

Are Americans Prioritizing Scrooge and Ralphie Over Jesus?

A new Christmas poll finds less Americans are actually reading the Bible's account of Christ's birth for Christmas, especially in comparison to those who make watching Christmas movies a tradition.

According to the results of a survey released Wednesday, 94 percent of Americans celebrate Christmas. For most, this will be a time for traditions. Whether it is watching a classic movie, reading a Christmas poem or short story, or opening up the pages of Scripture, traditions will play an integral part of their holiday celebrations.

The new survey commissioned by the American Bible Society and conducted online by Harris Interactive in November among more than 2,000 U.S. adults ages 18 and up found that while 30 percent make a tradition of watching the 1983 film *A Christmas Story* and 28 percent look forward to watching a film or TV version of the Dickens classic *A Christmas Carol*, just 15 percent say reading the Bible's account of the birth of Christ is part of their holiday traditions.

"There is nothing wrong with enjoying some of the great Christmas films that have been made over the decades," says American Bible Society Chief Communications Officer Geoffrey Morin. "It is just important that Christians don't make holiday celebrations more about Scrooge and Ralphie than about Jesus."

The survey also found that knowledge of the biblical account of Christmas was lacking. Fewer than half of Americans (42 percent) were able to correctly identify what the Bible says brought Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem for Jesus'

birth-reporting for a census. Worse still, just 28 percent of those ages 18 to 34 knew the right answer.

“Everything we know about Christmas comes from the pages of the Bible,” Morin says. “I hope these survey findings will encourage people to take a step back and consider making the biblical account of Christmas part of their celebrations.”