

STATE OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

A report on the current + future state



STATE OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

Report prepared for Lausanne Global Congress Seoul 2024

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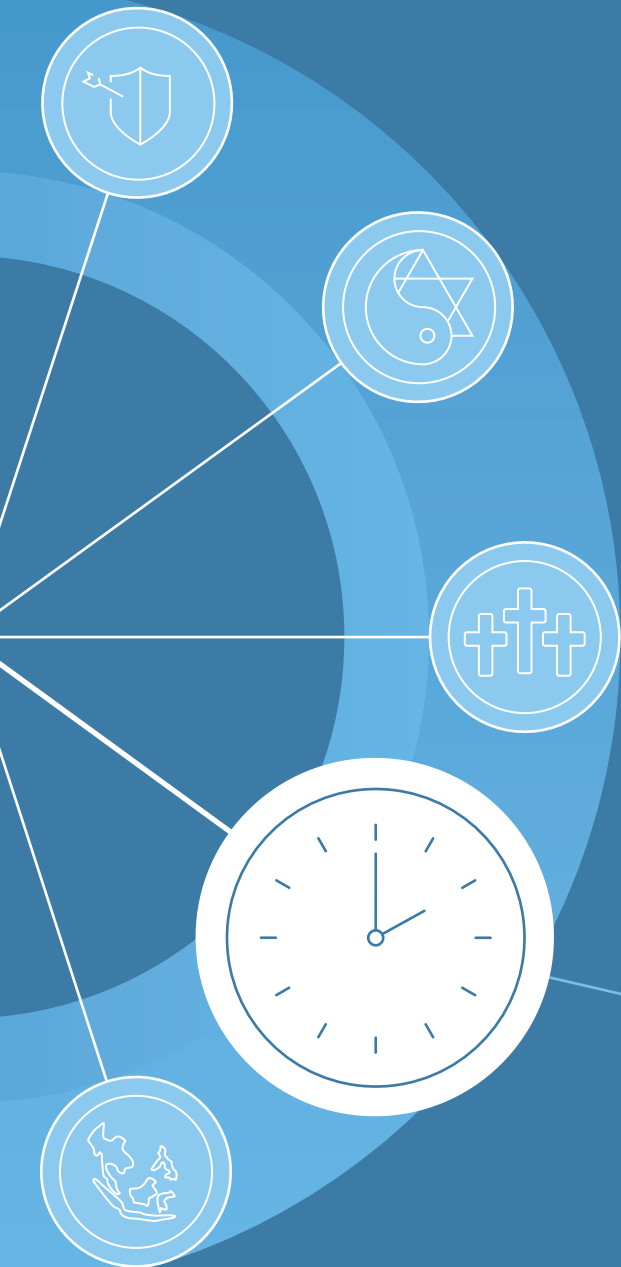
STATE OF THE GREAT COMMISSION



CURRENT STATUS OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

INTRODUCTION

Measuring the progress of the Great Commission is an infinitely complex task which aims to track the ineffable movement of God. Yet, we can measure a wide variety of human activity faithful to the great commission. The following reports on the current status of a wide variety of traditional missiological measures.

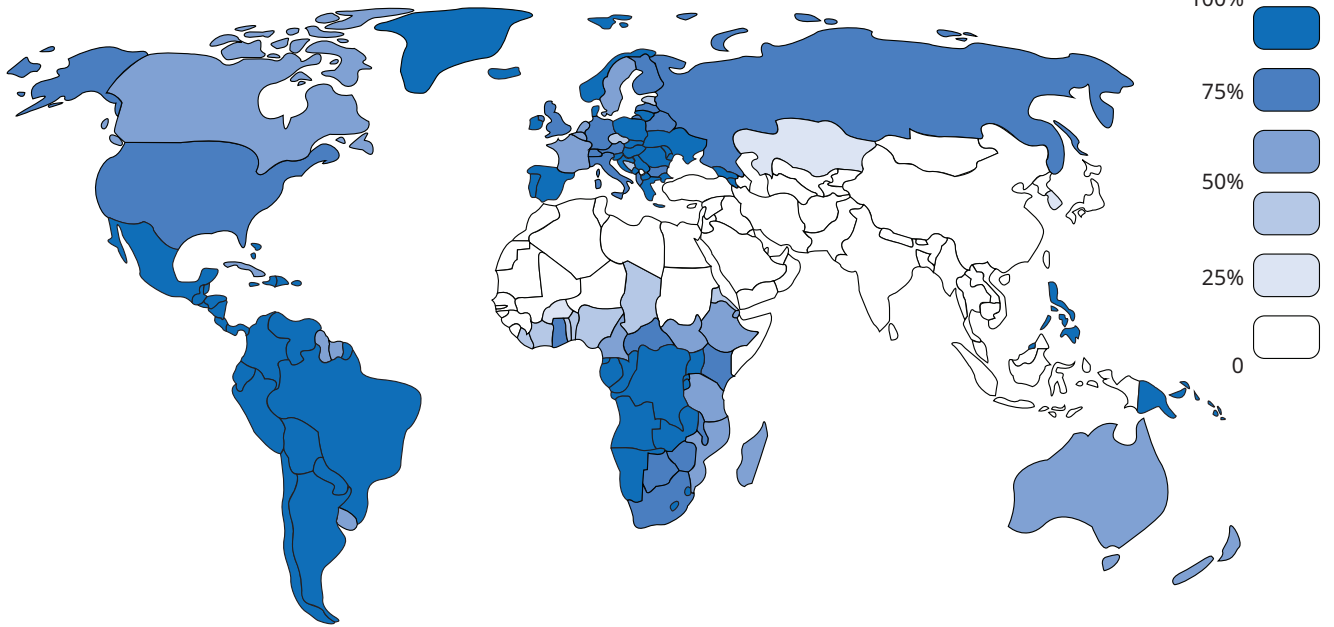




CURRENT STATUS

GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY

% CHRISTIAN AFFILIATION* BY COUNTRY



Source: World Christian Database, Accessed May 2023; *Graph reports Christian affiliation, or membership, not belief, practice, or theological beliefs

YOUNG AFRICA, AGING WEST

Sub-Saharan Africa's youthful Christian population ensures the region's centrality to global Christian growth for decades to come. Christianity will increasingly be a religion of the aged in Europe and North America.

THE AMERICAS

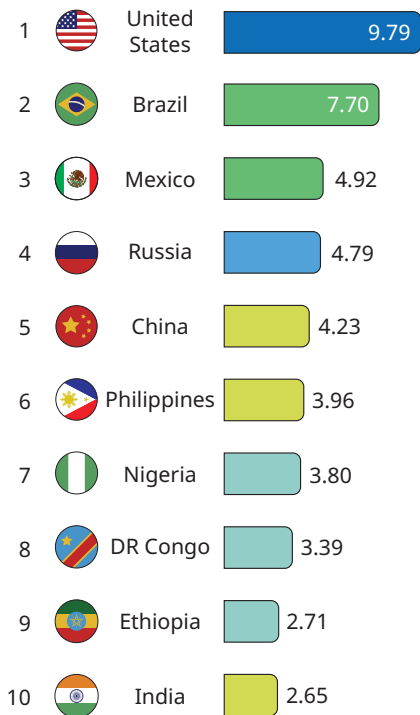
Countries in the Western Hemisphere maintain their centrality to the world Christian movement even as Western European nations fall out of the top ten for the first time in modern history.

GROWTH AND DECLINE

Over the past century, Christianity witnessed its most marked growth in Sub-Saharan Africa and its most marked decline in the Middle East, North Africa, and Western Europe.

% OF GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY

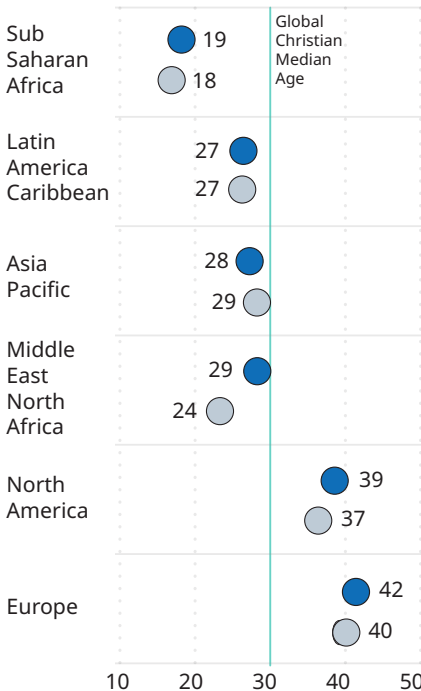
Ranking of Countries



Source: World Christian Database, Accessed May 2023

MEDIAN AGE

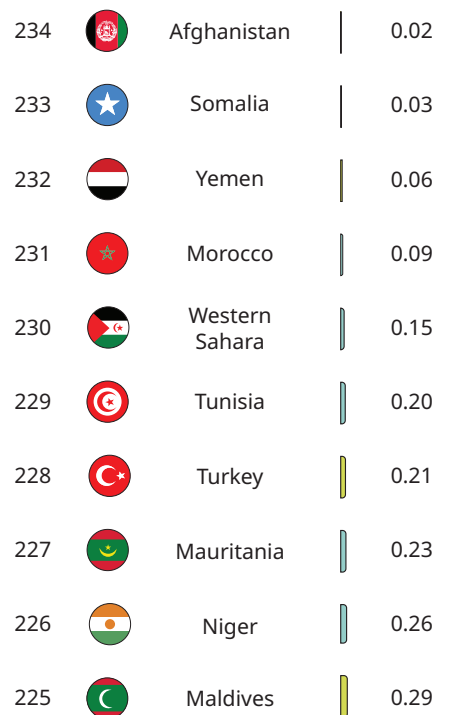
■ Christian Median Age in Region
□ Regional Population Median Age



Source: Pew Center, The Future of World Religions, 2015

LOWEST % CHRISTIAN

Countries with Lowest % Christian

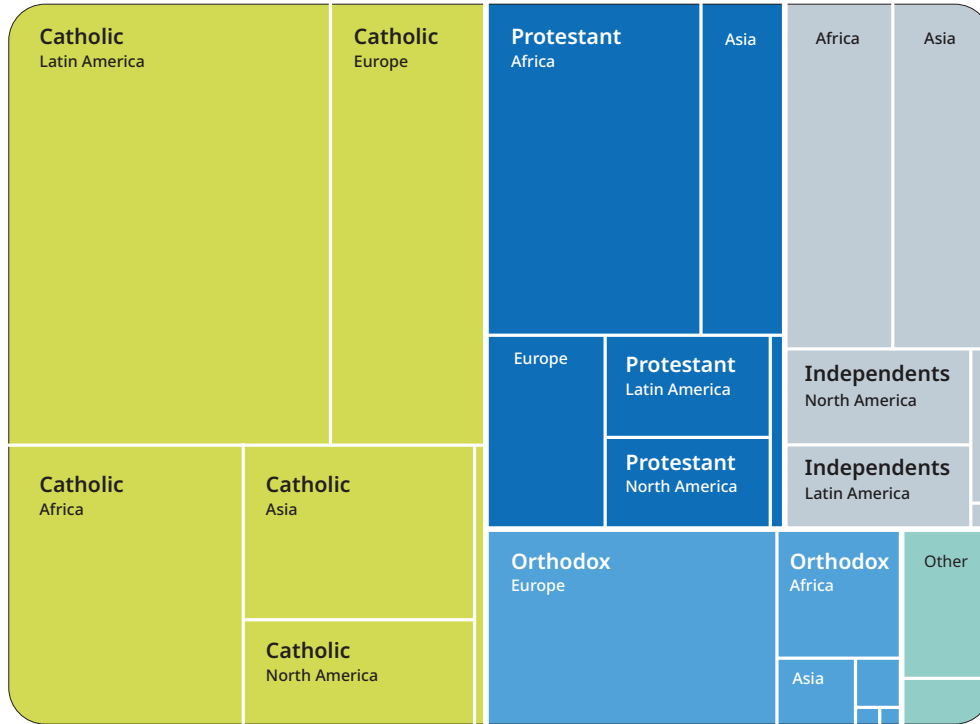


Source: World Christian Database, Accessed May 2023



CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

CHRISTIAN POPULATION BY MAJOR TRADITIONS



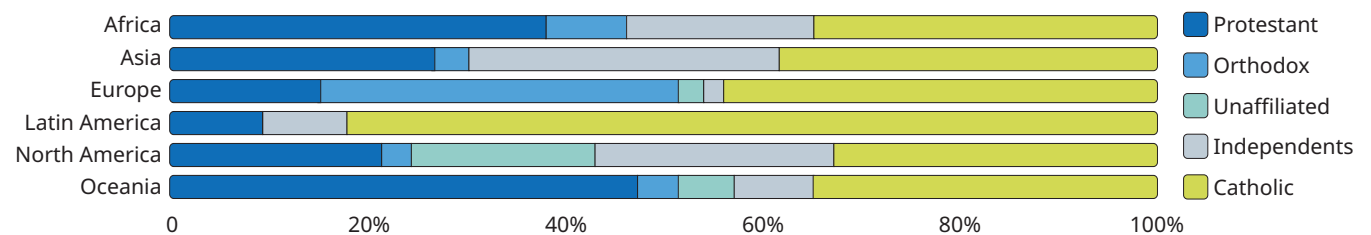
GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION
Catholicism remains the dominant Christian tradition throughout the world, with only Oceania possessing a near majority of Protestants. Orthodox traditions have experienced the sharpest decline in the past century, primarily through persistent persecution in Communist and then Islamic contexts.

Independents, those who do not identify with Catholic, Orthodox, or Protestants, have witnessed the most marked growth.

Growth of independents has fueled the rise of Christianity in Africa, and independents will likely dominate Christian growth in the Global South for decades to come.

Source: World Christian Encyclopedia pgs. 8, 10, 12, 14, 16; 2020

CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS BY GLOBAL REGION



Source: World Christian Encyclopedia pgs. 8, 10, 12, 14, 16; 2020

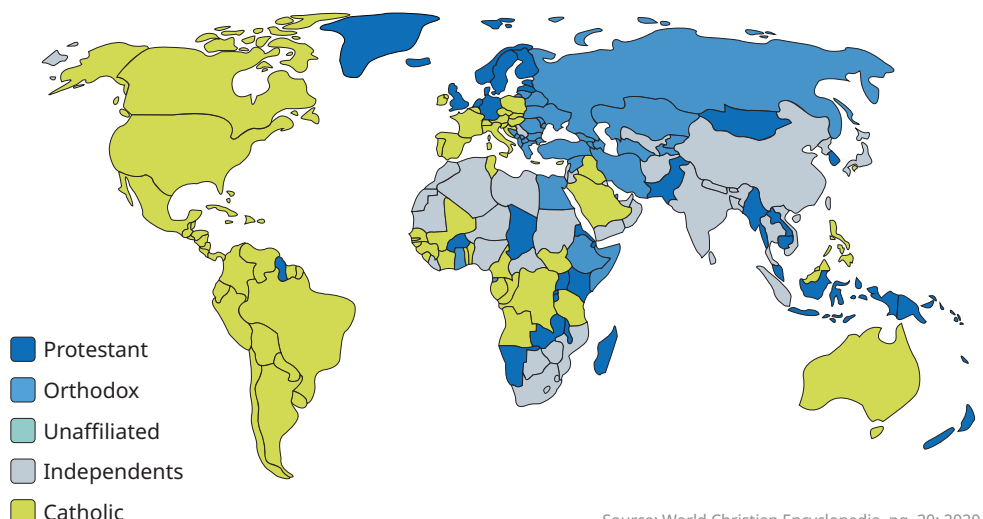
GROWING DIVERSITY

While European-origin traditions, most specifically Catholicism, dominated a century ago, today's global church is marked by increasing denominational parity.

The increase in number of denominations and movements can be both cause for celebration of Christianity's diversity but also can promote fragmentation and division.

Urban contexts marked by high levels of migration are centers of the promises and perils of Christian diversity.

MAJORITY CHRISTIAN DENOMINATION BY COUNTRY



Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, pg. 20; 2020



CURRENT STATUS

PROTESTANTS AND INDEPENDENTS

SHIFT SOUTHWARD

Protestants are those belonging to denominations descended from the Protestant Reformation in Europe.

