



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 15, 2024

“State of the Bible” Has Good News Among the Bad

[The first of a series on the “State of the Bible”](#) is remarkably robust and encouraging. Based on research done by the American Bible Society, the health of religion in the United States, under attack for more than 100 years, remains sturdy and vigorous.

However, in 1844 Karl Marx said that “the first requisite of the happiness of the people is the abolition of religion,” and it does appear that religion in America has suffered under the Marxist assault:

We’ve lived through a “positive world” (1964-1994), and a “neutral world” (1994-2014), and have now entered a “negative world” in which the dominant culture opposes the church.

State of the Bible data confirm a recent decline in Bible use, Scripture engagement, and church attendance.



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But all is not lost. As Jennifer Holloran, president and CEO of the American Bible Society, wrote, “We should see this moment of declining Scripture engagement as the time to grow in our ability to work together as the body of Christ.”

The initial report, “The Bible in America Today,” will be followed every month with additional reports providing insight into the state of the Bible gleaned from responses collected from more than 2,500 U.S. adults in January. The first report measures Scripture engagement, Bible use, perceptions of the Bible, and the overall spiritual vitality in America.

It begins with the recognition of the impact of the Marxist attack on America, reiterating a report from YouGov.com that more than half of Americans said that, for the country, 2023 was either a “bad” or a “terrible” year. But *personally*, a substantial majority (71 percent) said that their year was at least “OK,” with one in nine (11 percent) saying it was “great.”

And for that, the Bible is largely responsible: “More Christians are thriving in their spiritual growth. More young adults report being transformed [Romans 12:1-2] by the Bible’s message. We find joys as well as challenges in the data.”

The impact of churches being shuttered by the state in overreacting to the threat of Covid-19 didn’t show up in the data until 2022. In 2021, 128 million Americans read their Bibles regularly (about half of the total adult population in the country).

The next year, Bible readers dropped to 103 million, or about 40 percent of the population. And last



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year there was no measurable rebound: 99 million Americans, or about 38 percent, read their Bible regularly.

But, as the authors of the study reported:

Still, when people were asked whether their Bible use has increased or decreased in the past year, they are substantially more likely to say it has *increased*.

Among every age group (Generation Z — ages 11 to 27; millennials — ages 28 to 43; Generation X — ages 44 to 59; and baby boomers — ages 60 and up), personal Bible use increased over the previous year. More than one in five Gen Zers said that, “compared to last year, my personal use of the Bible has increased.”

Among all respondents, even among those deemed “Non-Bible users” by the authors, more than half said they wish to use the Bible more.

And when the authors looked at the demographics, they found even more surprises — black Americans lead every other group in “Scripture Engagement,” followed by Evangelicals and boomers. And the Bible remains the strongest in the South.

In addition, half of those polled agree that “Bible reading is an important component of a child’s character development.” This is remarkable in that prayer and Bible reading were removed from public schools by the then-radical Supreme Court more than 60 years ago.

Even more reassuring was the response to the statement: “The message of the Bible has transformed my life.” More than half of Gen Zers said it had, while nearly 60 percent of Gen Xers and seven out of 10 baby boomers agreed.

Marxist attacks on the foundations of the American culture (the Bible, the nuclear family, marriage, patriotism, traditional morality, law and order, etc.) have certainly done damage to the culture. But the data being reported monthly by the American Bible Society based on its January survey should provide comfort that the Bible, when read, studied, believed, and followed, will not only transform lives, but ultimately restore the culture.



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