

Reaching the Non-Religious Americans

Researchers are finding that people may be becoming more receptive to Faith in God.

For starters, they have found that the long decline in religious faith has stopped, with the number of religious Americans hovering around 70%. Now, recent research by Ryan Burge and Troy Jones reveals that there is hope of reaching the other 30%.

It turns out that only 10% of the non-religious, about 3% of Americans, are openly hostile to religion. These people are militant atheist evangelists, trying to convert others. Even this group may be reachable with a message of love and peace, because they have higher anxiety and more mental health concerns. Let them see it in your life and they may want it for themselves.

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Another group, about 7% of Americans, claim to be perfectly happy avoiding the spiritual side of life. Most don't pray and don't say they believe in an afterlife. Like some of us were, they will be perfectly happy continuing to be sinners until it does not work. It may take a life crisis to open their eyes, and if a Christian has invested in a relationship, they may then be open to the Gospel.

The remaining people claiming to be non-religious, about 20% of Americans, are leaning toward Spirituality, but have not

found a home. Half of them pray daily, and a third of them attend church at least once a year.

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Tellingly, two thirds of them want to be connected to God but are opposed to organized religion. To reach these people, Christians need to help overcome their fear of church through love, and be ready to give an answer for their faith with gentleness and respect (1 Peter 3:15).

Burge and Jones suggest that revival can reach the non-religious if we know them better. We believe that the key to reaching the hard-core Atheists, the complacent Atheists, and the spiritually homeless is the friendship and love expressed by individual Christians. Be genuine and don't overlook the power of your own testimony (Rev. 12:11).

As we approach Easter many of the unaffiliated non-religious may be making their annual, perhaps obligatory, visit to church. Take one to lunch and befriend them. You will be glad you did.

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Ron Allen is a Christian businessman who is active in ministries spreading a message of reconciliation to God, to men and between believers. He is the founder of American Wake Up Call.