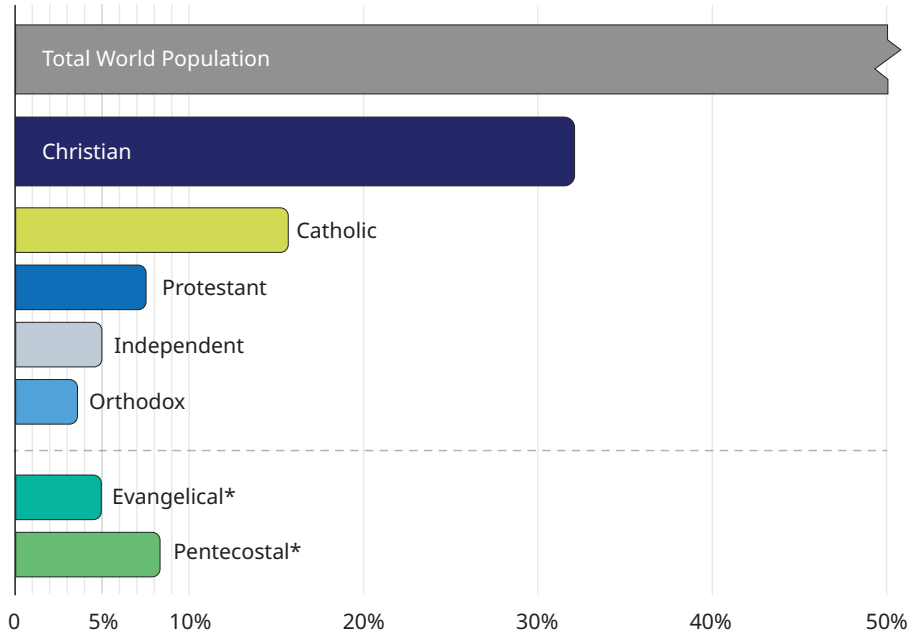
They include Baptists, Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, some Pentecostals, and many others.

More Protestants are now found in the Global South than Global North, with Anglicans worshipping on a Sunday morning in Nigeria rather than in England.

Independents do not identify as Catholic, Orthodox, or Protestant.

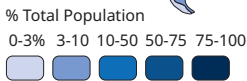
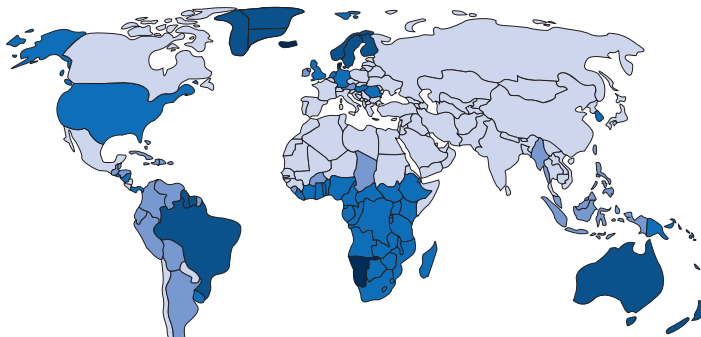
Independents are spread throughout the globe and are most conspicuous in contexts like China, Brazil, the United States, and Sub-Saharan Africa.

% OF GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY 2020



*These movements are found within the other Christian traditions Source: World Christian Encyclopedia pgs. 25-26, 2020

GLOBAL PROTESTANTS



Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, pg. 25, 2020

PROTESTANT FACT SHEET



Nigeria
Largest Country



Faroe Islands
Highest Percentage



Albania
Fastest Growth



United States
Largest Decline

23.2%

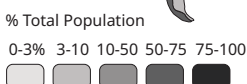
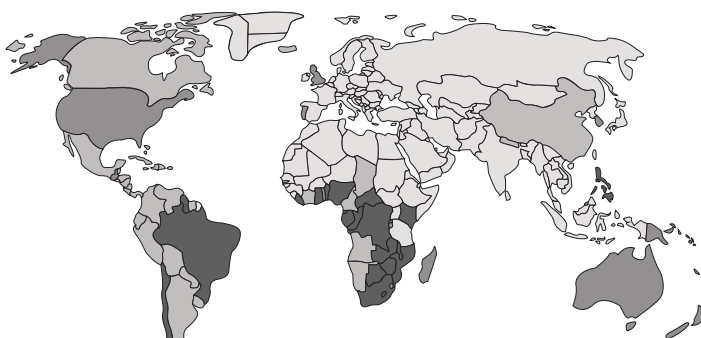
Percentage of Christians

7.5%

Percentage of World

Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, pg. 25, 2020

GLOBAL INDEPENDENTS



Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, pg. 26, 2020

INDEPENDENTS FACT SHEET



United States
Largest Country



Tonga
Highest Percentage



Mozambique
Fastest Growth



Germany
Largest Decline

15.5%

Percentage of Christians

5%

Percentage of World

Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, pg. 26, 2020



CURRENT STATUS

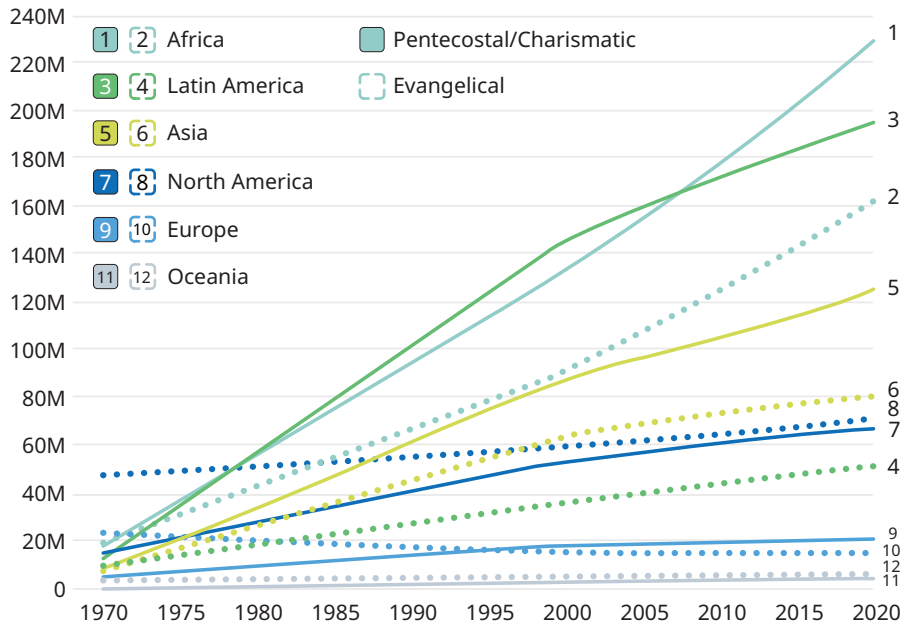
EVANGELICALS AND PENTECOSTALS

GROWING PIETISM

These two movements focused on experience, conversion, and personal piety often overlap. Yet while evangelicals are Protestant, charismatic Catholics also form part of the Pentecostal movement. Pentecostal and charismatic expressions of Christianity are the face of the rapid growth, renewal, and diversification of Christianity in the Global South. Latin America and Sub-Saharan Africa are now the demographic centers of global Pentecostalism. Fast Pentecostal growth in the Gulf States is caused primarily by labor migrations from African and Asian nations.

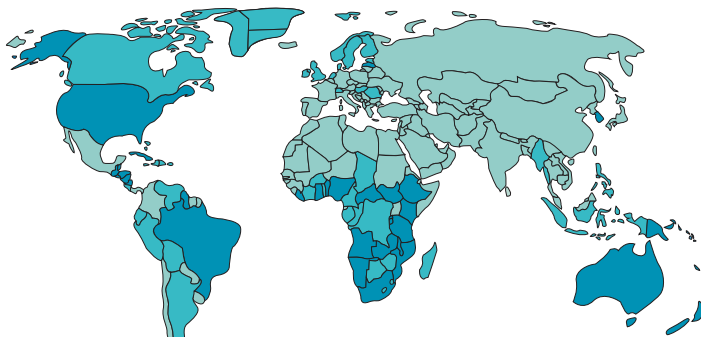
While the majority of evangelicals are now found outside the West, the United States remains a fiscal and institutional center for the movement. America's evangelical population, however, is declining.

RISE OF EVANGELICALS AND PENTECOSTALS



Source: World Christian Encyclopedia pgs. 25-26, 2020; M = Millions

GLOBAL EVANGELICALS



% Total Population
 0-3% 3-10 10-50 50-75 75-100

Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, pg. 25, 2020

EVANGELICAL FACT SHEET



United States
Largest Country



Marshall Islands
Highest Percentage



Belgium
Fastest Growth



Australia
Largest Decline

15.4%

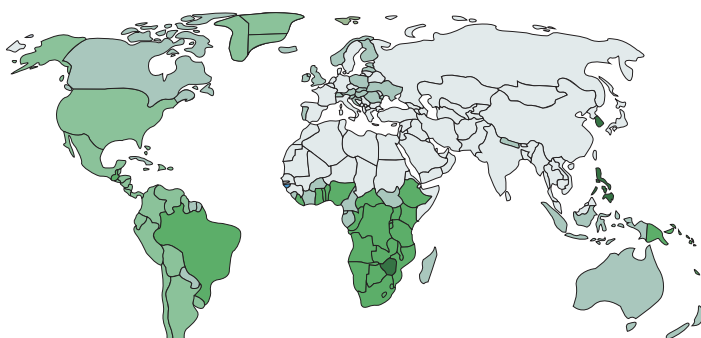
Percentage of Christians

5%

Percentage of World

Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, pg. 25, 2020

GLOBAL PENTECOSTALS/CHARISMATICS



% Total Population
 0-3% 3-10 10-50 50-75 75-100

Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, pg. 25, 2020

PENTECOSTAL FACT SHEET



Brazil
Largest Country



Marshall Islands
Highest Percentage



Kuwait
Fastest Growth



France
Largest Decline

25.6%

Percentage of Christians

8.3%

Percentage of World

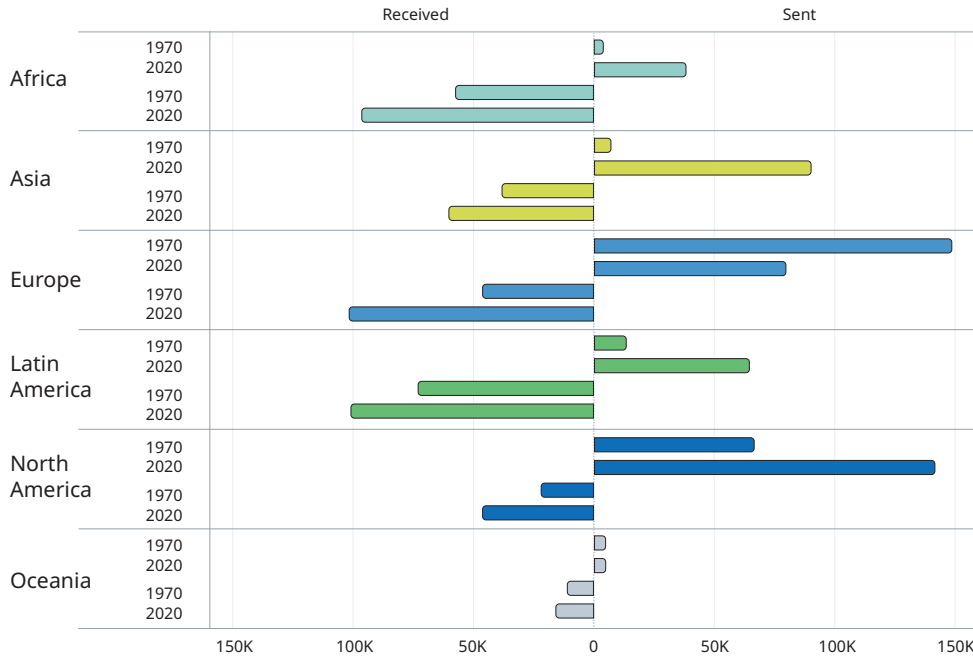
Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, pg. 26, 2020



CURRENT STATUS

MISSION WORKERS

MISSIONARIES SENT AND RECEIVED*



Source: World Christian Database, Accessed March 2023; *Estimated numbers of missionaries

POLYCENTRIC MISSION

Mission is now from every continent to every continent. With the exception of Europe, every region in the world both sends and receives more missionaries than fifty years ago.

Mission is increasingly decoupled from its Western colonial legacy, with more missionaries coming from countries that lack Christian majorities.

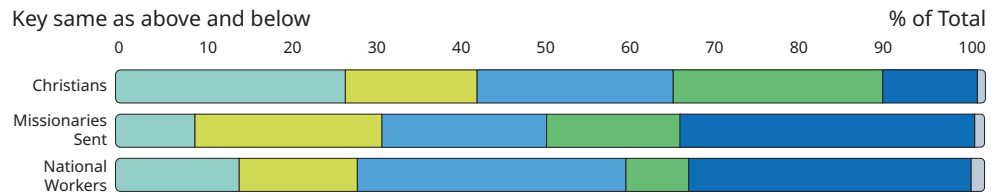
Left out of these statistics is the explosion of short-term missionaries, especially from North America, whose impact and experience differs markedly from missionaries who embed themselves in a cross-cultural setting for several years or more.

INDIGENOUS EQUIPPING

National workers are those who minister cross-culturally in their own country. This emphasis on equipping and sending indigenous ministers is an important trend in global missions.

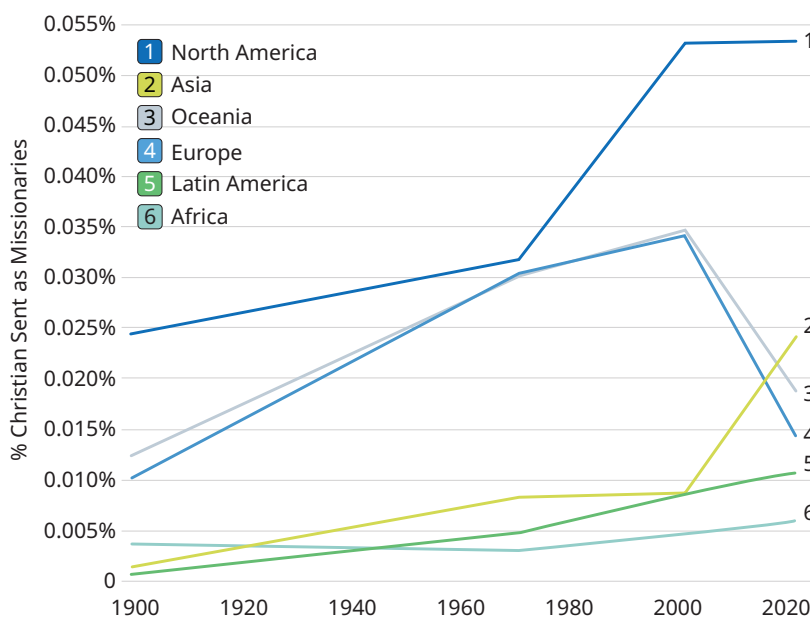
DISTRIBUTION OF NATIONAL WORKERS

Key same as above and below



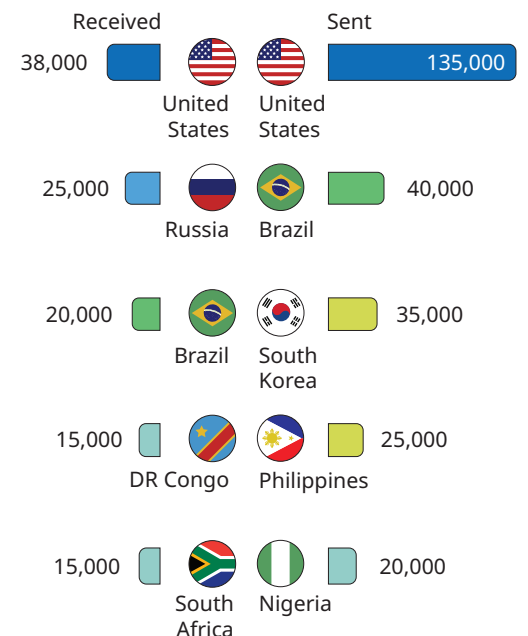
Source: World Christian Database, Accessed March 2023

MISSIONARIES SENT PER CHRISTIAN CAPITA



Source: World Christian Database, Accessed March 2023

TOP MISSIONARY ACTIVITY



Source: World Christian Database, Accessed March 2023



CURRENT STATUS

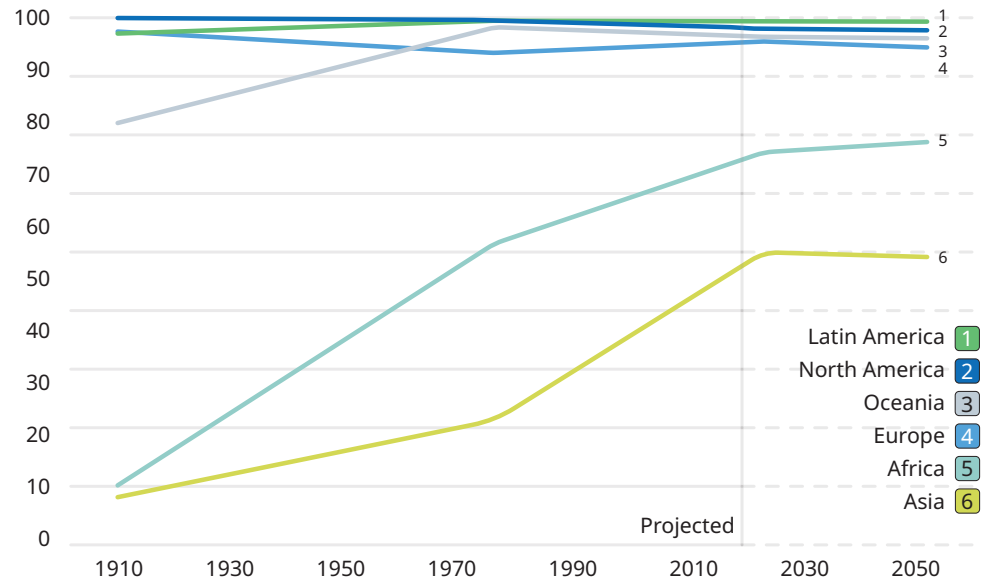
EVANGELIZED

DECLINE IN ACCESS

With the exception of Africa, all regions will witness an increase in the proportion of the population that is unevangelized in the coming decades. This is a stark reversal of a century of growing gospel access around the world.

