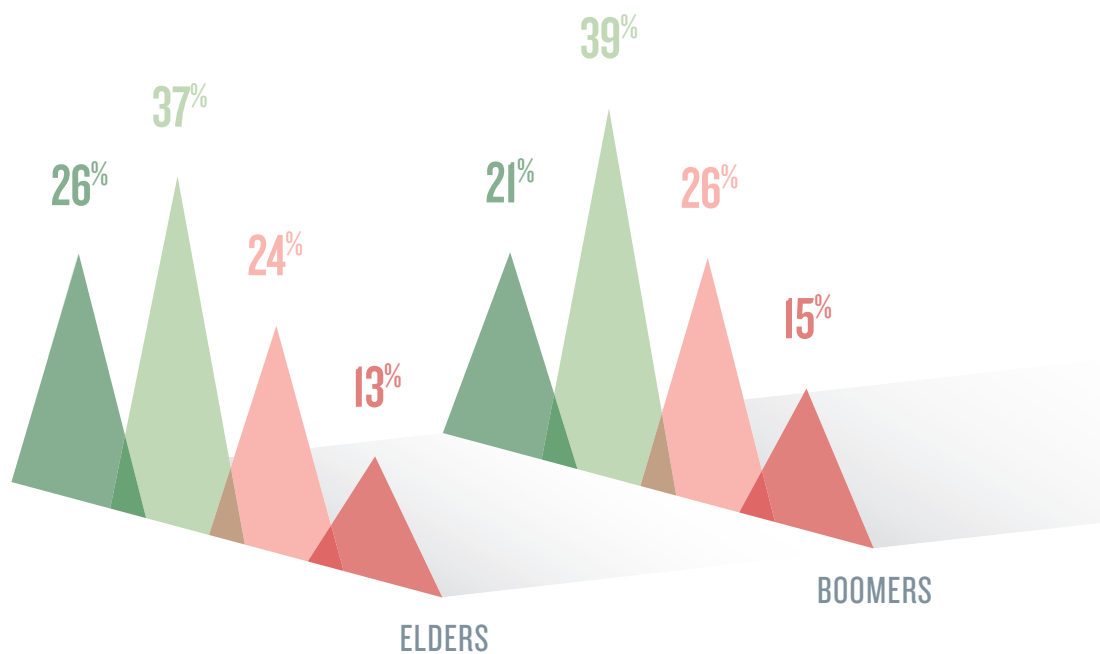


# GENERATION GAP

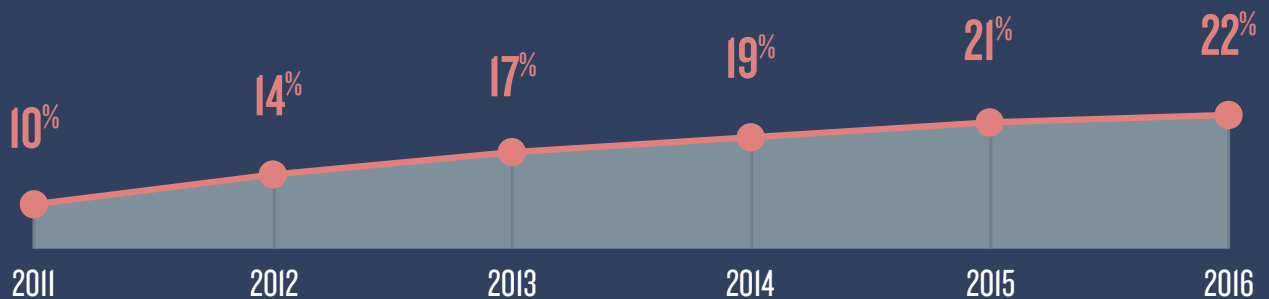
The Bible has been a part of American life since the first English colonists settled Jamestown in 1607. For nearly 400 years its well-known words, stories, people and principles informed public discourse and formed the national character and shared worldview. Younger generations, however, are loosening the Bible's grip on the American soul.

