



THE RENEWALISTS:

Pentecostal and Charismatic Evangelicals

2022



GREY MATTER
RESEARCH & CONSULTING

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WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Anytime we talk about a certain group, we have to start with a definition. What, for example, is a “Catholic”? Is someone who self-identifies as Catholic but has not been to Mass in decades still a Catholic? What about an individual who claims to believe Catholic doctrine but does not pray, attend Mass, take communion, etc.? Definitions are important.

The same issue is true of any group: political liberals, Protestants, church lay leaders, or evangelicals. And it is especially true of Charismatic or Pentecostal Christians.

Traditionally, Pentecostals are Christians who are part of a Pentecostal denomination such as the Assemblies of God, the Foursquare Church, the Church of God in Christ, or a nondenominational church that is theologically Pentecostal. They believe in a post-conversion “baptism of the Holy Spirit” which generally includes speaking in tongues (*glossolalia*), and is often accompanied by one or more “gifts of the Spirit” such as wisdom, prophecy, or healing.

25%
of evangelical
Protestants have
spoken in tongues

Charismatics are traditionally those who embrace at least some Pentecostal theology and practice, but who are not part of a historically Pentecostal denomination or church.

There are many theological nuances in the Pentecostal/Charismatic continuum that we are not prepared to address in this report. In modern times, the terms “Pentecostal” and “Charismatic” are increasingly used interchangeably. Rather

than utilize the awkward “Pentecostal/Charismatic” terminology or wrestle with theological distinctions, we will simply refer to this entire group as **Renewalists**, a term that came into use in the 1960s.

One important distinction here is that Renewalist Christians can be found in both evangelical and non-evangelical church traditions: mainline Protestant, Orthodox, and Roman Catholic. Because this study focused on *evangelical Protestants*, the information in this report is about **Renewalist evangelical Protestants**, and how they differ from non-Renewalist evangelical Protestants.

[Infinity Concepts](#) and [Grey Matter Research](#) partnered to study over 1,000 American evangelical Protestants. In this report, we take a deeper look at the Renewalist segment of the evangelical community.

KEY INSIGHTS

- 1** In this report, we define Renewalists as anyone who has personally spoken in tongues, OR who self-defines as Charismatic or Pentecostal, OR who attends a clearly Pentecostal or Charismatic church. By this definition, 36% of American evangelical Protestants qualify as Renewalists, which projects to 21 million adults.
- 2** 4.7 million American adults meet all three criteria in our Renewalist definition.
- 3** Twenty-five percent of all American evangelicals have spoken in tongues, at some point in their lives. This equates to about 14.6 million evangelicals who have experienced this.
- 4** Compared to other evangelicals, Renewalists tend to be somewhat younger, more likely to be raising children, more ethnically diverse, and live in less traditionally Christian parts of the country. Substantial differences by gender, marital status, education, or household income are not apparent.
- 5** Renewalists tend to have a higher level of spiritual engagement than other evangelicals. They show higher levels of Bible readership, small group participation, and church attendance.
- 6** Renewalists tend to spend a higher proportion of their media time with Christian content than do non-Renewalists.
- 7** The greater level of spiritual engagement Renewalists tend to show does not extend to charitable giving. Renewalists actually tend to give less money than other evangelical Protestants.
- 8** However, Renewalists are substantially more likely than other evangelicals to be part of a monthly giving program with a ministry or charitable organization other than their church.

9 Renewalists tend to want more out of their church. Specifically, more in-depth teaching, more outreach to the community, a greater focus on evangelism (nearly twice as likely as other evangelicals), and a greater focus on social issues.

10 A challenge for Renewalists may concern the handling of political issues in church. Four out of ten Renewalists would like changes in their church when it comes to politics, but 19% want a *greater* focus on politics, while 23% want *less* focus on politics.

11 Renewalists have a somewhat greater interest in Israel and connection to Israel than do other evangelicals.

Evangelical: A Quick Definition

Researchers have defined “evangelical” in ways that have them representing 7%, 23%, and even 35% or more of American adults. For this study, we considered an evangelical to be someone who agrees strongly with all four of the following theological positions:

- The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe
- It is important for me to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior
- Jesus Christ’s death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin
- Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God’s free gift of eternal salvation

Further, we limited our study to those who did not identify with a non-Protestant group, such as Mormon, Roman Catholic, or Orthodox. This is a study of American **evangelical Protestants**, a group representing **23% of American adults**, or about **59 million people**.

Renewalist: A Not-So-Quick Definition

So how might one go about defining what a Renewalist actually is? Just as with “evangelical,” there are a variety of possible methods:

1. Church attendance
2. Self-identification
3. Beliefs or practices

OPTION 1: CHURCH ATTENDANCE

There are multiple challenges to defining this audience according to what church people attend:

- 11% of evangelical Protestants rarely or never attend church, which means they cannot be defined at all in this manner
- Some denominations are easily confused (e.g., Church of God, Cleveland, TN and Church of God, Anderson, IN—both of which commonly go by just “Church of God”)
- Even when not easily confused, some people know they attend a Baptist or Presbyterian church, but do not know the specific denomination
- Many churches have no denominational reference in their name; people attending Church on the Rock or The Gathering may have no clue about the denomination
- Many people do not truly know the distinctive doctrines of the denomination or church they attend

We can identify that at least 13% of all evangelicals attend a clearly Pentecostal or Charismatic church or denomination (nearly eight million adults). This includes Apostolic, Assemblies of God, Church of God in Christ, Foursquare Gospel, and Vineyard, along with people who identify their church as “Pentecostal, Charismatic, Word, or Full Gospel.”

34%
of Renewalists attend a church they say teaches that speaking in tongues is still an active spiritual gift

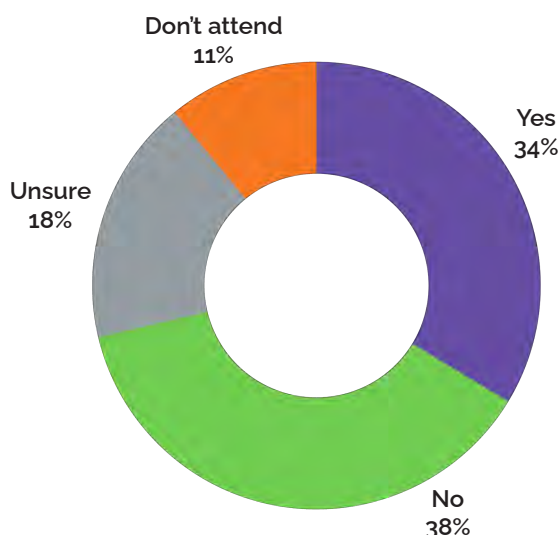
13%
of Renewalists
attend a *clearly*
Pentecostal
church

However, we know this method significantly under-reports how many Renewalist evangelicals there are, for the reasons noted above, plus because it excludes those Renewalists who attend non-Pentecostal churches.

We tried to address this issue by asking churchgoers a basic question: *Does the church you attend most often teach that the gift of speaking in tongues is available from the Holy Spirit for Christians today?* While this is not a theologically inclusive definition of Pentecostal or Charismatic, speaking in tongues represents one of the most common shared beliefs of Renewalists across the spectrum.

Thirty-four percent of all evangelicals attend a church they say teaches the gift of tongues is available for believers today. That would be 20 million evangelicals who would qualify as Renewalists under this definition.

Does Their Church Teach Tongues Is an Active Gift for Today?



However, there are still 11% who cannot address this question because they do not attend church. Plus, among those who at least occasionally attend worship, 18% do not know what their church teaches on this subject. That is a total of 29% of evangelical Protestants who cannot be categorized through the teachings of their church.

There is also the issue of whether people who report what their church teaches regarding tongues

are accurate. Among evangelicals who attend a clearly Pentecostal church, 17% do not affirm their church teaches that the gift of tongues is available for believers today. At the same time, 26% who do not attend one of these churches *do* say their church teaches that the gift of tongues is still active today.

OPTION 2: SELF-IDENTIFICATION

Often a group may not even agree internally on what terminology to use. Are people Latino, Hispanic, or LatinX? White, Caucasian, or Euro-American?

We see this with the word “evangelical.” Only 27% of Protestants with evangelical beliefs are willing to use the term “an evangelical Christian” to describe themselves. That does not even count the many people who do not hold evangelical beliefs who would still use this word in self-description.

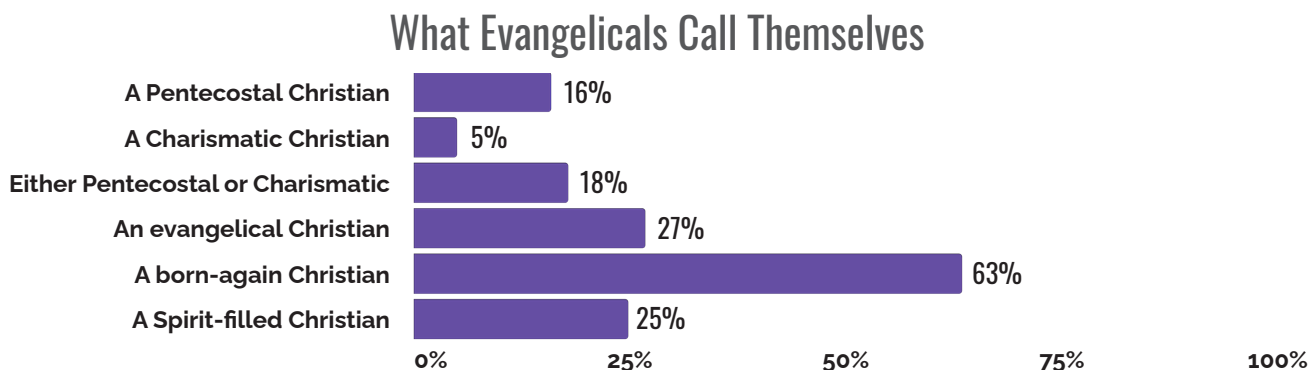
There can be tremendous confusion over theological definitions. We asked evangelicals whether they would or would not use five different terms to describe themselves:

1. A Pentecostal Christian
2. A Charismatic Christian
3. An evangelical Christian
4. A born-again Christian
5. A Spirit-filled Christian

Along with the 73% who would not call themselves an evangelical Christian, 37% would not call themselves a born-again Christian. Twenty-six percent of all evangelical Protestants would use *neither* evangelical nor born again in self-description.

