

## I BELIEVE THE BIBLE... I THINK by Carl McMurray

The Barna Research Group has done religious polling of the American public for years. Some of their latest research comes across as quite confusing to me. Notice their statistics below.

One-third of all adults (34%) believe that moral truth is absolute and unaffected by the circumstances.

Half of all adults firmly believe that the Bible is accurate in all the principles it teaches.

Just one-quarter of adults (27%) are convinced that Satan is a real force.

A minority of American adults (40%) are persuaded that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life while He was on earth.

Seven out of ten adults (70%) say that God is the all-powerful, all-knowing creator of the universe who still rules it today.

The research data showed that one pattern emerged loud and clear: young adults rarely possess a biblical worldview. The current study found that *less than one-half of one percent of adults* ...those aged 18 to 23 – have a biblical worldview, compared to about one out of every nine older adults.

Other groups that possess a below average likelihood of having a biblical worldview included people who describe themselves as liberal on social and political matters (also less than one-half of one percent); Catholics (2%); Democrats (4%) and residents of the Northeast (4%).

I note that 70% of adults believe that that God is the Creator who still rules today. But only half believe the Bible is accurate is all that it teaches. I'm wondering where the 30% difference got their knowledge of the Creator, if not from the Bible. And if you're going to believe in the God of the Bible, what rule of interpretation would allow one to choose those particular Scriptures but decide other Scriptures are false?

Half of American adults say they believe that the Bible is true in all that it teaches. But only 40% believe that Jesus lived a sinless life as described in Hebrews 4:15. They “say” they believe the Bible is true in all that it teaches, but only 27% believe Satan to be a real person or force for evil even though the Bible describes him on many occasions as walking, talking, discussing, fleeing, and seeking. I’ve got to question the truthfulness of those who are answering these surveys. They say they believe the Bible (and I have no reason to doubt their sincerity) but they don’t accept what it says. How can this be? There may be several reasons.

- It may be that they give lip service to believing the Bible, but they don’t study or read regularly, and therefore don’t really even know what it teaches.
- It may be that they believe “some” of the Bible and in their own minds that allows them to say, “Yes, I believe the Bible.”
- Or it may be the oft proven case where survey takers know what they “should” say and therefore give the “expected” answer, even though it is not true.

Whatever the reason, real New Testament Christians need to understand that implicit in “believing” the Bible is “obeying” it. If we won’t obey it, we don’t believe it. Implicit in recognizing God as the Creator Father of us all is the necessity of obeying Him. If we will not obey Him we literally are not recognizing Him, His power, or His authority. Let’s not fall into the danger of thinking that we’re giving God the glory and honor for a made-up religion of our own.

Ignorance is not bliss. Because we believe something, that does not make it true. Believing in God, truly, and believing the Bible is His inspired revelation to man is evidence by our desire to learn about His will and obey it in the fashion He demands.