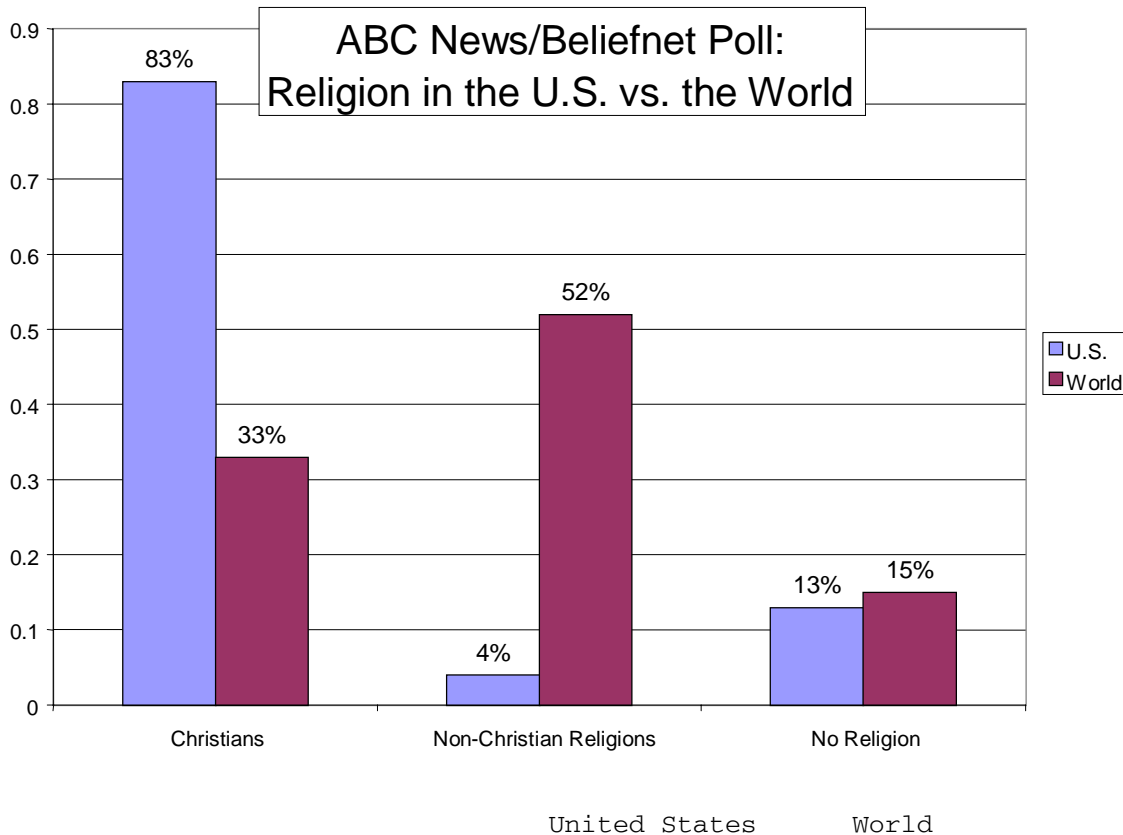


Religious Affiliation in America: Many Answers, Mostly Christian

Ask Americans their religion and you'll get an earful – 50 individual answers in an ABC News/Beliefnet poll, ranging from agnostics to Zen Buddhists. The vast majority, though, have something in common: Jesus Christ.

