

Barna Study Reveals Intriguing Trends on Teens' Feelings About Jesus

Barna Group has released the first 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 first volume, titled "How Teens Around the World Relate to Jesus," explores teens' perceptions of and affections for 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.

"This study is intended to help us listen to teens today," said David Kinnaman, CEO of Barna Group. "The impression these voices offer is that this generation is open, inclusive and curious about different faiths and perspectives. Our data suggests that although this generation may not deeply engage with Jesus, they are open to him, and when they do engage, they experience positive effects. It is our goal to offer a picture of the rising generation to the global church so that we may support and engage teens in relevant, meaningful ways."

Key Research Findings in Volume 1

Most teens around the world have a positive perception of

Jesus. For example, about half of all teens, across faith groups, describe Jesus as “loving” (49%) and believe He offers hope to (46%) and cares about (43%) people.

Only some core elements of the Christian gospel story come through in teens’ perceptions of Jesus. Nearly half of teens overall (47%) believe Jesus was crucified, while one-third of all teens (33%) says Jesus rose again. Teens’ perceptions of Jesus are more about the past than the present. There is a common perception that He is not active today.

There is a gap between the percentage of teens who identify as Christian in a nominal or cultural sense and those who say they have made a personal commitment to follow Jesus. One-third of self-identified Christian teens has not made a personal commitment to follow Jesus.

Teens do not see Christians nearly as positively as they see Jesus. Teens believe that Jesus is more “loving,” “wise” and “peaceful” than the Christians who follow Him. And Christians are seen as more “judgmental” or “hypocritical” than Jesus.

Teens are generally curious about Jesus. Overall, two-fifths of global teens (38%) are very motivated to continue learning about Jesus, and another one-fifth (21%) are somewhat motivated to do so.

For teens, there is a strong correlation between being committed to following Jesus and experiencing satisfaction, support and stability. Also, teens with a commitment to follow Jesus tend to have a greater sense of community than peers with other levels of connection to Jesus.

Barna Group will release two more volumes as a part of The Open Generation study on the following dates:

- October 12, 2022: How Teens Around the World View the Bible
- October 19, 2022: How Teens Around the World Can Make an

Impact

Learn more about the study by visiting [If you are a reporter seeking access to the full version of Volume 1, contact \[**Barna Group** is a visionary research and resource company based in Dallas, Texas. Started in 1984, the firm is widely considered to be a leading research organization focused on the intersection of faith and culture. Conducting more than two million interviews over the course of thousands of studies, Barna has become a go-to source for insights about faith and culture, leadership and vocation and generations. Barna has worked with thousands of businesses, nonprofit organizations and churches across the U.S. and around the world. Barna is an independent, privately-held, nonpartisan organization based in Dallas, Texas, with offices in Nashville, Tennessee, Ventura, California and Atlanta, Georgia.\]\(mailto:barna@. {eo}</p></div><div data-bbox=\)](#)