An evangelized person is someone who has heard the gospel and responded personally to its message. Asia, and more specifically South Asia (India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh), is poised to remain the least evangelized region for many decades to come.

% EVANGELIZED



Source: World Christian Database, Accessed April 2023

MISSION MISALIGNED

Only three percent of international missionaries go to the unreached (who compose 40 percent of the global population). Thus, 97 percent of missionaries are sent to people who already have gospel access.

More missionaries are sent to Europe than Asia. Thus despite the fact that Asia has 60 percent of the global population (versus Europe with 10 percent), Asia contains the majority of the world's unreached, and the cost of sending a missionary to Europe can exceed ten times that of sending a missionary (or equipping an indigenous missionary) in an unreached context in Asia or Africa.

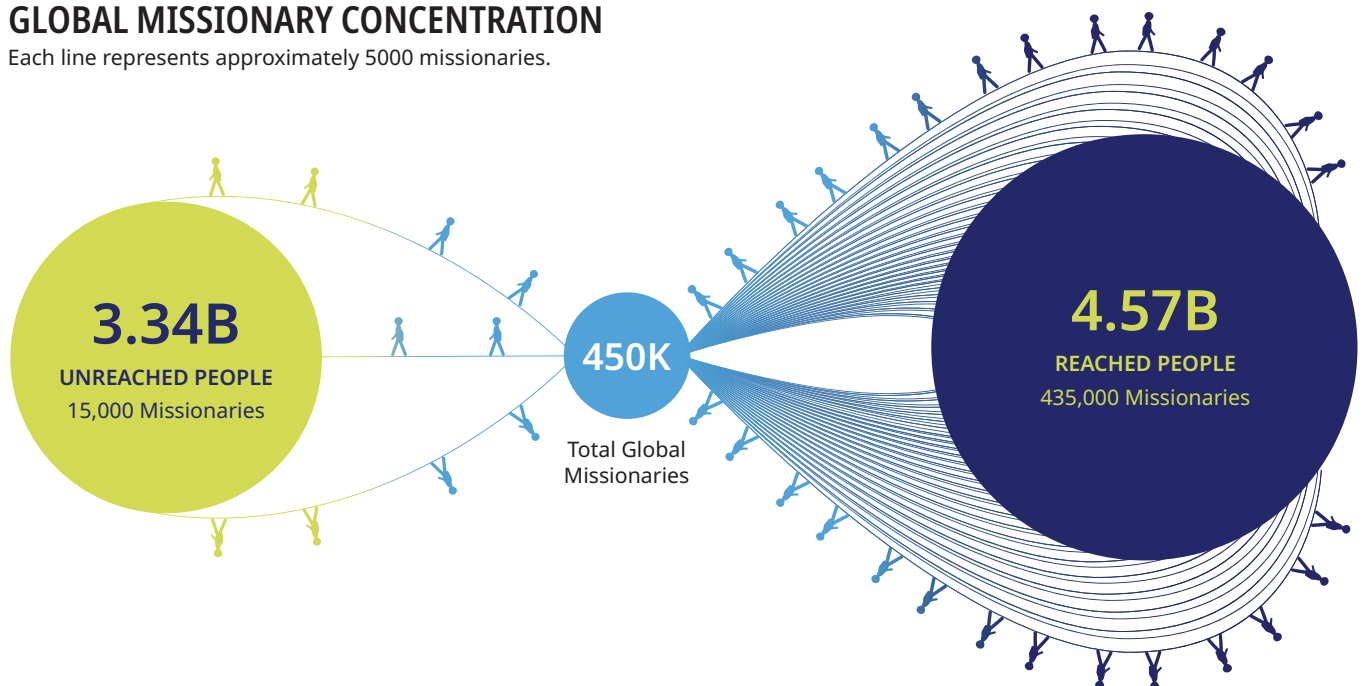
NO PRESENCE, NO RELATIONSHIP

Most missionaries go to predominantly Christian or Post-Christian contexts, leading to a lack of connection to and understanding of adherents to other religions.

Nearly nine out of ten Muslims and Hindus in the world do not personally know a Christian. The lack of contact reinforces the notion that Christianity is a Western religion.

GLOBAL MISSIONARY CONCENTRATION

Each line represents approximately 5000 missionaries.



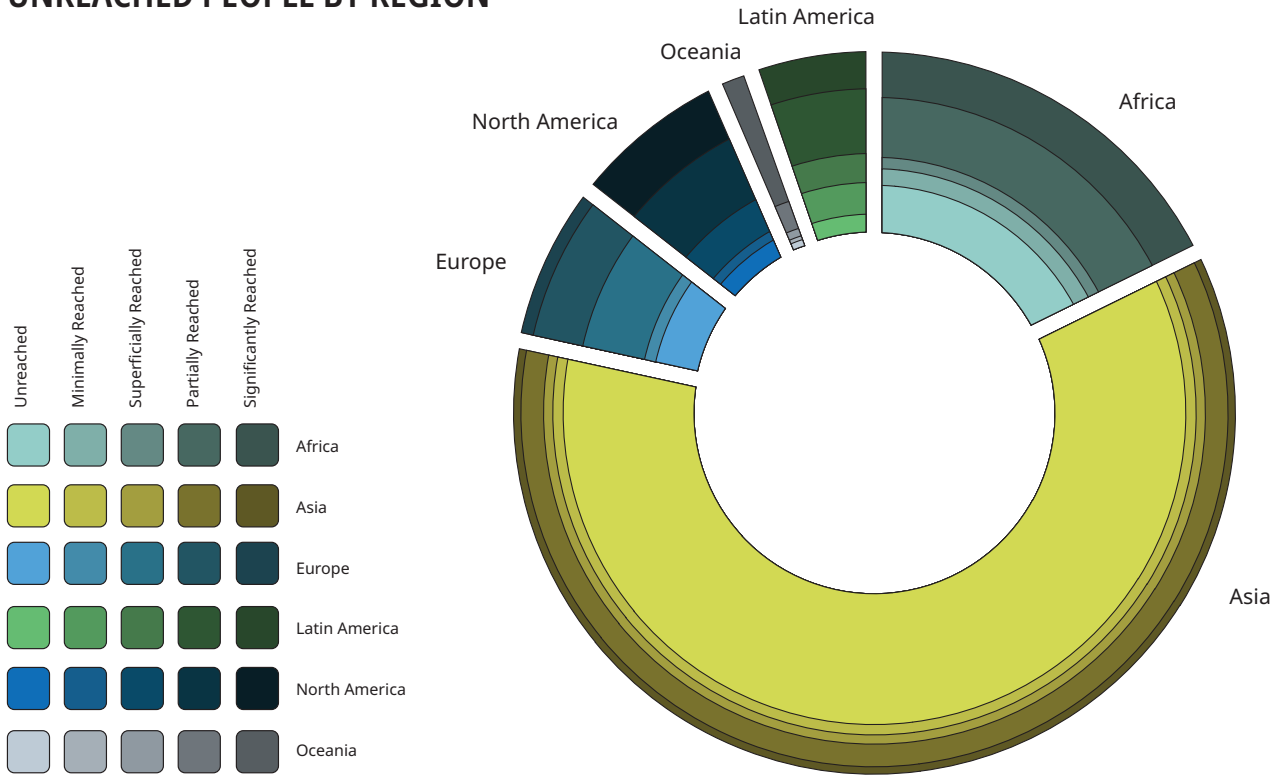
Source: Joshua Project, Aug 2022; B = Billion; K = Thousand



CURRENT STATUS

UNREACHED PEOPLE

UNREACHED PEOPLE BY REGION



Source: The Joshua Project, 2023

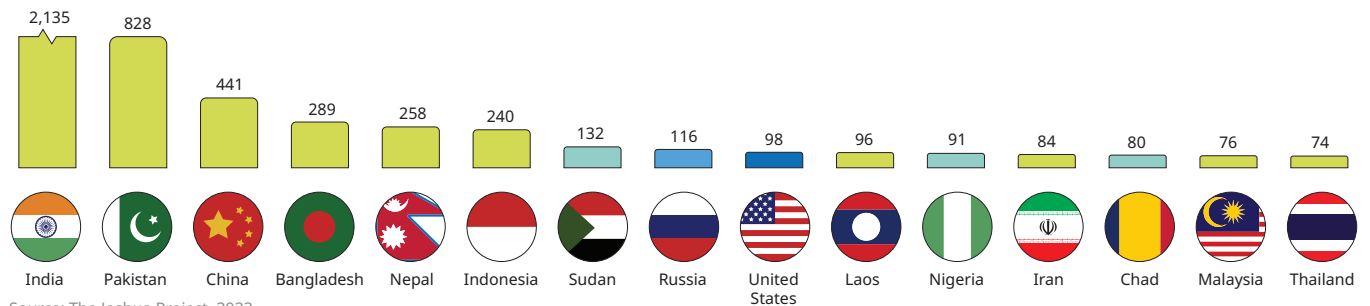
DEFINITION

Unreached people groups are those who lack an indigenous church capable of evangelizing their own people. People groups are distinct social groups where shared language and cultural practices create communal belonging.

MISSIONARY CHALLENGE

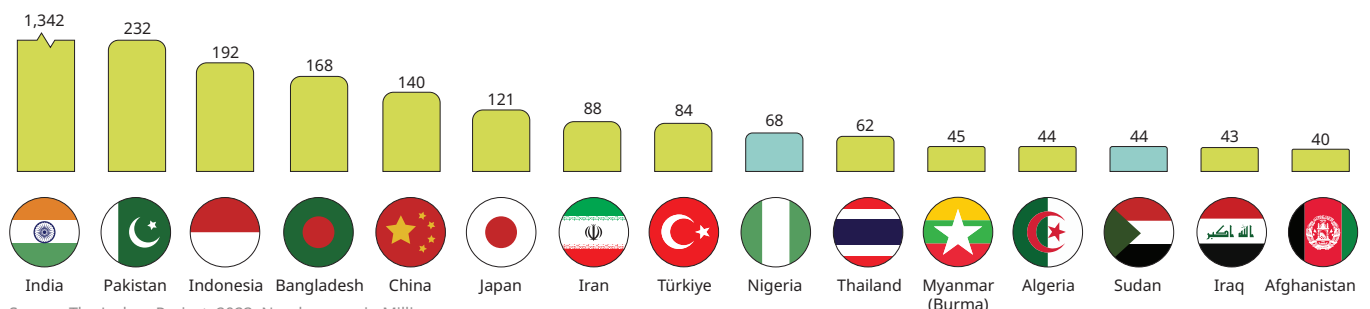
The countries that have received the greatest amount of Western missionary attention over two centuries contain the greatest number of unreached and unreached people groups: China and India (which once included Pakistan and Bangladesh).

COUNTRIES WITH MOST UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS



Source: The Joshua Project, 2023

COUNTRIES WITH MOST UNREACHED PEOPLE



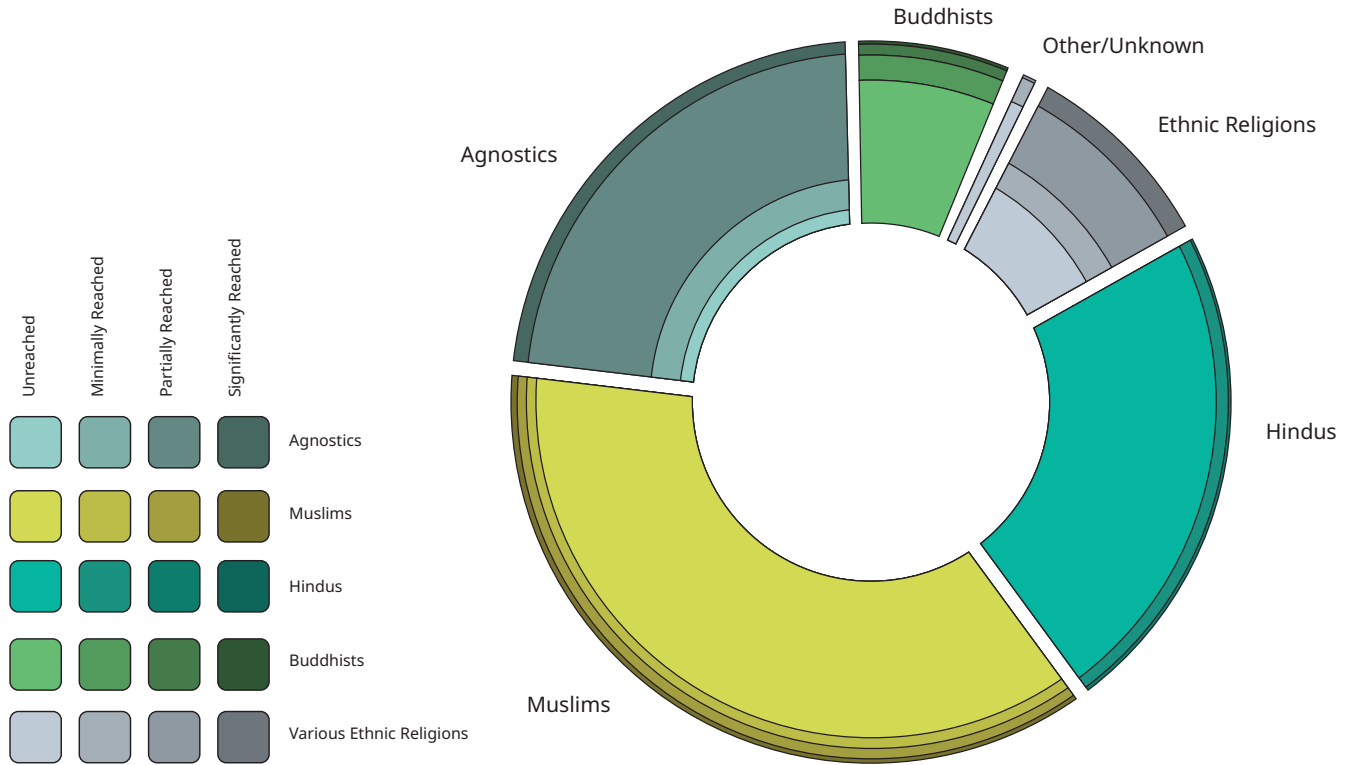
Source: The Joshua Project, 2023; Numbers are in Millions



CURRENT STATUS

UNREACHED PEOPLE

UNREACHED PEOPLE BY RELIGION



Source: The Joshua Project, 2023

RESISTANT ISLAM AND HINDUISM

The number of unreached among ethnic religions has rapidly declined over the last half-century while the number has grown among Muslims and Hindus. The large population of agnostics is due primarily to China. This population in China is declining, however, as multiple religions, including Christianity, are growing in the country.

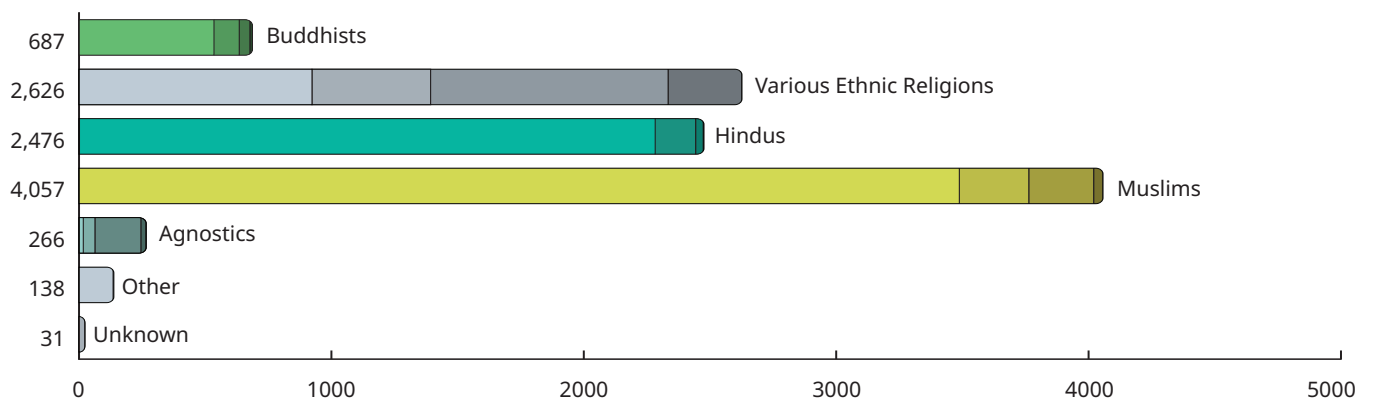
While adherents to global religions like Islam and Buddhism remain most resistant to Christianity, nominal believers in either religion are most likely to convert. Conversions by committed Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists are less common.

