

# Could This Guy Be the Eventual GOP Nominee?

Speaker of the House Paul Ryan (R-Wis.) doesn't want to be President of the United States—at least not yet—if you have read the numerous, and sometimes exasperated, denials in the mainstream media.

So, if he doesn't want the job, why are so many establishment Republicans insisting he should be the GOP nominee? Here's just a small sampling from a recent *Politico* article titled "[Top Republicans talking up Paul Ryan as nominee](#)":

*One of the nation's best-wired Republicans, with an enviable prediction record for this cycle, sees a 60 percent chance of a convention deadlock and a 90 percent chance that delegates turn to Ryan – ergo, a 54 percent chance that Ryan, who'll start the third week of July as chairman of the Republican National Convention, will end it as the nominee.*

But [he doesn't want the job](#), right? The same article attempts to answer that question:

*Ryan, who's more calculating and ambitious than he lets on, is running the same playbook he did to become Speaker: saying he doesn't want it, that it won't happen. In both cases, the maximum leverage is to NOT WANT IT – and to be begged to do it. He and his staff are trying to be as Shermanesque as it gets.*

For those who would prefer the establishment not pick the nominee, there are two alternatives: either Donald Trump or Ted Cruz wins the nomination outright prior to the convention, or they find a way to mend fences and build an anti-establishment coalition.

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# What Hard Conversations With Your Teen Sound Like

Certain conversations should be non-negotiable in your house. But when should you have them? And how? The answer may depend on your teen's stage of adolescence.

Tough conversations are just that—tough. As much as your teen may dread the necessary talks that come with adolescence, you have the unique privilege as a parent to speak truth into their life. The best part is, you are not alone. You have God's Word available to help you navigate these important discussions.

While your teen may expect the dreaded birds-and-bees rundown, they may be surprised to hear some other topics that are on your heart. Pray for God's wisdom and gear up because if you don't tell them the truth, someone else will tell them lies.

## **Young Teens (Ages 13-15)**

From even the earliest stage of adolescence, teenagers feel the need to keep up with those around them. Whether it be material things or social status, it's likely your teen doesn't want to be different from his peers at this life stage. Take time to communicate God's plan for your family and what you deem important.

**Give your teen clear expectations.** While other families might allow a variety of things, focus on what ground rules and expectations will govern your family and ultimately your teen's life moving forward. What will the rules be about curfew, chores etc.? What standards will you live by?

**Encourage your teen.** Because of the fragile nature of self-esteem at this stage, and their wanting to belong, encourage your teen by showing them what God says about them. Communicate that their self-worth is not measured by anything other than God's Word.

**Discuss with your teen how to guard and protect their heart.** Our hearts at any age are delicate and the internal desire to be seen by the opposite sex begins early. Explain the importance of waiting to engage in romantic relationships, and offer the many reasons why.

### **Middle Teens (Ages 16-17)**

Just because your teen has reached a phase in which they now know it all, does not mean you should not talk often about what is most important. Don't feel bad about checking up on your student. Remember God has entrusted your teen to your care and you are accountable before Him for the way in which you instruct them.

**Explain the importance of being financially responsible.** What things worked for you when trying to be responsible with your money? [Pass those tips on to your teen.](#) Help them understand the joy of tithing—an important command given to all Christians, which should be taught at an early age.

**Ask real questions about your student's walk with Christ.** At a stage in life when your teen may allow several influencers into their decision-making, it's crucial to have God's voice—echoed by yours—be the most important and consistent.

**You must talk about social media.** Your teen needs to know that anything they put on any social media site is available to all. The things they post can influence their future for years to come. Help your son or daughter live consistently in Christ so that every part of their life reflects that relationship. (Also Read: [5 Issues to Discuss Before Using Social Media](#))

## Older Teens (Ages 18-19)

Your almost-adult has the potential at this stage to have really meaningful discussions with you. You've likely been through some things over their adolescence that hopefully have helped to mold and shape the relationship you have with them now. Continue the conversations. Be a voice in your teen's life that is valuable and wanted.

