

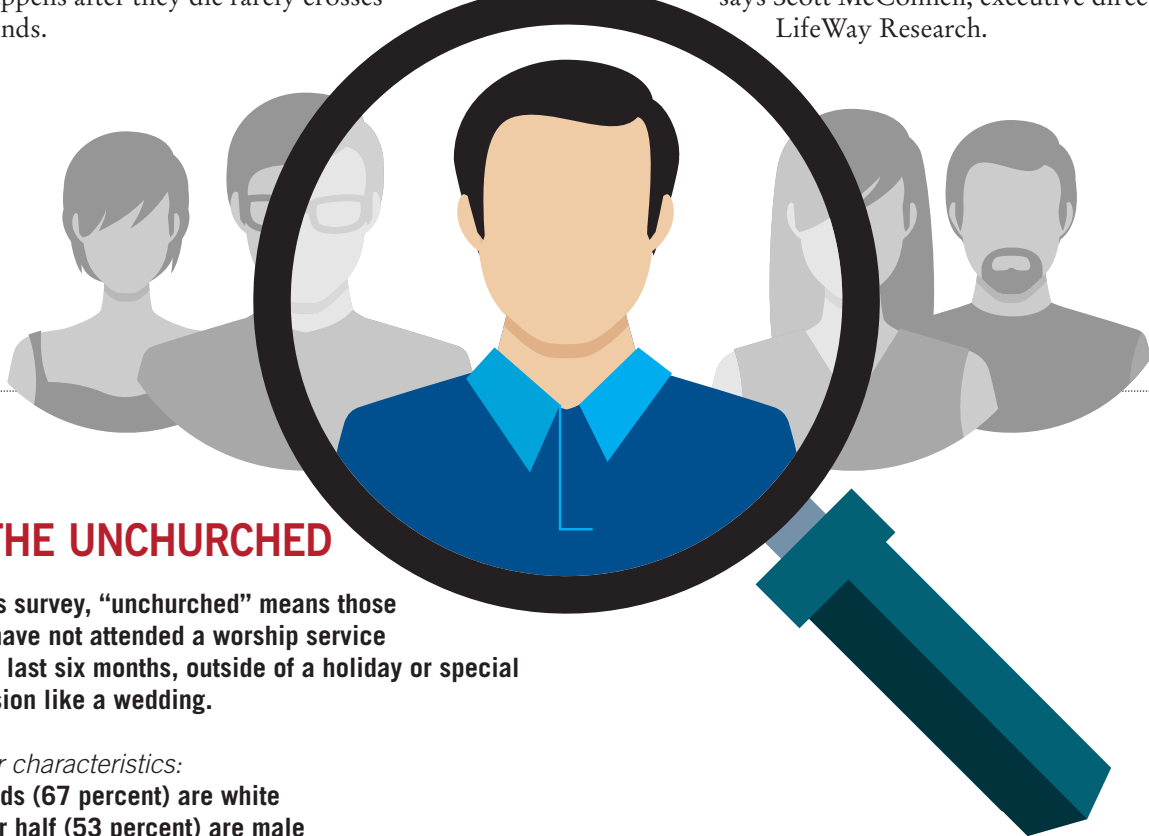
THE UNCHURCHED

Many Americans who don't go to church are happy to talk about religion and want to find deeper purpose in life. They're open to taking part in community service events hosted at a church or going to a church concert.

But only about a third say they'd go to a worship service if invited by someone they know. The question of what happens after they die rarely crosses their minds.

These are among the findings of a new online survey of 2,000 unchurched Americans from Nashville-based LifeWay Research. The survey, conducted in partnership with the Wheaton, Illinois-based Billy Graham Center for Evangelism, found more than half of Americans who don't go to church identify as Christians.

But they are mostly indifferent to organized religion, says Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research.



MEET THE UNCHURCHED

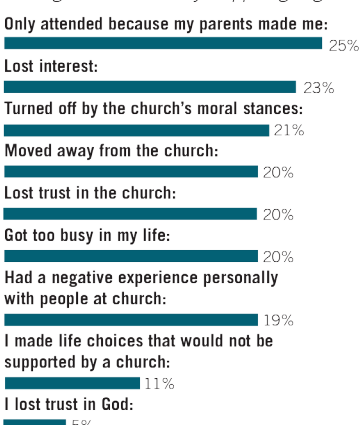
For this survey, "unchurched" means those who have not attended a worship service in the last six months, outside of a holiday or special occasion like a wedding.

