



“HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM!”

The Pew Research Center has released its latest report on religion in the United States and the findings are alarming. Here are some of the key findings:

- Self-identified Christians make up 63% of the U.S. population, down from 78% back in 2007.
- The decline is found primarily among Protestant Christians.
- Only 45% of U.S. adults pray daily. This is down from 58% in 2007.
- Secularism is rising, up from 16% in 2007 to 29% today. This means 3 out of 10 people describe themselves as “atheist, agnostic, or nothing in particular.”
- Given these stats, it may not surprise you to learn that only four-in-ten adults consider religion ‘very important’ in their lives.

You can see the full report at: [About Three-in-Ten U.S. Adults Are Now Religiously Unaffiliated | Pew Research Center \(pewforum.org\)](https://www.pewforum.org/2020/08/04/about-three-in-ten-u-s-adults-are-now-religiously-unaffiliated/)

### **To what would you attribute the decline of Christianity and the rise of secularism in our country?**

The report doesn’t offer reasons, but I can’t help but reflect on RC’s mantra: “The ideology on campus becomes the ideology of culture.” This is unfolding right before our eyes. Unbiblical and secular roots planted at the university are growing like weeds through entertainment, social media, and politics. Put differently, the beast is out of its cage and on a rampage.

But lest this cause us to despair, I am reminded this Christmas season of God’s remarkable gift and power. He took on human nature to save us from ourselves, from our sin. He offers us the free gift of eternal life through His Son. And He calls us to participate in the proclamation of this amazing message (1 Thess. 2:4), to make the most of the time (Eph. 5:16), to share and defend the gospel with gentleness and respect (1 Pet. 3:15.) So as the darkness of sin and fear shadow the world, let our hope, joy, and love shine ever brighter!

### 2021 YEAR IN REVIEW



- Spring 2021
  - RC meetings occurred 4 days a week either online or off campus. (Topics: Resurrection of Jesus; Evidence for the Bible; Christianity v. Stoicism, Islam, Black Hebrew Israelites; Luke/Acts; 1 and 2 Timothy)
  - RC equipped 5 other student ministries on the IUPUI campus.

- The Lord grew our leadership: 2 new Purdue Chapter Directors and 2 new CDs at IUPUI!
- We saw students grow in their faith!
- “Restoration ’21: A Night to Pursue Christ-Centered Mental Health” – Alongside several other ministries, we hosted a panel discussion of trained biblical counselors and Christian psychologists to answer student concerns.



- Summer 2021
  - I began my “Fishers of Men” support-raising campaign in an effort to reach full support. The Lord blessed us by adding several new supporters to our team. I’m continuing to seek support to reach my goal but am grateful for all the Lord’s many blessings.
  - The Lord opened a ministry door for me via multiple radio shows.
  - The Lord gave me an opportunity to write a booklet for RC which is currently in the graphics stage and should be released soon!



- Fall 2021
  - Back on campus!
  - Tabling 2x per week
  - Developing new student leaders
  - Meetings 4 days per week (Topics: Dealing with Doubt; Resurrection; Eschatology; Problem of Evil; Trinity; “The Servant” in Isaiah; LGBTQ)
  - I was a keynote speaker at multiple church functions.
  - I began teaching an Apologetics class at Great Commission Academy co-op.

### Thank you!

I am so very grateful to be partnering with each of you. Thank you for your prayers and financial support. May you have a very Merry Christmas and a happy new year!

Andy Foland

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Merrillville, IN 46410

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## THE APOLOGIST'S CORNER

We are getting **A.R.M.E.D.** with evidence for the reliability of the New Testament (N.T.) In this letter, we will consider **E**: Extrabiblical Corroboration.



**A** = Archaeology  
**R** = Regional Accuracy  
**M** = Manuscript Evidence  
**E** = Extrabiblical Corroboration  
**D** = Determined by God

“If Jesus were really all that Christians say, we should expect to find some evidence of Him outside the Bible. But we don’t have any! Therefore, I need not trust the Bible or believe in Jesus.” So say some skeptics. But they are woefully uninformed.

The truth is we have a surprising amount of extra-biblical source material about Jesus that corroborates the New Testament picture of Christ. Consider this partial list of sources:

1. Josephus – 1<sup>st</sup> century Jewish historian
2. Jewish Talmud – 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century
3. Cornelius Tacitus – Roman historian
4. Suetonius – 2<sup>nd</sup> century Roman chief secretary to emperor Hadrian
5. Pliny the Younger – Roman administrator (A.D.112)
6. Mara Bar-Serapion – Syrian
7. Thallus – 1<sup>st</sup> century historian
8. Phlegon – Roman writer
9. Lucian – 2<sup>nd</sup> century Greek writer
10. Emperor Trajan

Note several things about these sources: 1) most are early (1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> century); 2) they are non-Christian sources; 3) many were not sympathetic to Christianity and some were even enemies. Nevertheless, one can learn a great deal about Jesus from sources like these. In fact, consider what an examination of early non-Christian sources reveals about Jesus:

1. He was from Nazareth.
2. He lived a wise and virtuous life.
3. He was crucified under Pontius Pilate during the reign of Tiberius at Passover.
4. His disciples believed He was raised from the dead three days later.
5. He performed unusual feats.
6. His church spread rapidly, even to Rome.
7. His followers denied polytheism, lived moral lives, and worshiped Him as Divine.

Doesn’t this picture, painted by non-Christian sources, sound a lot like the New Testament picture of Jesus? This is further support for the accuracy of the N.T. authors.

For more information, read *The Historical Jesus: Ancient Evidence for the Life of Christ* by Gary Habermas.