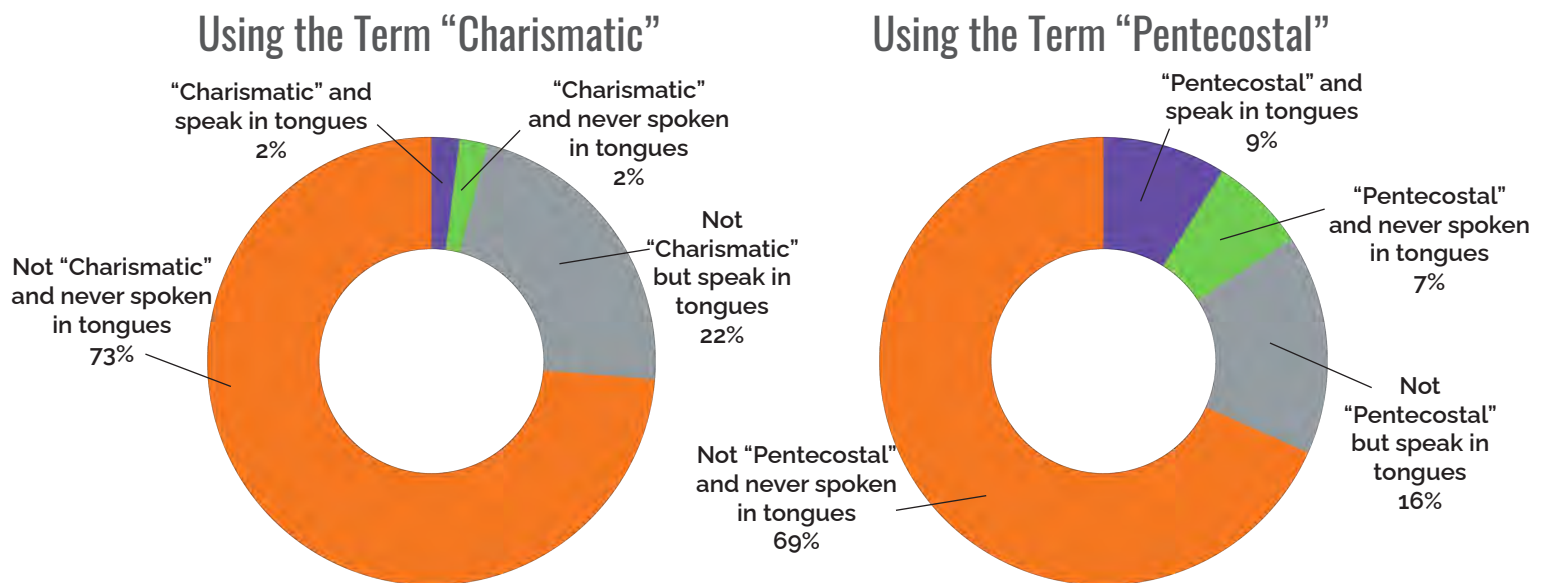
18%
of Renewalists call themselves either Pentecostal or Charismatic

Just 5% of all evangelicals would use the term “A Charismatic Christian” in self-description. To further show how unpopular this term is, only 10% of evangelicals who have personally spoken in tongues, 11% of those who attend a church that teaches speaking in tongues is available for Christians today, and 16% who attend a clearly Pentecostal church would use this term.



While 16% of all evangelical Protestants would call themselves “a Pentecostal Christian,” this term is not used by many who otherwise might be considered to be Pentecostal. Only 36% of those who have personally spoken in tongues, 34% of those who attend a church teaching the gift of tongues is still active, and 56% who attend a clearly Pentecostal church would call themselves “Pentecostal.”

In total, 18% of all evangelicals, or a little under 11 million people, would call themselves either Pentecostal or Charismatic.



A term that has achieved some popularity in Christian circles is “Spirit-filled,” the same way that “Christ-follower” has replaced “born-again” or “evangelical” for some. The problem with the term Spirit-filled is that although it is used in Renewalist circles, it is also used by non-Renewalists, but differently.

For instance, Christianity.com says “Being Spirit-filled is centered upon a continual process of spiritual growth and maturity that can only be found and cultivated by the Spirit of God.” John MacArthur’s ministry *Grace to You* notes, “The idea is one of keeping yourself constantly filled, as you yield moment by moment to the leading of the Spirit. It fits perfectly with the process of walking by the Spirit.” **Neither description fully represents the traditional Renewalist use of that term.**

This confusion can be seen in who would use this phrase to describe themselves. Twenty-five percent of all evangelicals would call themselves a Spirit-filled Christian, including:

- 36% of those who have spoken in tongues, but also 21% of those who have not
- 32% of those who call themselves Pentecostal, but also 24% of those who would not
- 32% of those who attend a church that teaches speaking in tongues is a gift still available to believers today, but also 19% who say their church does not teach this, and 24% who are not sure or do not attend church
- 28% of those who attend a clearly Pentecostal church, but also 25% of those who attend a church that is not clearly Pentecostal

In other words, this term is used differently by people with different beliefs, rendering it ineffective at defining the Renewalist population.

OPTION 3: BELIEFS OR PRACTICES

A challenge in looking at Renewalist beliefs and practices is that there is no true standard for what these beliefs and practices are or should be. One's experience in a Foursquare church will likely be very different from one's experience in a United Pentecostal church.

Probably the most unifying practice of Renewalist Christianity is the baptism or empowering of the Holy Spirit. Yet “most unifying” certainly does not mean it is very unifying at all. Consider the diversity represented in the three examples below:



- In its official belief statement, the **Assemblies of God** states that speaking in tongues is the initial physical sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit: *“**The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit** is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:4–10, 28), but different in purpose and use.”*
- The **Church of God in Christ (COGIC)**, the largest Pentecostal denomination in the United States, declares that speaking in tongues and manifesting the fruit of the Spirit is evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit: *“We believe that the **Baptism of the Holy Ghost** is an experience subsequent to conversion and sanctification and that tongue-speaking is the consequence of the baptism in the Holy Ghost with the manifestations of the fruit of the spirit (Galatians 5:22–23; Acts 10:46, 19:1–6). We believe that we are not baptized with the Holy Ghost in order to be saved (Acts 19:1–6; John 3:5). When one receives a baptismal Holy Ghost experience, we believe one will speak with a tongue unknown to oneself according to the sovereign will of Christ. To be filled with the Spirit means to be Spirit controlled as expressed by Paul in Ephesians 5:18–19. Since the Charismatic demonstrations were necessary to help the early church to be successful in implementing the command of Christ, we therefore, believe that a Holy Ghost experience is mandatory for all men today.”*
- **Vineyard USA**, a Charismatic church movement, uses different terminology to describe a similar experience, but does not specifically reference speaking in tongues: *“We believe that the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Church at Pentecost in power, baptizing believers into the Body of Christ and releasing the gifts of the Spirit to them. The Spirit brings the permanent indwelling presence of God to us for spiritual worship, personal sanctification, building up the Church, gifting us for ministry, and driving back the kingdom of Satan by the evangelization of the world through proclaiming the word of Jesus and doing the works of Jesus. We believe that the **Holy Spirit indwells every believer** in Jesus Christ and that He is our abiding Helper, Teacher, and Guide. We believe in the filling or the **empowering of the Holy Spirit**, often a conscious experience, for ministry today. We believe in the present ministry of the Spirit and in the exercise of all of the biblical gifts of the Spirit. We practice the laying on of hands for the **empowering of the Spirit**, for healing, and for recognition and empowering of those whom God has ordained to lead and serve the Church.”*

We asked evangelicals about their own experience with speaking in tongues. Four percent admit they do not even know what this is. A clear majority (71%) have never spoken in tongues. Sixteen percent have spoken in tongues, but do not do so regularly, and 8% claim to speak in tongues regularly.

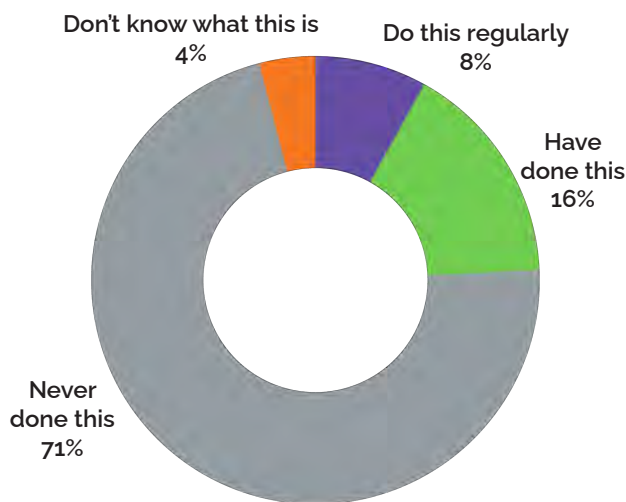
This means a total of 25% of all evangelicals have spoken in tongues, at some point in their lives. **This equates to about 14.6 million adults who have exercised this gift.**

8%

of evangelicals
regularly speak in
tongues

So is this a valid definition of “Renewalist”? Generally, we believe this definition does not include anyone inappropriately. The question is whether it excludes people who should be included.

