

Morals Paper: Believers Reject Moral Absolutes – BRG 5/2002

Originally posted for Committee on Moral Concerns
A former morals lobbyist organization in Sacramento

An alarming survey [twenty years ago] by the **Barna Research Group (BRG)** discovered that many Christians are ambivalent toward moral absolutes.

As reported by Eric Tiansay in "*Ministries Today*" magazine (May/June 2002), the following statistics came from 4000 people polled.

For this survey, a 'Christian' was defined as a person who self-identified as 'born again' and/or believed in salvation through Christ Jesus. This *narrower definition* eliminated the bias of using church affiliation or the [socially] vague term of 'Christian' as measures.

This makes these numbers even more unsettling. Only a minority of those who claim to be born again hold to biblical values that impact their personal lives.

- 15% - Agnostic, atheist, or belonged to a faith other than Christianity
 - [This percentage doubled among Millennials ten years later]
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- 33% - Christians who took moral issue cues from sources *other* than the Bible
- 26% - Christians who based ethical and moral decision-making upon the Bible.
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- 32% - Christian adults who believe in moral absolutes
- 22% - All adults who believe in moral absolutes (including Christian adults).
 - Thus, considerably less non-Christian adults believe in moral absolutes.
- 64% - All adults who thought truth was **always relative** to situation
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- 9% - Christian teens who believe in moral absolutes
- 4% - All teens who believe in moral absolutes (including Christian teens).
 - Thus, virtually NO non-Christian teen believes in moral absolutes.
- 83% - All teens who thought truth was **always relative** to situation.

BRG President, George Barna, said "... *preach(ing) more sermons and teach(ing) more Sunday School classes ... won't solve the problem since most ... don't accept the basis of the principles being taught in those venues.*"