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Women are the Backbone of U.S. Christian churches. They are more likely than men to comprise the ranks of churchgoers, volunteers, and Sunday school teachers. According to Barna Research 72% of U.S. Christian women feel they are doing meaningful ministry (72%), 59% say they have substantial influence in their church, and 55% expect their influence to increase. At the same time, 31% are resigned to low expectations when it comes to church, 20% feel under-utilized, 16% say their opportunities at church are limited by their gender, 13% feel under-appreciated by their church, and 11% believe they are taken for granted. (*Barna Group 8/14/12*)

Back Home Again The number of young adults 20 to 34 who lived with their parents jumped from 17% in 1980 to 24% in '07-'09 (the Great Recession), according to a detailed analysis by Ohio State Univ. professor Zhenchao Qian. The rise was sharpest among those under 25 (a new high of 43% vs. 32% in '80) but it increased largely across the board. Even among 30- to 34-year-olds, nearly 1 in 10 lived with parents. The only segment not affected: young adults with graduate degrees. The share living with parents has stayed at 8% since '80. The number of kids never moving out or coming back after college or divorce had declined in the '90s but increased faster during the last recession. Unemployment among young workers has hovered above 12%. Financial insecurity, coupled with massive student loan debt, has exacerbated another trend that might encourage some to live with their parents: delaying marriage and postponing having children. Many also return when marriages end. Among 30- to 34-year-olds who live with their parents, 20% are divorced. (*Zhenchao Qian, Ohio State Univ., and US2010 Project*)

Amish Growth On average, a new Amish community is founded every 3½ weeks, according to a new Ohio State Univ. study of Amish communities in the U.S. and Ontario, Canada. Since the Amish do not proselytize, the growth comes from having a lot of children and few members leaving their community. As a result, they're doubling their population about every 21 to 22 years. The census estimates there are 251,000 Amish in the areas studied, dispersed among 456 settlements, up from 179 in 1990. The Amish are currently in 29 states, mostly in the Midwest, but communities can also be found in Florida and Texas. Ohio has the most Amish with 60,233, closely followed by Pennsylvania with 59,078. At the current rate of growth, the researchers believe the Amish population will exceed 1 million dispersed across over 1,000 settlements by 2050. (*Christian Post 8/6/12*)

Least Religious Nations A global study of religion by Gallup found 59% of the 51, 927 people surveyed around the world described themselves as religious; 23% said they are "not religious" and 13% said they are "convinced atheists." The top 10 nations with the largest number of convinced atheists are China, Japan, the Czech Republic, France, South Korea, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands, Austria, Iceland, and Australia. Other countries seeing a drop in religious belief are, in order: Switzerland, France, South Africa, Iceland, Ecuador, the U.S., Canada, and Austria. The most religious countries were Ghana, Nigeria, and Armenia. Many of the most religiously inclined countries are strongly Islamic, and the countries seeing the sharpest decline in religious belief are all formerly Christian-majority. (*The Global Index of Religion and Atheism, Gallup 7/12*)

Too Connected Too many people feel a need to check e-mails, texts, and social networks almost constantly on the off chance an emergency has occurred in the last 5 minutes they absolutely, positively must address. Most people feel if everyone else is available 24/7, they should be, too. (*NY Times* 7/14/12)

Millennials in the Workforce So far only a portion of the 78 million Millennials have entered the workforce, but once the entire generation has joined, they will eclipse Boomers as the largest working generation in U.S. history. It is critical for organizations to understand their mentality and aspirations in order to best utilize their talents and create a work environment conducive to the generation's success—and ultimately the success of the organization. They want to learn. They not only want to prepare themselves for their current positions; they are also anticipating qualifications required for future positions. They are flexible. They thrive in flexible environments and will make themselves virtually accessible at any point during the day or week, within reason. They are collaborative. They desire a culture of teamwork and open communication rather than leadership that gives orders and expects immediate results. Millennials are willing to work hard for you; they just want to make sure their requests are heard and understood. (*Engage Gen-Y* 7/27/12)

Pastors buy most of their books at local Christian retailers because they want to support their business and ministry. 58% of pastors select a ministry-related book because of its topic compared with 15% based on the author. U.S. pastors prefer to read books in hardcover (55%) vs. 24% in paperback and 16% in digital. (*ECPA* 8/1/12)