Have Personally Spoken in Tongues



In 2006, Pew Research Center conducted a ten-country study of Renewalists (including the US). In this study, they define Renewalists as anyone who meets any of the following criteria:

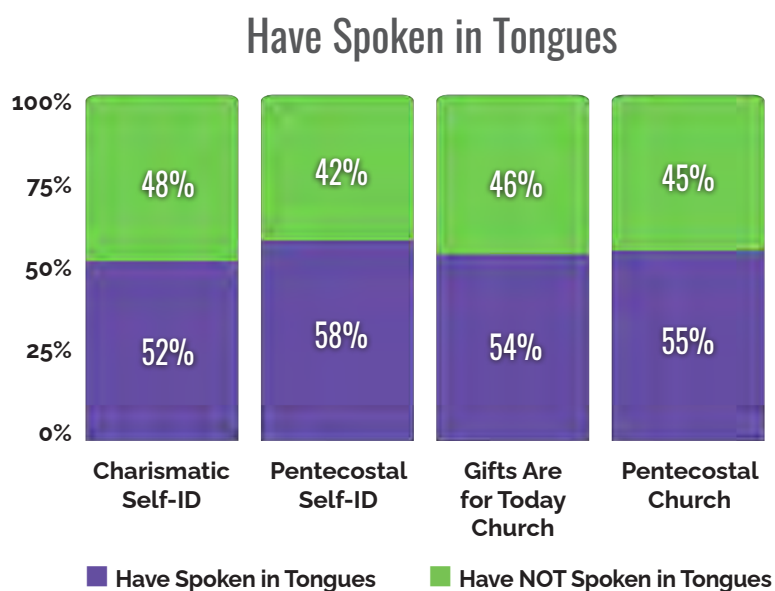
- They attend a classically Pentecostal denomination
- They call themselves a “Pentecostal Christian” or a “Charismatic Christian”
- They say they speak in tongues at least several times a year

By this definition, they estimate 23% of the US population qualifies as Renewalist (including non-evangelicals). However, Pew also asked about the frequency of speaking in tongues. In their study, 36% of US Renewalists say they never speak in tongues, while 46% do so weekly or more, and 18% do so but less than weekly.

Note that saying they “never” speak in tongues is a measure of their current practices; this does not mean they have never spoken in tongues. We have to assume that some

Renewalists have spoken in tongues previously (possibly during their “baptism in the Holy Spirit” experience, as the Assemblies of God teaches) but do not do so currently.

In our study, 52% of those who call themselves Charismatic and 58% of those who call themselves Pentecostal have spoken in tongues at some point. Fifty-four percent of those who attend a church that teaches tongues is still an active gift for believers today have personally spoken in tongues. Of those who attend a clearly Pentecostal church, 55% report having personally spoken in tongues.



What Is the “Right” Definition?

Obviously, there is a clear relationship among all of these different factors and ways of defining “Renewalist.” But it is also not a one-to-one relationship, given all the blurred lines.

Consider three situations:

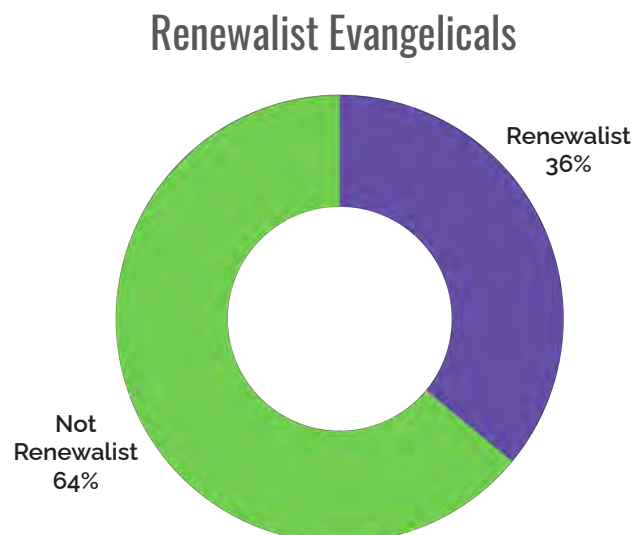
- Jesse regularly attends a Foursquare Gospel church but has never spoken in tongues and would not call himself Charismatic or Pentecostal.
- Teresa considers herself a Charismatic Christian but attends a Lutheran church, which does not teach that tongues are still an active gift, and has never personally spoken in tongues.
- Luis has spoken in tongues, but does not consider himself Charismatic or Pentecostal and is currently part of a Southern Baptist congregation.

Which of these three people, if any, is a Renewalist?

To base our definition solely on church attendance is problematic: people may not know their church’s denomination, may not know what their church teaches on this topic (or may not agree with it), or may not even attend church.

Self-identification by itself is also an issue: what people call themselves may not be at all accurate or inclusive, and the population likely interprets theological terms differently.

We concluded that a combination of factors would give us the best understanding of the Renewalist segment of evangelical Christians.

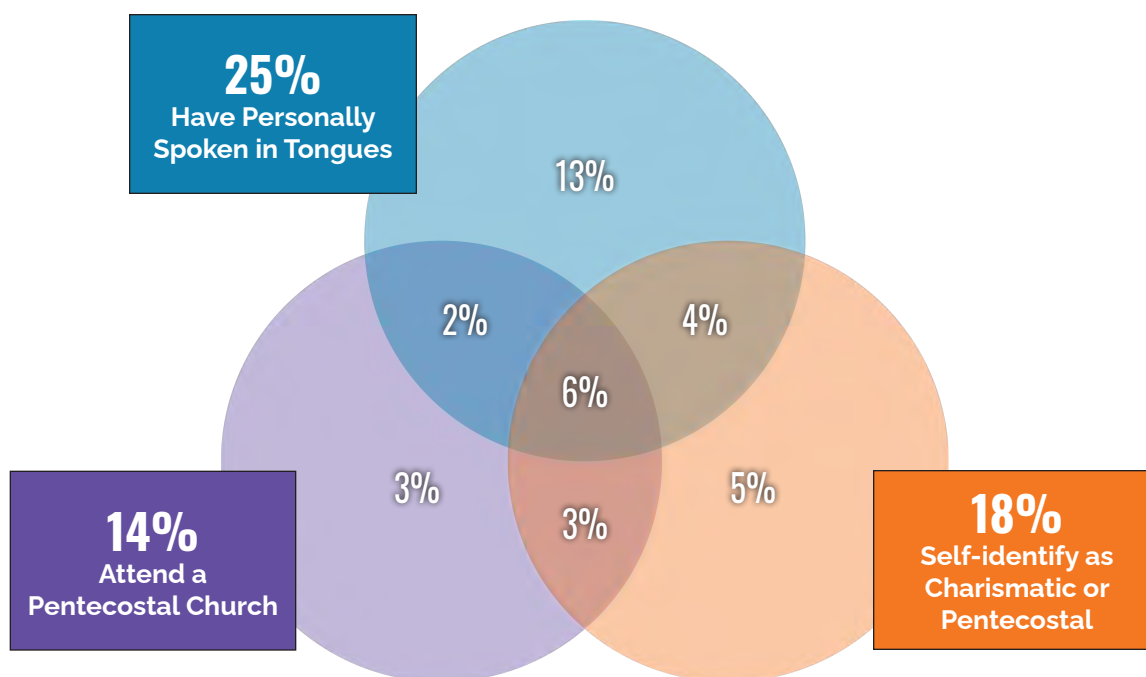


In this report, we will define Renewalists as anyone who has personally spoken in tongues, OR who self-defines as Charismatic or Pentecostal, OR who attends a clearly Pentecostal or Charismatic church. For additional clarity, we will further break the data down into each of these three elements of our definition.

By this definition, 36% of evangelical Protestants qualify as Renewalists, which projects to 21 million adults. This includes the following (with much overlap):

- 25% who have personally spoken in tongues (14.6 million adults)
- 18% who call themselves Charismatic or Pentecostal (10.6 million adults)
- 14% who attend a clearly Pentecostal church (7.8 million adults)

How the 36% of Renewalists Are Defined



The interesting thing is that people who fit all three of these qualifiers only represent 6% of all evangelical Protestants, which truly shows just how diversified Renewalist evangelicalism is today.

Ultimately, this three-part definition means **8% of all American adults, or 36% of all Protestant evangelicals, are Renewalist evangelical Protestants.**

Who Are the Renewalists?

Renewalists tend to be somewhat younger, more likely to be raising children, more ethnically diverse, and in less Christian parts of the country than other evangelicals. But substantial differences are not apparent by gender, marital status, education, or household income.

The average age of Renewalist evangelicals is 46.9, compared to 52.5 for other evangelicals. When we look at the individual components of the Renewalist definition, all three (speaking in tongues, self-definition, and Pentecostal church) skew younger.

Renewalists by Age

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|-------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Gen Z | 8% | 7% | 6% | 11% | 12% |
| Millennials | 27% | 20% | 26% | 32% | 20% |
| Gen X | 35% | 27% | 36% | 23% | 33% |
| Boomers | 28% | 40% | 30% | 32% | 33% |
| Greatest | 2% | 6% | 2% | 4% | 2% |
| Average Age | 46.9 | 52.5 | 47.8 | 47.8 | 47.8 |

Sixty-three percent of Renewalists are non-Latino Caucasians, with 16% African-American, 13% Latino, and 5% Asian or Pacific Islander. Among non-Renewalist evangelicals, 78% are white. (Note that this study was only conducted in English, so the proportion who speak primarily Spanish, Vietnamese, Portuguese, or other languages is not included.)

Race/Ethnicity

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| White | 63% | 78% | 67% | 64% | 65% |
| Black | 16% | 11% | 18% | 15% | 8% |
| Latino | 13% | 5% | 9% | 14% | 16% |
| Asian/PI | 5% | 4% | 5% | 3% | 4% |
| Other/mixed | 3% | 3% | 1% | 3% | 6% |

Renewalists are more likely than others to be found in the West and Northeast—two regions of the country that overall tend to be substantially less religious than the Midwest and South.

