

Blessed Are the Ignorant

80% of Americans believe the Bible is the inspired word of God. Many of the other 20% accept it as an authority on moral values and the rule of law.

31% of Americans believe the Bible is the actual Word of God, to be taken literally, word for word.

40% of Americans say they would turn to the Bible first as the basis of their religious beliefs.

33% of Americans believe that accepting the Bible as God's truth is essential for someone to truly know God.

33% of Americans read the Bible at least once a week. 12% read it less than weekly but at least once a month.

More than 50% of Americans read the Bible less than once per month. Of those, almost half never read it, and 6% can't remember the last time they read it.

80% of Americans say they are Christians.

40% of Americans know that Jesus delivered the Sermon on the Mount.

Less than half of American adults can name the 4 New Testament Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John). Few know that Jesus had 12 disciples, or that he was born in Bethlehem.

A large majority of Americans accept the Ten Commandments as valid rules for living today. Few of them can recall what those commandments are.

30% of teenagers do not know why Easter is celebrated, even though two-thirds of those teens regularly attend religious services.

from *The People's Religion*, George Gallup & Jem Castelli, 1989.