Among their characteristics:

- Two-thirds (67 percent) are white
- Just over half (53 percent) are male
- About half (47 percent) have a high school diploma or less

IF THE UNCHURCHED ONCE ATTENDED A CHURCH, WHY DID THEY LEAVE?

Among the reasons they stopped going to church:



56% IDENTIFY AS CHRISTIAN

Of those who identify as Christian, 1 in 4 reports having a strong faith.

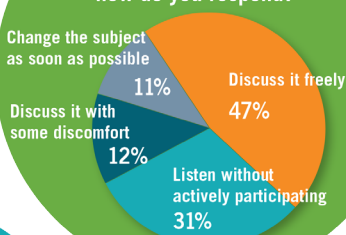
BELIEFS ABOUT LIFE AFTER DEATH

There are many beliefs about life after death. Which statement is closest to your own beliefs?



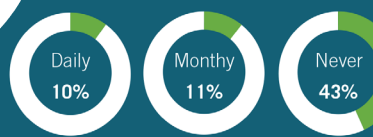
OPEN TO DISCUSSION

When someone wants to talk about their religious beliefs, how do you respond?



AFTERLIFE?

How often do you wonder, "If I were to die today, do I know for sure I would go to heaven?"



Note: Charts are rounded, so some totals may not equal 100%.

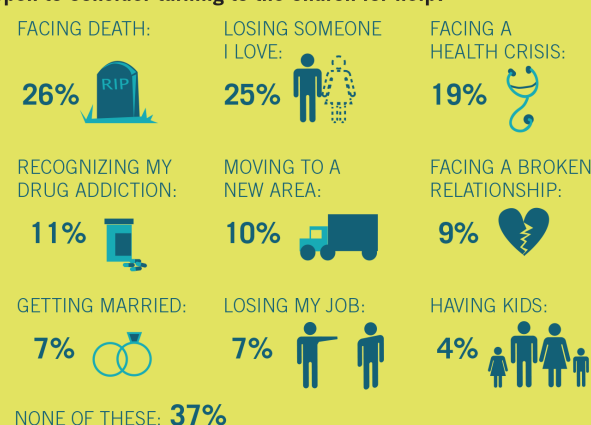
MOST UNCHURCHED PEOPLE DON'T PLAN TO GO TO CHURCH IN THE FUTURE

Being part of a congregation doesn't seem to appeal to most of the unchurched, even after they marry and have kids or face a time of crisis.

How likely are you to attend church regularly sometime in the future?



Which, if any, of these life experiences would make you more open to consider turning to the church for help?



FEW ARE HOSTILE TO CHURCH

Almost two-thirds (62 percent) went to church regularly as a child. Few had a bad experience with people at church (19 percent) or were turned off by the church's teaching on moral issues (21 percent). Many seem to have simply fallen out of the habit of churchgoing.