Region

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Northeast | 14% | 7% | 14% | 14% | 18% |
| Midwest | 18% | 25% | 17% | 18% | 13% |
| South | 44% | 50% | 42% | 45% | 47% |
| West | 25% | 18% | 27% | 20% | 20% |

Finally, partly due to lower ages and partly influenced by greater racial/ethnic diversity, Renewalists are more likely than other evangelicals to be raising children under age 18.

Raising Children under 18

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Yes | 39% | 27% | 40% | 39% | 34% |
| No | 61% | 73% | 60% | 61% | 66% |

Spiritual Engagement

Renewalists are consistent in the fact that they tend to have a higher level of spiritual engagement than do non-Renewalist evangelicals. They show higher levels of frequent Bible readership, small group participation, and church attendance.

Forty-eight percent of Renewalists report daily Bible readership, compared to 36% of other evangelicals. A total of 78% of Renewalists typically read the Bible once a week or more outside of church, versus 70% of other evangelicals.

Bible Readership

| Bible Readership | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------|
| Daily | 48% | 36% | 52% | 47% | 54% |
| 1-6 times/week | 29% | 35% | 31% | 34% | 28% |
| 1-3 times/month | 10% | 10% | 8% | 8% | 8% |
| Less/none | 13% | 19% | 9% | 11% | 10% |

Renewalists are also more likely to attend church frequently, no matter how we define “frequently.” At least once a month? Eighty-four percent among Renewalists, 78% for others. At least once a week? Seventy-three percent for Renewalists, 66% for others. More than once a week? Thirty-two percent for Renewalists, 18% for others.

Church Attendance

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| More than weekly | 32% | 18% | 32% | 38% | 40% |
| Weekly | 41% | 48% | 38% | 39% | 42% |
| 1-3 times/month | 10% | 12% | 11% | 9% | 10% |
| Less/none | 16% | 22% | 19% | 15% | 8% |

Renewalists are also more likely to participate regularly in a small group Bible study or prayer group, again no matter how we define “frequently”: once a month or more (56% to 45%), once a week or more (46% to 32%), or more than once a week (19% to 7%).

Small Group Participation

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------|
| More than weekly | 19% | 7% | 20% | 14% | 14% |
| Weekly | 28% | 25% | 27% | 32% | 31% |
| 1-3 times/month | 10% | 13% | 9% | 12% | 8% |
| Less/none | 44% | 55% | 43% | 42% | 47% |

These differences show up consistently, whether we define “Renewalist” broadly (any of the three qualifiers), or individually, by the experience of speaking in tongues, self-identification, or Pentecostal church attendance.

Great Expectations

One trait Renewalists share is that they tend to want more out of their church than they are currently getting. In the Infinity Concepts/Grey Matter Research report [The Congregational Scorecard](#), we asked people what changes they would make in their church if they could.

The areas in which Renewalists differed most frequently from their non-Renewalist brethren included:

1. **Political involvement/messages:** Renewalists are divided over whether they would like more political (19%) or less political (23%), with 58% saying they are quite happy with this in their church. Non-Renewalists are much less likely to call for any change (78% are fine as is), and when they do, they generally want less (20%), not more (7%).
2. **More in-depth teaching:** Renewalists are more likely than other evangelicals to want more of this in church (38% to 26%); almost no one from either group called for less.
3. **More outreach to the community:** Renewalists also are more likely than others to want more (45% to 34%); almost no one called for less of this.
4. **Greater focus on evangelism:** very few from either group want less evangelism, but Renewalists are twice as likely as others to want more (40% to 19%).
5. **Greater focus on social issues:** Renewalists are more likely than others to want more of this (26% to 15%).

Notice that four of these five biggest differences have to do (at least in part) with what is going on outside the church walls: evangelism, social issues, politics, and community outreach. In short, Renewalists are especially desirous of having their church out in the world making a difference.

The challenge for Renewalists may concern the handling of political issues. Almost no evangelicals wish for less in-depth teaching, less focus on evangelism, etc. Four out of ten Renewalists would like changes in their church when it comes to politics, but they are divided over what those changes need to be.

Changes in Church

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------|
| More community outreach | 45% | 34% | 48% | 49% | 36% |
| More focus on evangelism | 40% | 19% | 44% | 46% | 49% |
| More in-depth teaching | 38% | 26% | 43% | 37% | 36% |
| Larger congregation | 31% | 23% | 32% | 30% | 25% |
| More focus on social issues | 26% | 15% | 24% | 30% | 19% |
| More music | 25% | 16% | 27% | 28% | 23% |
| More racial/ethnic diversity | 24% | 23% | 24% | 29% | 20% |
| More contemporary service | 21% | 10% | 23% | 15% | 20% |
| More women in leadership | 19% | 12% | 19% | 24% | 26% |
| More politics | 19% | 7% | 17% | 20% | 17% |
| More contemporary music | 18% | 12% | 19% | 20% | 17% |
| Longer services | 12% | 4% | 16% | 13% | 7% |
| More donation requests | 11% | 5% | 13% | 13% | 7% |
| Longer sermons | 10% | 6% | 12% | 8% | 6% |

The Online Church

Another challenge in the Renewalist world may be the online church. In [The Ripple Effect](#), Grey Matter and Infinity Concepts examine how online church experiences affected evangelicals and their desire to return to in-person services.

Renewalists and non-Renewalists are equally likely to have stopped attending in-person worship during the pandemic, but there are a few differences in how the two groups approached this.

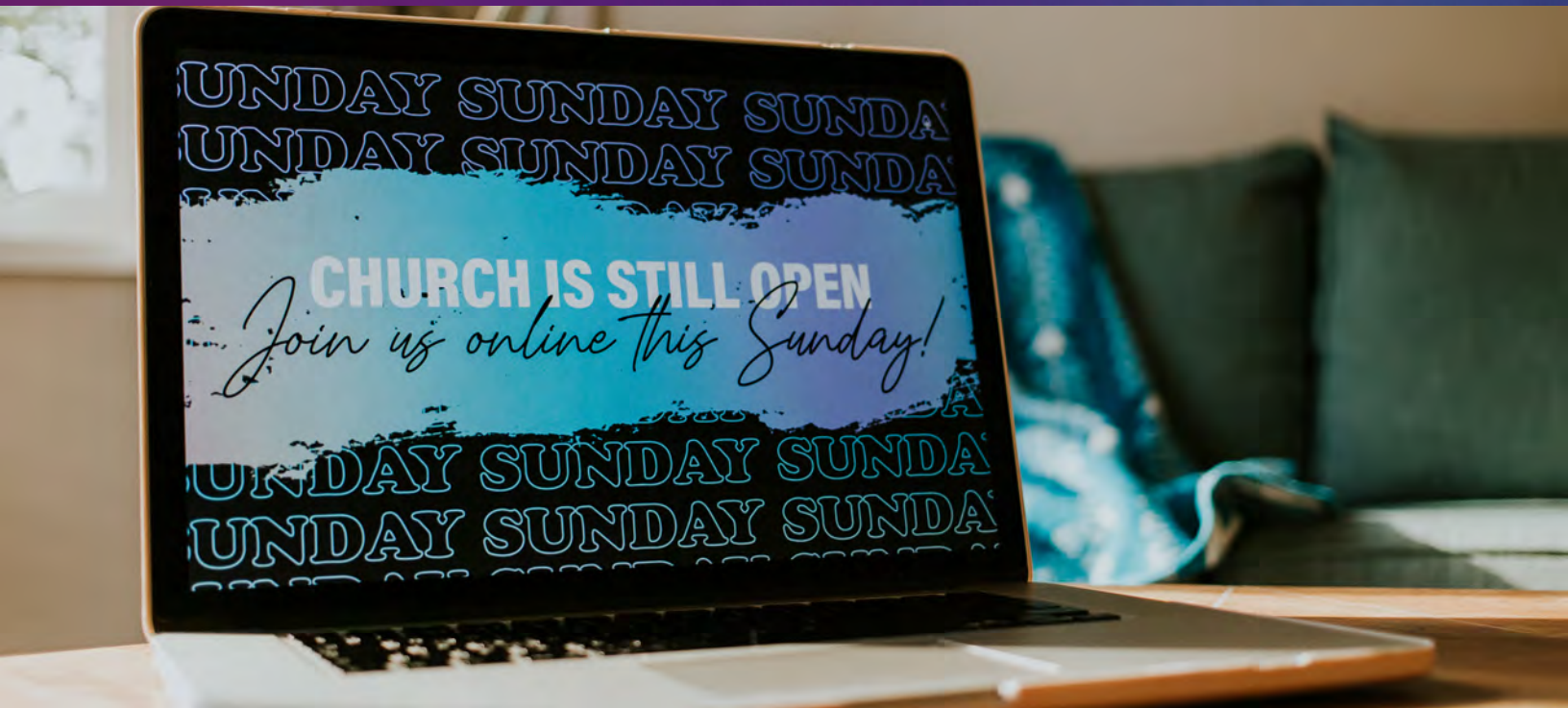
For one thing, Renewalists turned to a wider variety of sources in an attempt to replace the in-person worship experience. Seventy-nine percent viewed online church services during this time (about the same as among other evangelicals), but Renewalists are more likely than other evangelicals to have:

- Found other types of Christian teaching online (24% to 15%)
- Watched services or other Christian teachings on television (49% to 39%)
- Listened to Christian radio (33% to 26%)
- Turned to Christian podcasts (17% to 11%).

Additionally, Renewalists who turned to online church are 35% more likely than other evangelicals to have looked beyond their own congregation. Thirty-eight percent of Renewalists who viewed church online did so at least in part through a church other than the one they usually attend, compared to 28% of other evangelicals.