CHANGING PARADIGMS

Even as the number of Unreached People Groups declines, the number of unreached peoples continues to grow. Unreached people are increasingly found among new forms of human community that differ from the 'ethnolinguistic groups' that dominated the unreached of prior generations. Urbanization, migration, digital technologies, and the individualism encouraged by a rising global middle class are reshaping cultural belonging. These forces are leading to a greater prevalence of ethnic and linguistic mixing that produce hybrid identities and novel communities. UPG paradigms will need to be complemented by other models for understanding and reaching an unbelieving world.

UNREACHED PEOPLE GROUPS BY RELIGION

Same key as above



Source: The Joshua Project, 2023



DISCIPLE MAKING MOVEMENTS

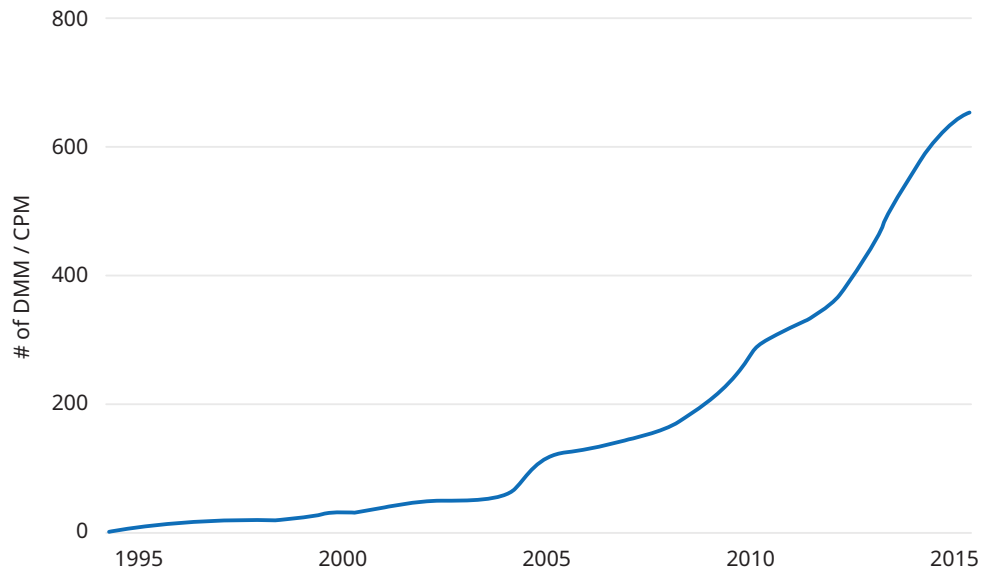
GENERATING DISCIPLES

A disciple making movement (DMM) or church planting movement (CPM) is defined by three characteristics.

First, there are sequential generations of growth. When an original disciple or church makes a new disciple or church, that is one generation. DMM / CPM are identified when there are at least four successful direct generations. Second, the movement is dynamic and growing. Third, the DMM is greater than approximately 1,000 believers or CPM are greater than approximately 100 churches.

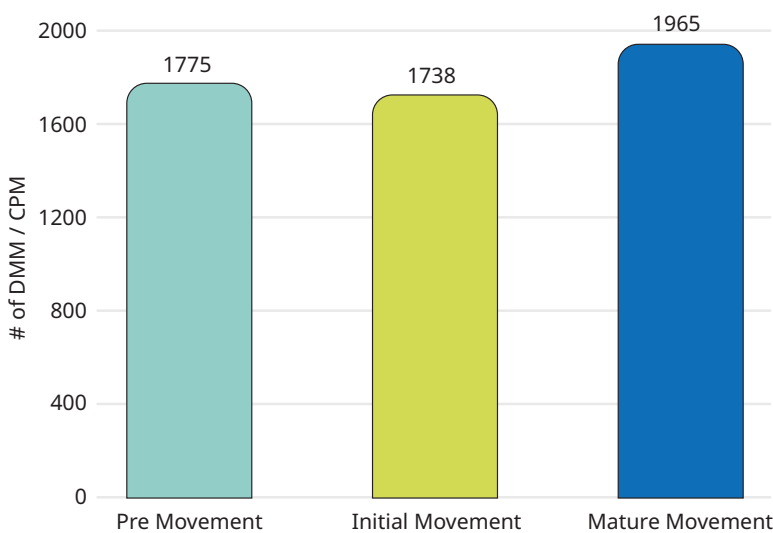
GROWTH OF DISCIPLE MAKING MOVEMENTS

Based on sub-set of movements for which we have "Begin" dates.



Source: Justin Long, December 2022; Data includes Church Planting Movements and Disciple Making Movements

OF MOVEMENTS IN STAGES



Source: Justin Long, December 2022

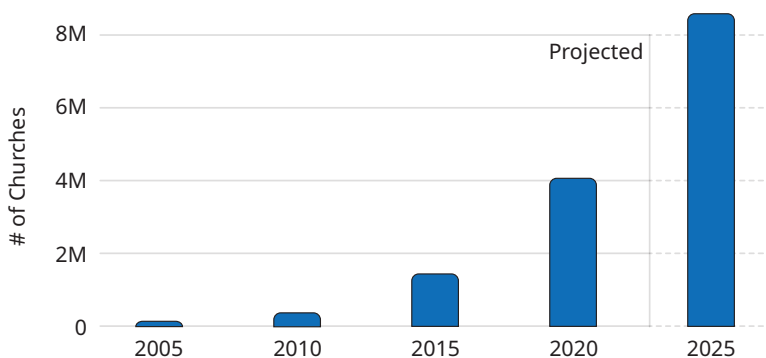
GLOBAL FRUIT RIPENING

A harvest is being celebrated due to research results of quantifiable disciple making movements. Sources informing the missional information community include members of networks and networks of movements. Some are quite large, in the millions, while others are quite small, numbering a few thousand.

DMM / CPM continue to grow with the number of known mature movements over 1,950 and over 1,750 pre-movements and 1,750 initial movements in 2022. And these are only what are known so far. In other words, these figures are a conservative 'floor', not an estimate of the 'ceiling.'

DMM researchers estimate that there are 100+ million professing disciples due to DMM.

INCREASE IN CHURCHES OVER TIME



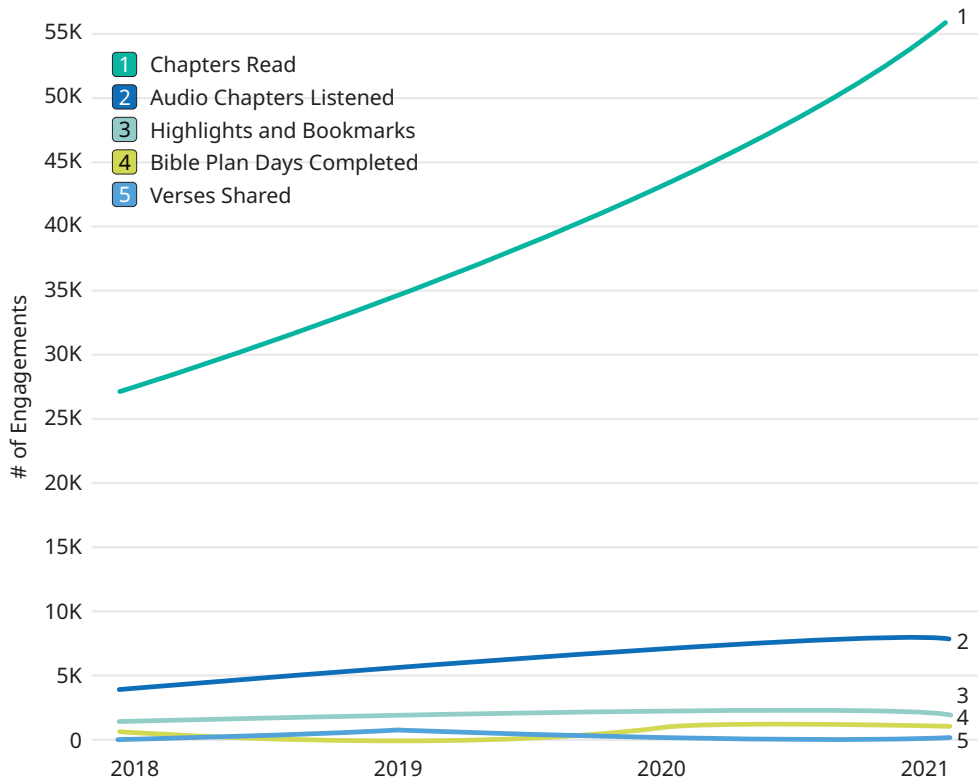
Source: Justin Long, December 2022; M = Million; Churches started by CPM/DMM movements

DMM researchers estimate that there are 100+ million professing disciples (not all baptized) due to DMM, making around 1 percent of the world part of a DMM. Additionally, researchers estimate that there are over 9 million churches emerging from or part of a CPM. Understanding that most of these churches are 'house churches' with an average of 14 disciples per church, there are more house churches in CPM than churches in traditional denominations.



DIGITAL BIBLE ENGAGEMENT

YOUVERSION DIGITAL BIBLE ENGAGEMENT



Source: YouVersion Annual Statistics; K = Thousand

A NEW MEDIUM

The rise of digital media is potentially as transformative to Scripture engagement as the advent of the printing press in Early Modern Europe. Technological developments always impact how Christians interact with the Bible.

YouVersion's research shows constant growth in online Bible reading. Less evident, however, is growth in engagement in the interactive possibilities of digital media like note taking and verse sharing, or other ways of capitalizing on digital media's social and creative capabilities.

The rise of smart phone usage around the world opens access to the Bible in new ways, especially in sensitive contexts. Unequal internet access, however, remains a barrier.

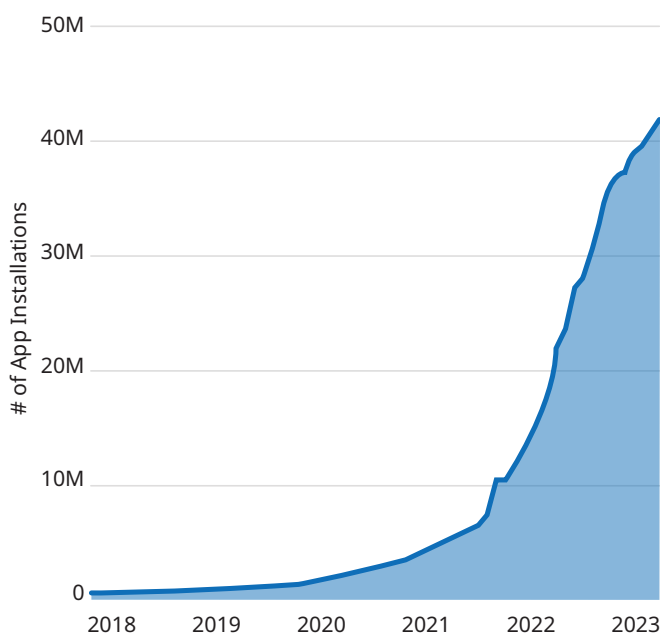
A NEW ORALITY

Digital technologies give rise to what many call the 'new orality.' Bible applications allow people around the world to hear, as opposed to read, the Bible in their heart language.

NEW TACTICS

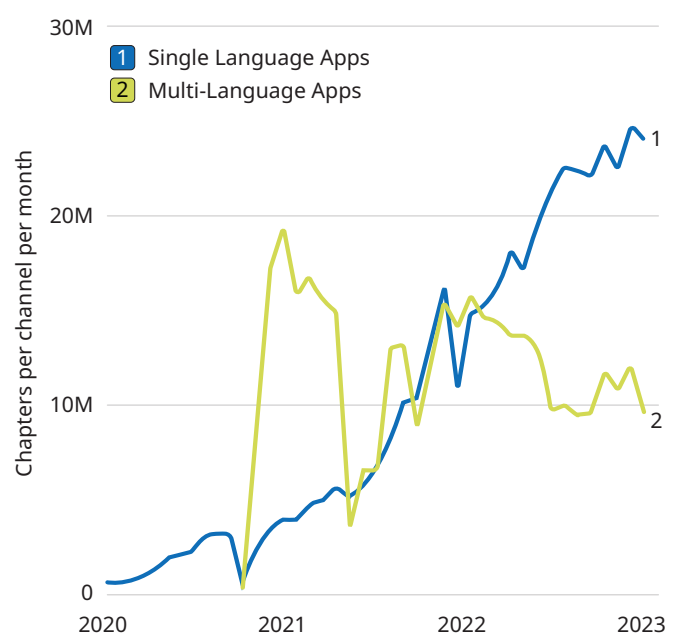
Experimentation in strategic delivery of digital Scriptures has recently produced an interesting observation. Distribution of targeted single language Bible apps increases the engagement levels over multi-language apps.

SINGLE LANGUAGE BIBLE APP INSTALLS



Source: Richard Margette, SIL, Single Language Bible App Installs via Faith Comes by Hearing; M = Million

MULTI-LANGUAGE APPS



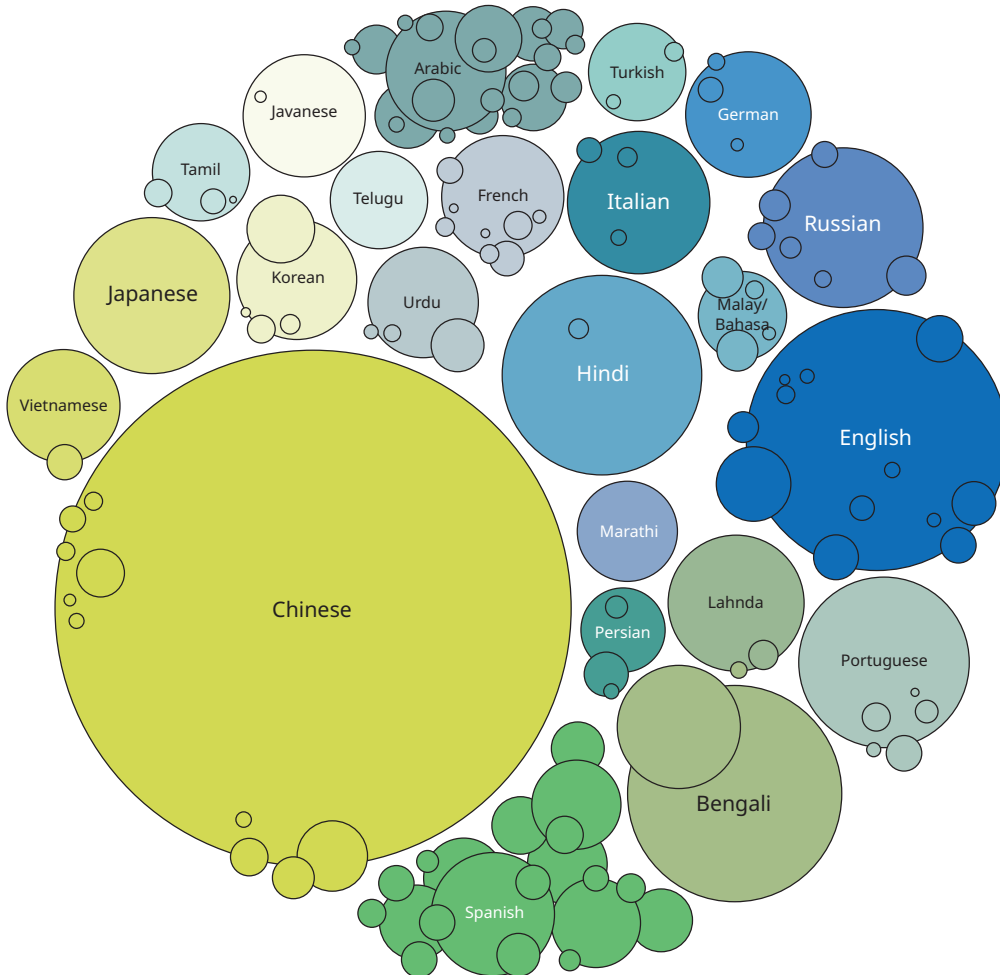
Source: Faith Comes by Hearing, Annual Statistics; M = Million



CURRENT STATUS

LANGUAGE

GLOBAL POPULATION DISTRIBUTION BY LANGUAGE



STRATEGIC GATEWAYS

Instead of relying on primarily English-speaking translators and Western organizations to supervise individual translation projects, advocates of new methods suggest that translation resources and initiatives should be decentralized and housed within 'Strategic Languages' that provide interconnections with the majority of the world's languages.

