

U.S. Charismatic Movement Continues Growth

A study released Monday found that slightly more than half of all Protestants in the U.S. identify themselves as charismatic or Pentecostal. This number has risen six percent in the last decade.



In the last decade there has been a steady increase in the number of charismatic or Pentecostal Christians, revealed a new study released on Monday by The Barna Group.

The report found that slightly more than half of all Protestants in the U.S. identify themselves as charismatic or Pentecostal. In less than a decade, the number of total adults in America who claim to be charismatic or Pentecostal jumped from 30 percent to 36 percent—the same percentage of all Catholics who remarkably fit Barna’s charismatic designation.

The charismatic orientation is most popular among the nonwhite population—a sector of the population that has seen explosive growth, said George Barna, founder of the Barna Group. “It is not surprising that the Pentecostal community in America has been growing—nor do we expect it to stop making headway.”

The Barna survey coincides with recent reports revealing the charismatic expression growing particularly fast in the Hispanic community, which was once known for its exclusive devotion to traditional Roman Catholicism.

Research by the Pew Forum on Religious and Public Life has shown that a number of Hispanic Catholics are either leaving the Catholic Church for charismatic Protestant congregations, or are practicing a charismatic form of Catholicism.

The study included not only mainline Pentecostal denominations such as the Assemblies of God and the Church of God in Christ but also included four of the 10 nondenominational churches

that categorize themselves as charismatic.

“We are moving toward a future in which the charismatic-fundamentalist split will be a historical footnote rather than a dividing line within the body of believers,” Barna said.

“Young Christians, in particular, have little energy for the arguments that have traditionally separated charismatics and non-charismatics. Increasing numbers of people are recognizing that there are more significant arenas in which to invest their resources.”