Renewalists who experienced online church are also 29% more likely than other evangelicals to say their online experience was actually better than in-person worship attendance in at least one way (53% to 41%).

All of these differences add up to cast some doubt on whether Renewalists will return to attending church as they did prior to the pandemic, or substitute the online experience.



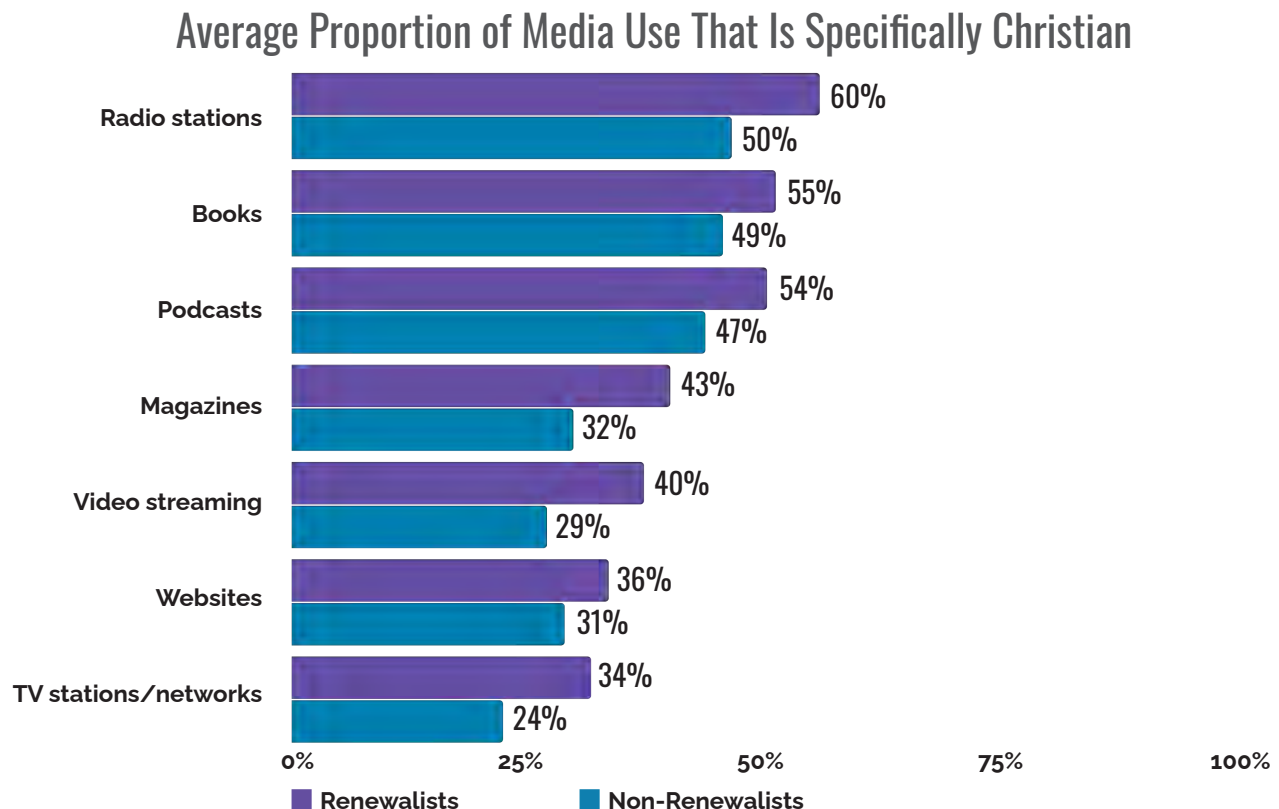
- They had a significantly greater range of experiences in their attempt to replace in-person worship, including “visiting” churches other than their own
- They have more positive perceptions of their online church experiences
- They are more likely to wish for various changes in their own church

Renewalists say basically the same things as other evangelicals about the online church. Last year, 44% wanted to return exclusively to in-person worship, while 38% wanted to be in-person with occasional online use, and 18% wanted to incorporate online as a regular part of their worship experience. But with all of these other factors, one is left to wonder whether their COVID experiences with worship will have a greater long-term effect on Renewalists than on other evangelicals.

Media Habits of Renewalists

With the fact that Renewalists tend to be more engaged in their faith than other evangelicals, it should be no surprise that part of that engagement is greater use of Christian media.

Among evangelicals who use each type of media, Renewalists consistently show a higher proportion of content that is specifically Christian than do other evangelicals. This is true for every media format. The proportion of media use that is specifically Christian is only slightly higher for books and websites, but substantially higher for most other forms of media.



We cannot say that Renewalists consume *more* Christian content than other evangelicals, because we did not measure the actual number of hours, sites, or pages

they are consuming. But we can say that **the average Renewalist spends a higher proportion of their media time with Christian media and content than does the average non-Renewalist.**

This is true in a couple of ways ...

- First, Renewalists on average dedicate a greater proportion of their media use to content that is specifically Christian (not just “clean” or “family-friendly”).
- Second, Renewalists tend to use a greater variety of media formats specifically for spiritual purposes (for Christian information, teaching, preaching, inspiration, and/or spiritual growth). The fact that Renewalists tend to skew younger also plays a role in this, as younger evangelicals are comfortable with a wider variety of media formats (see the Infinity Concepts/Grey Matter report [Media Matters: Evangelicals and Christian Media](#) for more details).

Renewalists are not less likely than other evangelicals to use any format for spiritual purposes, but they are *more* likely to use nine of the 14 formats we tested.

Renewalists use an average of 4.0 different formats for spiritual purposes, while non-Renewalists use an average of 3.2. The biggest differences are that websites,



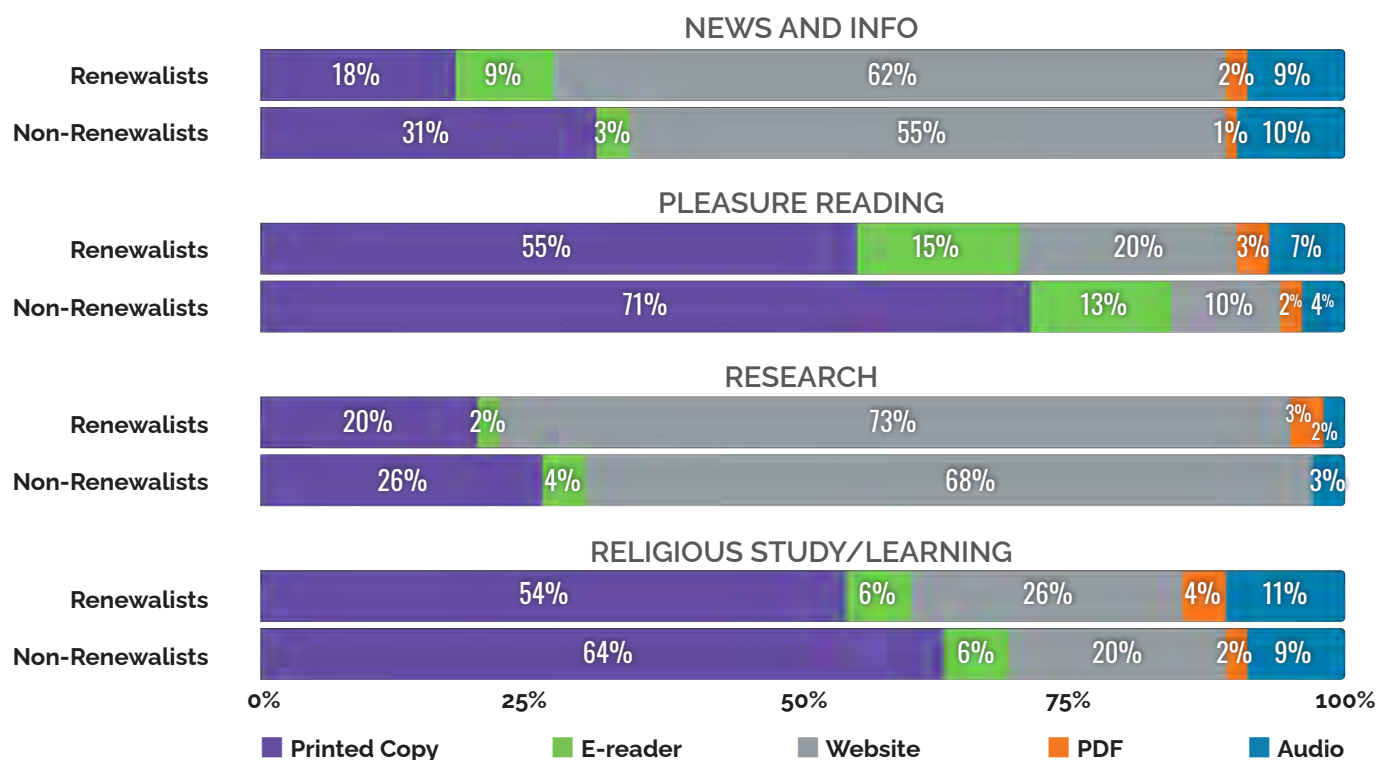
streaming video, podcasts, and e-books are especially popular among Renewalists, compared to other evangelicals.

