

The Joy of Toil

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The 21st Sunday after Pentecost (Pr 24)
21 October, A.D. 2012
Ecc1 5:10-20; Heb 4:1-13 (14-16); Mk 10:23-31

Introduction: God, 'Nones' and Money

'Nones' on the rise & implications

I. The Dangers of Wealth

Mark 10:25 (ESV)

It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God."

Ecclesiastes 5:10-17 (ESV)

¹⁰He who loves money will not be satisfied with money, nor he who loves wealth with his income; this also is vanity. ¹¹When goods increase, they increase who eat them, and what advantage has their owner but to see them with his eyes? ¹²Sweet is the sleep of a laborer, whether he eats little or much, but the full stomach of the rich will not let him sleep.

¹³There is a grievous evil that I have seen under the sun: riches were kept by their owner to his hurt, ¹⁴and those riches were lost in a bad venture. And he is father of a son, but he has nothing in his hand. ¹⁵As he came from his mother's womb he shall go again, naked as he came, and shall take nothing for his toil that he may carry away in his hand. ¹⁶This also is a grievous evil: just as he came, so shall he go, and what gain is there to him who toils for the wind?

¹⁷Moreover, all his days he eats in darkness in much vexation and sickness and anger.

II. Wealth God's Way

Ecclesiastes 5:18–20 (ESV)

¹⁸Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. ¹⁹Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. ²⁰For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart.

III. Heavenly Wealth & Understanding

Hebrews 4:14–16 (ESV)

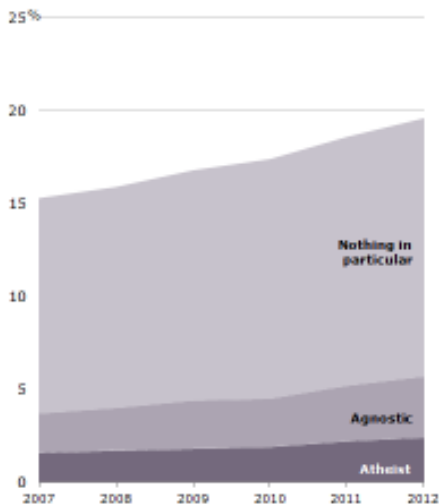
¹⁴Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. ¹⁵For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Conclusion

CCT: Christ has redeemed _____ and calls us, therefore, to have _____ in our toil.

Statistics from the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life¹

Growth of the Religiously Unaffiliated

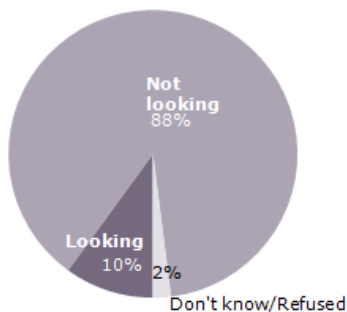


Source: Aggregated data from surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2007-July 2012.

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Are You Looking For a Religion that Would be Right for You?

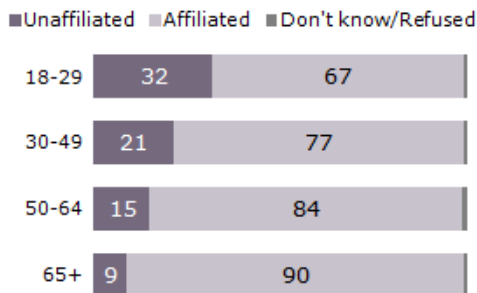
Among those who identify their religion as "nothing in particular," % who say they are ...



Source: Pew Research Center survey, June 28-July 9, 2012. Q72. Based on those who say their religion is "nothing in particular."

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Religious Affiliation by Age



Source: Aggregated data from surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, January-July 2012.

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¹ From a report on a October 9, 2012 report by The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life. www.pewforum.org. See "Nones" on the Rise." <http://www.pewforum.org/Unaffiliated/nones-on-the-rise.aspx>. Accessed October 15, 2012.

Views of Religious Institutions

% who agree that churches and other religious organizations ...

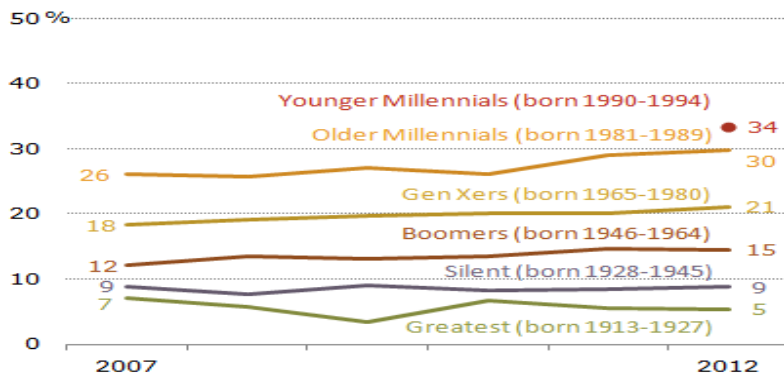
	U.S.		
	general public	Unaffiliated	Affiliated
	%	%	%
Are too concerned w/money and power	51	70	47
Focus too much on rules	51	67	47
Are too involved w/politics	46	67	41
Bring people together/strengthen community bonds	88	78	90
Play important role in helping poor and needy	87	77	90
Protect and strengthen morality	76	52	81

Source: Pew Research Center survey, June 28-July 9, 2012. Q73a-g. Responses of disagree and those who did not give an answer are not shown.

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Recent Trends in Affiliation, by Generation

% of each age cohort that is unaffiliated



Source: Aggregated data from surveys conducted by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, 2007-2012.

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