

Poll Shows True Bible-Believers at Record Low

The number of Americans who believe the Bible is the literal, trustworthy word of God is lower than it has been in years.

According to a Gallup poll, 28 percent of respondents believe the Bible is the actual Word of God and should be “taken literally, word for word.” Another almost 50 percent claim that it is inspired but should not be taken literally.



(Image credit: Gallup [via ChristianPost])

In 1979, 40 percent of Americans believed the Bible was God’s word and should be interpreted literally—a record high that has long since diminished.

Meanwhile, 21 percent of respondents reported that the Bible “is an ancient book of fables, legends, history, and moral precepts recorded by man.”

But even among those surveyed who identified the Bible as inspired by God, further clarification left significant room for doubt.

Gallup offered to let half of the respondents select multiple options for what the phrase “actual word of God” meant. With this option, 22 percent of those answering stated that the Bible should be taken “literally, word for word,” while 28 percent said that “multiple interpretations are possible.”

To further complicate the results, the language of the survey is not the language of biblical hermeneutics. For example, conservative Bible-believing Christians may find no issue in saying that not all of the Bible is meant to be read literally (since vast portions, such as the Psalter and many of the

prophetic books, contain poetic literature) or that the Bible is also a book of history and moral precepts (since these are present alongside other content).

Gallup's participants were comprised of a random sampling of 1,028 adults ages 18 and up from all 50 states plus Washington, D.C.