

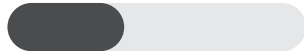


GLOBAL YOUTH CULTURE

Who is Generation Z and what do they think about faith? This was a question OneHope set out to answer. Our global research study connected us to more than 8,000 teens in 20 countries. We also focused in on US young people and had deeper conversations with 94 teens ages 14-20 to find out where they stand and the influences that have shaped them.

GEN Z PERSONAS

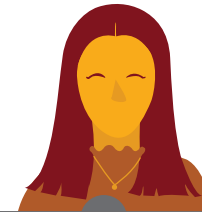
NONES



39% of US teens
have no religion



hurt

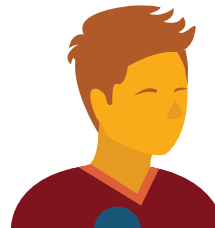


apathetic

NOMINAL CHRISTIANS



42% of US teens
identify as Christian

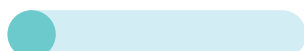


passive



progressive

COMMITTED CHRISTIANS



8% of US teens are
Christians who are committed*



progressive



all-in

* These teens identified as Christian and met a criteria that included four foundational beliefs and two regular spiritual disciplines.

THE “HURT NONE”



Clayton

THOUGHTS ON FAITH

I was very shaped by the community I grew up in where it was ‘believe in what we believe in or you will be shunned.’ Religion was shoved down my throat.”

PRESSURES HE FACES

- Mental health struggles
- Academic and family expectations
- There’s too much judgement and hate
- Negative media and all the bad news in the world makes everything worse

STRUGGLES

High anxiety

69%

Loneliness

77%

Depression

69%

Suicidal thoughts

48%

Same-sex attraction

34%

Pornography

57%

MAJOR FAITH INFLUENCES



CHRISTIANS I KNOW

I have parents, friends and people in my community who are Christian and I don’t want to be like them.



PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I have been hurt in the past by people who claim to represent God and I’ve done my own research on what to believe.



MY IDENTITY

I am part of the LGBTQ+ community and I am not going to change my identity because a religion says I have to.

WHAT’S HOLDING HIM BACK...



FROM FAITH

- Religion is controlling and can be used to hurt people.
- Christianity is about rules and there is no free will.
- I don’t need religion to tell me what to think.
- God wasn’t there for me when I needed Him.



FROM SCRIPTURE

- The Bible doesn’t make sense. It says it’s wrong to be gay.
- The Bible tells me I am a sinner and going to hell which is offensive.
- It’s written by normal broken people like me.
- The Bible is not the answer to my problems.



FROM CHURCH

- Churches treat gay people poorly and judge others hard.
- Churches are just broken institutions full of hurt people.
- Going to church is weird and uncomfortable.
- Churches brainwash people and force religion on them.

WHAT’S MISSING

- Positive and loving examples of Christians.
- A church community that journeys with them and welcomes their questions.
- Experiencing religion not as rules but as relationship.
- Realizing the seriousness of sin and its eternal consequences.
- Redemptive conversations around identity.

Age: 19 years old

Religion: No religion

About: I was raised around religion but I’ve made my own choices now. God hasn’t helped me and Christians have hurt me in the past.

THE “APATHETIC NONE”



Melissa

THOUGHTS ON FAITH

“Religion was never really a big part of my life. I never found an affiliation to it. It was an unimportant thing in my life that some people had but I didn't have.”

PRESSURES SHE FACES

- Mental health struggles
- Academic expectations
- Pressure from parents
- Lack of acceptance for gender identity

STRUGGLES

High anxiety

69%

Loneliness

77%

Depression

69%

Suicidal thoughts

48%

Same-sex attraction

34%

Pornography

57%

MAJOR FAITH INFLUENCES



PARENTS

My parents never cared about religion, so I didn't either.



PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I haven't seen God do anything or felt the need for religion in my life.



CULTURE

The culture and most people around me don't have Christian beliefs.

WHAT'S HOLDING HER BACK...



FROM FAITH

- Religion is boring and controlling.
- Christianity contradicts my values on identity.
- Religions all have the same basic moral core.
- There's nothing special about Christians I know.