Mom Stress In a recent study of both working and stay-at-home moms published in *Engage Moms*, 69% felt stressed as a mother for about 50% of the time. They most likely turn for help to their spouse, not their own mother. What would help most? 30% said a housekeeper, 23% said a personal assistant, and 19% said spousal help. 70% said one of their biggest stressors is not being able to say no to friends, family and colleagues. (*Engage Moms* 8/3/12)

Street Smarts 66% of American adults say formal education is more important for success in life than street smarts, according to a new Rasmussen Reports survey. 21% think street smarts are more valuable, while another 14% are not sure. (*Rasmussen Reports* 8/4/12)

Good Citizens 67% of likely U.S. voters say that in terms of being a good citizen, doing volunteer work for church and community organizations is more important than getting involved in politics. (*Rasmussen Reports*)

China's Urban Boom The lure of rapid riches is drawing Chinese to urban areas in droves. These 2 recent stats illustrate the startling scale of China's urban consumption boom: 1) Urban household disposable income is expected to double between '10 and '20. 2) In '10, China had 18 million households with an annual income above USD \$16,000. By '20, this number will be 167 million households. That's nearly 400 million people. (*McKinsey* 3/12).

Truth-Telling Improves Health People who tell fewer lies experience improved health, such as less stress and fewer headaches, according to research presented at a recent meeting of the American Psychological Association. Evidence indicates Americans average about 11 lies per week. Those who told fewer lies experienced fewer mental health complaints such as feeling tense or melancholy and fewer physical complaints such as sore throats and headaches. Participants also reported their personal relationships and social interactions went more smoothly when they told fewer lies. (*Baptist Press* 8/10/12)

Textbooks 54% of U.S. adults say most school textbooks are more concerned with political correctness than accuracy. (*Rasmussen Reports* 8/16/12)

Religiosity Down—Atheism Up The number of Americans who say they are "religious" dropped from 73% in '05 to 60% in '12. During the same period, those who say they are atheists rose from 1% to 5%, finds a recent WIN-Gallup International poll involving 50,000 people from 57 countries and 5 continents. The current poll confirms a declining religiosity (both at home and abroad) that's been

detected in other polls. The *2008 American Religious Identification Survey* found 15 of Americans said they have no religion—different from being a “confirmed atheist,” but nonetheless up from 8% in 1990. (*The Global Index of Religiosity and Atheism* 8/12)

Personal Recommendations Dominate book recommendations, reports the Pew Research Center. The study found these key sources for book recommendations: 64% of those ages 16 and older get book recommendations from family members, friends, or co-workers, 28% from online bookstores or other websites, 23% from staffers in bookstores they visit in person, and 19% from librarians or library websites. (*Center for Media Research Brief* 7/18/12)

Cutting-Edge Dads vs. Regular Dads Euro RSCG Worldwide took a look at how fathers who are early-adopting “prosumers” stand out from the crowd in terms of how they bring new media and technology to their kids. In the study, 14% of the survey base was early-adopting “Digital Dads” while 86% were “Average Joes.” The study found 75% of Digital Dads and 63% of Average Joes think new technologies and greater access to info is making their kids smarter. About the same believe kids who grow up without Internet access at home are at a disadvantage. 48% of Digital Dads say it’s important to them that their kids have the latest and greatest in high-tech, while just 24% say they can go without. The situation is reversed among Average Joes. 70% of Average Joes and 60% of Digital Dads believe new technologies are too much of a distraction for their kids and are impairing their ability to communicate face-to-face. 75% of Average Joes and 64% of Digital Dads worry digital communication is making the current generation of young people less proficient in the English language. Yet, 60% of Digital Dads vs. 50% of Average Joes limit the amount of time their kids spend online; more of them also send their kids outside to play. 43% of Digital Dads vs. 27% of Average Joes believe digital technology and entertainment are creating a stronger bond between parents and their teens. A majority of Average Joes believe new technologies are creating more of a divide between the generations. (*Marketing Daily* 6/15/12)