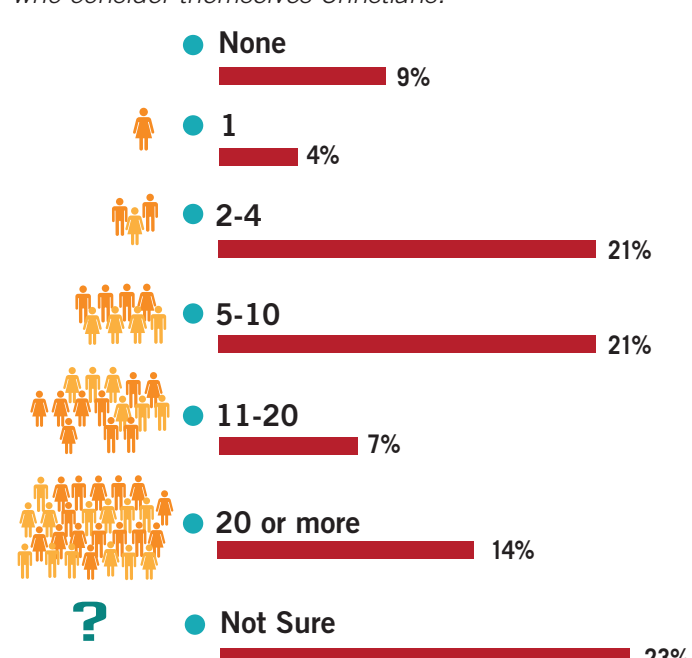
51% OF PEOPLE WOULD ATTEND CHURCH IF A FRIEND OR NEIGHBOR ASKED THEM



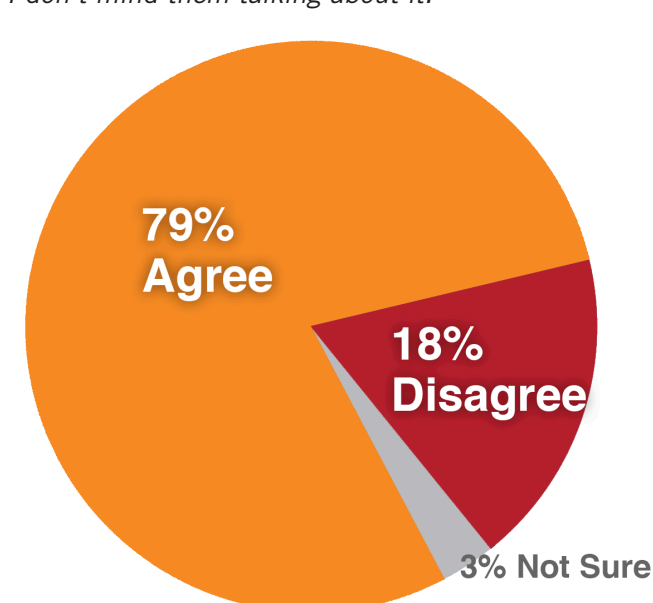
ATTRACTING THE UNCHURCHED TO CHURCH

The unchurched often have Christian friends and aren't turned off by conversations about faith.

How many friends do you interact with regularly who consider themselves Christians?



If a friend of mine really values their faith, I don't mind them talking about it.

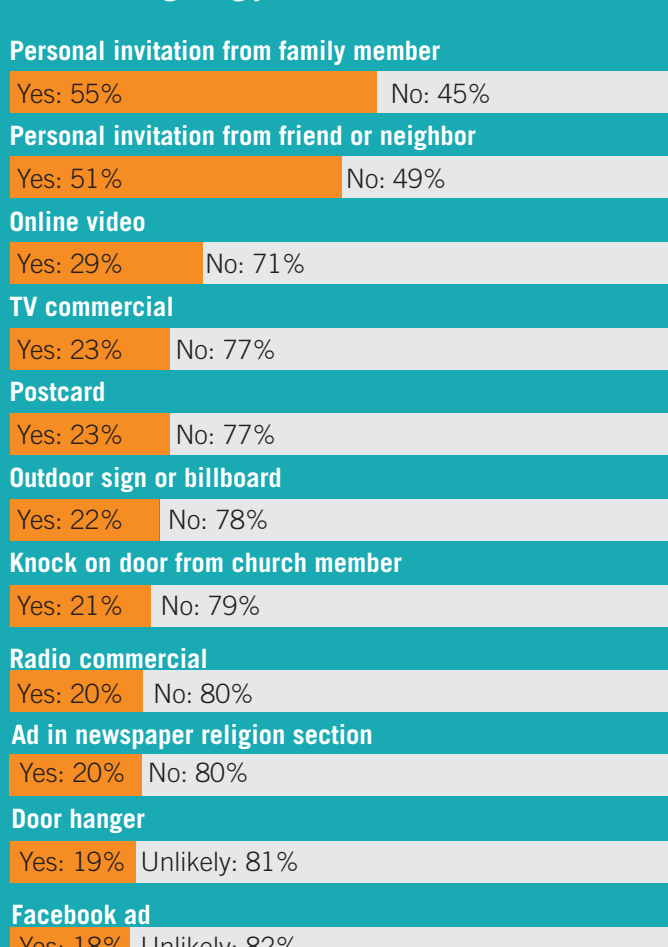


A personal touch still matters

Want the unchurched to give church a try? Ask them to church. More than half say a personal invitation is effective. Inviting them to a community meeting—rather than worship—might be the way to go.

If someone you knew invited you to these activities sponsored by a local Christian church, how likely would you be to attend?

If a local congregation or faith community wanted to reach out and invite you to attend, they might use one of these methods. Would the following options be effective in getting you (or others) to visit?



“UNCHURCHED AMERICANS AREN'T HOSTILE TO FAITH. THEY JUST DON'T THINK CHURCH IS FOR THEM.”

— Scott McConnell, executive director of LifeWay Research