Media Formats Used for Spiritual Purposes

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|---|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Websites | 44% | 31% | 46% | 42% | 45% |
| Any television | 42% | 35% | 39% | 43% | 46% |
| Printed books | 40% | 45% | 43% | 44% | 46% |
| Streaming video | 38% | 24% | 39% | 36% | 35% |
| Mobile apps | 30% | 26% | 32% | 29% | 30% |
| Podcasts | 26% | 17% | 26% | 26% | 27% |
| Broadcast radio | 24% | 22% | 24% | 27% | 19% |
| E-books | 18% | 9% | 22% | 19% | 17% |
| Audio books | 15% | 7% | 17% | 14% | 11% |
| Satellite/Internet radio | 14% | 10% | 12% | 19% | 15% |
| CDs | 14% | 9% | 15% | 14% | 14% |
| DVDs | 14% | 8% | 13% | 17% | 9% |
| Printed magazines | 13% | 11% | 14% | 15% | 14% |
| Blogs | 13% | 8% | 12% | 13% | 14% |
| No media – only church and Bible | 12% | 16% | 11% | 13% | 13% |
| Average number of formats used | 4.0 | 3.2 | 4.0 | 4.1 | 3.9 |

In general, again partly because they skew younger, Renewalists are more likely to prefer digital formats for reading than are other evangelicals. Renewalists are more likely than other evangelicals to prefer an e-reader or website when they are reading for pleasure, getting news and information, or doing religious learning or study.

Reading Format Preferences

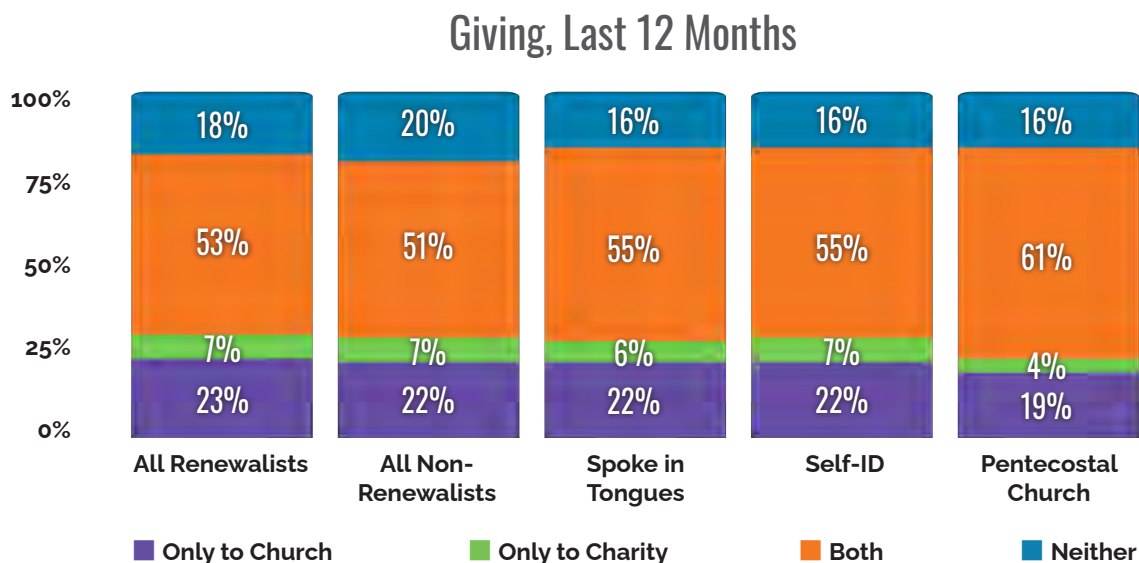


Renewalists and Giving

Unfortunately, the greater level of spiritual engagement Renewalists tend to show in terms of Bible reading, church attendance, small group participation, and Christian media use does not extend to charitable giving.

In fact, Renewalists and non-Renewalists are almost identical in their propensity to give.

- Seventy-six percent of Renewalist evangelicals financially supported a church they attended (in person or online) in the last 12 months, which is not statistically different from the 73% measured among non-Renewalists.
- Similarly, 59% of Renewalists made a gift to a charity or ministry outside their church in the last 12 months, compared to 58% of other evangelicals.
- Twenty-two percent of all Renewalists gave not a penny to church or charity in the last year—the same figure as among other evangelicals.

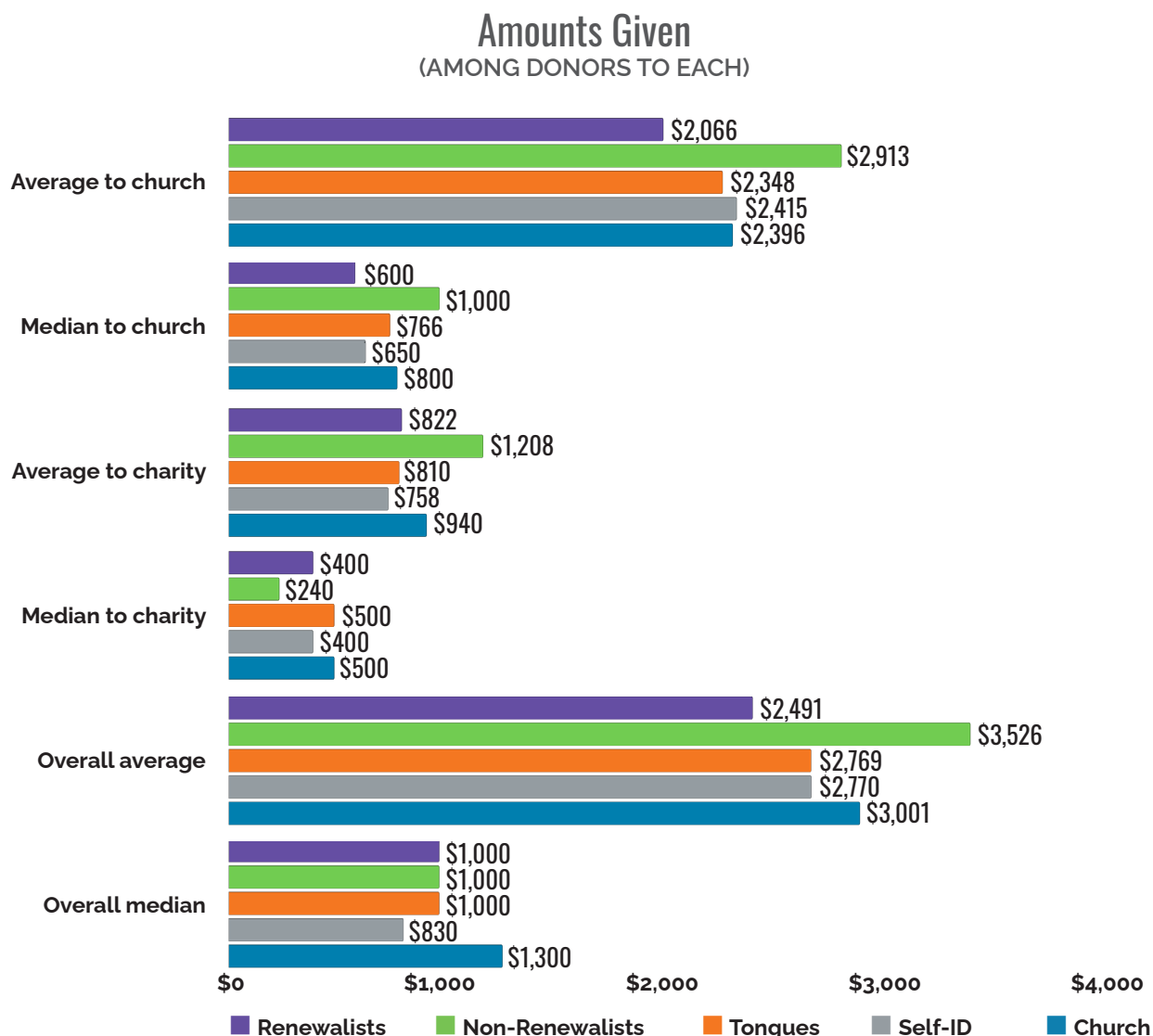


While they are just as likely to give, Renewalists actually tend to give less money than other evangelical Protestants. Among donors to churches, Renewalists gave

an average of \$2,066 in the last 12 months, while non-Renewalists gave an average of \$2,913. If we instead look at the median giving, Renewalists are at \$600, while non-Renewalists are at \$1,000.

Charitable (non-church) giving is a little more unclear. Renewalists have a lower average (\$822 to \$1,208), but a higher median (\$400 to \$240). This occurs because Renewalists are more likely to be clustered in the middle of the giving amounts, from \$500 to \$1,999, while non-Renewalists are more varied—being more likely than Renewalists to give under \$500, as well as \$2,000 or more.

Total giving (church or charity) sees some of the same effects, with both groups being at a median of \$1,000, but non-Renewalists having an average total giving of \$3,526, while the average for Renewalists is \$2,491.





Another way to measure giving is *generosity*, which is simply a measure of the amounts given compared to household income (which was measured in \$10,000 ranges, so we used the midpoint of each range).

For generosity, we will look at all evangelicals, not just donors. And what we see is that Renewalists tend to have lower levels of generosity than do other evangelicals. However, neither group has particularly high levels of generosity.