STD Rates have continued to grow, particularly among teens, despite condom usage remaining at or near record levels, according to recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention data. Teen condom use remained near the 60% percent range where it plateaued in ’03. Despite this, the CDC estimates 15 to 24 year-olds account for almost half of the estimated 19 million new STD infections every year, while comprising only 25% percent of the sexually active population. “Rates of oral contraceptive use among females in this age range have increased, which helps explain the lower birth rate,” said Dr. David Hager, OB/GYN and a member of Focus on the Family’s Physicians Resource Council. Hager also attributes part of the decrease to the 40% of teen pregnancies that end in elective abortion. Teens are faced with a culture that encourages their being sexually active and a personal tendency to believe they are immune to long-term consequences. Factors such as these have led to 1 in 4 teen girls having at least one STD, according to a CDC estimate. (*Baptist Press* 7/5/12)

Lasting Marriages A 2011 Univ. of Iowa studied the link between teenage sex and divorce rates in women. Their researchers concluded that women who lose their virginity as teens are far more likely to divorce. Of married women who had sex for the first time as teens, 31% were divorced within 5 years and 47% were divorced within 10 years. In contrast, married women who delayed sex into adulthood had a divorce rate of 15% at 5 years and 27% at 10 years. That’s twice the likelihood of divorce at the 5-year mark and near double at the 10-year mark. (*Journal of Marriage and Family*)

Millennials in general don’t partake in nearly as many risky behaviors as previous generations, and when they do engage in dangerous activities, it’s usually not to act out. Instead, they consider risky behaviors (texting and driving, underage drinking, and smoking pot) as experiences or choices where the payoff outweighs the risk. In the recent *Risky Business* survey, 34% of Millennials text while driving or go on the Internet while behind the wheel. 97% wear their seatbelt. 35% (even underage) have tried alcohol and pot. They don’t view these actions as a big deal and feel there’s a bigger reward than a risk. But few have taken hard drugs (only 3% use an illicit drug at least monthly) or smoke (only 9% smoke at least weekly), which

they've continuously been told is harmful. (*Engage Gen-Y* 7/13/12)

Asian Americans From less than 1% of the total U.S. population (including children) in 1965, Asian Americans have increased to 5.8% (or 18.2 million) in '11, according to the U.S. Census. They have been largely responsible for the growth of non-Abrahamic faiths in the U.S., particularly Buddhism and Hinduism. Counted together, Buddhists and Hindus now account for the same share of the U.S. public as Jews (roughly 2%). 42% of Asian Americans are Christians, 14% Buddhists, 10% Hindu, 1% Sikh, 2% other, and 26% unaffiliated, finds a new Pew Research Center study. Asian Americans as a whole are less likely than Americans overall to believe in God and to pray on a daily basis, while a somewhat higher proportion of Asian Americans are unaffiliated with any religion. (*Gallup Politics* 7/10/12)

Christians Embrace Tablets According to recent CBA-funded Barna Group research, Christians are embracing computer tablets and e-readers at a faster pace than most consumers. 44% of pastors, 30% of Christian-store shoppers, and 25% of practicing Catholics own a mobile tablet device or e-reader vs. 18% of non Christian-store shoppers. The most-owned device is the iPad (44% among Christian-store shoppers). Additionally, nearly 70% of them said they would definitely or probably buy an e-book or digital download from a Christian store. More than 800 Christian stores are now able to sell e-books through store websites. (*ECPA Rush to Press* 7/23/12)

Media Saturated Teens 9 in 10 U.S. 13- to 17-year-olds have used some form of social media. 3 in 4 currently have a profile on a social networking site, and 1 in 5 has a current Twitter account. 68% say Facebook is their main social networking site vs. 6% for Twitter, 1% for GooglePlus, and 1% for MySpace. 68% text every day, 51% visit social networking sites daily, and 11% send or receive tweets at least once a day. 34% visit their main social networking site several times a day. 23% are "heavy" social media users (at least 2 different types of social media every day). (*Center for Media Research Brief* 7/25/12)

Mega Churches In '02, there were about 800 churches across the U.S. boasting average weekly attendance of more than 2,000. Today, more than 1,600 congregations enjoy an average attendance of around 3,500 per weekend. (*Hartford Institute for Religious Research* 7/12)