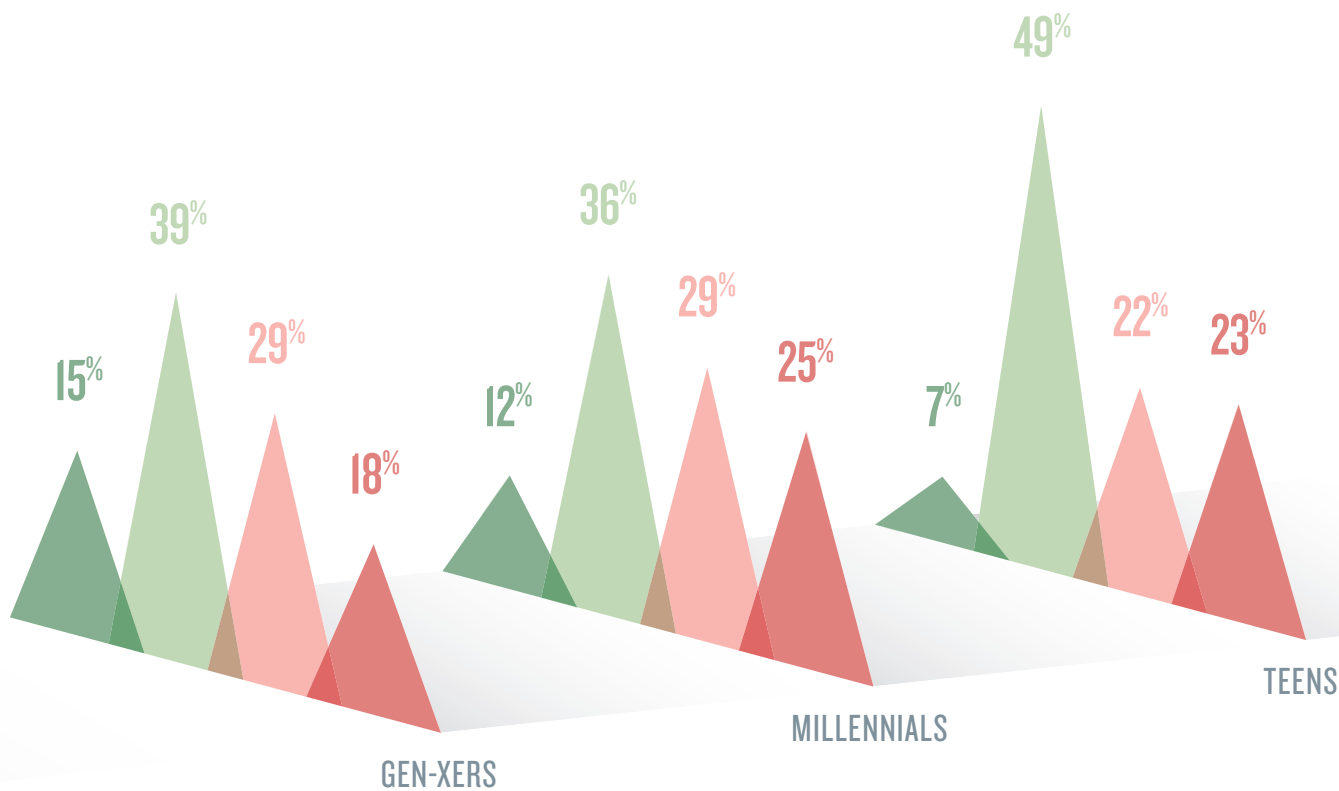
- + BIBLE ENGAGED
- + BIBLE FRIENDLY
- BIBLE NEUTRAL
- BIBLE SKEPTIC



## THE RISE OF BIBLE SKEPTICS

PERCENT OF ADULTS THAT QUALIFY AS BIBLE SKEPTICS

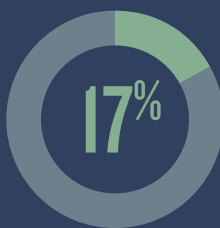




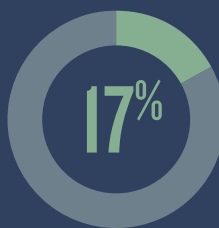
### TOP REASONS PEOPLE GIVE FOR DECREASED BIBLE ENGAGEMENT