**Communicate the intense love you have for your teen.** While your student may be preparing to leave your home, knowing they are loved unconditionally no matter what, is a truth they need to hide in their hearts. [Talk to them about your love.](#) Talk about Christ's love. (Also Read: [3 Ways to Send Your Teen to College](#))

**Discuss how to honor Christ in romantic relationships.** With more freedom comes more opportunity to compromise, especially when the heart is involved. Your teen needs to know where you stand, but most importantly, [what God's Word says about relationships.](#)

**Inspire your teen to be set apart.** College ushers in a whole new realm of peer pressure. Your student needs to know that living by God's standards is most important. The reality is that honoring God may require them to make decisions that seem unpopular, weird or like they are missing out on the fun in the moment. But these good decisions will set them up for God's best in their lives, and they'll discover it much sooner than those who stray away from Christ.

Above all else, be honest and transparent as you guide your teen through these tricky years and difficult conversations that will have to happen. Know that when God is honored through your parenting, He is glorified!

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*Article courtesy of [Parenting Teens](#) magazine. For the original article, visit [lifeway.com](http://lifeway.com).*

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## **Franklin Graham Has Some Choice Words for 'Hypocrite' Company**

On Wednesday, Franklin Graham called out PayPal for its hypocritical corporate stances. PayPal announced Tuesday that it was canceling plans to open a Charlotte, North Carolina, global operations center after the state passed anti-LGBT laws.

But Graham pointed out [on Facebook](#) that PayPal already does business with countries that have anti-LGBT laws in place. Graham said, "PayPal operates in countries including Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, and Yemen for Pete's sake. Just last month PayPal announced they would be expanding in Cuba, a country in which homosexuals and transgender people have been imprisoned, tortured, and executed. PayPal only agreed to come to Charlotte in the first place after holding out for millions in corporate incentives. And under the current law that they are so strongly protesting, PayPal could have chosen their own corporate bathroom policies."

Michael Brown called out this same hypocritical stance, [arguing](#), "PayPal has now sent a loud and clear message to America: The common sense values of conservative Americans should be scorned; the destructive values of Cuban Communists, including decades of human rights abuses that continue to this

hour, should be embraced.”

Does PayPal’s decision make sense? Let us know in the comments.

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## **Evangelical Activist Offers Support to Embattled Governor**

Since he signed the Protecting Freedom of Conscience from Government Discrimination Act into law, Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant and his state have faced a massive backlash from LGBT activists and corporate interests all around the world.

But, he’s also received support from his neighbors. Kayla Moore, president of the Foundation for Moral Law, recently wrote a letter of support to Bryant. In it, she praises him for protecting Christians in government and business from persecution.

*As President of the Foundation for Moral Law, I commend you for your courage in signing HB 1523, the religious freedom bill that protects the free exercise rights of people who hold sincere religious objections to same-sex marriage, extramarital sex, and transgender orientations.*

*In recent years a fanatical minority has managed to persuade five unelected lawyers on the U.S. Supreme Court to force same-sex marriage on all fifty states, and a few states have harassed florists, bakers, photographers, and others who refuse for religious reasons to advance same-sex marriage. These people need the protection and interposition of state governments. We are thankful that, because of your courageous decision, Mississippi will protect them. We hope*

*other states will follow your example.*

*The Foundation for Moral Law stands for the defense of Christian liberty and of the Constitution as written and interpreted strictly according to the intent of its Framers. In the event Mississippi faces a lawsuit over HB 1523, the Foundation would be pleased to assist in Mississippi's defense.*

The new law, which is still frequently referred to by its bill number, HB 1523, has been characterized by many in the mainstream media as a “throwback to the Jim Crow era.” And now, it faces many of the same boycotts and travel bans that have been thrown at North Carolina and Georgia.

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## **Morning Routines: 3 Simple Steps to Enhance Your Mood for the Day**

The morning routine can “make or break” your day in no time.