FROM SCRIPTURE

- The Bible is anti-LGBTQ+.
- The Bible is boring and makes no sense.
- The Bible is a human-written document with no authority.
- The Bible encourages rules and control.



FROM CHURCH

- Church is boring and irrelevant. Going feels like a chore.
- I feel out of place at church and it doesn't do anything for me.
- Churches can be judgmental and hypocritical.

WHAT'S MISSING

- Positive examples of a life lived in step with Scripture.
- A clear understanding of Scripture.
- A bridge to the church.
- Urgency to ask and answer life's big questions.
- A way to openly question assumptions.

📅 Age: 17 years old

🏠 Religion: No religion

💬 **About:** I don't believe in God and I don't care what others believe in, as long as they don't force their beliefs on others.

THE “PASSIVE NOMINAL”



Matthew

THOUGHTS ON FAITH

“I’m not a really strong Christian, but I would still identify.”

PRESSURES HE FACES

- Mental health struggles
- Academic expectations
- Not being “Christian enough”
- What to think and do when culture contradicts faith

STRUGGLES

High anxiety

64%

Loneliness

75%

Depression

59%

Suicidal thoughts

31%

Same-sex attraction

23%

Pornography

47%

MAJOR FAITH INFLUENCES



PARENTS

My parents take me to church, but they don’t really bring faith home.



YOUTH PASTORS

I learn about faith and life from my leaders at youth group.



OTHER CHRISTIANS

I hear about and see faith from other people in my life who are believers as well.

WALKING OUT FAITH



WHAT BEING A CHRISTIAN MEANS

- I go to church, pray before meals, and try not to sin.
- The Bible is a good moral guide but I don’t really need it in daily life.
- It’s important to be tolerant and not enroach on the beliefs of others.
- Let’s respect everyone including LGBTQ+ people.



ISSUES WITH SCRIPTURE

- The Bible is just a book of rules I already know.
- The Bible is hard to understand.
- I’m not sure I can fully trust what the Bible says. It is outdated.
- I don’t have the time and attention span for reading long old books.



VIEW OF CHURCH

- Church is part of my family’s religious routine.
- Going to church is how I show I am a Christian.
- Church can be boring.
- You don’t have to attend church to be a Christian.

WHAT’S MISSING

- Biblical knowledge and understanding.
- Conviction that knowing the truth is important.
- Personal life-giving relationship with Christ.
- Examples of faith lived out.
- Understanding the importance of internal beliefs as well as external behaviors.

📅 Age: 15 years old

🏛 Religion: Christianity

💬 **About:** I consider myself a Christian, but I don’t practice my faith much outside going to church.


THE “PROGRESSIVE NOMINAL”



Tamikah

 **Age:** 18 years old

 **Religion:** Christianity

 **About:** I was raised a Christian and am a believer. I think the Bible should fit modern times and we need to affirm people of all walks of life. My faith is my own and doesn't affect anyone else.

THOUGHTS ON FAITH

“Having grown up with religion, a lot of the morals are ingrained in me... I feel like the Bible should be used as a reference but not as an absolute thing that shouldn't be changed.”

PRESSURES SHE FACES

- Mental health struggles fueled by academic expectations.
- Gaps between traditional Christianity and cultural values.
- Living in a polarized society where religion and truth divide.
- Advocating for the marginalized in religious spaces.

STRUGGLES

High anxiety

64%

Loneliness

75%

Depression

59%

Suicidal thoughts

31%

Same-sex attraction

23%

Pornography

47%

MAJOR FAITH INFLUENCES



PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

My experiences help me discern what is true more so than someone telling me what to believe.



OTHER CHRISTIANS

I have seen churches and Christians being hypocritical and hurtful and I don't want to be like that.



CULTURE

We need to love and accept one another and not force our beliefs on others.

WALKING OUT FAITH



WHAT BEING A CHRISTIAN MEANS

- My faith helps me be a good person, but other religions do that too.
- We need to be tolerant of other people's beliefs, since we can't really know what's true.
- We should practice the golden rule and be kind.



ISSUES WITH SCRIPTURE

- The Bible is useful but not really trustworthy.
- There are lots of translation and interpretation issues.
- Truth changes over time, so the Bible isn't really relevant today. I trust my experiences more than an old book.