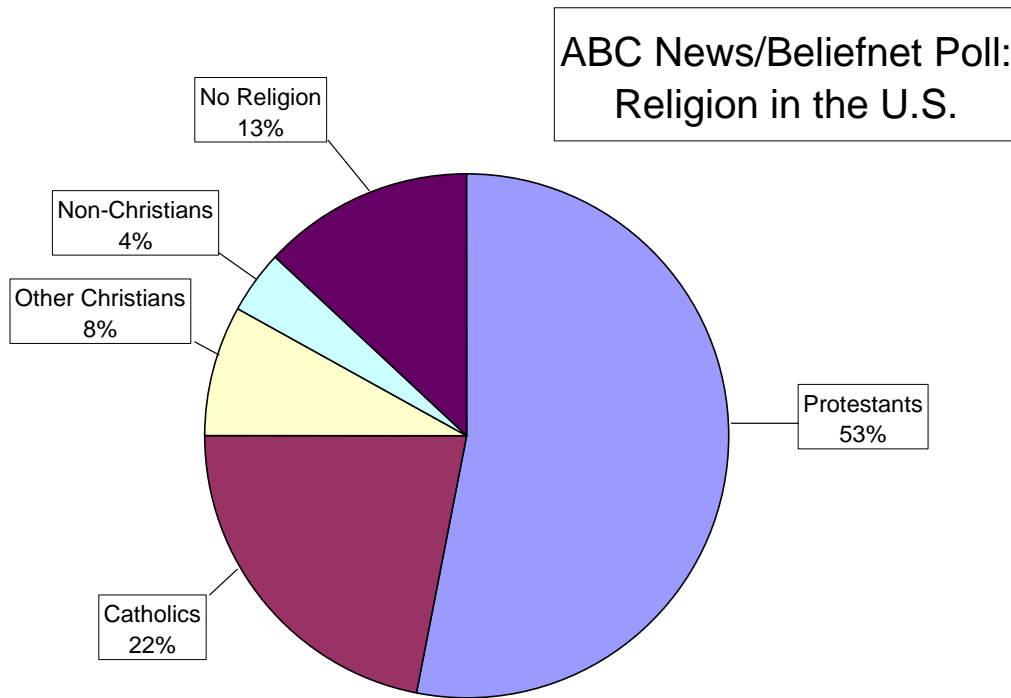
Eighty-three percent of Americans identify themselves as Christians. Most of the rest, 13 percent, have no religion. That leaves just four percent as adherents of all non-Christian religions combined – Jews, Muslims, Buddhists and a smattering of individual mentions.

That's quite different from the world at large: Fifty-two percent of the world's population is non-Christian, compared to four percent here; and one-third is Christian, compared to 83 percent here. (These are rough comparisons, because the world figures, reported by the Encyclopedia Britannica, are for the full population, while the U.S. figures are among adults only.)



Christians	83%	33
No religion	13	15
All non-Christian religions	4	52

This poll used an open-ended question to gauge religious affiliation: “What if anything is your religion?” Most of the 50 affiliations cited are Christian denominations, ranging from the Assembly of God to the United Church of Christ. Added up they show that 53 percent of Americans are Protestants, 22 percent Catholics and eight percent other Christians, such as Mormons or Jehovah’s Witnesses.



PROTESTANT GROUPS – The largest group within the ranks of American Protestants is unaffiliated: Nineteen percent of Americans say they’re Protestants, but don’t cite a specific denomination. They account for more than a third of all Protestants.

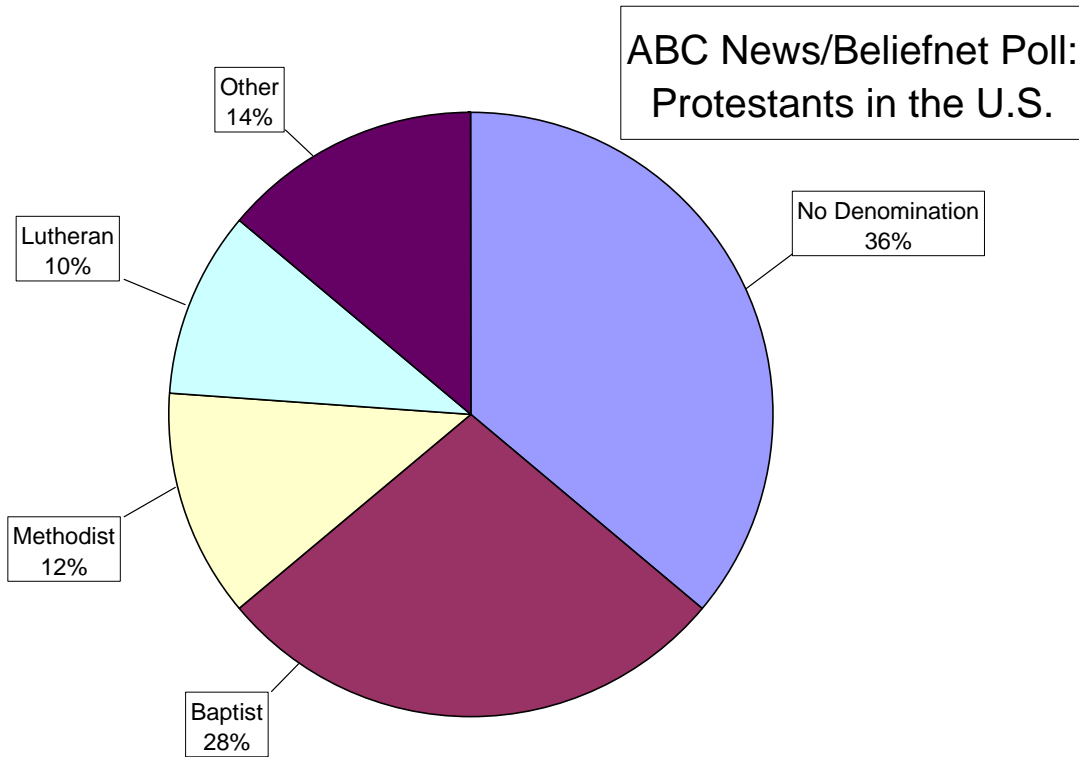
Another 15 percent of Americans identify themselves as Baptists or Southern Baptists, meaning this group accounts for nearly three in 10 Protestants. No other Protestant denomination comes close in size.

