

What the Numbers Said About Tuesday's 'Evangelical Vote'

The exit polling data from Tuesday night's Michigan and Mississippi primaries suggest many political experts and faith leaders approached the 2016 election with a flawed assumption about Christians in America.

Now that nearly half of the states have had their say in the presidential nominating process, it's clear that an outright majority of Republican voters self-identify as "born-again" or "evangelical" Christians. Yet many of those same voters have said they don't feel it's vitally important that they vote for a candidate who shares their world view.

Tuesday's data highlighted the disconnect once again.

In Mississippi, a solid southern Bible Belt state, "born-again" or "evangelical" Christians made up 84 percent of the Republican voters. But only 54 percent said shared religious beliefs mattered "a great deal" in their final decision-making process.

U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) won among those who said shared religious beliefs mattered most, but only by five points, 46-41, over Donald Trump. The bombastic and caustic GOP front-runner won the born-again/evangelical vote by 12 points, 49-37.

In Michigan, where committed Christians only made up 53 percent of the vote, it was even worse. Only 22 percent said shared religious beliefs mattered a great deal, and of those voters, Cruz won only 36 percent support.

These numbers suggest an alarming disconnect between Christians and their biblical voting duties. The implications should serve as a wake-up call for the church as a whole

moving forward.