

Nones and Dones Fact Sheet

by Jared Siebert, Director of New Leaf Network



Canadian stats

- Christian - 66% in 2011, 88% in 70's
 - Protestant 27%, 41% in the 70's
 - Catholic 39%, 47% in the 70's
 - Evangelical - 6-13% (this number has remained relatively stable for 100 years)
 - Part of the reason is that 40-50% of immigrants to Canada arrive as Christians. Many of them are part of the evangelical tradition.
- Other Religions - 11% in 2011, 4% in the 70's
- Nones - 24% adult population, 32-35% of Canadian Millennials, Jury is still out on Gen. Z
 - Regional differences - increasing in number from east to west.
 - 16% in 2001, the number has almost doubled since 2001
 - The fastest growing religious segment
 - **This group is quickly eclipsing the church as the moral, spiritual, and cultural leaders of our country.**
 - 12% are atheists
- **NONES Key Attributes** – Grew up with no or little religious affiliation or participation. Do not associate with any religious affiliation as adults. They do not have Christian categories or understand Christian or Evangelical sub-culture, traditions, vernacular, etc.
 - Individualistic, Open minded, and Free
 - They believe that being an free and open minded individual is more possible outside of religion than inside it.
 - Meaning and Purpose
 - They derive meaning and purpose apart from religion and instead find it in their family and friends, their job, their life goals, their recreational activities, and their volunteer initiatives.
 - Morality
 - They have a moral code. They define morality along the lines of treating people kindly and with respect and not stealing, lying, or murdering. Stealing, lying and murdering are wrong because it causes others pain or loss, and it helps foster a world lacking in trust or concern for the well-being of others.
 - Aversion to Forced Religion
 - Nones oppose those who push their religion onto others. For them it's not the Canadian way.

- 4 main types of Nones
 - Liminals
 - Oscillate between Christian identity and having no religious identity. They are marginally Nones. (many young adults raised in nominal to moderately committed Christian churches / homes are joining this category)
 - Spiritual But Not Religious
 - Most likely believe in a god of some kind or a universal energy or mind. Those beliefs shape how they live their lives but they don't practice any one single religion.
 - Agnostics
 - Often not very technical about this religious designation but they are highly suspicious of people who make big pronouncements about God, God's nature, and God's existence.
 - Atheists
 - Simply do not believe in any god.
 - Tend to see the world in purely material terms. Look to science for explanations of the world.
 - Canadian atheists tend not to be like their American counterparts. They see the polarizing fundamentalist approach to atheism that people like Dawkins, Dennet, and Harris use as very un-Canadian.

- **Young Adult DONES Key Attributes** – Grew up with moderate to marginal religious affiliation and are walking away from organized religion or Christian faith.

- According to Hemorrhaging Faith, and depending on the grouping, the Canadian Church loses anywhere from 60%-90% of its young people by early adulthood. This is where the Dones come from.
- Key Attributes
- Individualistic, Open minded, and Free
 - Dones often describe their transition from faith to no faith or from being churchied to leaving the church in conversion like terms. I once was lost but now am found was blind but now I see.
- Aversion to Church Organization
 - Have an “allergic reaction” to things like denominations, creeds, statements of faith, membership, and hierarchical church leadership.
- Morality
 - Their moral code is often informed in Christian thought - but have often felt that the church is on the wrong side of ethical debates and often the cause of several societal problems.
- Aversion to Forced Religion
 - Part of why the Dones left is that they see the church as being too judgmental and controlling.
- 3 main types
 - Done with Church but open to the Christian God, Done with Church and done with the Christian God, Done with Church and done with the concept of God.