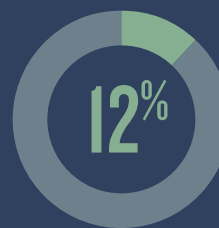
TOO BUSY WITH LIFE'S RESPONSIBILITIES



BECAME ATHEIST OR AGNOSTIC



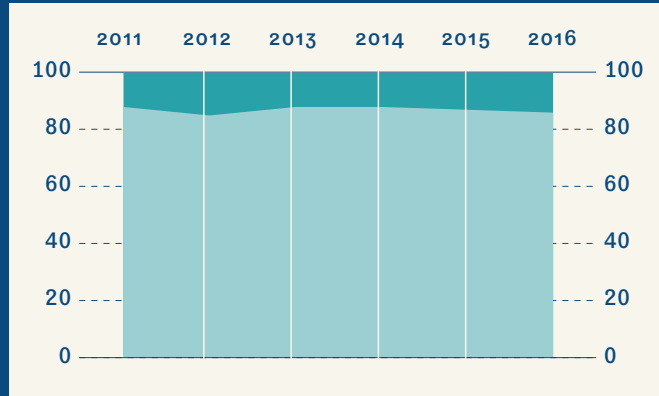
DECIDED TO LEAVE THE CHURCH ALTOGETHER



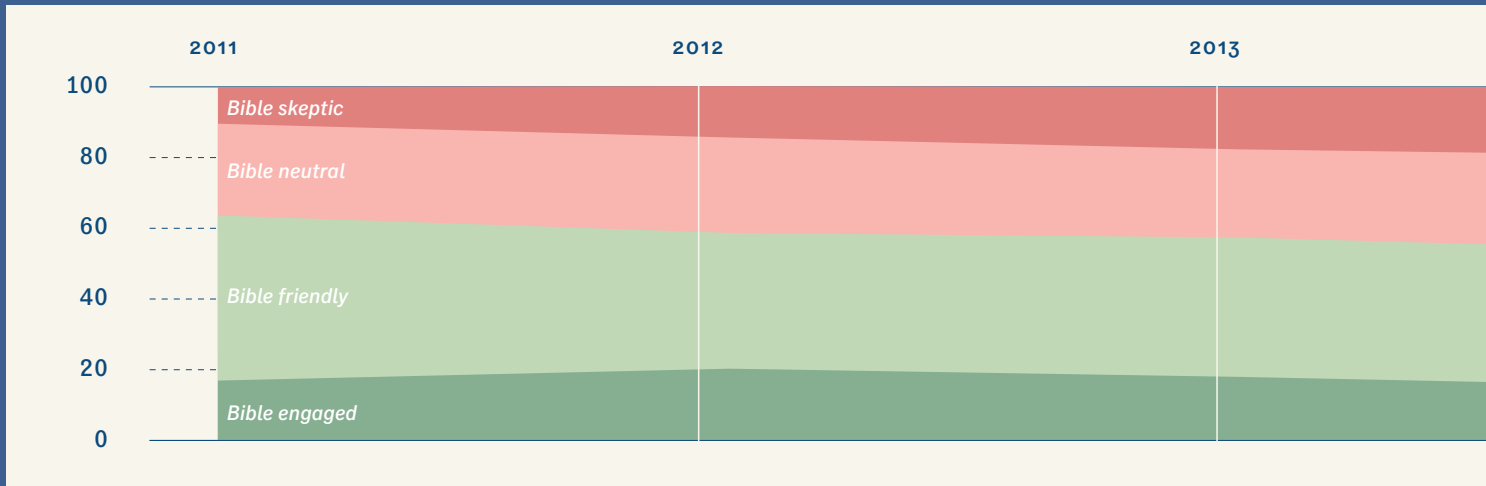
A DIFFICULT EXPERIENCE IN MY LIFE CAUSED ME TO DOUBT MY FAITH

## BIBLE OWNERSHIP

The percentage of Americans who say yes, they own a copy of the Bible, has held steady over the past half-decade. Nearly nine out of 10 adults say there is at least one Bible at home, and the median number of Bibles per household is 3.0.

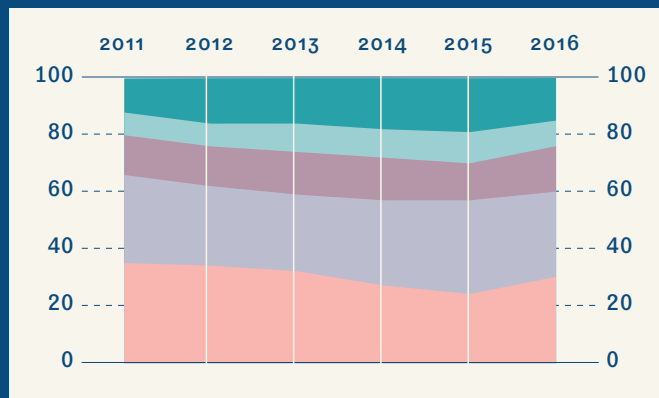


# THE BIBLE THROUGH THE YEARS



## WHAT IS THE BIBLE, EXACTLY?

Americans' views on how best to describe the Bible have remained fairly consistent over time—except among Millennials, which we'll explore in part IV. As more Millennials have emerged into adulthood since 2011, they have begun to tip the Bible-engagement scales toward greater skepticism.