VIEW OF CHURCH

- Evangelical churches are too judgmental towards LGBTQ+.
- I'm not hardcore religious, but I go to church and say grace before meals.
- I go to church even if my family doesn't.

WHAT'S MISSING

- The importance of absolute truth.
- Prioritizing Scripture and the body of Christ.
- Relatable role models who show how the Bible speaks today.
- A space to process and live out their deep values for love and justice within the boundaries of God's truth.

THE “PROGRESSIVE COMMITTED”



Gunner

Age: 17 years old

Religion: Christianity

About: I am a Christian who also identifies as gay. I love Jesus and I believe Jesus loves everyone regardless of sexual orientation.

THOUGHTS ON FAITH

“Being told that you will go to hell for liking the same sex is pretty tough.”

PRESSURES HE FACES

- Reconciling personal beliefs about identity with what Scripture says
- Being accepted in both Christian and LGBTQ+ communities
- Mental health struggles
- Academic expectations

STRUGGLES

High anxiety

49%

Loneliness

61%

Depression

59%

Suicidal thoughts

12%

Same-sex attraction

12%

Pornography

39%

MAJOR FAITH INFLUENCES



PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

I can feel God at work in my life even as I've realized things like I am not straight.



FRIENDS

My church community affirms who I am and friends help me grow in my faith.



BIBLE

It's important to understand what Scripture really means, not just says.

WALKING OUT FAITH



WHAT COMMITTED FAITH LOOKS LIKE

- Reading my Bible and regularly going to church.
- Loving and accepting others.
- Figuring out what faith means to me.
- My faith is personal and I don't force it on others.



THE ROLE OF SCRIPTURE

- Scripture is my guide and helps me experience peace.
- The Bible is worth studying.
- Passages about homosexuality have been widely misinterpreted.
- The Bible says no sin is greater than another.



THE ROLE OF CHURCH

- Church community is important to me.
- I enjoy serving at church.
- Some churches judge me for being gay, but all Christians have some sin in their lives.

WHAT'S MISSING

- Conviction of the authority of Scripture over all areas of life, including identity.
- An understanding of the seriousness of choosing to live with sin.
- Aligning their lives to God's standards regardless of perceived unfairness within the Christian community.

THE "ALL - IN COMMITTED"



Hannah

Age: 18 years old

Religion: Christianity

About: I have been a Christian my whole life. I have gone through some hard times, but I've seen God at work which has made my faith stronger.

THOUGHTS ON FAITH

"I have always believed in Jesus as the son of God but only this past year He went from being a part of my life to my everything and the only thing that matters to me."

PRESSURES SHE FACES

- Being a faithful witness in a hostile world
- Connecting non-Christians to God's truth
- Loving others no matter what struggles they face
- Tension between the Bible and culture in conversations like LGBTQ+

STRUGGLES

High anxiety

49%

Loneliness

61%

Depression

59%

Suicidal thoughts

12%

Same-sex attraction

12%

Pornography

39%

MAJOR FAITH INFLUENCES



PARENTS

My parents are strong Christians. They taught me about faith as they raised me.



CHURCH

My church community helps me wrestle with hard questions and deal with difficult things in life.



BIBLE

In good times and bad times, the Bible has been my guide and my comfort.

WALKING OUT FAITH



WHAT COMMITTED FAITH LOOKS LIKE

- Reading my Bible and applying it to my life.
- Being active in church and giving back to community.
- Loving and encouraging others with both grace & truth.
- Sharing the hope I have in Christ.



THE ROLE OF SCRIPTURE

- God speaks through the Bible.
- The Bible has gotten me through tough times.
- The Bible is foundational for discerning truth with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
- The Bible is important enough to study its history.



THE ROLE OF CHURCH

- Attending church is a priority, not an option.
- Church community is critically important in my life.
- I am actively engaged and even serving at church.

WHAT'S MISSING

- Confidence in how to engage others with truth.
- Biblical and practical approaches to difficult topics.
- Feeling equipped and ready to influence, lead, and support others.
- Reinforced sense of being released into the world to minister.