Young Adults Are Leaving the Church in record numbers. According to LifeWay Research, 7 in 10 Protestants who were ages 18 to 30 who went to church regularly in high school quit attending by age 23. A third of those had not returned by age 30. That means about 25% of young Protestants have left the church. The Barna Group says 6 in 10 young people will leave the church permanently or for an extended period starting at age 15. The *2012 Millennial Values Survey* found college-age millennials are 30% more likely than the general population to be religiously unaffiliated. Just 1 in 4 attends religious services at least once a week, while 43% seldom or never attend. Nearly half still live with their parents, yet those who live at home are no more likely to attend church than those who do not. Pollsters fear current trends signal more than the historic "sowing wild oats" life passage. Research suggests the main reason for disengaging from religion is their faith simply does not seem relevant or important to their daily lives. (*Church Executive* 7/10/12)

Declining Confidence According to the Gallup Organization, only 44% of Americans have "a great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in "the church or organized religion" vs. 68% in the mid-1970s. However, it still ranks 4th, preceded by the military, small business, and the police. The least-trusted institution is Congress (13%) followed by HMOs and banks. (*Church Report* 6/17/12)

Exponential Acceleration It took 38 years for the radio to reach 50 million people but only 13 years for TV to do it. The Internet did it in 4, the iPod in 3 years, Facebook in 2, and Twitter in only 6 months. (*Publishing Poynters* 6/27/12)

Dads Really Do Matter to Kids, according to a meta-analysis of several decades' worth of parenting studies published in *Personality and Social Psychology Review*. Kids who feel rejected by their fathers show higher rates of behavioral problems, delinquency, depression, and substance

abuse than those who feel rejected by their mothers. Another study published in the *Journal of Early Adolescence* suggests children whose fathers use an authoritative parenting style show more persistence than others, regardless of the type of parenting style their mothers use. Persistence, in turn, was linked to lower rates of delinquency and greater involvement in school. (*CitizenLink* 6/21/12)

Oral Evangelism According to the International Orality Network, 70% of the world's population learns orally. That's 4.35 billion people who can't or won't rely on written instruction for learning. There are still 2,700 language groups that don't have their own version of written Scripture. It is considered ideal for mission work in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, as well as with churches in North America, Europe, and Western countries along with prison ministries. (*Charisma News* 6/19/12)

Children Are Harmed by growing up in homosexual and lesbian households, according to a new study that analyzed data from nearly 3,000 American adults, ages 18 to 39, who were raised in "different types of family arrangements." The Univ. of Texas study reveals a person is more likely to get molested in a household led by two lesbians than in a traditional 2-parent household. They are also more likely to have sexually transmitted diseases, to identify as homosexual, to be on public assistance, to have thoughts of suicide, and to have been forced to have sex unwillingly. (*Social Science Research* 7/12)

Fast Facts:

- 19% of U.S. adults self-identify as having no religious affiliation. Just 6% did so in 1990.
- 10% of U.S. adults became "Nones" or claim to have no religious affiliation after growing up within a religious group.
- 17% of Protestant pastors do not believe Adam and Eve were real people.
- Billy Graham has preached to more people than any other Protestant in history—2.2 billion.
- 50% of Americans say the Bible is hard to understand.
- 33% of Millennials report weekly attendance at a worship service.

- 86% of Americans view the Bible as a sacred book.
- Only 20% of Americans are engaging the Bible in their personal lives.
- 43% of Protestant pastors regularly evaluate discipleship progress among their congregations; 56% do not.
- 92% of Protestant pastors believe their congregation is making significant progress in their spiritual development.
- 90% of Protestant pastors agree, "We are consistently hearing reports of changed lives at our church."
- Pastors, as a group, purchase between 8 million and 13 million books every year.
- Tweens control an estimated \$43 billion in spending power.
- About 56.7 million people—19% of the U.S. population—had a disability in '10.
- Young men are much more likely to live with parents than women, partly because they marry later.
- YouTube users watch more than 3 billion hours of video per month.
- The average tablet user spends 13.9 hours per week with the device.
- Text messaging users send or receive an average of 35 messages per day.
- Women 25 to 44 are most often affected by depression with a major cause being the inability to express anger.
- 25%–50% of those with some type of depressive disorder will attempt suicide in their lifetime.
- 70% of family businesses fail to pass successfully to the next generation.
- In the 1930s, there were 33 workers for each U.S. retiree vs. 3.3 today.

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