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1. 2016

1.1 April

Overview of the Decline in Religious Attendants (2016-04-14 17:24)

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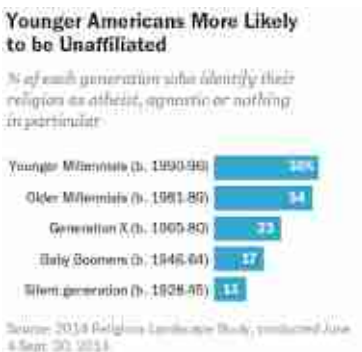


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[6] Millennial's and religion has become a major topic in the religious world due to the great importance the new generation holds on the endurance of faith. For generations it has been a custom, seemingly obligation, to take on the same religion as that of your parents but in today's society less people are continuing their parents' traditional faith. In a study done by pew research shows that 1 in 5 Americans left their Christian faith that they were raised into to become unaffiliated, and that now 36 % of millennials identify as unaffiliated which is larger than any other age group.

There are numerous reasons why this abandonment of faith has increased with millennials; some major influences are the facts that they were born with less trust in institutions, taught a cultural of independence rather than obedience, and gained higher levels of education.

In an interview with Michael Hout, a professor of sociology at New York University, written by David Masci, Hout simply explains the increase in millennials non-affiliation by stating, "I think you see higher levels of these things among Millennials because they require very little in the way of institutional involvement. They also are harbingers

of the 'make your own way' or 'do-it-yourself' religion that characterizes this group." This decline in faith has sparked religions all across the world to rethink how they connect with younger people and the lessons they want to provide. Over the course of the blog I will go from different religions, learning the new ways they are trying to entice millennials to continue their faith.

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Christianity's Strategy (2016-04-14 17:33)



I first began this blog by stating an overview of the general decline of religion with millenias. Now I would like to take an in-depth look into how each specific religion is looking to entice the younger generation. I'll first begin with my family's religion, Christianity. My father was raised Catholic and my mother Presbyterian so growing up every Sunday we would attend service and Sunday school but even with my parent's influence I still I found it difficult to make a connection with the religion. Clearly, I am not the only millennial who faced this struggle. When confronted with this issue many state that the main problem is the bias view that Christianity has by being portrayed as morally strict and not open to new ideas and social values. To offset this preconception and increase attendees churches are focusing on social media, and structural changes. For example, just this past year Pope Francis added to his already huge social media presence by joining instagram. This is a major step forward for the catholic faith because it's advertising that it will no longer be against the millenials social culture but instead embrace it to its full capacity. The Pope is not the only Christian religious representative to join the movement there are thousands of other churches making this move too. There's now multiple articles and sites that give advice to churches on how to establish a social media presence; a great example is this page: [2]<http://blog.capterra.com/church-making-one-12-common-social-media-blunders/>. But it is not only enough to create online profiles of churches it also has to change within to make younger guests feel more comfortable. In an article written on millennialevangelical.com is speaks about transitioning Sunday school into a more relaxed atmosphere where everyone can feel free to join in the conversation and ask questions. By creating a more open environment it reaches to the younger generations culture of having open discussions instead of a strict structure; a culture that you can also see being adapted in business and schools. Another major point it touches is the idea of contextualization by stating, "If you aren't respecting the context and culture in which your 20-somethings live, don't be confused when you don't reach them." In this he means the church needs to become less involved with political conversations and more involved with how younger people prefer to learn. The overall strategy for catholic churches is to evolve into the modern society and teach people the great lessons of God and Jesus while still remaining open to new ideas.

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Why is the Islamic Religion the Outlier? (2016-04-14 17:39)

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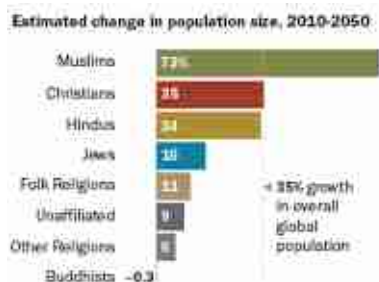
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[7] On the contrary from the Catholic religion, which is declining in attendees, the Islamic religion is the top growing religion in the world. The current median age of Muslims worldwide according to pewresearch.com is 23, thus causing them to have a higher priority on adapting to modern society. The main tool that they use to convert or revert non-Muslims to Islam is by creating websites that give testimonials to help persuade people to become Muslim. One of the most famous testimonials used is *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*. His autobiography includes all of the hardships and sins he had faced before he was Muslim and how his conversion to Islam helped him become a better person. Narratives like this are retold to the audience, by recent converters, to help people connect more to the stories so that they can understand the religion in a more personal way. Many of the stories have constant themes of someone who on their own decided to look into the faith influenced solely by personal curiosity, or who before knew little to nothing about the religion, and by people who have been introduced to the religion by a friend. In most cases it seems that their conversion is something that happens almost on accident after learning more about the religion's values and that's what makes it so different from other religions. Another main point to recognize is that the birthrate in Muslim's families. On average they have 3.1 children compared to non-Muslims who only have 2.3 children. This may only seem like one more child but it actually plays a major role in

growth rates. With this combination of modernization of their conversion techniques and having more children than other non-Muslims it allows the Muslim faith to have the highest attendance rates and is an exemplary model for religions facing declining attendees.

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Creating Jewish Experiences (2016-04-14 21:59)



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Judaism is a complex religion and ethnicity and when it comes to millennials' interpretation of the Judaism they tend to focus more the cultural aspects instead of the religious values. This is in major contrast to the older generations

values of which 93 % of Jews in the aging Greatest Generation affiliate themselves as Jews by religion. This gap between the generations is growing farther and farther apart causing many synagogues and rabbis to focus their attention on involving more teens. Many websites for the synagogues post information and studies on how to gain participation from younger people. From the studies and strategies listed there is a clear theme of advice: adapt to their culture.

Like the other two religions I mentioned before, social media and technology is a top priority. By including social media and adopting the technological way of communicating the Jewish community can reach a broader audience. Another way they plan to entice younger people that is unique from the other religions, is by creating more valuable experiences. These experiences range from the birth right trips to Israel to day cares. Most of the community agrees that by making these experiences more affordable to wide range of people more will be inclined to learn about the religious side of Judaism. The community is also trying to make Jewish summer camps open to a wider variety of young people; by attracting non-Jewish people and people of lower incomes to attend. This will allow for more people to learn the values of the religion and subsequently grow in attendants. Overall there main strategy is to deepening Jewish teens' journeys so that they can achieve a better connection to the faith that is strong than the cultural ties.

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Adaptation is Key (2016-04-15 19:57)

Almost every religion deals with this issue with each new generation. Typically younger people do not always agree with the same values as their parents or have had the same education for learning about their native religion; which causes them to be reluctant to continue it.

The major difference for millennials is the major technological advances that have completely changed how people communicate that was not seen before. Yes, there has also been social issues or slight difference in communication but never on this scale. This change is posing as a huge problem for religions because it seems if they don't innovate

they will get left behind. All around the world religious organizations are working to become a more modern religion. Now it has become a priority for all religious groups to hold a strong social media presence. I believe the more the religious groups adapt the more attendants they will receive.



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<https://www.blogbooker.com>

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