

How important is your religion to
you?

Gallup runs polls on this question in
most countries of the world.

In first place are the Muslim countries with 90-98% of the people saying religion is important.

Very close to that are the countries of Africa which practice paganism mixed in with Catholicism.

The US is at 65%, about 10% less than the Catholic nations of the world.

The formerly Communist countries of the world come in around 30%

The lowest numbers come from the countries primarily involved in WWII in Europe. The Nordic countries are the lowest (16%) all the way up to the UK (26%) and France (29%)

Early strongholds of Christianity in the US now lead the way into a revolt against “Christian morals”

New England, California and now Maryland lead the way in this revolt with gay marriage and a belief that Bible is outdated and certainly didn't come from God.

I teach a lot on church attendance.

Would you care to guess where church attendance is lowest?

New England, California – the same states where “Gay Marriage” is moving forward.

Pro 14:34 Righteousness exalts a nation,
But sin is a disgrace to any people.

Let's look at what sin does to disgrace the people of nations that are moving away from Biblical morality.

Stanley Kurtz writes, “Conservative advocates of gay marriage want to test it in a few states. The implication is that, should the experiment go bad, we can call it off. Yet the effects, even in a few American states, will be neither containable nor revocable. It took about 15 years after the change hit Sweden and Denmark for Norway's out-of-wedlock birthrate to begin to move from ‘European’ to ‘Nordic’ levels.”

Kurtz continues, “It took another 15 years (and the advent of gay marriage) for Norway's out-of-wedlock birthrate to shoot past even Denmark's. By the time we see the effects of gay marriage in America, it will be too late to do anything about it. Yet we needn't wait that long. In effect, Scandinavia has run our experiment for us. The results are in.”

There are critics who cast aspersions on Kurtz' writing on the "Nordic" experiment in gay marriage, however, I happen to have a lot of data on genital herpes and that rate climbed significantly as Biblical beliefs and consequent morality declined in all countries in Europe – in approximate direct correlation to acceptance of "gay marriage", except that now it's due to HSV-1 rather than HSV-2.

The same is true for Chlamydia, another STD, while the number of abortions has increased by about 10% (in Sweden) in 1996.

Your religion should be important to you because all of this information points to the positive effect of Biblical morality on mankind and the nations that observe it.

However our children are leaving the church of Christ – due to their parents? – the preachers? – the other members?

Regardless of the reason, they may give, it's basically that they don't believe the Bible.

They don't believe the Bible (church) is relevant.

Thus, they don't believe it's true!

Are we the one true church that
Jesus said He would build?

Mat 16:18 "And I also say to you
that you are Peter, and upon this
rock I will build My church; and the
gates of Hades shall not overpower
it.

A question from our radio program -- Mat 8:8 But the centurion answered and said, "Lord, I am not worthy for You to come under my roof, but just say the word, and my servant will be healed. 9 "For I, too, am a man under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to this one, 'Go!' and he goes, and to another, 'Come!' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this!' and he does it." (10) Now when Jesus heard this, He marveled, and said to those who were following, "Truly I say to you, I have not found such great faith with anyone in Israel.

(11) "And I say to you, that many shall come from east and west, and recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven;
(12) but the sons of the kingdom shall be cast out into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

Who are the sons of the kingdom?

The statement Jesus made referenced the lack of faith in Israel.

Jesus references the coming of the Gentiles into the kingdom and the eternal destruction of those in Israel who did not follow God according to his commands.

Luk 6:46 "And why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,'
and do not do what I say?"

Mat 7:21 "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord,
Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he
who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.

(22) "Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord,
Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in
Your name cast out demons, and in Your name
perform many miracles?' (23) "And then I will
declare to them, 'I never knew you; DEPART
FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.'

Do we believe what the Bible says?

Joh 16:13 "But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. (14) "He shall glorify Me; for He shall take of Mine, and shall disclose it to you.

Joh 17:20 "I do not ask in behalf of these alone,
but for those also who believe in Me through
their word;

Joh 20:30 Many other signs therefore Jesus also
performed in the presence of the disciples,
which are not written in this book; (31) but
these have been written that you may believe
that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that
believing you may have life in His name.

2Ti 3:16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; (17) that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

2Pe 1:3 seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

If we are to believe the Bible because it has all the answers, then what is happening to church attendance? It is going the same way it went in Europe.

When brethren first saw that our children were not continuing in their faith, they said, “Let’s have some programs for them.”

And they weren’t talking about Bible study, but about social get-togethers.

And it didn’t work.

So they said, “Let’s hire a youth minister to run the programs and keep the kids interested.” And it didn’t work. (And the denominations had already tried it and were dying.)

Why did I leave the church?
Because I listened to a lot of smart
men who told me it was a myth –
and I didn't have any basis on
which to disagree with them but I
had a lot of evidence that what I
was told went against scientific
observation.

What brought me back? I was given evidence that there was a God, that he revealed Himself to man, and that revelation was through the Bible, thus demonstrating that the Bible was true and that Jesus was God's son.

In a single verse, Moses wrote something that was different from every other religious starting point -- Gen 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Someone sat down and said there was a beginning – something from nothing and even used a word indicating that – bara

It's just one point, but it cannot be refuted as a leap beyond the imagination of man.

From there, it's an easy jump to additional points that make the case that the Bible is God's word.

If it is God's word, how dare I or you refuse to follow it explicitly?

Act 2:36 Let all the house of Israel therefore know assuredly, that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.

(37) Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, Brethren, what shall we do? (38) And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.