

Report: One Thing Better Than Coffee to Jump-Start Your Morning

The more engaged someone is with the Bible, the more likely he or she is to recognize their need for it on a daily basis, according to the latest State of the Bible research from American Bible Society. Among this group, 61 percent said they must have the Bible as part of their daily routines when given a choice between the Bible, coffee, sweets and social media.

The research also gauged opinions of all Americans, regardless of their relationship with the Bible, and among that group 37 percent chose coffee, 28 percent chose something sweet, 19 percent chose social media and 16 percent chose the Bible.

“What many Americans rightly recognize is, that while coffee provides a nice temporary jolt of energy, only the life-changing message of the Bible gives lasting hope and peace,” said Roy Peterson, president and CEO of American Bible Society. “The Bible provides the wisdom of the ages for today’s fears, challenges and struggles.”

The survey also shows that while coffee and sweets offer a bit of daily comfort, they are not alleviating fear in America, with 42 percent of all Americans responding that they are more fearful today than they were in the past. Women (47 percent) and Millennials (49 percent) are more fearful than men and other age groups. But the Bible is clearly making a difference in the lives of people engaged in reading it. Forty-one percent of Americans reported feeling peaceful when reading the Bible and, among those who interact with the Bible most often, 62 percent said their fear level had not increased in the past five years.

And hope is not lost. Some 81 percent of Americans agree they

have a great sense of hope for the future. Those who have a higher level of engagement with the Bible are more likely to affirm their hope for the future than those who are less engaged.

The State of the Bible research—commissioned by American Bible Society and conducted by Barna Group—also revealed the trends for how often Americans are reading the Bible, their perceptions around the Bible and how much impact the Bible has on their choices, relationships and lives overall.

In previous years, the Bible engagement scale was based on two factors: frequency of reading and belief in the Bible. For the 2018 report, American Bible Society sharpened its lens to gather more robust and complex information about the Bible's impact on Americans' opinions and habits. No longer are Americans categorized based on whether they think the Bible is the Word of God or a book written by man. Instead the factors expanded to not only include frequency of Bible reading, but also spiritual impact and moral centrality.

“American Bible Society took a higher-resolution look into the lives of Americans around the Bible,” said Peterson. “We are now able to give better context into how Americans are or are not interacting with the Bible and how that impacts their lives. We are finding the more engaged with the Bible someone is, the more hopeful and peaceful they are, along with a greater awareness of their need for the Bible.”

The 2018 research reveals, in order of higher engagement to lower engagement, 9 percent of Americans are Bible Centered, 17 percent are Bible Engaged, 15 percent are Bible Friendly, 5 percent are Bible Neutral and 54 percent are Bible Disengaged. Those in the Bible Disengaged category do not necessarily have hostile or negative feelings toward the Bible but may simply be indifferent. A majority of the Bible Disengaged do not interact with the Bible at all and are primarily classified by their infrequent interaction with the Bible and its minimal

impact on their lives. The higher someone is on the engagement scale, the more likely he or she is to feel the following:

- Desire to read the Bible more (57 percent of all Americans, 89 percent of Bible Centered and 90 percent of Bible Engaged)
- Believe the Bible contains everything a person needs to know to live a meaningful life (42 percent of Americans, 89 percent of Bible Centered and 80 percent of Bible Engaged)
- Believe the Bible has too little influence in U.S. society (41 percent of Americans, 66 percent of Bible Centered and 70 percent of Bible Engaged)
- Believe the Bible is the moral fabric of the U.S. more than the Constitution (44 percent of Americans, 80 percent of Bible Centered and 82 percent of Bible Engaged) and that morals and values in America are declining (79 percent of Americans, 88 percent of Bible Centered and 89 percent of Bible Engaged)

Those who read the Bible at least once a month said the Bible has impacted their lives in important ways, including:

- More willingness to engage with their faith (56 percent said very strongly or strongly)
- Higher likelihood of showing loving behavior toward others (54 percent)
- More generosity with time, energy or financial resources (42 percent)

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,

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