

Notes from: **“The Scandal of the Evangelical Conscience”**
A **Books and Culture** synopsis of Ron Sider’s book (same title)
February 2005
Ron Sider cites George Barna

I. Categories of Christians

A. Barna’s “Born Again” Christians (35-43% of the US population)

1. I have made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is still important in my life today.
2. I believe that when I die I will go to heaven because I have confessed my sins and accepted Jesus Christ as my savior.

B. Barna’s “Evangelical” Christians (7-8% of the US population)

(Accept the 2 “born again” criteria above, but also four more, see below.)

1. Jesus lived a sinless life.
2. Eternal salvation is only through grace, not works.
3. Christians have a personal responsibility to evangelize non-Christians.
4. Satan exists.

C. Christians with a biblical worldview (Only 9% of all Born Again adults, only 2% of born again teenagers!) (Roughly parallel with category B. above, “evangelical”)

1. The Bible is the moral standard.
2. Absolute moral truths exist and are conveyed through the Bible.
3. God is the all-knowing, all-powerful Creator who still rules the universe.
4. Jesus Christ lived a sinless life.
5. Satan is a real, living entity.
6. Salvation is a free gift, not something we can earn.
7. Every Christian has a personal responsibility to evangelize.
8. The Bible is totally accurate in all that it teaches.

II. Barna: “Worldview Christians” do behave differently from other Christians.

A. Spiritual practice.

1. Twice as likely as other Christians to read the Bible each week.
2. Adults are three times as likely to attend weekly Sunday School.
3. Adults are more than three times as likely to attend a weekly small group for prayer and Bible study.

B. Moral and Social choices.

1. 9x more likely than other Christians to avoid sexually explicit material on the internet.
2. 4x more likely to boycott objectionable products and companies.
3. 2x more likely to avoid movies w/ harmful content.
4. 3x more likely not to use tobacco products.
5. 2x more likely to volunteer time to help needy people.
6. Families have much lower rates of domestic abuse.

III. Sider’s Lessons, and signs of hope.

1. Faith _____. A genuine, committed, informed faith does lead to better living.
2. Theology _____. To change the behavior of believers, work and pray for more orthodox belief in the churches.
3. Believers are _____. 80% of Christians in the US say that if their churches taught more about what they should do personally to grow spiritually, they would be open to listen and follow most recommendations.
4. The gospel is _____! Jesus of Nazareth came out of his grave alive, and he takes initiative to reconcile people to God.