For church giving:

- Renewalists give an average of 2.05% of household income to church, which is 20% lower than the 2.57% average for other evangelicals
- Renewalists give a median of 0.5% of their income to their church, which is 19% lower than the 0.62% median among other evangelicals

For charitable giving outside of church:

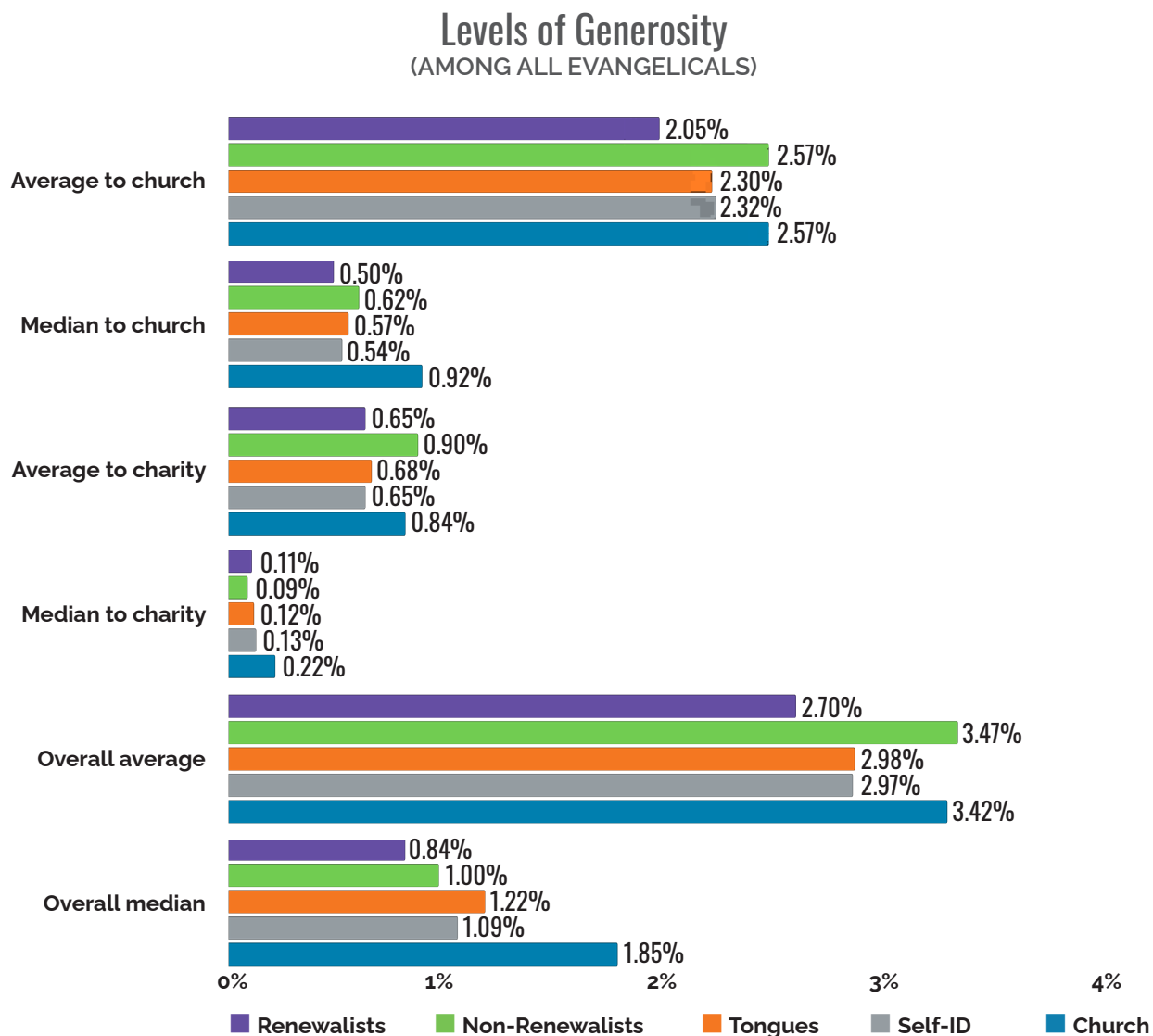
- Renewalists gave an average of 0.65% of household income to charities or ministries in the last year, which is 28% lower than the non-Renewalist average of 0.9%
- Renewalists gave a median of 0.11% of household income to charity, which is very similar to the non-Renewalist median of 0.09%

For total giving (church and charity):

- Renewalists give an average of 2.7% of household income away, which is 22% lower than the 3.47% figure among other evangelicals
- Renewalists give a median of 0.84% of income away, which is 16% below the 1% figure for other evangelicals

And yes, these figures do mean that **half of all Renewalists give less than one-half of one percent of their household income to the church, while half of all evangelicals from either group give less than one penny out of every dollar to charity.**

Another way to look at this is that half of all Renewalist evangelicals give one penny away for every \$1.19 they earn (while half of all non-Renewalist evangelicals give one penny away for every \$1 they earn).



One thing we learned in the report [*The Favorite Charity: Evangelical Giving Priorities*](#) is that when asked to name the one organization outside of church that is their very top priority for giving, only 46% of evangelical donors name a Christian organization.

Instead, 54% prioritize entirely secular organizations such as United Way, Tunnel 2 Towers, or Goodwill.

Renewalist donors are somewhat more likely than other evangelicals to say their top giving priority is a faith-based organization, but it is still about an even split. Among Renewalists, 54% have a Christian organization as their top giving priority, while 46% name a secular charity. Among non-Renewalists, just 43% favor a Christian organization, while 57% prioritize a secular charity.

Nineteen percent of Renewalists name an organization that focuses exclusively or primarily on religious work—meaning things such as evangelism, sending missionaries, Bible teaching, Christian media, etc. This leaves 35% favoring a Christian organization that does other types of service work, such as building houses, helping in disasters, or fighting substance abuse. Just 12% of non-Renewalists prioritize an organization that focuses on religious work, with 31% favoring a Christian organization doing other types of work.

Interestingly, although Renewalists are more likely to prioritize supporting a Christian organization, they are no more likely than non-Renewalists to say they would rather support a Christian organization. They are simply more likely to put their money where their mouth is.

From naming their favorite organization, we can determine the causes evangelicals prioritize. Renewalists and non-Renewalists look fairly similar, with two differences.

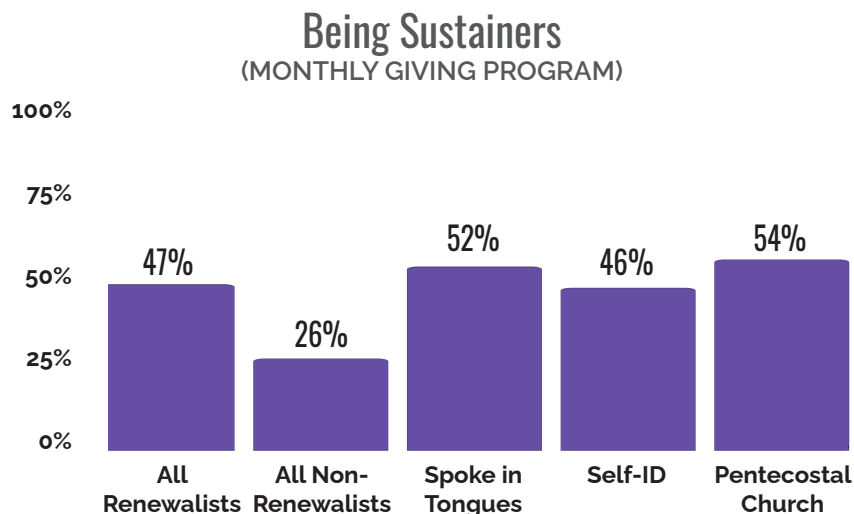
- First, Renewalists are more likely than others to name as their favorite organization one that concentrates on specifically Christian work, such as sending missionaries, Christian media, teaching and preaching, etc. (20% among Renewalists, 12% among other evangelicals).
- Second, Renewalists are significantly less likely than others to prioritize supporting an organization that fights specific diseases, such as American Diabetes Association or American Cancer Society (12% to 24%). Other than that, prioritizing disaster relief, education, animals, or other causes is similar between Renewalists and non-Renewalists.

Another difference in giving is that although they tend to give less and be less generous, **Renewalists are substantially more likely than other evangelicals to be**

part of a monthly giving program with an organization other than their church (47% to 26%).

In fact, while Renewalists represent 36% of all evangelical donors, they actually represent 51% of all evangelical sustainers or partners (two terms often used to describe those who commit to a monthly giving program).

Renewalists are
80%
more likely to be part
of a monthly giving
program than non-
Renewalist evangelical
Protestants



Renewalists and Israel

Renewalists have a somewhat greater interest in, and connection to, Israel than do other evangelicals—but the differences are not massive.

First, Renewalists place a slightly greater priority on Israel in their own charitable behavior (giving money, volunteering, promoting causes on social media, etc.). Fifty-four percent consider this an important personal priority, compared to 45% of non-Renewalists.

Charitable Priorities

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|---|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------|
| Israel is a priority in their charitable behavior | 54% | 45% | 57% | 54% | 55% |

When we measure what Renewalists would prioritize supporting related to Israel, their priorities and the priorities of other evangelicals are indistinguishable.

Renewalists’ top priorities are helping needy individuals and families in Israel (29%), helping people learn the Jewish roots of Christianity (16%), supporting medical services and first responders in Israel (12%), and supporting pro-Israel politicians or political positions in the US (11%)—which are the top four priorities of other evangelicals, as well.

Renewalists have theological views of Israel and the Jewish people that are similar to what other evangelicals believe. They are slightly more likely to see the Jewish people as still God’s chosen people today (57% to 49%), and slightly less likely to hold some other position on this issue.

Theological Views of the Jewish People

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|---|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------|
| They are still God's chosen people | 57% | 49% | 61% | 56% | 66% |
| Replacement theology | 16% | 18% | 16% | 14% | 14% |
| Never were God's chosen people | 8% | 11% | 7% | 9% | 5% |
| Other | 2% | 2% | 2% | 2% | -- |
| Not sure | 16% | 21% | 15% | 19% | 15% |

In our report [The Jewish Connection](#), we detailed how we segmented evangelicals into three groups:

- **Israel Loyalists** – they put a very high priority on supporting Israel, and believe the Jewish people are still God's chosen people today (20% of all evangelicals)
- **Dismissives** – they either reject the idea that the Jewish people ever were God's chosen people or put a low priority on supporting Israel/the Jewish people (28% of evangelicals)
- **Passives** – neither Loyalist nor Dismissive (52% of all evangelicals)

What we find is that Renewalists are only very slightly more likely than other evangelicals to be Israel Loyalists (23% to 18%), but they are definitely less likely to be Dismissives (21% to 32%).

