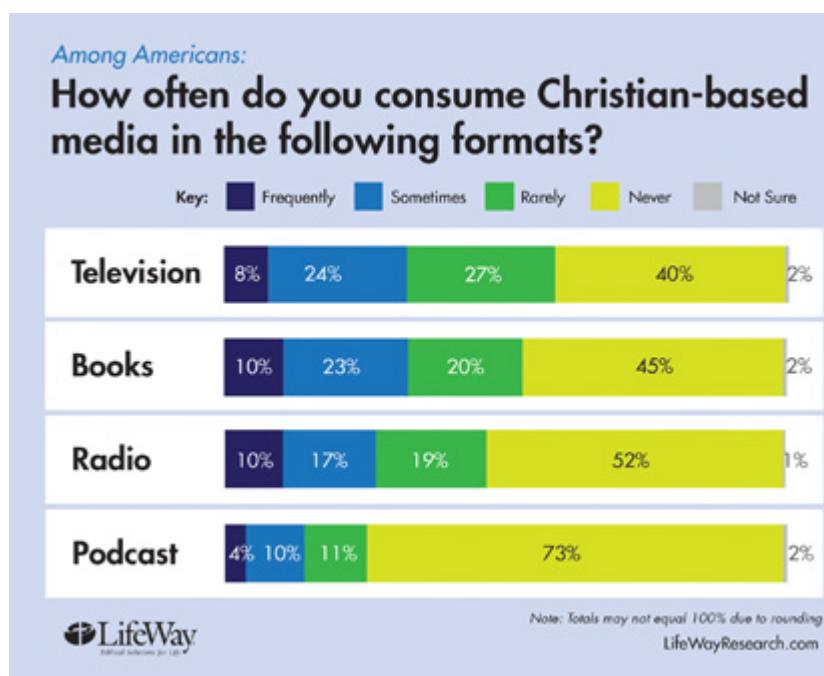


# Christian media reaches the faithful, not the masses

February 27, 2015

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—Christian media has a huge base among the faithful, but many Americans ignore it.

About two-thirds of weekly churchgoers and evangelicals say they tune in to Christian radio and television on a regular basis. But among all Americans, two-thirds rarely or never watch Christian TV, and seven of 10 rarely or never listen to Christian radio.



Those are among the findings of a new LifeWay Research study on the use of Christian media. The study, sponsored by the National Religious Broadcasters, included an online survey of 2,252 Americans and a phone survey of 1,009 Americans.

“Christian media delivers teaching, music and entertainment to a predominantly Christian constituency,” said Ed Stetzer, executive director of LifeWay Research, who released the study’s findings during the NRB national convention in Nashville. “Not surprisingly, those who embrace Christian teaching will value and consume these the most.”

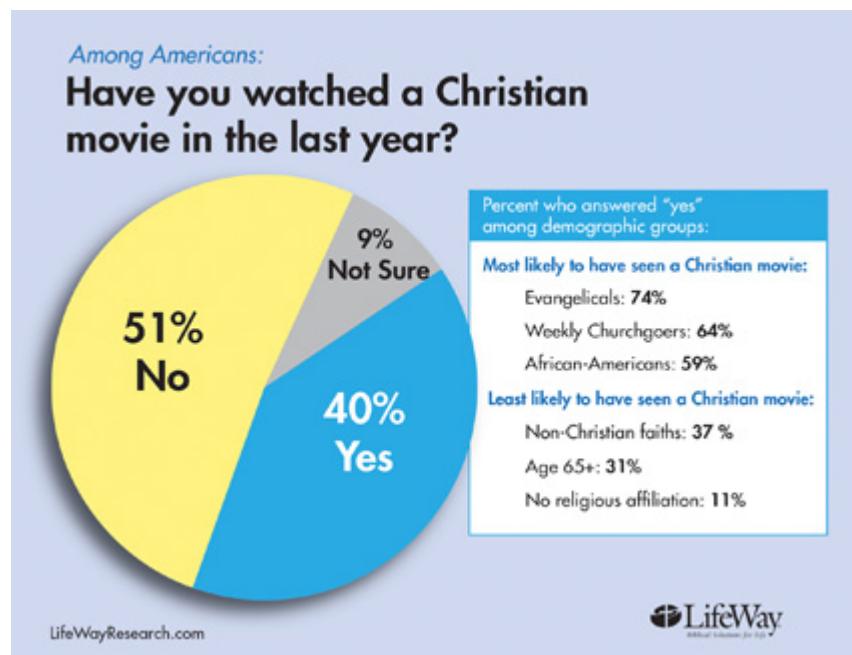
Researchers found demographic splits between those who frequently or sometimes listen to or watch Christian broadcasts and those who rarely or never tune in.

