

New Report: Americans Crave More Time in the Bible

More Americans are expressing interest in increasing their interaction with the Bible, according to the annual "State of the Bible" research from American Bible Society. The 2018 report reveals a majority of Americans, 57 percent, declare they wish they used the Bible more. While 89 percent of those who are considered Bible Engaged desire to increase their Bible use, 70 percent of those considered Bible Neutral are also interested in greater time with the Bible. The findings of Americans' growing desire for more of the Bible are among a number of Bible stats recently released about Americans' beliefs and behaviors.

In all, 48 percent of Americans are considered Bible users—meaning they watch, listen, pray or use Bible content or text in any form outside of a church service three to four times a year. And 35 percent of Americans use the Bible every week. Many Bible readers report reading the Bible because it brings them closer to God (62 percent); 25 percent of Americans have read the Bible in its entirety.

Many Americans, 66 percent, are expressing some curiosity to know more about the Bible, including 29 percent who express a strong desire. And 63 percent say they are interested in knowing about who Jesus is, while 31 percent are strongly interested.

"What we are seeing is a great appetite to read and understand the Bible," said Roy Peterson, president and CEO of American Bible Society. "American Bible Society invites those who are curious about the Bible to experience its narrative firsthand. From poverty to politics, the Bible addresses the whole of the human experience and can be life-changing for those who read it."

Yet, even as Americans express some curiosity to know more about the Bible, 65 percent say their level of Bible use is the same as it was a year ago.

When Americans were asked which frustrations they experienced when using the Bible, the most common response (26 percent) was lack of time; 23 percent reported not having any frustrations at all. When American do read the Bible, they feel peace (41 percent), hope (35 percent) and encouragement (33 percent). Only a small portion of Americans expressed negative emotions while reading the Bible: 16 percent said they were confused, and 13 percent said they were overwhelmed. Fifty-nine percent of adults said none of the unfavorable emotions provided described their experience (confused, overwhelmed, doubtful, judged, bored or discouraged).

For 58 percent of adults, the Bible has impacted the way they live their lives. And 85 percent of all adults believe the Bible has resulted in their willingness to engage in their faith more and show more loving behavior toward others (84 percent). Seventy-one percent say they are more generous with their time, energy or financial resources. This may be because after reading the Bible in the past week, 97 percent of adults say they gave some or a lot of thought to how it might apply to their lives. Americans also say the Bible encourages the following:

- Generosity (81 percent)
- Patience (81 percent)
- Serving the poor (78 percent)

An overwhelming majority of Americans own a Bible in their household (82 percent). When asked which version of the Bible Americans prefer, the King James Version still tops the list at 33 percent. But, there is growing interest in the New International Version as 14 percent prefer it—up from 10 percent in 2011. Preference toward the King James Version dropped seven percentage points since 2016 and 12 percent since 2011.

“State of the Bible” is an annual report on behaviors and beliefs about the Bible among U.S. adults. For more information about the latest “State of the Bible” research, visit .