For many of us, the a.m. routine includes dragging ourselves out of bed, dreading to start even the day. A pot of coffee is added to the morning “to get us going” only to find challenges lead the way.

Making the most of the morning routine changes “the [mood](#)” for the rest of the day. The first 60 minutes of the day is the most important in determining how the rest of the day will go.

Here are three simple steps to help provide a more positive (and healthy) attitude for the remaining hours:

**1. Change breathing patterns.** Breathing patterns are important and related to stress levels. Individuals who are “stressed” all the time are usually not breathing properly. Their bodies are in the “fight or flight” response mode, and their breathing is more shallow. During this time, the heart rate also increases. A vicious cycle then occurs, and the body is in “shallow” breathing much of the time.

The goal is to pay attention to the breathing patterns being used. Take time to breath more deeply on a regular basis. If you feel the tension coming in during the day, take a few minutes to do deep breathing while focusing on relaxing.

- **Five-minute [meditation](#).** During the morning, take five minutes to meditate mindfully. Focus on breathing in a comfortable position. Breath deep with a steady inhale into your stomach region (ten times) and focus on bringing stress levels down. Practice bringing your mind “back to the breathing” if thoughts consistently come into your head. If needed, this can also be done during the day at break time, or even lunch time.
- **Try box-breathing exercises.** Box-breathing exercises are great for decreasing anxiety, lowering heart rate, and depressing arousal levels. These exercises are also useful for clearing the mind. Box breathing involves inhaling (count to four), hold breath in (count to four), exhaling (count to four), hold breath out (count to four), inhaling (count to four), hold breath in (count to four), exhaling (count to four), so forth. The four-count can also be changed to another number if needed.

**2. Increase movement.** Increasing body movement leads to a more fulfilled and healthier lifestyle. Our bodies are created to run, play, climb, crawl, lift, balance, as well as other complex moves. Moving the body improves mood and develops a happier state of mind. Blood flow expands with increased movements; lymph removes toxins more quickly with amplified

efforts.

- **Body shaking.** As strange as it may sound, body shaking is a wonderful stress reliever. It is one of the best things to do to take away tension and decrease the effects of stress on the body. Body shaking increases the blood flow, helps to remove toxins, and awakens the body for additional movement.
- **Locomotion [exercises](#).** Locomotion exercises improve the overall mobility of the body and also encourages the release of endorphins (feel-good chemicals). Mood is improved during these self-powered actions. Locomotion exercises do not require any equipment. Some of the movements include walking, hopping, leaping, rolling, sliding, skipping, climbing, and swimming.

**3. Healthy eating during breakfast.** Making healthy choices for the first meal of the day gives the body “sound nutrition” to get started. Consuming the right food determines how well the body functions for the remaining hours of the day. Eating *improper foods* will result in feeling “down and out” before you even begin your routine.

- **Drinking water.** Drinking a glass of water in the morning (every day) will help the body to fight inflammation, provide hydration, and alkalize the system. Drinking a sufficient amount of water through the day boosts the immune system and improves health. Try adding a squeeze of lemon to drinking water in the mornings.
- **Healthy smoothies.** Sipping a vitamin packed healthy smoothie is another way to start the day off right. Healthy smoothies are easy for the body to digest. Many recipes are quick to create and can be enjoyed by all in the family.

Here is a delightful recipe to get you started:

*Green Smoothie with Coconut Water*

One ripe banana

Eight oz. coconut water

One tsp. coconut oil

One dozen raw cashews

One handful of spinach

Blend ingredients and sip slowly. Protein powders, potato starches, and superfood formulas can also be added to the smoothie if desired.

### **Three Simple Steps**

Taking these three simple steps can make the day go so much better. So, why not give it a try? Stop to breathe more deeply, purpose to increase body movement, and make healthier breakfast choices. A healthy morning routine will make the day go much better!

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For the original article, visit [drcolbert.com](http://drcolbert.com).

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# The Pope Does Something Amazing for Girl Going Blind

A 5-year-old American girl who does not know she is gradually going blind met Pope Francis on Wednesday as part of her parents' "visual bucket list" to show her people and things while she can still see.