Position on Israel/the Jewish People

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|-------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|---------|--------------------|
| Israel Loyalists | 23% | 18% | 26% | 22% | 26% |
| Dismissives | 21% | 32% | 22% | 20% | 16% |
| Passives | 56% | 51% | 52% | 58% | 58% |

This interest in Israel extends to travel. Renewalists are more likely than other evangelicals to express significant interest in visiting Israel (67% to 56%). In fact, they are more likely to have visited already (11% to 6%).

Interest in Israel Travel

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|---|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Strong interest in Israel travel | 67% | 56% | 72% | 67% | 59% |
| Have visited Israel | 11% | 6% | 11% | 14% | 16% |

They are also less likely to have significant concerns about the safety of Israel travel. Eighteen percent of Renewalists express significant doubts about the safety of travel to Israel, while 52% have few or no worries about the safety of Israel travel.

Non-Renewalists are more likely to have significant concerns (31%), and less likely to see such a trip as largely or completely safe (34%).

Perceived Safety of Israel Travel

| | Renewalists | Other Evangelicals | Spoken in Tongues | Self-ID | Pentecostal Church |
|------------------------|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Safe | 52% | 34% | 54% | 56% | 49% |
| Moderately safe | 30% | 35% | 29% | 28% | 33% |
| Unsafe | 18% | 31% | 17% | 17% | 18% |

In general, Israel is likely to play a larger role in the theology and lives of Renewalist evangelicals, but not dramatically more significant than for evangelicals in general.

What Does It All Mean?

One of the things we learned in this research is just how diverse and fragmented the Renewalist segment of evangelicals is. They do not agree on what to call themselves, they do not center primarily on certain denominations, and they do not all share experiences that are often assumed to be central to the Renewalist worldview, such as speaking in tongues.

In fact, while 36% of evangelical Protestants have at least one of the three different factors we used to define “Renewalist” (tongues, Pentecostal church attendance, and self-identification), only 6% have *all three* traits. And this does not even take into account Renewalists from outside of evangelicalism.

As such, it is important to recognize that Renewalists are far from being a monolithic group that shares theology and practices. For example, nearly half of the people who call themselves either Charismatic or Pentecostal have never spoken in tongues, while only 30% experience this regularly. Similarly, 45% of the people in clearly Pentecostal churches have never spoken in tongues, while just 30% experience this regularly.

Stereotyping or making assumptions about Renewalists is just as dangerous and inaccurate as assuming that evangelicals are older, white Republican gun owners because this is how they are often portrayed.

One distinct challenge with this is nomenclature. If, for example, you describe a church, a ministry, or a person as “Pentecostal,” as “Charismatic,” or as “Spirit-filled,” do not assume that everyone in the Christian community knows your intentions. Even within the Renewalist segment of this community, these terms are not agreed upon or used in the same manner (when they are used at all).

One has to wonder whether part of the reason for this is the teaching some people receive inside Renewalist congregations. It is interesting that about one out of every six people attending a church that is clearly Renewalist cannot affirm their church teaches that the gift of tongues is available for believers today.

Some Renewalist churches struggle with the concept of how to attract nonbelievers to services that are openly Charismatic or Pentecostal and include practices that might seem strange to someone not versed in their beliefs. Some pastors have tried to downplay the Renewalist elements of their congregations for newcomers; for instance, holding a Sunday morning “seeker” service where Renewalist traits are discouraged, but a Sunday evening “believers” service where prophecy, tongues, and more demonstrative worship are encouraged. Is it possible that practices such as this have led to some regular churchgoers not even understanding the theology of the church they are attending?

It is also important to recognize that in many ways, Renewalists are not all that different from other evangelicals. They do not have radically different spiritual lives, beliefs about Israel, giving habits, media habits, etc. **In many ways, the two groups of evangelicals are far more similar than different.**

Yet there definitely are differences. And these differences lead to some interesting contradictions, particularly in the area of giving. For one thing, Renewalists are consistently more likely than other evangelicals to be spiritually engaged on a regular basis: more frequently reading the Bible, going to church, participating in a small group, a consistently higher proportion of media use dedicated to Christian content, etc.

Unfortunately, that greater level of spiritual engagement does not extend to their wallets. Not only are they not *more* likely to give, they actually are *less generous* on average than other evangelicals. Renewalists give lower proportions of their income to church and charity, and in total, they are less likely than non-Renewalists to tithe or come close to it.

The fascinating thing about this is that among evangelicals in general, we know that giving increases the more spiritually engaged people are. Yet this relationship

between spiritual engagement and giving is somehow less pronounced among Renewalists.

There is also a contradiction among Renewalists when it comes to church. Renewalists often want more out of their church, particularly when it comes to the things that happen outside the walls: evangelism, social issues, political issues, and community outreach. Those things require resources. Yet these higher expectations for their church are not connected with a higher level of giving. Measured by median or average, Renewalists as a group give less to their church than do non-Renewalist evangelicals.

The typical church pastor is already challenged with too many needs and too few resources. **Renewalists who expect even more, but give even less, may be putting their leadership in a no-win position.**

In the midst of this concern, it is interesting to note that Renewalists are substantially more likely than other evangelicals to be part of a monthly giving program with a ministry or charitable organization other than their church. Monthly partnerships are the foundation of most ministries and nonprofits. While research indicates that giving to nonprofits or parachurch ministries does not negatively impact church giving, nonetheless, Renewalists' financial commitment to other organizations may add to the concerns of church leadership.

Renewalist churches may face even greater challenges from other fronts, as well. Renewalists are far more likely than other evangelicals to want their church to do something different on the political front. The challenge for church leaders is that Renewalists are divided over just what that change should be.

By a three-to-one margin, non-Renewalist evangelicals want to see less political involvement and/or fewer political messages in their churches. Renewalist churchgoers are divided over whether they want more of this (19%) or less of it (23%). Certainly, this does not mean every individual church is divided along these lines, but given the passions that politics can engender, this issue certainly seems ripe for contention within churches, as well as possibly creating more church switching as some people search for congregations with a level of political involvement that better fits what they want.

During the COVID lockdown, Renewalists turned to a wider variety of sources to help replace the in-person church experience. Those who chose online church are 35% more likely than other evangelicals to have viewed services from a church other than the one they were attending in person. And those who viewed online church are 29% more likely than other evangelicals to say at least one thing about their online experience was superior to attending in person.

One is left to ponder whether churches with a large number of Renewalists will see greater defections to online church and/or greater circulation of attendees to different churches (online or in person), creating even more pressure for many churches.

Even with these challenges, there are many opportunities. Renewalists are more likely than other evangelicals to be getting the Word through church, media, small groups, and the Bible itself. This obviously presents more opportunity for solid teaching to get through to them and hopefully lead to spiritual growth.

Their expectations for churches to do more could lead to very positive results, if those expectations can be combined with greater levels of financial support, lay leadership, volunteerism, and involvement.

Their frequently conflicting desires about politics in church could, if handled adroitly, lead to critical dialogues about the appropriate role of politics within congregations.

The fact that they are younger, more diverse, and more likely to have children could lead to more outreach opportunities among populations where they have a greater presence than other evangelicals do.

Finally, the fact that they are more likely than other evangelicals to be found in less-Christian parts of the country in the Northeast and West gives them an opportunity for their lights to shine brighter in the parts of the US that need it the most.

ADDITIONAL REPORTS

from Infinity Concepts and Grey Matter Research

If you found this report beneficial, Grey Matter Research and Infinity Concepts also offer eight other reports on evangelical Protestants:

CHURCH REPORTS:

- [*The Ripple Effect: Congregations, COVID, and the Future of Church Life*](#)
- [*The Congregational Scorecard: What Evangelicals Want in a Church*](#)

GIVING REPORTS:

- [*The Generosity Factor: Evangelicals and Giving*](#)
- [*The Generation Gap: Evangelical Giving Preferences*](#)
- [*The Favorite Charity: Evangelical Giving Priorities*](#)

ISRAEL REPORTS:

- [*The Jewish Connection: Evangelicals and Israel*](#)
- [*The Holy Land Journey: Evangelicals and Israel Travel*](#)

MEDIA REPORTS:

- [*Media Matters: Evangelicals and the Media*](#)

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Company president Ron Sellers would be delighted to chat with you. Call him at **1-602-684-6294**, or meet him digitally at ron@greymatterresearch.com.

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Infinity Concepts President, Mark Dreistadt, and Chief Growth Officer, Darrell Law, can be reached at 724-733-1200 or by email at Mark@infinityconcepts.com and Darrell@infinityconcepts.com.

Additional Resources from Grey Matter Research

In addition to our custom research work for clients, we offer a variety of exclusive reports.

A small selection is below; [click here](#) for information on all of them.

■ What America's Favorite Charities Have in Common

Donors often claim they like to support small, local organizations. The reality is they generally favor massive global brands. And most people of faith do not favor supporting faith-based organizations. Learn what sets America's favorite charities apart in the minds of donors. [Click here.](#)

■ Lost Opportunities: Faith, Giving, and Social Media

Learn how donors and people of faith use social media to interact with nonprofit organizations and congregations. [Click here.](#)

■ Charitable Overhead Ratios and Donor Decisions

Donors often believe ministries and charities spend more on fundraising and administration than they should. Because of this, many organizations think donors will not support organizations with expense ratios exceeding a certain threshold. We find that is often not true—and in fact, donors frequently do not have a clue what their favorite organization's overhead ratio really is. [Click here.](#)

■ Charity Watchdogs: Ignore Them at Your Own Risk

How many donors actually use charity watchdogs to research organizations they might support? [Click here.](#)

■ How Much Mail and Email Donors Receive and Read

Donors report receiving more prospecting messages than messages from organizations they already support. And very few just toss or delete everything they receive—your messages have the opportunity to get read. [Click here.](#)

■ Six Ways Your Survey Research May Be Misleading You

The only thing worse than no research is bad research, and there are many ways you can unintentionally receive misleading data from your surveys—even when they are conducted by professionals. [Click here.](#)

Additional Resources from Infinity Concepts

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