiveness: no change
4. Believing the Bible to be the true, relevant, and reliable words of God that serve as a moral guide: five-point improvement
5. Accepting the existence of absolute moral truth: decline of seven points
6. Acknowledging your purpose in life: knowing, loving, and serving God with all your heart, soul, strength and mind: seven-point improvement
7. Understanding genuine success in life: consistent obedience to God: two-point improvement

Barna was optimistic:

Reviewing the data made it clear that these principles, although simple, serve as a foundation on which you can build a more satisfying and influential life, and one that brings glory to God.

Statistically, we see that if this base is not solid, a person’s worldview will be an inconsistent and unpredictable mess. Since worldview is our decision-making filter, a person who has a weak foundation will be characterized by a life that is a constant struggle.



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[But for] people who put these seven commitments together as a foundation for their decision-making, these guidelines are both powerful and transformative. Rather than experiencing life as a continual surprise and a daunting challenge, they give us the strength and confidence to make solid decisions each time.

Embracing the seven cornerstones is not just about developing a biblical worldview for its own sake. A biblical worldview is imperative because it is the only pathway to being able to consistently think like Jesus so that we can then live like Him.

Very few hold all seven cornerstones, according to Barna. In America, there are an estimated 176 million adults who self-identify as Christian, but only six percent, or about 15 million, actually hold his biblical worldview.

In the second study, released last week, he revealed fresh data that supported what he found in the first: Among those who believe that there are moral absolutes, there was a 14-point improvement since 2020. Among those who believe that good works cannot gain entry to Heaven, there was a gain of 10 points.

Among those whose life purpose is to know, love, and serve God with all their heart, mind, strength, and soul, there was a seven-point improvement. And among those for whom the Bible is the true and completely accurate word of God, there was an improvement of five points.

The two studies do show some negative trends, however. Among those self-proclaimed followers of Jesus, those who “have a unique, God-given calling or purpose” for their lives have suffered a 20-point decline since Covid.

They who remain “deeply committed to practicing their faith” dropped by 12 points, and those who attend a church service (either in person or online) at least once a week have dropped 12 points since Covid.

Such dramatic changes in outlooks in such a short period of time caught Barna by surprise: “The pandemic was certainly a life crisis for our nation, so even though this magnitude of spiritual shift was not expected, it is feasible given the physical and psychological effects of COVID along with the economic, relational and lifestyle effects of the government’s drastic policies.”

There’s much work to be done, wrote Barna: “This is a time when pastors would be wise to return to many basic Christian principles to rebuild the spiritual foundation of congregants and to celebrate the blessings of God, reminding people how great their God really is.”

And much will be required of the remnant: “If ever there was a time when our nation was desperate for a grassroots spiritual revival led by the remnant in the pews who still revere God, Jesus Christ, the Bible, and truth, now is that time.”

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