Elizabeth "Lizzy" Myers and her parents, from Lexington, Ohio, were given special seats at Francis's general audience in St. Peter's Square, where the pope spoke to them briefly.

He bent down so his head could reach the level of Lizzy's, softly touched the girl's eyes with his right hand and blessed her.

"She was awestruck. She just teared up," her mother Christine Myers, who is Catholic, told reporters afterwards. "To her he's the big guy in the white hat."

"He asked us to pray for him and told us he would pray for us," she said. "I feel an absolute sense of peace. For the first time, I've felt peace."

Lizzy, whose case has received big media coverage in the United States, is not aware that she is suffering from Usher's Syndrome, which will eventually leave her deaf and blind.

Her parents said they would tell Lizzy, who already wears a hearing aid, about her condition gradually as she asks questions.

She could be blind in about seven years so they have started what they call a "visual bucket list" of sites and people they think she should see while she can.

Seeing the pope was among the experiences at the top of the list. She also saw the Colosseum and other monuments in Rome.

“I feel like I have very little time to show her so much,” her father, Steve Myers, said.

After reading of her case, an airline offered them round-trip tickets to anywhere in the world and the family chose Rome.

Lizzy gave the pope a piece of a meteorite she was given when she was a special guest at the Warren Rupp Observatory in Mansfield, Ohio, one of the first places on her parents’ list.

Her mother said she and her husband wanted to make sure that she also saw simple things while she could, “like bonfires and fireflies.” {eoa}

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## **Country Legend Merle Haggard Dies at 79**

Country giant Merle Haggard, who rose from poverty and prison to international fame through his songs about outlaws, underdogs and an abiding sense of national pride in such hits as “Okie From Muskogee” and “Sing Me Back Home,” died Wednesday at 79, on his birthday.

Haggard’s manager, Frank Mull, said the country icon died in Palo Cedro, California, of pneumonia that he had been battling for months. His publicist, Tresa Redburn, said no official cause of death has been determined.

He had kept up an ambitious touring schedule, but the pneumonia in both lungs had forced him to cancel several shows this year. Mull said his family was by his side when he died at home and they were planning a funeral for Saturday at his

home.

A masterful guitarist, fiddler and songwriter as well as singer, the Country Music Hall of Famer with the firm, direct baritone recorded for more than 40 years, releasing dozens of albums and No. 1 hits.

“He was my brother, my friend. I will miss him,” said Willie Nelson, his longtime friend, in a statement. Tanya Tucker recalled fondly the time they ate bologna sandwiches by the river: “I just can’t imagine a world without Merle. It’s so hard to accept, but I’ll continue honoring him on stage just as I do during every show.”

The White House called Haggard a “legend” and said President Barack Obama was sending his thoughts and prayers to Haggard’s family. White House press secretary Josh Earnest said Haggard told stories that people from all walks of American life could relate to.

“His passing is a loss for country music, but obviously is a loss for all the people who got to know him personally, too,” Earnest said.

Haggard—along with fellow California country star Buck Owens—was a founder of the twangy Bakersfield Sound, a direct contrast to the smooth, string-laden country records popular in Nashville, Tennessee, in the 1960s.

His music was rough yet sensitive, reflecting on childhood, marriage and daily struggles, telling stories of shame and redemption, or just putting his foot down in “The Fightin’ Side of Me” and “I Think I’ll Just Stay Here and Drink.”

His most beloved songs included the prison ballad “Sing Me Back Home,” the tributes to his mother “Mama Tried” and “Hungry Eyes,” the romantic lament “Today I Started Loving You Again” and such blue collar chronicles as “If We Make It Through December” and “Workin’ Man Blues.”

"We've lost one of the greatest writers and singers of all time. His heart was as tender as his love ballads," said Dolly Parton. "I loved him like a brother."

Few faces in country were as recognizable as Haggard's, with its wary, sideways glance and chiseled, haunted features that seemed to bear every scar from his past.