Baptists are especially prevalent among black Americans: Nearly half of blacks, 48 percent, say they’re Baptists, making it far and away their No. 1 denomination (next are nondenominational, at 15 percent of blacks, and Methodist, at eight percent of blacks). Among whites, 22 percent are Catholics, another 22 percent are nonaffiliated Protestants and 13 percent are Baptists.

Blacks, who are overwhelmingly Christian, are also more likely than whites to have any religion: Just three percent of blacks say they have no religion, compared to 13 percent of whites. (“No religion” includes people who describe their religion as atheist or agnostic.)

OTHER DENOMINATIONS – Six percent of Americans say they’re Methodists (including African Methodists and United Methodists); five percent, Lutherans. No other Protestant denomination was named by more than two percent of respondents.

Protestant denominations	% of all Americans	% of Protestants
No denomination	19%	36
Baptist or Southern Baptist	15	28
Methodist	6	12
Lutheran	5	10
All others	7	14

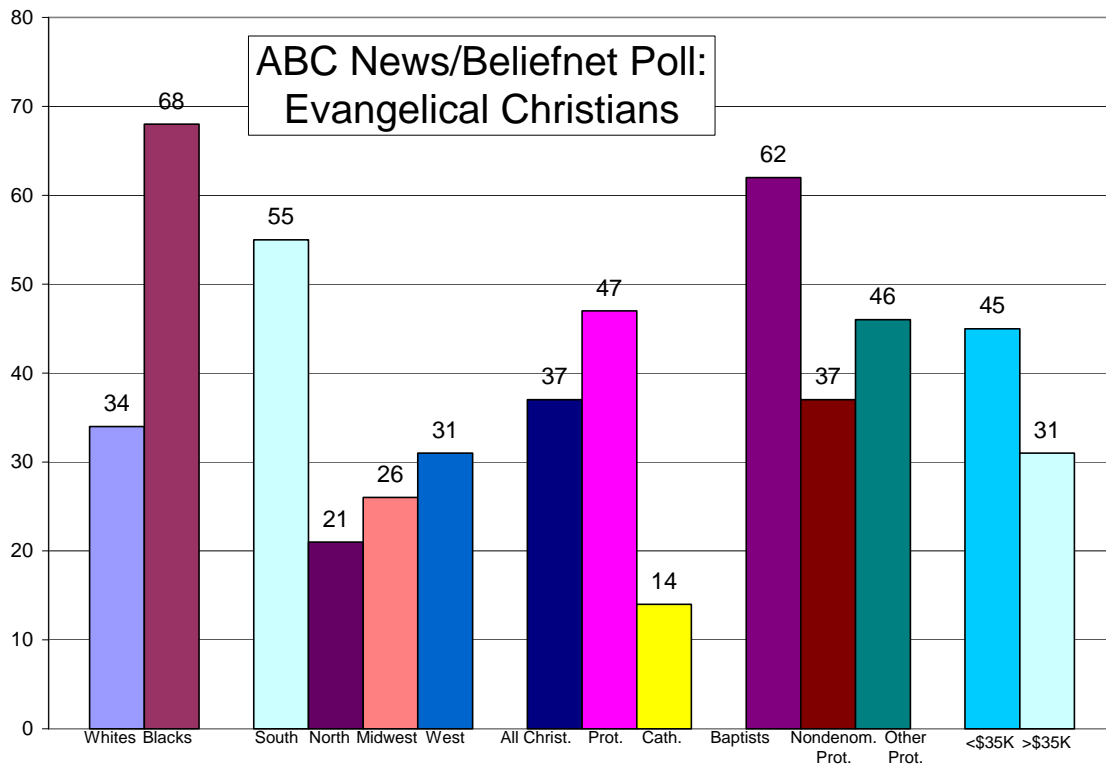


EVANGELICALS – Thirty-seven percent of all Christians describe themselves as born-again or evangelical; that includes nearly half of all Protestants (47 percent), as well as a small share (14 percent) of Catholics.

Baptists again dominate: Sixty-two percent of Baptists say they’re evangelical Christians, compared to 46 percent of all other Protestant denominations combined, and 37 percent of nondenominational Protestants.

Evangelism soars particularly among blacks, and southerners: Two-thirds of blacks describe themselves as evangelical or born-again Christians, double the share of whites who do so. And 55 percent of Christians in the South say they're born again, compared to 21 percent in the Northeast, 26 percent in the Midwest and 31 percent in the West.

Lower-income Christians also are more apt to be evangelicals. Among those with household incomes under \$35,000, 45 percent are evangelicals; among those with higher incomes this declines to 31 percent.



INCOME, EDUCATION – More broadly, Protestants tend to have lower incomes than Catholics: Forty-nine percent of evangelical Protestants have incomes under \$50,000, as do 43 percent of non-evangelical Protestants, compared to 36 percent of Catholics.

Income correlates with education. Thirty-six percent of Catholics are college graduates; that declines to 23 percent of Protestants, and 17 percent of Baptists.