*just another book of teachings written by men that contain stories and advice*

*not inspired, tells how writers understood the ways and principles of God*

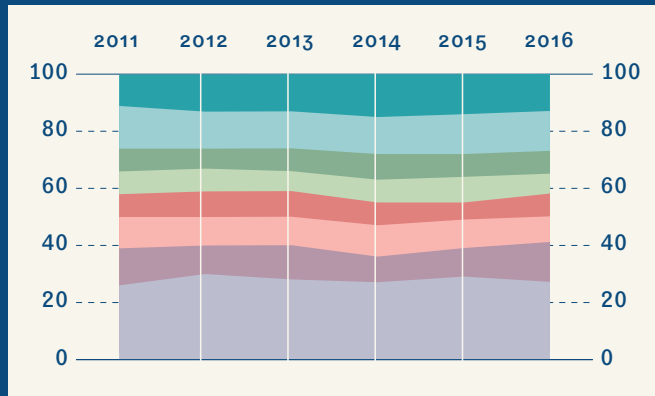
*inspired word of God, has some factual or historical errors*

*inspired word of God, no errors, some verses symbolic*

*actual word of God and should be taken literally, word for word*

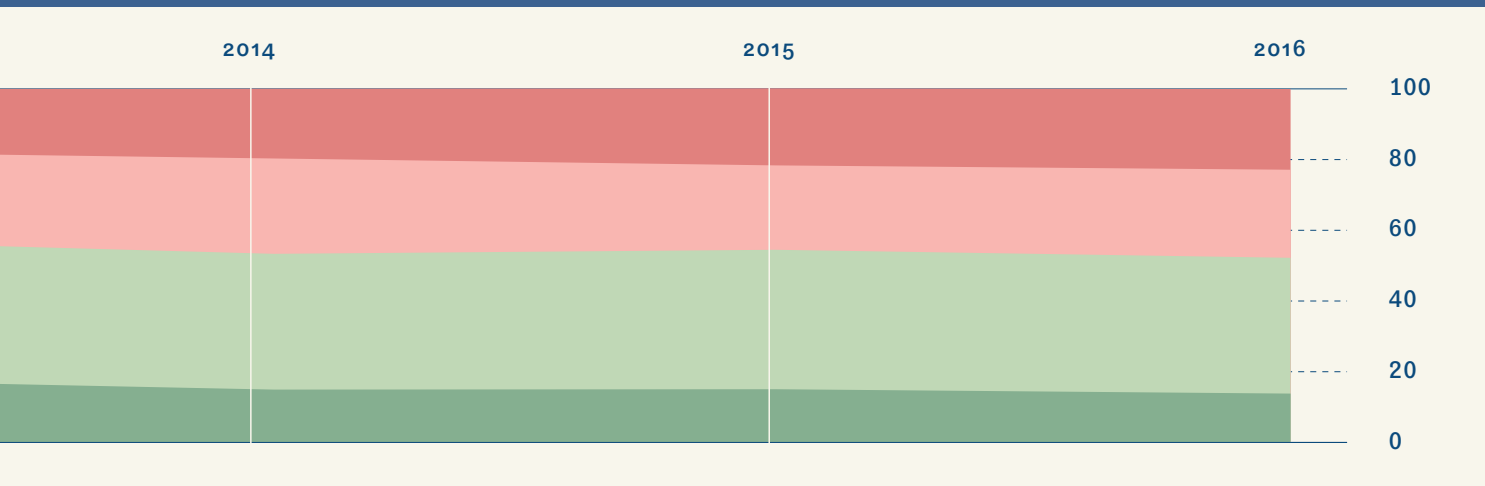
## HABITS OF BIBLE READING

Bible readership among U.S. adults has also been notably stable since 2011. About one-quarter never reads the Scriptures, while another one-quarter reads the Bible a few times a week or more. The other half of the population falls somewhere in between.



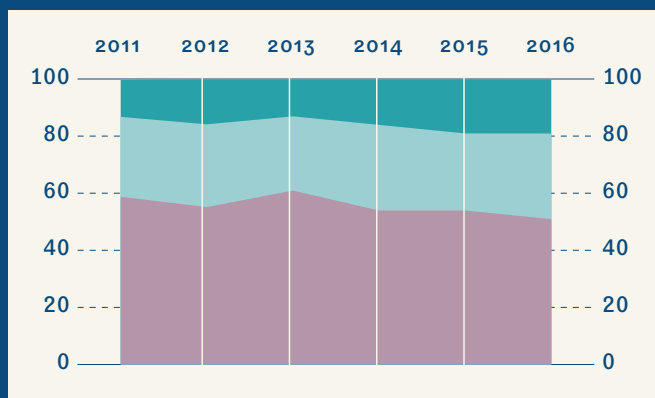
*every day*  
*several times/4+ times a week*  
*once a week*  
*once a month*  
*three or four times a year*  
*once or twice a year*  
*less than once a year*  
*never*

Barna and American Bible Society have tracked Americans' views of and engagement with the Bible since 2011. Bible ownership and reading habits have remained fairly consistent through the years – but there is a clear downward trend when it comes to views on the Bible's trustworthiness and influence.



## THE BIBLE'S INFLUENCE ON SOCIETY

Fewer people today than in 2011 say the Bible's influence on society is too limited—and the number of Americans who says it holds too much sway over society is increasing.



*too much influence*  
*just right*  
*too little influence*