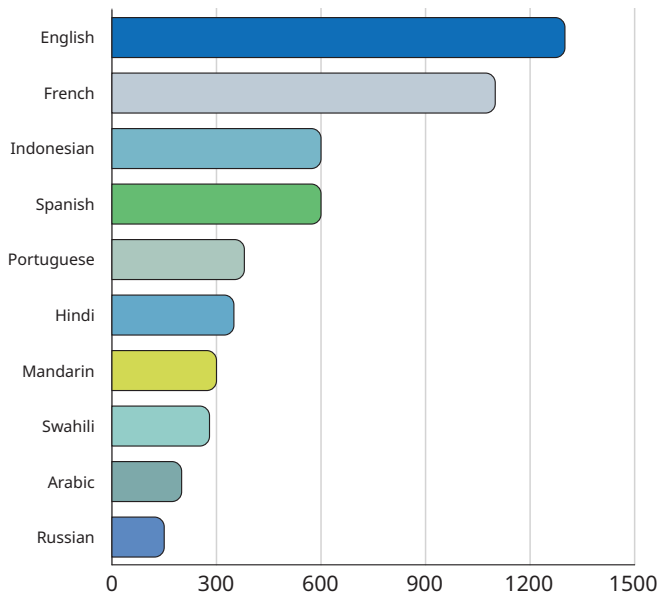
The method recognizes scales of multilingualism, the interconnectivity of languages, and that all languages perpetually evolve.

English, Hindi, Arabic, Mandarin, French, Indonesian, Swahili, Russian, Portuguese, and Spanish are recognized as the ten most strategic "Gateway" languages, central hubs in linguistic networks.

Source: Ethologue, "Languages of the World," 2023

GATEWAY INFLUENCE BY SUB-LANGUAGES

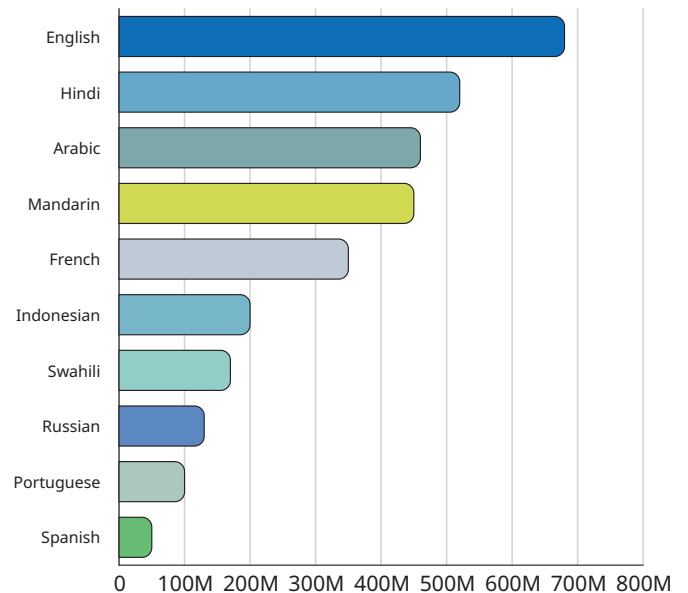
Number of languages reached by gateway language resources



Source: Weiss, Unfolding Word, June 2023

GATEWAY INFLUENCE BY POPULATION

Number of people reached by gateway language resources



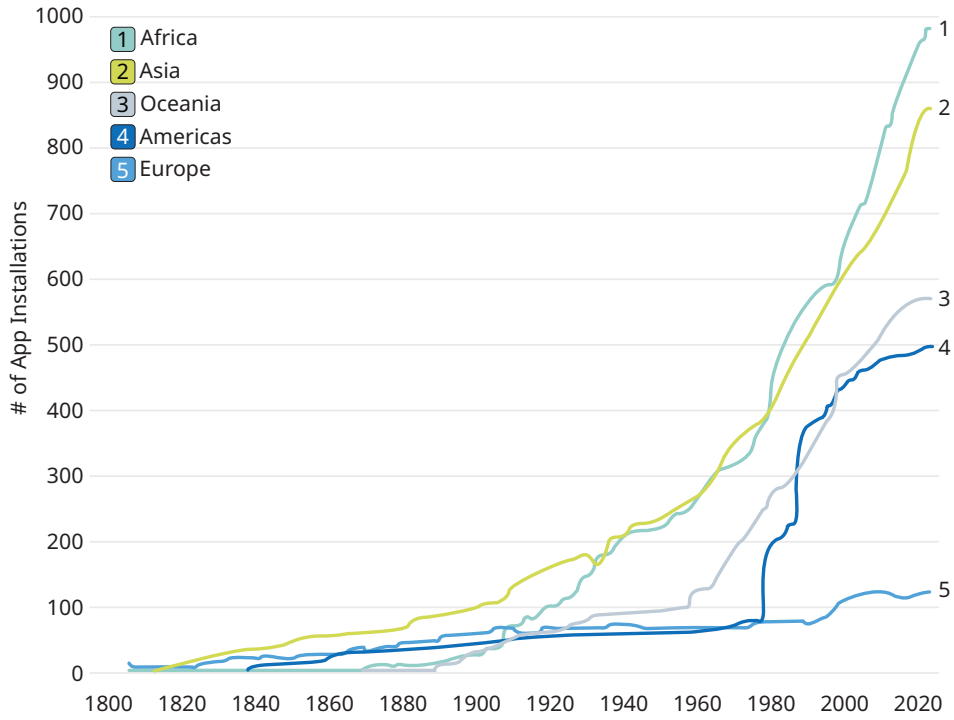
Source: Weiss, Unfolding Word, June 2023; M = Million



CURRENT STATUS

BIBLE TRANSLATION

BIBLE TRANSLATION OVER TIME BY REGION



Source: Progress Bible, 2023

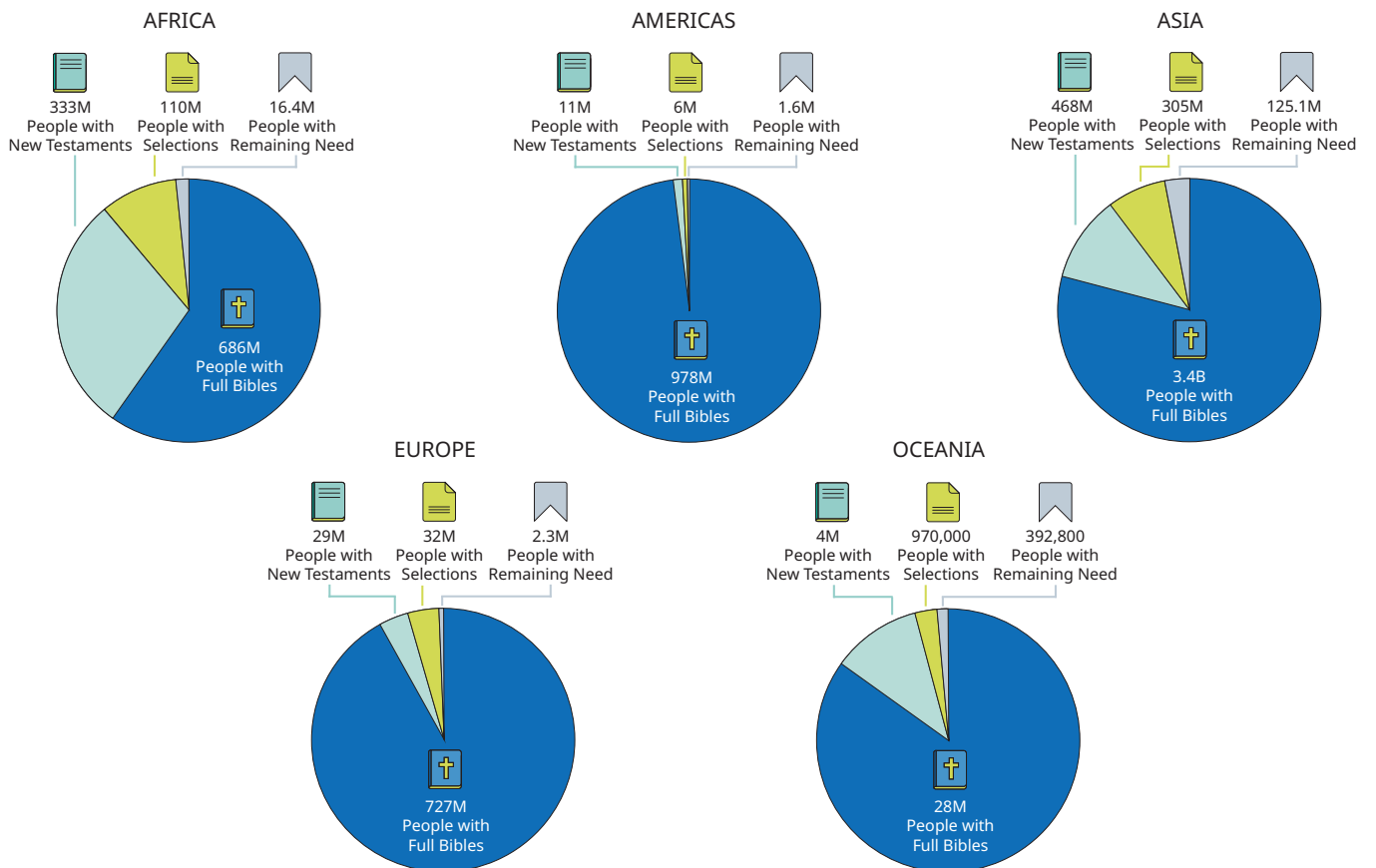
GROWING ACCESS

While work remains, the rapid increase in languages having Bible translations over the last 50 years is one of the great missionary successes of our time. Never before have so many people had access to God's word in their heart language.

Never before have so many people had access to God's word.

Three quarters of the global population possess access to the full Bible while nearly 10 percent lack even partial access. The Americas remain the region with the greatest access to Scripture while Asia contains the largest amount of people with either partial or no translation in their language.

BIBLE TRANSLATION STATUS

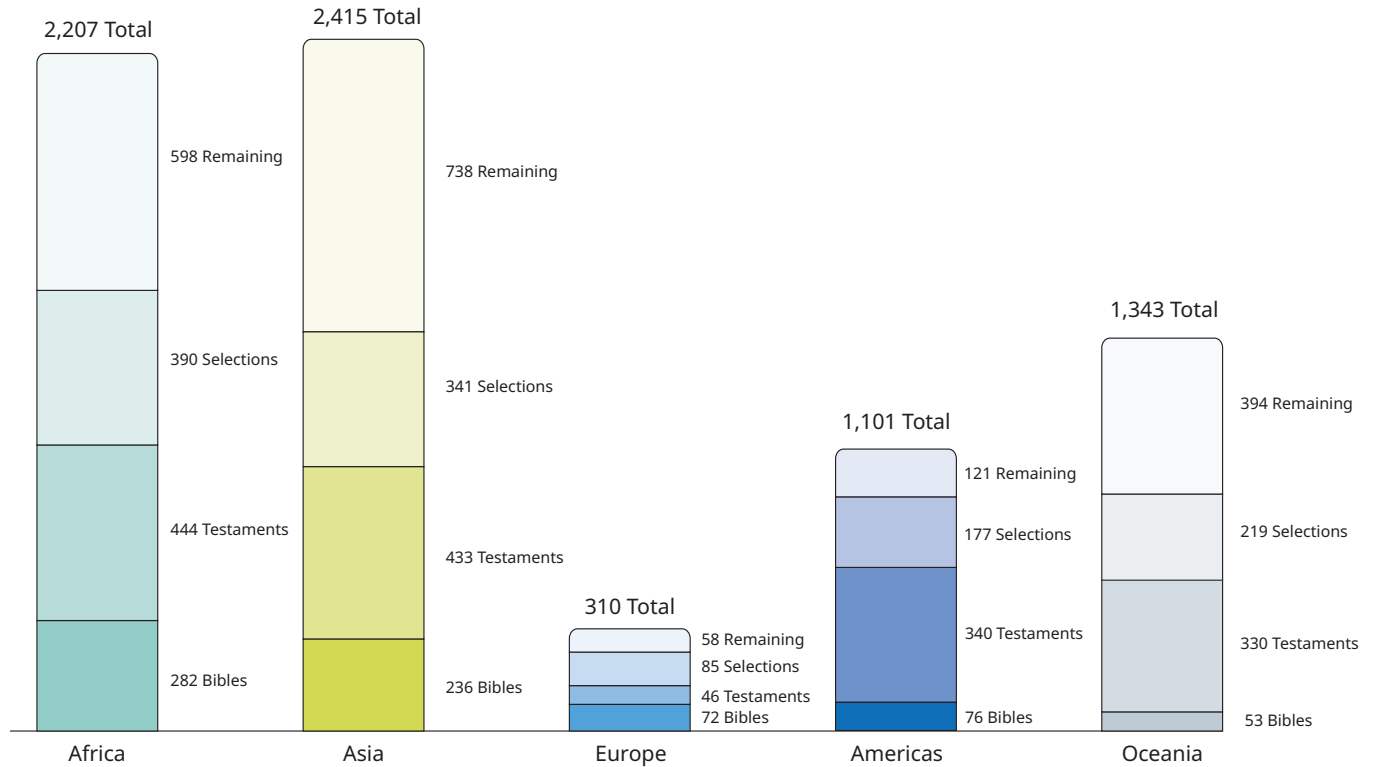


Source: Missio Nexus, 2022; B = Billion; M = Million



BIBLE TRANSLATION

LANGUAGES WITH SCRIPTURE AVAILABLE



Source: Missio Nexus, 2022;

TRANSLATION AND ACCESS

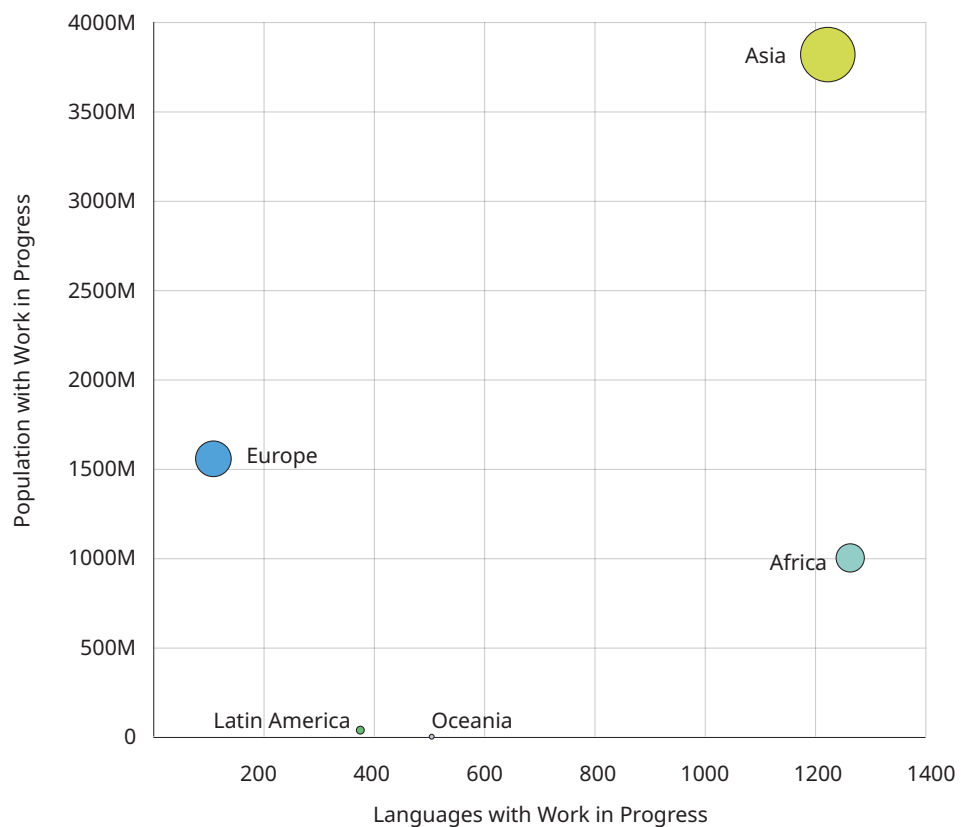
Over one 1,000 languages still lack a translation of even part of the Bible. Asia, Africa, and Oceania possess the majority of language groups still lacking Bibles.

Bible translators are currently developing partial or full translations in thousands of languages around the world.

Over 1,000 languages still lack a translation of even part of the Bible.

Organizations are employing new translation strategies, like community mobilization methods, and Artificial Intelligence in attempts to expand Bible access and Bible engagement.