"Merle Haggard was an original. Not just a singer, not just a songwriter, not just another famous performer. He was your common everyday working man," said Hank Williams Jr.

He was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 1994, the same year he won a Grammy for best male country vocal performance in "That's the Way Love Goes."

Haggard also began headlining at Farm Aid, the benefit founded by his longtime friend Willie Nelson, and started touring with Bob Dylan and the Rolling Stones.

His childhood was out of a John Steinbeck novel; his family migrated from Oklahoma to California and lived as outsiders in their adopted state. Born in 1937 near Bakersfield, Haggard was raised in a converted railway boxcar, the only dwelling his parents could afford. When Haggard was 9, his beloved father suddenly fell ill and died, leaving Haggard with lasting grief. He turned to petty crime and spent several years in and out of institutions.

He served three years in San Quentin as inmate 845200 for burglarizing a cafe during a drunken spree. It was during that stint he saw Johnny Cash play, and he returned to Bakersfield at age 22 in 1960 ready to write music. Singer-bandleader Wynn Stewart was an early patron, hiring Haggard to play bass in his group. Haggard's first hit was a cover of Stewart's "Sing a Sad Song" and by 1966 he had been voted most promising vocalist by the Academy of Country and Western Music. He became a superstar in 1967, first with a cover of Liz Anderson's "I'm a Lonesome Fugitive," then with such originals

as “Sing Me Back Home” and “The Legend of Bonnie and Clyde,” featuring Glen Campbell on banjo.

Fame brought him unexpected respectability. His criminal record was erased by then-Gov. Ronald Reagan, who pardoned him in 1972, and he was invited by President Richard Nixon to sing at the White House. Officials in Kern County, where he spent his boyhood years, have since honored his legacy by renaming a portion of road Merle Haggard Drive.

Haggard was active as ever in his 70s, and received strong reviews for his 2010 album “I Am What I Am.” He lived his last years outside Redding with his fifth wife, Theresa Lane. Haggard previously was married to singer Leona Williams, and to country crooner Bonnie Owens, the former wife of Buck Owens, with whom he toured for nearly a decade. He is survived by six children, Marty, Dana, Kelli, Noel, Jenessa and Ben, and his sister Lillian Haggard Rea.

When doctors found a spot on his lung in 2008, Haggard announced he didn’t plan to seek treatment. But after friends and family members convinced him otherwise, he had a tumor removed and vowed to keep performing.

“When I quit doing them (tours), the next big event is the funeral,” he told the AP in a 1990 interview. “They keep me young.”

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# **Will There Be a Shaming Campaign for Christians Who**

# Support Trump?

Earlier this week, at the University Club in Washington, D.C., members of the Institute on Religion and Democracy gathered to discuss who would be worse for evangelicals: Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton.

The two views were personified at the meeting by Michael Cromartie, vice president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center, and Fred Barnes, executive editor of *The Weekly Standard*. Neither of them likes the prospect of Trump winning the Republican presidential nomination, but they differ instead on which potential nominee would be the worst possible outcome.

Cromartie said:

*I just don't think a Christian can support a sexist, racist, demagogic, misogynist, woman hater, anti-immigrant person who shows none of the fruits of the Spirit, who has called himself a Christian but puts his money in the "communion plate," and says he's never had to ask God for forgiveness.*

*I don't vote on candidates based on their rigorous theology, but I like them to know at least one thing! It is so clear that his own personal profession of faith is totally calculated. I just think that somebody who makes fun of reporters who are disabled, who has this attitude toward other races, other ethnicities, other genders, that's so obviously off-putting, I can't understand how that kind of person can win the support of real Christians.*

He then voiced his agreement with conservative blogger Matt Walsh, saying to evangelical leaders who have supported Trump, "We're going to remember you ... Shame on you!" Much of the room erupted into applause, but Barnes quickly countered with his position:

*If Trump is the nominee, and you don't vote for him, what do you get? Hillary Clinton.*

He said he disagreed with Trump on nearly every policy position, except taxes, but said there was a way the GOP front-runner could still earn his vote. He thought a Trump-Rubio ticket would be a winner, even if the former rivals don't particularly like each other.

