

CANADA - A NATION OF BELIEVERS

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Toronto, ON – The results of an Angus Reid/CTV/Globe and Mail survey released today show that greater than eight in ten (84%) Canadians say they believe in God. Not only do many Canadians believe in God, but two thirds (67%) say that their religious faith is very important to their day to day life. In terms of specific beliefs, seven in ten (69%) Canadians say agree with the statement "through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God provided a way for the forgiveness of my sins." Canada is predominantly a Christian country. More than three quarters (77%) of Canadians identify themselves with a Christian church.

These are the findings of an Angus Reid/CTV/Globe and Mail poll conducted between April 11th and April 16th 2000. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 1,500 adult Canadians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult Canadian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual Canadian population according to the 1996 Census data.

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84% of Canadians say they believe in God

Belief in God is one thing most Canadians agree on. A full 84% answered “yes” when asked, “Do you believe in God?” Agnostics appear to be rare. Just 2% said they were unsure about God. The remaining 14% do not believe in God.

- Belief in God is most prevalent among those 55+ (89%) and somewhat lower among those 35 to 54 (85%) and 18 to 34 (79%).
- The Atlantic provinces show the highest level of belief in God (93%) while residents of British Columbia (75%) show the lowest level of belief in God.
- Men (82%) are slightly less likely than women (86%) to believe in God.
- Belief in God is consistent across all income ranges.
- Canadians with less than a high school education (91%) are most likely to believe in God while Canadians with a University education (80%) are least likely to believe.

Two thirds (67%) say that their religious faith is very important to their day to day life

Underscoring the large number of Canadians who believe in God, many Canadians (67%) agree with the statement "my religious faith is very important to my day to day life", largely unchanged since 1993 when 66% of the Canadians agreed with this statement.. Of the more than two thirds who agree with this statement, nearly four in ten (39%) who "strongly agree" and over a quarter (28%) "moderately agree".

- Similar to the trends for belief in God, Atlantic Canadians are most likely (75%) and British Columbians (55%) are least likely to say that their religious faith is important to

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their day to day lives.

- The importance of religion increases with age. Among young Canadians, 58% agree that their faith is important to their day to day lives, compared with 69% among middle aged and 77% among older Canadians.
- Women (72%) are much more likely than men (63%) to say that religion is important to their lives.
- Although belief in God is consistent across incomes, low income Canadians (71%) are more likely than middle (68%) or high income (61%) Canadians to say that religion is important on a day to day basis.
- Catholics (75%) are more likely than members of mainline Protestant churches (United Church, Anglican, Presbyterian & Lutheran) (69%) to say that their religious faith is important to their day to day lives.

Seven in ten (69%) Canadians agree that through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God provided a way for the forgiveness of their sins

Many Canadians (69%) believe in the central theme of Easter. Namely, that through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, God provided a way for the forgiveness of their sins. Over four in ten (43%) "strongly agree" with this statement while a quarter (26%) "moderately agree". Belief in this article of faith has increased seven percentage points since 1993 and six points since 1996. Belief in other articles of faith is also strong. Two thirds (66%) of Canadians believe that "the Bible is the inspired word of God." (up from 65% in 1993 and 1996). Meanwhile almost half of Canadians (48%) believe that "Satan, the devil, is active in the world today." Belief in the Devil has increased seven points since 1993.

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- Belief in forgiveness through Christ is highest in Atlantic Canada (86%) and lowest in Quebec (61%).
- Women (73%) are more likely than men (64%) to believe in forgiveness through Christ.
- Belief that the Bible is the inspired word of God is highest in Atlantic Canada (79%) and Saskatchewan/Manitoba (78%) and lowest in B.C. (53%).
- At 65%, Atlantic Canadians are most likely to believe that the Devil is active in the world today. Meanwhile, Quebecers (36%) are least likely to believe that the Devil is active -- 34% among Catholic Quebecers.

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