TRANSLATION WORKS IN PROGRESS



Source: Progress Bible, 2023; O = size of population



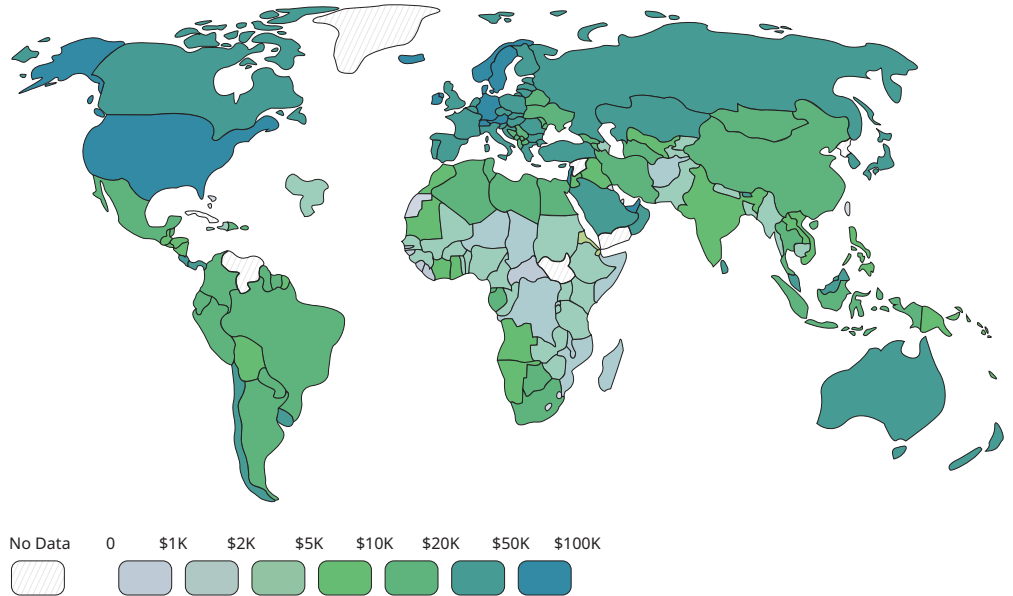
CURRENT STATUS

FINANCIAL GIVING

GLOBAL INEQUALITY

Europe, North America, and much of Oceania remain the wealthiest regions in the world. Many Gulf nations are also wealthy but vast divides exist in those nations between the rich. Western nations drive charitable giving, although growing economies in Asia are pushing increases in giving in the Global South. Despite great wealth existing in the Christian community, a sliver of that wealth goes to Christian causes with a tiny percentage invested in global missions.

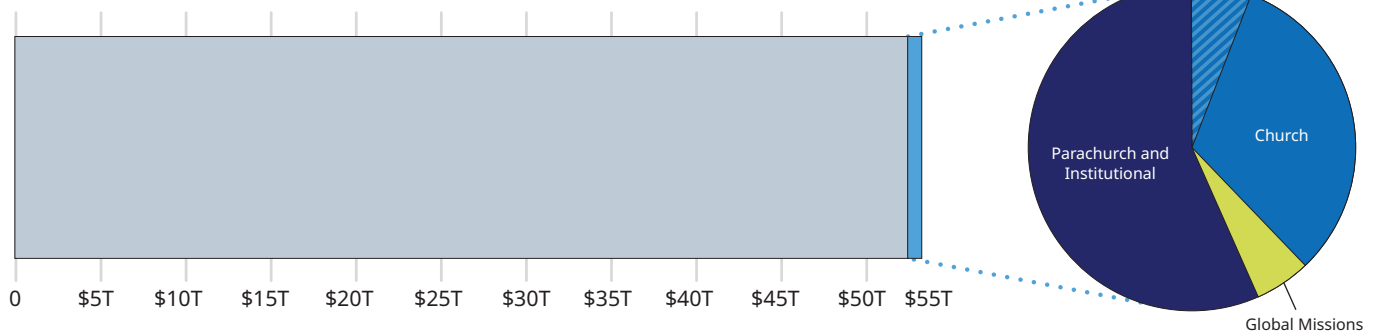
GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT PER CAPITA



Source: OurWorldInData, 2020; K = Thousand

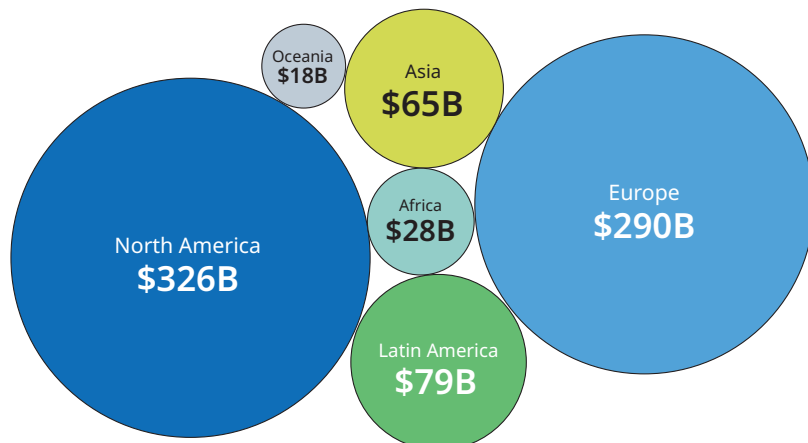
CHRISTIAN SPENDING

- Everything Else
- Giving to Christian Causes



Source: World Christian Database, "Status of Global Christianity in the Context of 1900 – 2050," 2022; T = Trillion

CHURCH INCOME BY REGION



Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, 2022, pg. 941; B = Billion

CHRISTIAN INEQUALITY

Comparing church income by region versus the regions where Christianity is growing reveals stark financial and resource inequalities in the global church. Most Western Christian wealth stays within the Western church.

As Christianity continues to grow in the Global South while shrinking in the Global North, addressing financial disparities in the global church is a key issue.

One of the primary consequences of the divide is an abundance of investment in a declining Christianity and a growing Christianity institutionally hamstrung by minimal resources.



GREAT COMMISSION DISCIPLESHIP

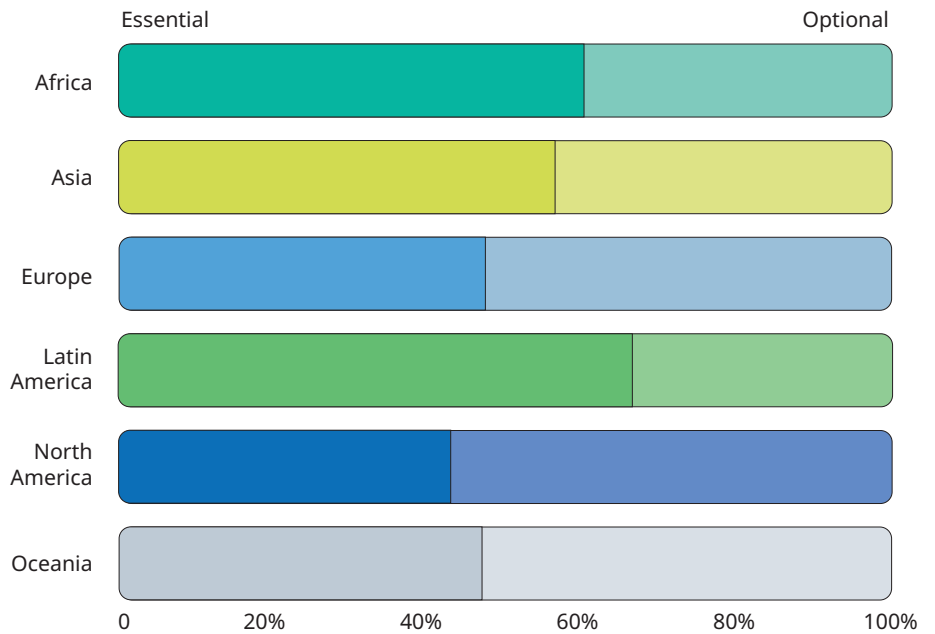
OPTIONAL COMMISSION

When a survey asked 1,500 global Christian leaders about the level of commitment to the Great Commission in their region, the results did not showcase the importance of the Great Commission. Leaders in Africa, Asia, and Latin America perceived that 30-40 percent of Christians saw the Great Commission as optional. This number is even higher in the North America, Europe and Australia with leaders perceiving that approximately 50 percent of Christians hold the Great Commission as optional.

These perceptions also extend to the church with global leaders observing that approximately 50 percent of churches in their region are not united by a shared commitment to the Great Commission.

IMPORTANCE OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

"The average Christian believes sharing the Gospel is:"

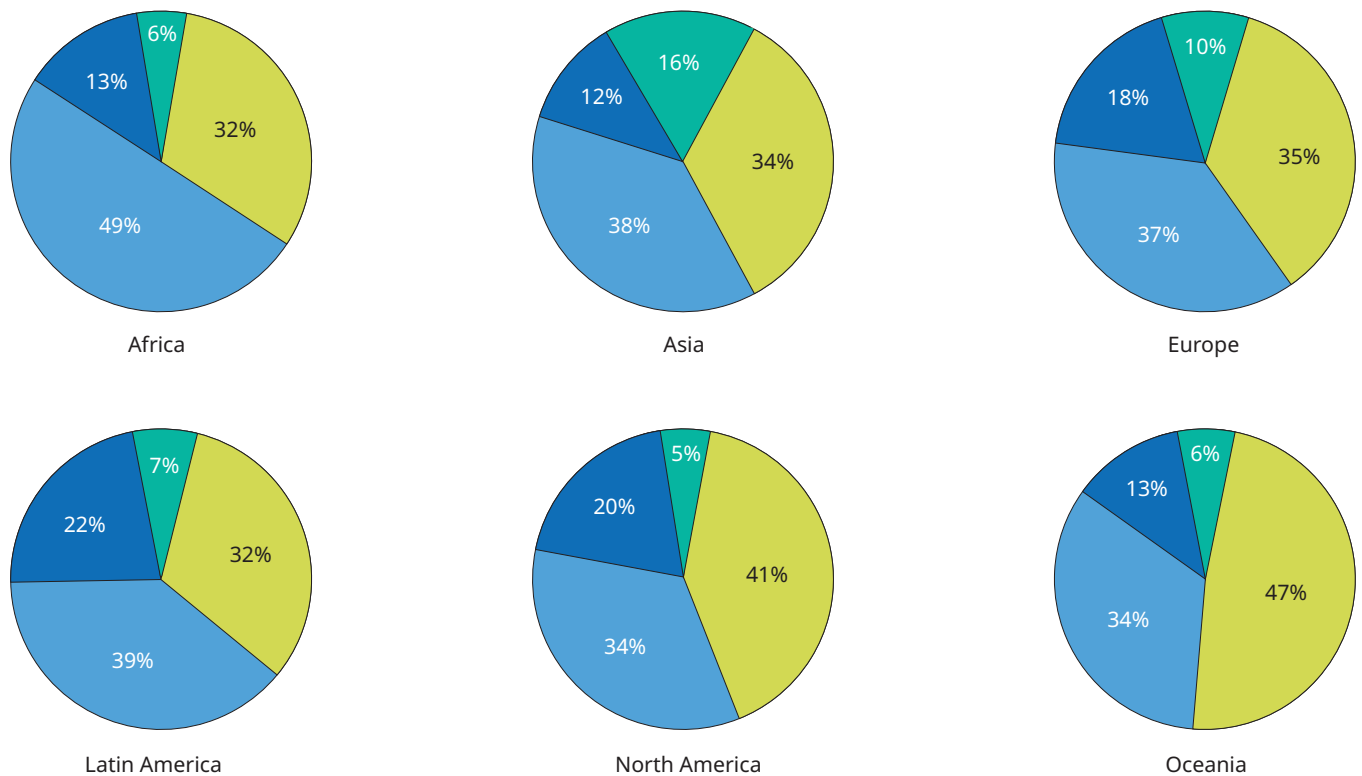


Source: Lausanne Movement, "Global Leaders Survey," 2022

UNITED COMMITMENT

"In your perception, are the local churches in your context united by a shared commitment to the Great Commission in your region?"

Very Much United Somewhat United Not Fully United Not United At All



Source: Lausanne Movement, "Global Leaders Survey," 2022



CURRENT STATUS

GREAT COMMISSION DISCIPLESHIP

LIMITED PREPAREDNESS

The majority of the 1,500 global Christian leaders surveyed believe that less than half of the Christians in their region would be able to say what the Great Commission is.

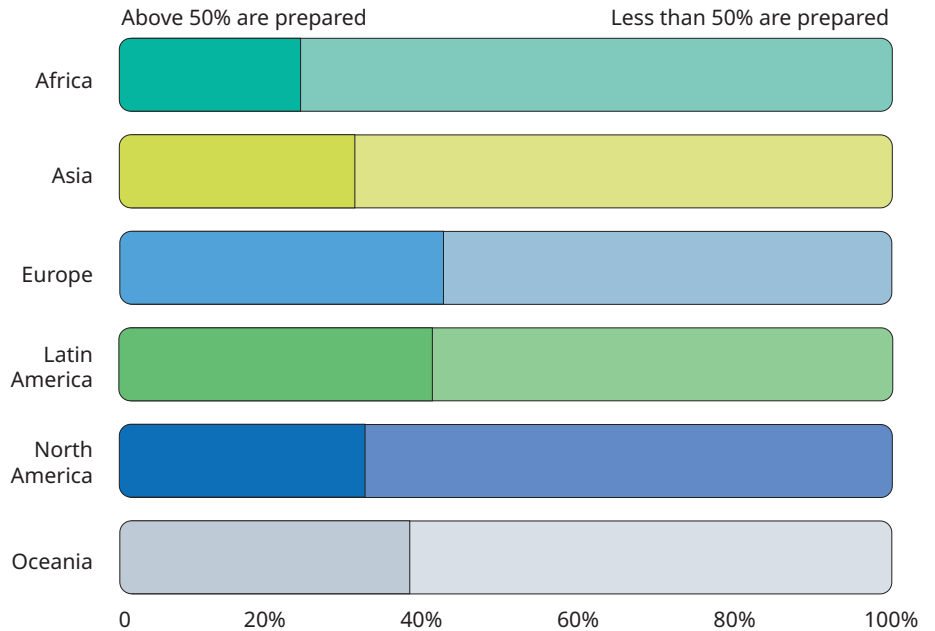
Less than half are prepared to share the Gospel.

When considering individuals in their churches, the Lausanne leaders surveyed perceived that less than half of people in their church felt prepared to share the gospel.

There is an observable correlation between perceived lack of discipleship in the Great Commission and perceived gospel preparedness.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE GREAT COMMISSION

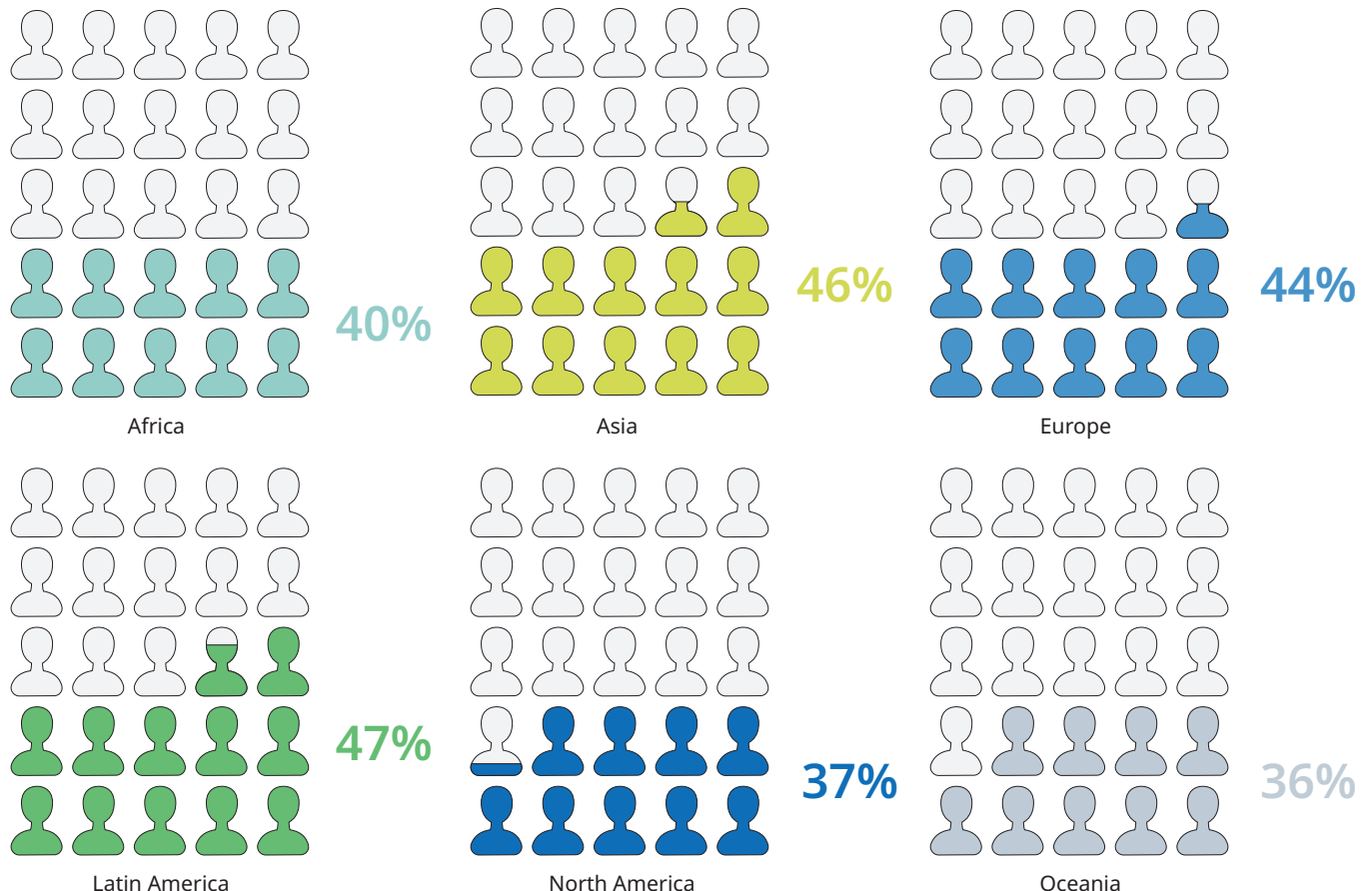
"If you asked four average Christians in your region, how many would be able to tell you what the Great Commission is?"