"Of course they hate each other, but this is politics," he said. "Jack Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson hated each other."

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## **Ignite Azusa: Positioning for a New Jesus Revolution**

We are on the verge of one of the greatest awakenings of all time. Many have prophesied about a new move of God on the horizon that far surpasses any we have ever seen. Our generation is pregnant with birthing a new Jesus Revolution and we have been given the incredible opportunity to step into something truly special in our day.

The Azusa Street Revival is not just something that happened over a hundred years ago, it prophesies into our future of what God wants to pour out in an even greater measure today. There is great momentum for us to step into that was initiated in the Azusa Street Revival, a move of God that has brought more people to Jesus than in previous centuries combined. Lessons and keys for our destiny are embedded in their story. We can access these to unlock even greater realms of God's glory in our day. The fire from Azusa is still burning and available today.

The Azusa Street Revival (1906-1909) was a significant spiritual awakening that played a crucial role in the emergence of Pentecostalism and the rapid growth of Christianity around the globe. On Nov. 16, 1905, just months before the revival was sparked in California, an intercessor in Los Angeles named Frank Bartleman felt a stirring similar to what many of us might be feeling today. He said,

The current of revival is sweeping by our door. Will we cast ourselves on its mighty bosom and ride to glorious victory? A year of life at this time, with its wonderful possibilities for God, is worth a hundred years of ordinary life. "Pentecost" is knocking at our doors. The revival for our country is no longer a question. Slowly but surely, the tide has been rising until in the very near future we believe for a deluge of salvation that will sweep all before it. Wales will not long stand alone in this glorious triumph for our Christ. The spirit of reviving is coming upon us, driven by the breath of God, the Holy Ghost. The clouds are gathering rapidly, big with a mighty rain, whose precipitation lingers but a little.

Heroes will arise from the dust of obscure and despised circumstances, and their names will be emblazoned on heaven's eternal page of fame. The Spirit is brooding over our land again as at creation's dawn, and the fiat of God goes forth. "Let there be light." Brother, sister, if we all believed God, can you realize what would happen? Many of us here are living for nothing else. A volume of believing prayer is ascending to the throne night and day. Los Angeles, Southern California and the whole continent shall surely find itself ere long in the throes of a mighty revival, by the Spirit and power of God.

Can you feel the stirring deep within your spirit? If we really believed God, can you realize what might happen? Many of us today are sensing the intensity and weight of what God is about to pour out in all the earth. We are indeed on the verge of the greatest revival we have ever seen. The momentum of those who have gone before us is great.

As you dive into the Azusa story, I declare that the weak be made strong, the hidden unveiled, the brokenhearted restored and made whole, and the wounded healed. I call forth the heroes to arise from the dust of obscure and despised circumstances. As you read *Ignite Azusa*, I pray that the Holy Spirit will ignite you with the fire of God like never before.

*“God, do it again in our day and even more. Whatever it looks like, we don’t care, just as long as we have more of You. Release the keys of intimacy and destiny that You want to deposit into our generation. Overshadow us and cause us to burn for You with a flame that will never go out. We are Yours forever, Lord. Mark us for Your glory. We say yes to You, no matter what the cost.”*

The preceding is an excerpt from the new book *Ignite Azusa: Positioning for a New Jesus Revolution* by Jennifer A. Miskov, Ph.D., with Heidi Baker, Lou Engle and Bill Johnson.

Heidi Baker, Ph.D. (Iris Global), Lou Engle (TheCall) and Bill Johnson (Bethel Church in Redding, California) partner together in [Ignite Azusa](#) to inspire courage to step into the momentum set before us today. They will also be in Los Angeles April 9, 2016 for the 110th anniversary of the Azusa Street Revival at the AzusaNow gathering. We are believing for a new Jesus Revolution in our day. Join us at TheCall Azusa ([thecall.com](http://thecall.com)).

