

America's Bible Crisis Is Worse Than Most Christians Realize, Leaders Warn

As America approaches its 250th birthday, Christian leaders are warning that declining biblical literacy is accelerating the nation's moral and cultural decline.

During Israel365's "Open the Book: A National Conversation on Biblical Literacy" on June 14, speakers pointed to troubling research showing that while 66% of Americans identify as Christian, only 4% hold a biblical worldview.

"That foundation is cracking," Rabbi Pesach Wolicki said. "That foundation is under attack."

Wolicki added that many Americans own Bibles but lack a basic understanding of Scripture.

"They're holding a book that they no longer know," he said.

'We Lost the Balance'

Troy Miller, president and CEO of the National Religious Broadcasters, said churches bear much of the responsibility for the decline.

He argued that many congregations shifted away from discipleship and deep Bible teaching in favor of seeker-sensitive models.

"We lost the balance," Miller said.

"Bible literacy or illiteracy is behind so many of the social ills we're seeing today."



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'Silence in the Pulpit'

Pastor Jim Garlow, founder of Well Versed, said biblical illiteracy has been compounded by pastors who avoid addressing cultural issues through Scripture.

"It never goes in neutral. It goes to something else," Garlow said.

Citing research showing many pastors believe the Bible speaks to modern moral issues but decline to address them publicly, Garlow added, "Therein lay the problem."

"There's been silence in the pulpit. It's catastrophic."

Support for Israel

Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, said declining support for Israel is one consequence of America's fading biblical knowledge.

The trend is "the fruition of seeds that were planted decades ago," Perkins said.

Referencing biblical accounts of Abraham, David and Jeremiah acquiring land in Israel, Perkins argued that Scripture provides a clear historical foundation for the Jewish connection to the land.

"If we understood our Bible as Christians," Perkins said, "we could not go along with what is being advocated by the UN and others."

Building the Next Generation

Pastor Stephen Martin shared how his church responded by

creating a yearlong Bible-reading initiative and a classical Christian school.

Recalling a lesson from a rabbi in Israel, Martin said, “Most nations build monuments. The Jewish people don’t do that. We build schools.”

“It’s the best thing we’ve ever done as a church,” he added.

As the summit concluded, Wolicki urged attendees to remain committed to Scripture.

“Keep the book open,” he said. “This is not the end of the conversation. It is the start of one.”

James Lasher, a seasoned writer and editor at Charisma Media, combines faith and storytelling with a journalism background from Otterbein University and ministry experience in Guatemala and at the LA Dream Center. A Marine Corps and Air Force veteran, he is the author of *The Revelation of Jesus: A Common Man’s Commentary* and a contributor to Charisma magazine. For interviews and media inquiries, please contact media@.