Source: Lausanne Movement, Global Leaders Survey, 2022

GREAT COMMISSION PREPAREDNESS

"What percentage of members in your local church would say they feel prepared to share the Gospel with others?"



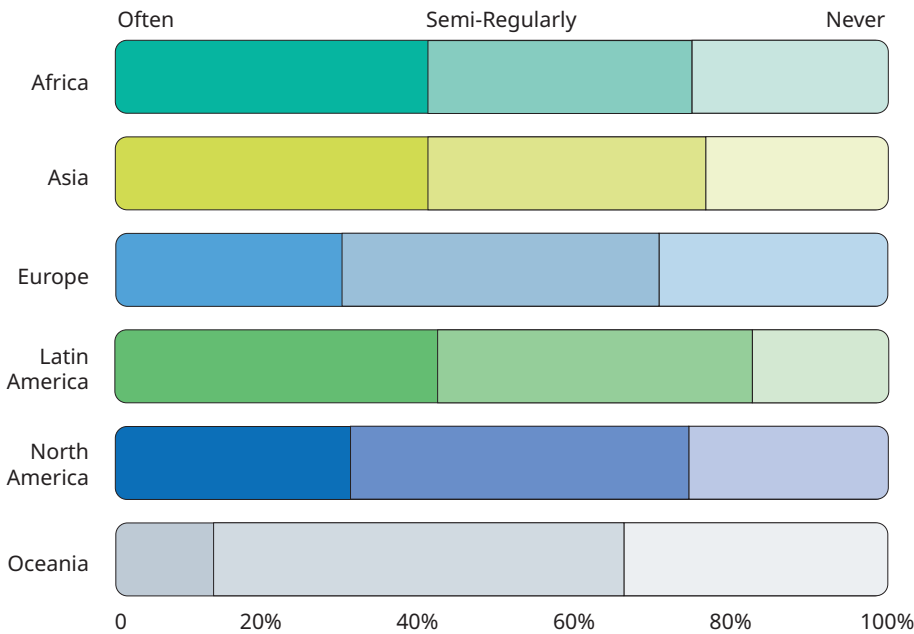
Source: Lausanne Movement, Global Leaders Survey, 2022



GREAT COMMISSION DISCIPLESHIP

FREQUENCY OF GREAT COMMISSION TEACHING

"In your perception, how often do churches teach the Great Commission in your region?"



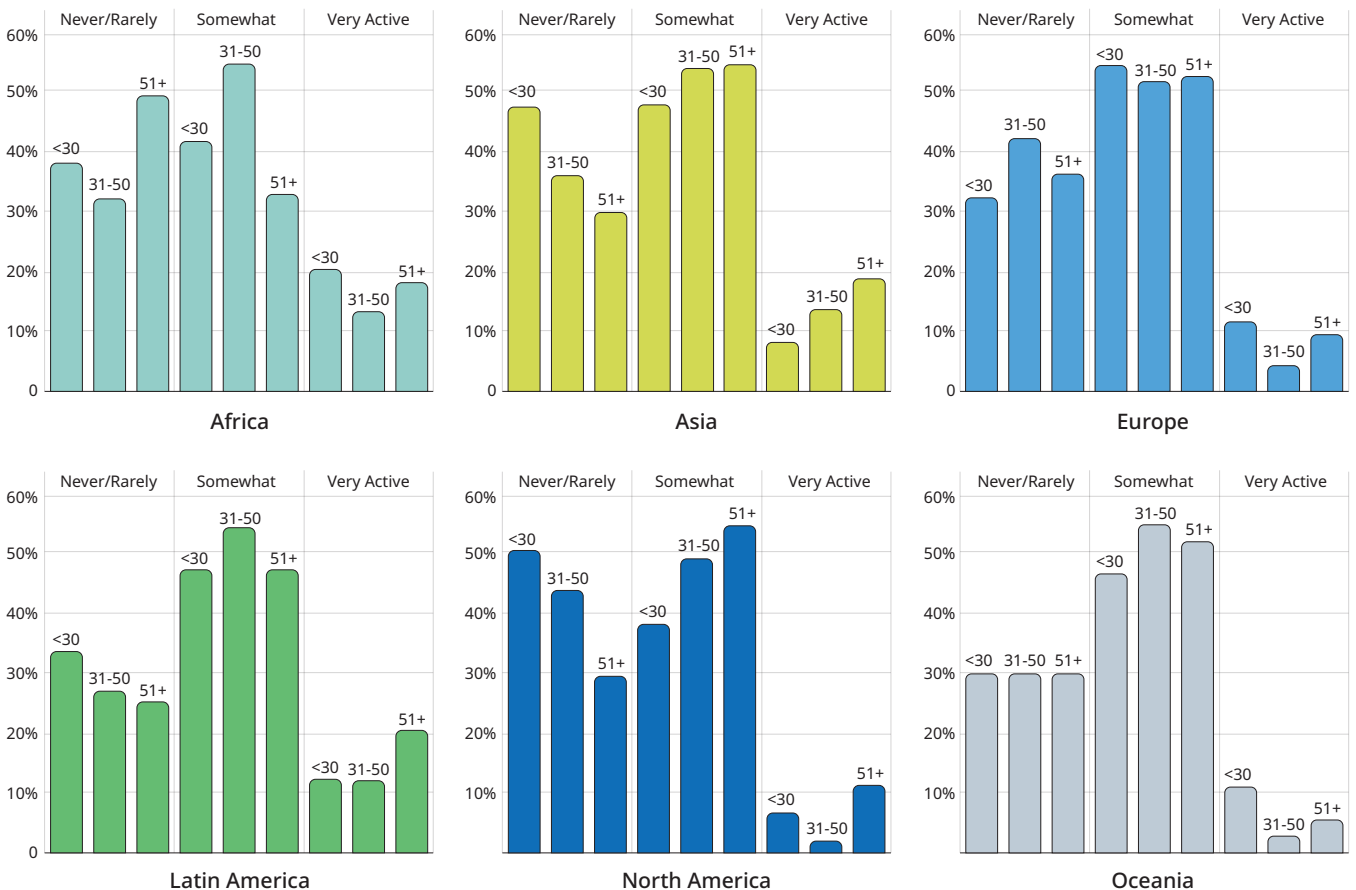
Source: Lausanne Movement, "Global Leaders Survey," 2022

EFFECTIVE TEACHING

In the perception of 1500 global Christian leaders, the 65-80 percent of leaders perceived that churches teach the Great Commission 'often' or on a 'semi-regular' basis. Yet, when asked how active Christians in their context are in the gospel proclamation, leaders responded that they felt less than 15-20 percent of Christians are 'very active.' Further they perceived that 35-40 percent of Christians in their context 'never/ rarely' proclaim the gospel. Across the globe, the surveyed leaders felt individuals under 30 participate less in gospel proclamation. Observing that most leaders felt that the Great Commission is taught regularly in their context, but yet also feel large portions of the church are not very active in gospel proclamation brings forth questions about the effectiveness of current Great Commission discipleship.

GREAT COMMISSION PARTICIPATION

"In your context, how active are Christians in different generations in Gospel Proclamation?"



Source: Lausanne Movement, "Global Leaders Survey," 2022

WHAT IS POLYCENTRIC CHRISTIANITY?

INTRODUCTION

Christianity is a dynamic and living faith which has experienced notable global shifts in the last 100 years, and including the growth of Christianity in the Global South, the rise of Pentecostalism, and the continued addition of denominations, leading to the question, 'What is Polycentric Christianity?'

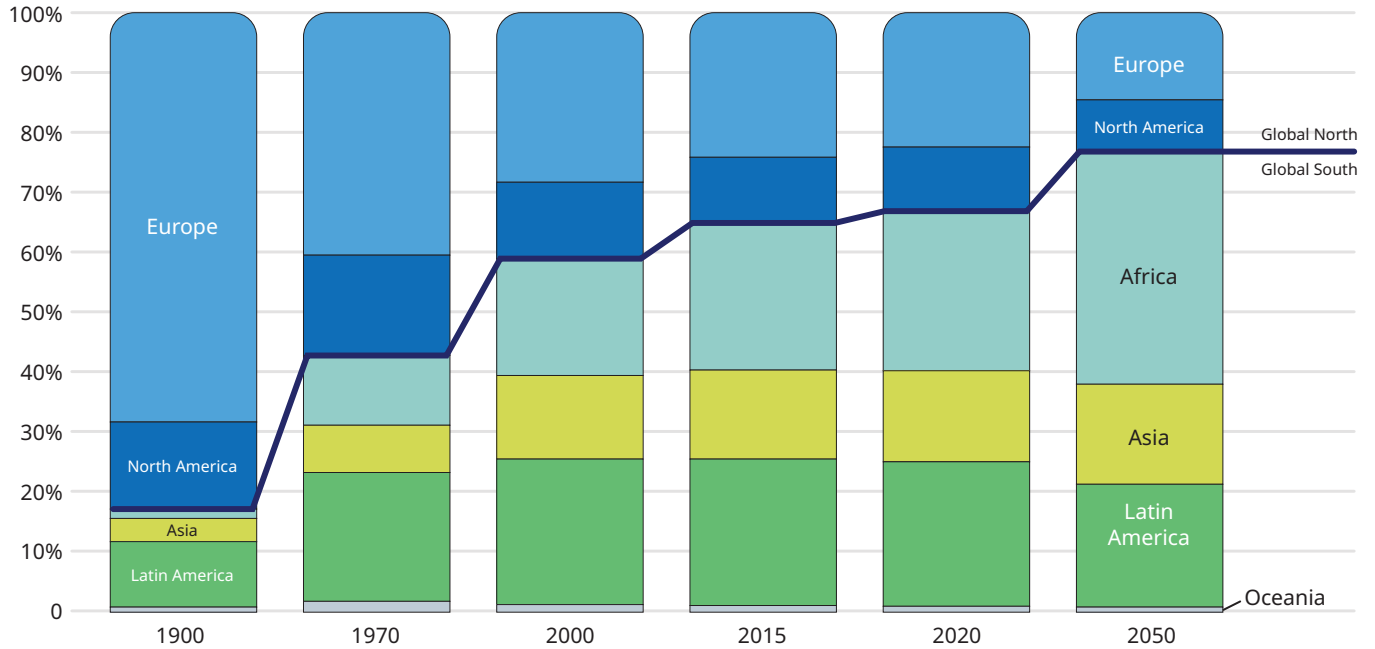
The following section explores the contextual shifts towards a global polycentric Christianity.





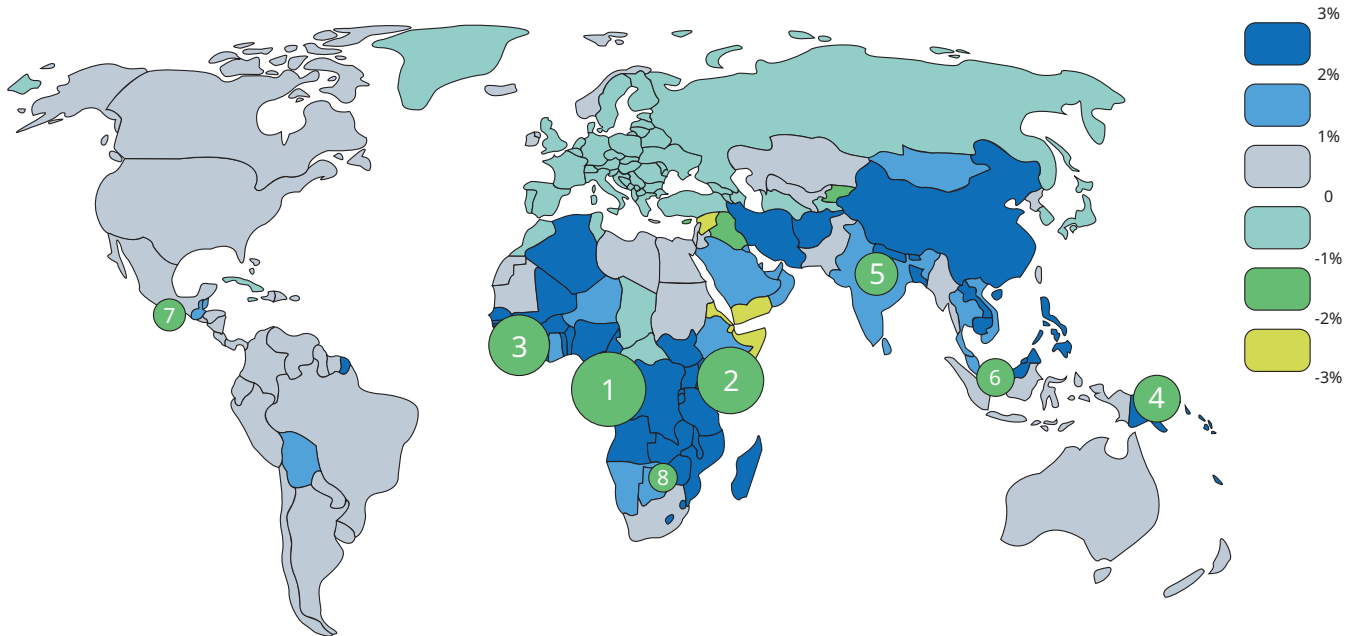
CHRISTIAN GROWTH

REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF CHRISTIANITY



Source: World Christian Encyclopedia pgs. 8, 10, 12, 14, 16

PROJECTED CHRISTIAN CHANGE 2020-2050



Source: World Christian Encyclopedia pgs. 8, 10, 12, 14, 16

FASTEST GROWING REGIONS

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| 3.27% ① Middle Africa | 1.88% ⑤ South Asia |
| 2.93% ② Eastern Africa | 1.66% ⑥ South-Eastern Asia |
| 2.76% ③ Western Africa | 1.41% ⑦ Central America |
| 2.06% ④ Melanesia | 1.36% ⑧ Southern Africa |

Source: World Christian Database, Accessed May 2023

A NON-WESTERN RELIGION

Observing the average annual rate of change per year, by 2050, Africa is projected to have the highest percentage of global Christians. Asia's share of the Christian population will also grow while all other regions' share will be in decline. Europe and North America will become an increasingly lower percentage of global Christianity.



CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS

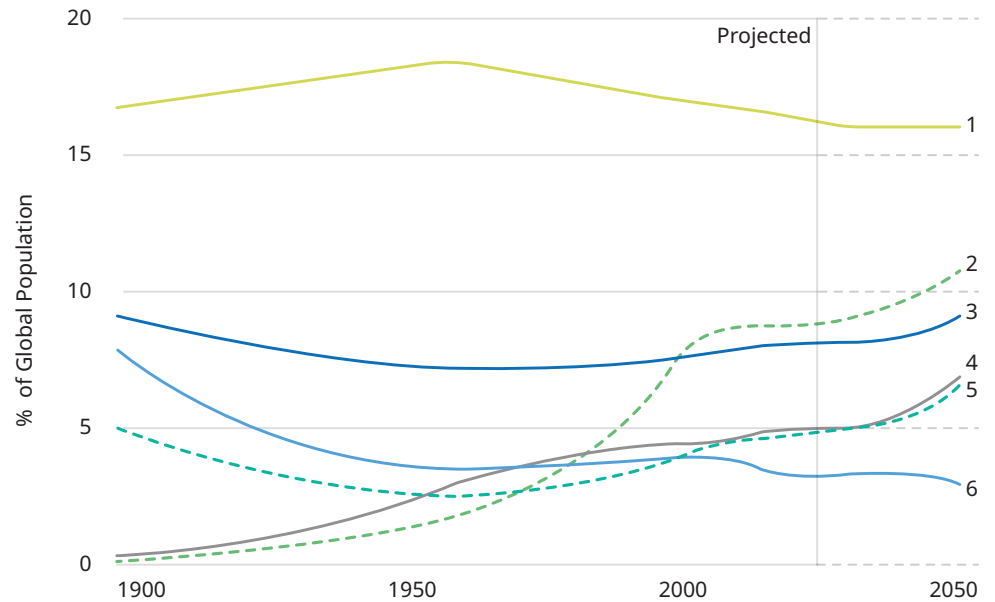
PENTECOSTAL GROWTH

Pentecostal and charismatic expressions of Christianity are the leading edge of Christian growth around the world. Pentecostal Christians are typically more missionary in orientation, placing a high emphasis on lay evangelism through personal networks. Much Catholic growth since the late 20th century has also occurred through the Catholic charismatic movement.

With the exception of the Orthodox, all other Christian traditions demonstrate trends of growth or stability in Africa and Asia in the coming decades.