**Jennifer A. Miskov** has a Ph.D. in Global Pentecostal and Charismatic Studies from the University of Birmingham, U.K. She is the founding director of Destiny House, a ministry that cultivates communities of worshippers who do life together and who launch people into their destinies from a place of intimacy with God and connection with family. She teaches revival history classes at Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry and facilitates Writing in the Glory workshops at various places. Learn more or order your copies of *Ignite Azusa* at [silvertogold.com](http://silvertogold.com).

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# Research: Americans Say Christians Face Increased Persecution

A growing number of Americans believe religious liberty is on the decline and that the nation's Christians face growing intolerance.

They also say American Christians complain too much.

Those are among the findings of a new study of views about religious liberty from LifeWay Research. Researchers surveyed 1,000 Americans in September 2013 and September 2015 and then compared the results.

Two-thirds (63 percent) say Christians face increasing intolerance, up from half (50 percent) in 2013.

A similar number (60 percent) say religious liberty is on the decline, up from just over half (54 percent) in 2013.

Forty-three percent say American Christians complain too much about how they are treated, up from 34 percent in 2013.

"More Americans worry the U.S. has a hostile environment for religious liberty," said Ed Stetzer, executive director of LifeWay Research. "As this perception grows, some approve of it while others speak up against it."

Religious liberty has become an increasingly contentious issue in American culture—with disputes over [birth control](#), [same-sex wedding cakes](#), [headscarves at work](#) and [prisoner's beards](#).

The more recent LifeWay Research survey found faith plays a

key role in how Americans view the state of religious liberty.



Two-thirds of Christians (64 percent) and those of other faiths (65 percent) say religious liberty is on the decline. Self-identified evangelicals (71 percent) and those who attend worship at least once a week (70 percent) are most likely to agree.

Catholics (56 percent) and nonevangelicals (55 percent) are more skeptical. So are Nones (46 percent).

“Christians are particularly sensitive to what they see as intolerance towards their faith,” said Stetzer. “But they share a common concern with people of other faiths—that religious liberty in general is declining. And this perception is growing rapidly.”

Age also played a role in how Americans view the state of religious liberty.

Less than half (42 percent) of those 18 to 24 say religious liberty is on the decline. By contrast, 6 in 10 (62 percent) of those over 25 see a decline.

Lifeway Research also found non-Christians are less convinced that Christians face intolerance.

Less than half of those from other faiths (43 percent) and Nones (48 percent) agree when asked if intolerance toward Christians has increased.

By contrast, most Christians (70 percent), self-identified evangelicals (82 percent) and Protestants (74 percent) see more intolerance. So do two-thirds (76 percent) of those who attend services once a week or more.

Researchers found some signs that Americans are tired of arguments over religious liberty. A sizable number of Americans believe Christians' complaints about how they are treated are excessive.

Among them:

- 38 percent of Christians
- 39 percent of Americans of other faiths
- 59 percent of Nones
- 53 percent of those who rarely or never attend worship

American Christians face a challenge, as the nation becomes more secular, said Stetzer. Calls for religious liberty may fall on increasingly deaf ears in the future.

"Most people now believe Christians are facing intolerance. However, a surprisingly large minority perceives Christians to be complainers," said Stetzer. "Both of those facts will matter as Christians profess and contend for their beliefs without sounding false alarms around faux controversies. It won't be easy to strike that balance."

**Lifeway Research** works with churches, denominations and networks who need input from their members for key decisions and new directions. Some of our ongoing research includes church leadership, theological issues, ethnic/multicultural issues, outreach/ evangelism/missions, worship, discipleship, emerging trends, and the beliefs and behaviors of both the churched and unchurched. Lifeway Research will work with your organization to develop a survey that asks the questions you need to ask, so that you can quickly receive the input that you need. To discuss your research needs, contact [Scott.McConnell@lifeway.com](mailto:Scott.McConnell@lifeway.com).