

# Daniel: The Key to Victorious Living in a Hostile Culture

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## Introduction: Why this Bible study matters to you!

For the eyes of the LORD roam throughout the earth, so that He may strongly support those whose heart is completely His. (2 Chron 16:9; NASB)

- 1) The church is largely irrelevant and ineffective in today's world because it is not very different from the world (the culture) it exists in. Because it isn't different it lacks a source of power or a prophetic stance to challenge what's wrong with today's world.
- 2) Christians are generally weak, disconnected from the Spirit, and distracted because they have aligned their hearts to something other than God. God empowers those who are disconnected from those aspects of culture that are opposed to his nature and values. He doesn't empower those who internalize and live out the values of secular culture.
- 3) Living without the power of the Spirit has left most people (and many Christians) with lives that are empty (prone to addiction and overstimulation), aimless (accomplish little for the kingdom), and are consumed by the same passions and anxieties that characterize secular (merely biological) existence.

# 8 in 10 Americans Say Religion Is Losing Influence in Public Life

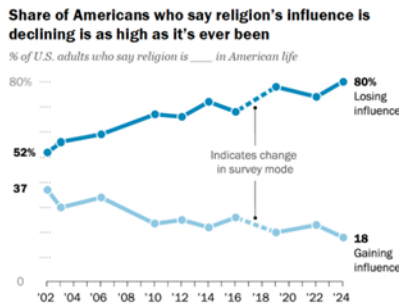
*Few see Biden or Trump as especially religious*

## How we did this

A new Pew Research Center survey finds that 80% of U.S. adults say religion's role in American life is shrinking – a percentage that's as high as it's ever been in our surveys.

Most Americans who say religion's influence is shrinking are not happy about it. Overall, 49% of U.S. adults say both that religion is losing influence *and* that this is a bad thing. An additional 8% of U.S. adults think religion's influence is growing and that this is a good thing.

Together, a combined 57% of U.S. adults – a clear majority – express a positive view of religion's influence on American life.



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Dotted line indicates a change in survey mode between 2016 and 2019. Data from 2019 and after comes from Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel (ATP). 2016 and earlier used telephone surveys. The wording of the question on the telephone surveys was slightly different than on the ATP. Refer to the Topline for details.  
Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Feb. 13-25, 2024.  
"8 in 10 Americans Say Religion Is Losing Influence in Public Life"

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## REPORT MATERIALS

- Report PDF
- Topline

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### 8 in 10 Americans Say Religion Is Losing Influence in Public Life

- Moral and religious qualities in a president
- Views of Biden, Trump and their religious engagement
- Views on trying to control religious values in the government and schools
- Christianity's place in politics, and Christian nationalism

- Religion's role in public life
- U.S. presidential candidates and their religious engagement
- Christianity's place in politics, and 'Christian nationalism'

#### Acknowledgments

#### Methodology

## Daniel

- 1) Who was he? How can we describe his life in a nutshell?
- 2) What is the structure of the book? Why is this book so unique?
- 3) Why have some people tried to criticize and dispute the historical claims of this book?

In support of traditional date and authorship:

- a) Jesus believed in traditional authorship. Matt 24:15

“So when you see standing in the holy place ‘the abomination that causes desolation,’ spoken of through the prophet Daniel—let the reader understand—then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.” (Matt 24:15-16)

- b) The Dead Sea Scrolls contained fragments of Daniel, which essentially proves it was written many centuries before the time of Christ.

- c) There are Persian “loanwords” (Old Persian) that have been shown archeologically to have been in use in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

- d) The book was accepted in the Jewish canon without dispute.

- e) Ezekiel mentions Daniel, and the book of Ezekiel is universally accepted as originating long before the second century B.C. (See Ezek 14:13-14, 20; 28:3).

“Son of man, if a country sins against me by being unfaithful and I stretch out my hand against it to cut off its food supply and send famine upon it and kill its people and their animals, even if these three men—Noah, Daniel and Job—were in it, they could save only themselves by their righteousness, declares the Sovereign LORD.” (Ezek 14:13-14)

- f) Daniel’s visions clearly predict the fall of the Babylonian empire, followed by the Medo-Persian empire, then the Greek empire. This is the time frame of late authorship. But it goes on to predict the Roman empire as a fourth world empire. Even if it were written during the time of the Greek empire, it accurately predicts another empire (Rome) that arose after the time of late authorship.

## Brief Historical Snapshots

- Assyria, Nineveh
- Babylon
- Nebuchadnezzar
- Josiah, King of Judah
- Jehoiakim
- Jehoiachin (Jeconiah)

## The Captivity

However, if you do not obey the LORD your God and do not carefully follow all his commands and decrees I am giving you today, all these curses will come on you and overtake you... The LORD will drive you and the king you set over you to a nation unknown to you or your ancestors. There you will worship other gods, gods of wood and stone. You will become a thing of horror, a byword and an object of ridicule among all the peoples where the LORD will drive you. (Deut 28:15, 36-37)