Self-identified evangelicals (69 percent), weekly church attenders (62 percent) and African-Americans (54 percent) are more likely to watch Christian television.

About two-thirds of evangelicals (67 percent) and more than half of weekly church attenders (57 percent) are fans of Christian radio. Just under half (46 percent) of African Americans also tune in. Overall, about one in four (27 percent) Americans frequently or sometimes listen to Christian radio.

More Protestants and nondenominational Christians (45 percent) watch Christian television than Catholics (28 percent). Radio has a similar denominational split. Fewer than half (41 percent) of Protestants and nondenominational Christians tune in, along with one in five (21 percent) Catholics.

Christian books fare about the same as Christian broadcasting. About a third of Americans (33 percent) say they frequently or sometimes read Christian books. Two-thirds (65 percent) rarely or never read Christian books.



Two-thirds of Americans (67 percent) rarely or never watch Christian

television, and that tendency is even more pronounced among those who skip church all together (94 percent) or have no religious affiliation (89 percent).

Seven in 10 Americans (72 percent) rarely or never listen to Christian radio. They include those with no religious affiliation (94 percent) or who rarely (84 percent) or never (97 percent) attend church.

Christian movies have wider appeal. Four in 10 (40 percent) Americans say they watched a Christian movie in the last year. About half (51 percent) have not. One in 10 (9 percent) are not sure.

Americans over age 65 (31 percent) are less likely to have seen a Christian movie than those 18-29 (40 percent). African-Americans (59 percent), evangelicals (74 percent) and weekly churchgoers (64 percent) are more likely to have seen a Christian movie.

Those with no religious affiliation (11 percent) and those from non-Christian faiths (37 percent) are least likely to have seen a Christian film.

“Great movies hinge on great stories, and the Bible is filled with great stories,” Stetzer said. “These numbers show that many Americans are watching, and perhaps this will encourage more and better films.”

Christian media has found a significant audience online. The phone survey revealed 25 percent of Americans watch or listen to Christian programming every week on their computer, phone or tablet. An additional 5 percent tune in online monthly, and 9 percent watch or listen online less than once a month.

“That would amount to over 60 million adult Americans each week,” Stetzer explained.

Six in 10 (60 percent) never watch or listen on their computer, smartphone

or tablet.

Few (4 percent) Americans listen to Christian podcasts frequently. About one in 10 listen sometimes. Most Americans (84 percent) rarely or never listen to Christian podcasts.

## **Survey methodology**

Researchers conducted the online survey of adult Americans Sept. 17-18, 2014. They invited a sample of an online panel demographically reflecting the adult population of the United States to participate. Responses were weighted by region, age, ethnicity, gender and income to reflect the population more accurately. The completed sample is 2,252 online surveys.

The phone survey of Americans was conducted Jan. 29-Feb. 1, 2015. The calling utilized Random Digit Dialing. Fifty percent of completes were among landlines and 50 percent among cell phones. Weights were used for geographic, demographic and socioeconomic characteristics to more accurately reflect the population more accurately. The completed sample is 1,009 surveys. The sample provides 95 percent confidence the sampling error does not exceed plus or minus 3.1 percent. Margins of error are higher in sub-groups.