GLOBAL CHRISTIAN TRADITIONS 1900-2050

1 Catholic 2 Pentecostal* 3 Protestant 4 Independent 5 Evangelical* 6 Orthodox

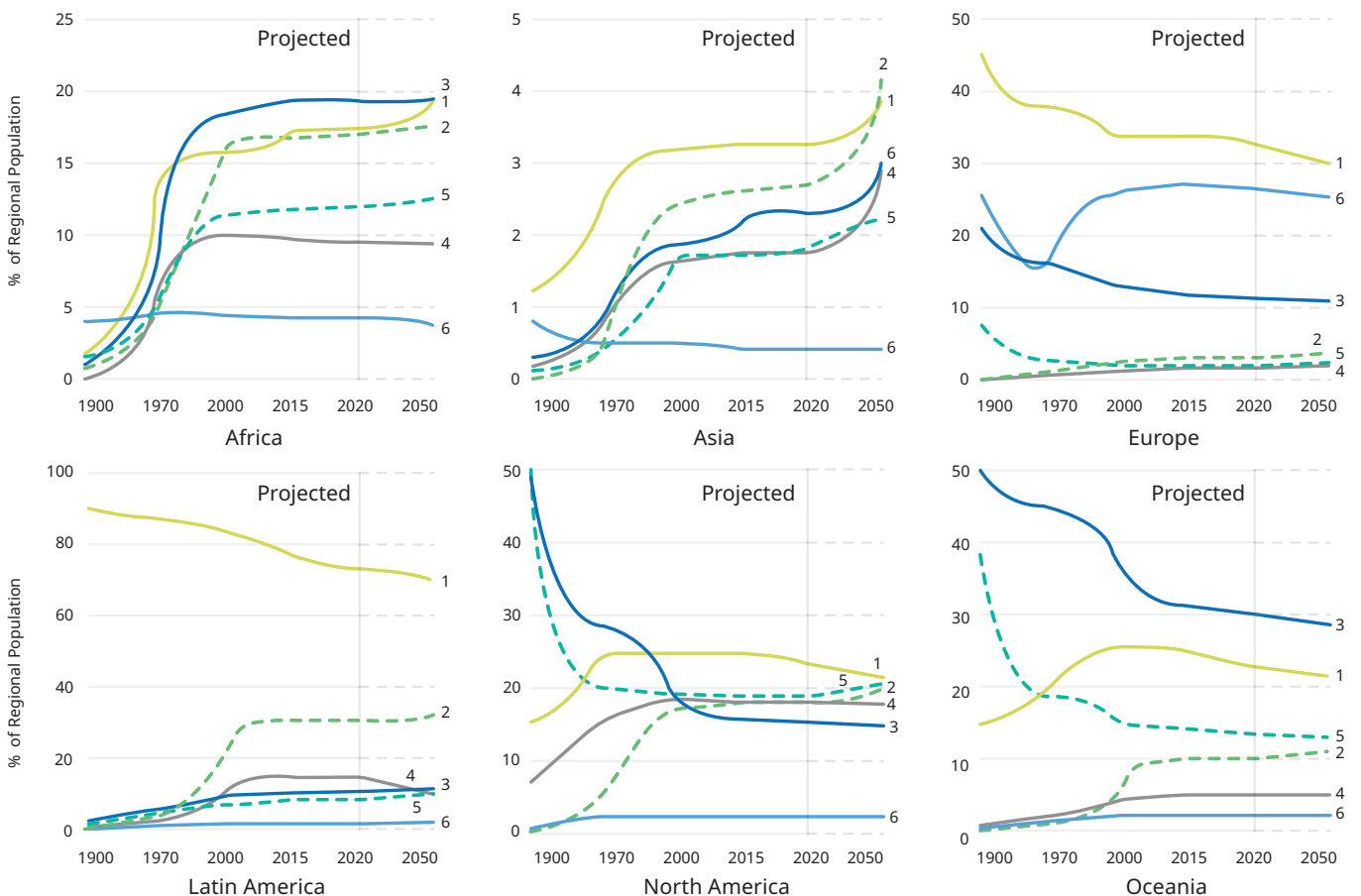


*These movements are found within the other Christian traditions

Source: World Christian Encyclopedia pg. 20

CONTINENTAL DENOMINATIONS OVER TIME

1 Catholic 2 Pentecostal* 3 Protestant 4 Independent 5 Evangelical* 6 Orthodox



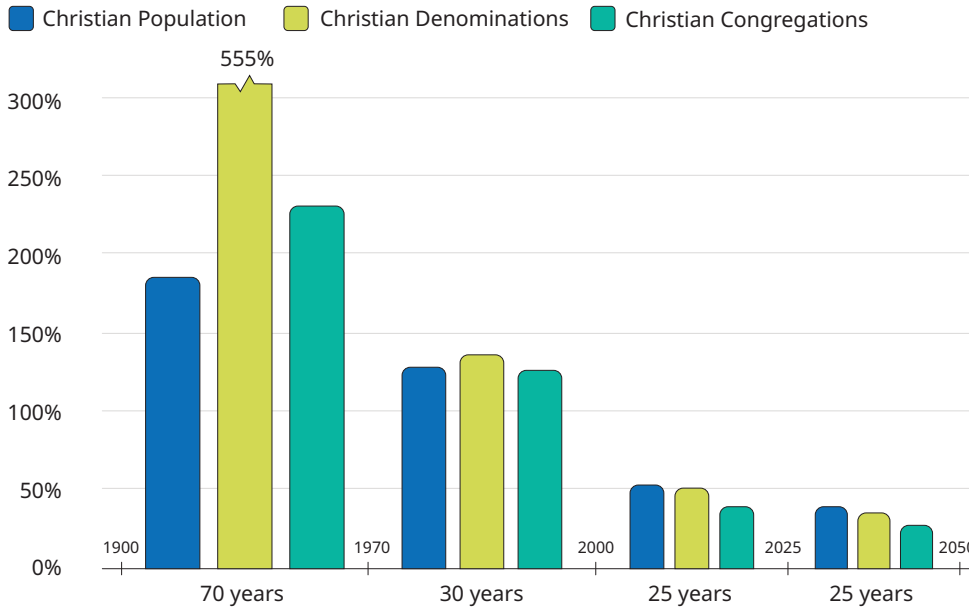
*These movements are found within the other Christian traditions

Source: World Christian Encyclopedia, pgs. 21-26



CHRISTIAN DENOMINATIONS

% CHANGE OF CHRISTIANITY OVER TIME



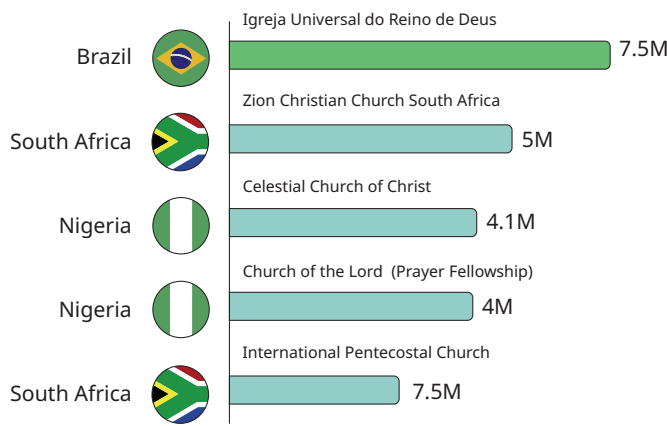
Source: World Christian Database, Status of Global Christianity, 2023

47,000 AND GROWING

According to the Center for Study of Global Christianity, in mid-2023 there are 47,300 Christian denominations / rites. By 2025, it is predicted that there will be 49,000; and in 2050, 64,000. The percentage growth of denominations is higher or equal to the percentage of growth of the Christian population and growth of congregations since 1900.

Globally the largest Protestant / Independent congregations, and fastest growing mega-denominations, are located in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

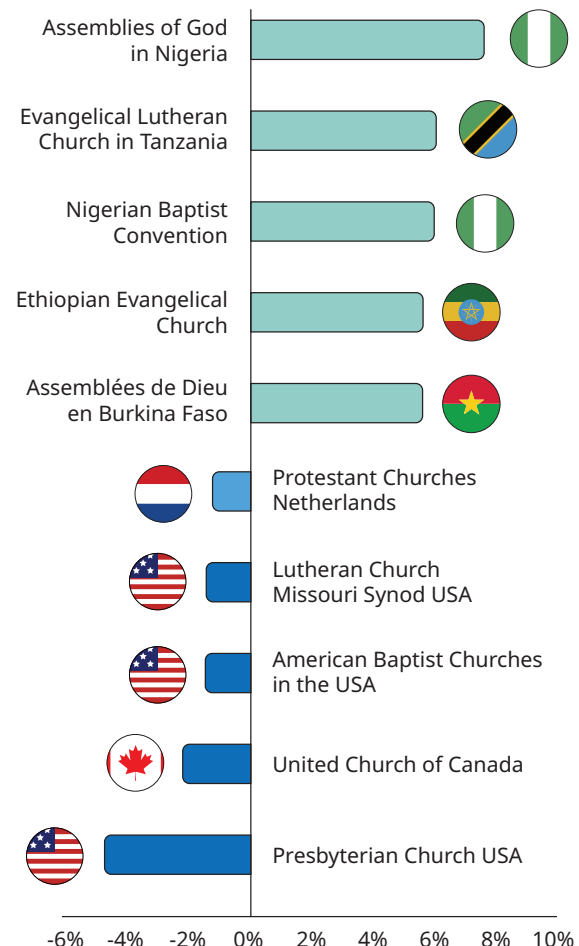
LARGEST INDEPENDENT DENOMINATIONS



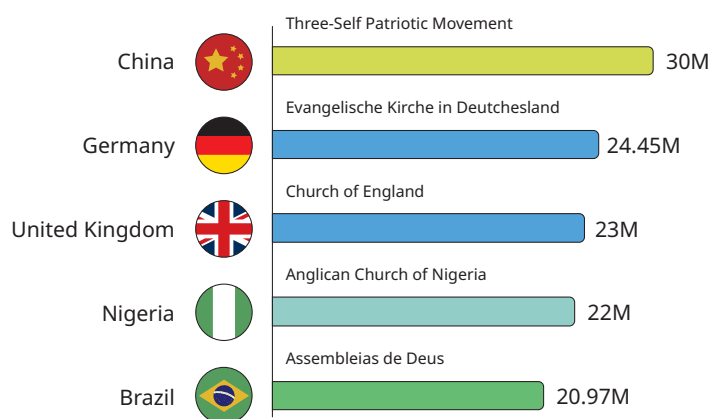
Source: World Christian Database, Accessed July 2023, M = Million

CHANGE IN LARGE DENOMINATIONS

Fastest Growth and Decline, 2000-2015



LARGEST PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS



Source: World Christian Database, Accessed July 2023, M = Million

Source: World Christian Database, Accessed July 2023; Protestant Churches with 1M Membership or more

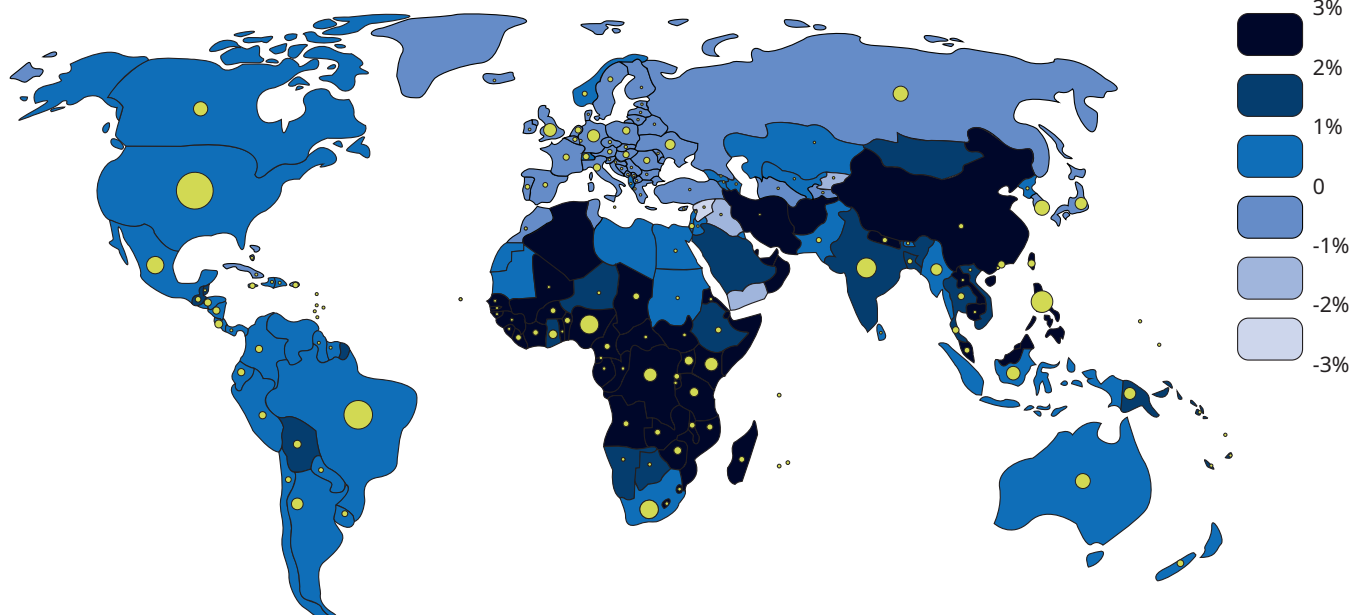


STRUCTURES OF FORMATION

GLOBAL THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION INSTITUTES

● Size represents # of Theological Institutions

Projected % Christian Change 2020-2050



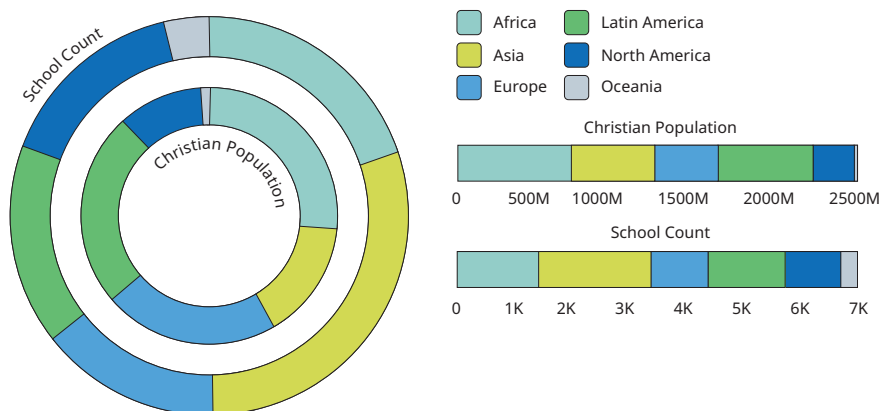
Source: Institutions = World Council of Churches, "Global Survey on Theological Education" % Change Map = World Christian Database, Accessed May 2023

INSTITUTIONAL IMBALANCE

Africa and Latin America remain under-resourced with theological schools while North America, with a declining Christian population, possesses an abundance of such institutions.

The larger network of institutions in Asia is likely due to over a century of Western missionary investment in countries throughout the continent.

OF INSTITUTIONS VS POPULATION

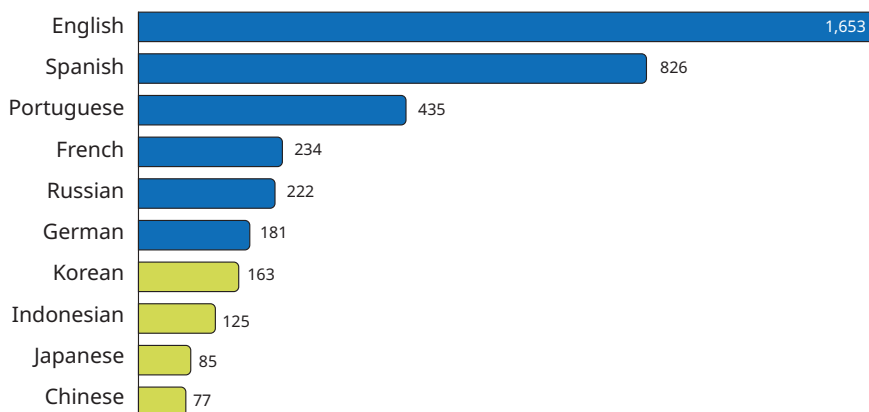


Source: Population = World Christian Database, Accessed May 2023 School Count = World Council of Churches, "Global Survey on Theological Education"

Africa and Latin America remain under-resourced with theological schools.

More Christians speak Spanish than any other language, even though English-speaking institutions outnumber Spanish institutions two-to-one. Chinese and Tagalog are the fifth and seventh most prevalent mother tongues respectively among Christians globally. These two language groups demonstrate the need for contextualized structures of formation.

INSTITUTIONS BY LANGUAGE



Source: World Council of Churches, "Global Survey on Theological Education"

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CONTEXT SHIFTS



SHIFTS IN CHRISTIANITY

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