

Barna Study Reveals How Teens Worldwide Really Feel About the Bible

Read Time: 2 Minutes 47 Seconds

Barna Group has released the second volume of The Open Generation, a first-of-its-kind international research study to understand the identity, values and views of teenagers around the world.

The second volume, titled “How Teens Around the World View the Bible,” reveals teens’ opinions of the Bible and how interested teens are in learning more about the Bible. It explores how this generation engages with and applies Scripture to their lives, and how it impacts those who read it.

The first volume revealed intriguing trends on teens’ feelings about Jesus.

The Open Generation includes responses from nearly 25,000 teens ages 13-17 across 26 countries. The survey was sent to a cross section of teens, nationally representative of each country, regardless of their faith background or leaning.

The study was developed and conducted by Barna Group in 2021, in partnership with Alpha, Biblica and World Vision, with additional support from Christian Vision, Bible Study Fellowship, Christ In Youth and the Association of Christian Schools International.

“Our research shows that teens generally have positive opinions of the Bible, and they’re curious about it,” said David Kinnaman, CEO of Barna Group. “Despite these high views, engagement with the Bible remains low, and we see many teens

express uncertainty about how scripture can influence their lives and the world around them. Globally, our research shows that teens are motivated to make an impact with their lives, are looking for community and fulfilling relationships, and seeking purpose and direction for their lives. This research presents areas of opportunity for church leaders to help teens connect their questions to the Bible and the answers it provides.”

Key Research Findings in Volume 2

- Three-fifths of teens around the world (59%) say there is a Christian Bible in their home. Among teens who own a Bible, 88% say it is in a language and version they can understand.
- Many teens recognize that the Bible is holy (44%), inspired by God (41%), good (40%) and meaningful (39%). However, 22% of teens who own or read the Bible say they don’t fully understand the Bible while reading it.
- Bible reading is not the norm for today’s teens. One in five teens uses a Bible at least weekly. Forty-one percent of all teens never use a Bible.
- Parents and church leaders play a prominent role in supporting a teen’s knowledge of the Bible. Many Bible-engaged teens have had a parent or guardian (56%) or pastor, priest or minister (54%) teach them how to read and study the Bible.
- Nearly three in five teens are very motivated (35%) or somewhat motivated (21%) to continue learning about the Bible. This motivation increases with Bible engagement.
- The more teens engage with the Bible, the more they seem to act on Jesus’ teachings and encounter God’s love. Two in five teens say reading the Bible motivates them (39%) or makes them feel loved (38%).
- Bible engagement correlates with a strong desire and empowerment to make a difference. Though 43% of Christian teens want others to see Jesus reflected

through them in their words and actions, that number jumps to 81% among Bible-engaged teens.

Learn more about the study by visiting {eoa}

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