POLITICS – There's an enormous political difference between evangelical and non-evangelical Protestants on some issues. One is abortion: Sixty-two percent of evangelical Protestants say it should be illegal in all or most cases; by contrast, 65 percent of non-evangelical Protestants say abortion should be legal (as do 55 percent of Catholics). (See 7/2 analysis on abortion and 6/26 analysis on stem-cell research.)

The difference narrows in terms of ideology more broadly. Forty-four percent of white evangelical Protestants say they're conservative on most political matters; that compares to 33 percent of white non-evangelical Protestants and white Catholics alike. Blacks are different in this regard; just 24 percent of blacks say they're conservative politically. And among people who have no religion, only 19 percent are conservatives.

There's even less difference between evangelical and non-evangelical white Protestants in political party identification: Forty percent of white evangelical Protestants identify themselves as Republicans, as do 34 percent of white non-evangelical Protestants. By contrast only five percent of blacks, and 11 percent of non-Christians, are Republicans.

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News/Beliefnet poll was conducted by telephone June 20-24, 2001, among a random national sample of 1,022 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Fieldwork by TNS Intersearch of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet, at:
<http://abcnews.go.com/sections/politics/PollVault/PollVault.html>

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Here are the full results (*= less than 0.5 percent):

911. What if anything is your religion?

	6/24/01
Christian	83
None	13
Non-Christian	4
Christian includes:	
Catholic	22
Protestant	53
Other Christian	8
Protestant includes:	
No denomination	19
Baptist/Southern Baptist	15
Methodist/African	
Methodist/United Methodist	6
Lutheran	5
Pentecostal	2
Presbyterian	2
Episcopalian	1
Seventh-Day Adventist	1
Other mentions: Assembly of God, Charismatic, Church of Christ, Church of God in Christ, Congregational, Reformed, United Church of Christ	
Other Christian includes:	
Christian, non-Protestant, no denomination	6
Jehovah's Witness	1

Mormon 1
Other mentions: Christian Scientist, Orthodox/Greek Orthodox/Russian
Orthodox

Non-Christian includes:

Jewish 1
Other mentions: Anthroposophy, Buddhist/Zen/Zen Buddhist, "Diet,"
Eclectic, Hindu, Holiness, Israelite, Metaphysical, Muslim, My own,
Native American, New Age, Non-denominational, Pagan, Personal, Self-
Realization Fellowship, Spiritual, Unitarian

None includes:

None 11
Agnostic 2
Atheist 1

END