



**WHITE EVANGELICALS, THE ISSUES AND THE 2008 ELECTION**  
 October 12-16, 2007

Evangelicals have become important supporters of the Republican Party, but this year they are less enthusiastic about the election than usual, and do not see any of the major Republican candidates as having strong religious beliefs. However, many say that they would support someone less conservative than themselves if they thought that candidate could win, and their top issues for 2008 are health care and Iraq, not social issues.

When evangelicals are asked to name the issue they would most like to hear the presidential candidates talk about, health care tops the list, closely followed by the war in Iraq. Immigration and the economy and jobs are also frequently mentioned. Voters nationwide want to hear about these issues too. But social issues such as abortion and same-sex marriage rank low on the list.

**ISSUE YOU MOST WANT THE CANDIDATES TO TALK ABOUT**  
 (Among registered voters)

	White	
	Evangelicals	All
Health care	23%	25%
War in Iraq	20	26
Immigration	8	6
Economy/jobs	7	11

Are the candidates talking about these issues? A third of white evangelicals (and voters overall) say they are not; but they are also more likely to say the Democratic candidates, not the Republicans, are talking about their top issue. Among evangelicals who choose health care as their issue, 41% say the Democrats are talking about it, while just 7% say the Republicans are.

**ARE THE CANDIDATES TALKING ABOUT YOUR ISSUE?**  
 (Among voters who selected an issue)

	White	
	Evangelicals	All
Democrats are	24%	35%
Republicans are	10	9
Both are (vol.)	12	10
No one is talking about it	35	33

When asked directly about specific issues, white evangelical voters are twice as likely as voters overall to say social issues such as

same-sex marriage and abortion are extremely important in their vote for president. These voters are somewhat less likely (28%) than the electorate at large (37%) to say that the war in Iraq will be extremely important in their vote. Global warming also is less important to voters who are evangelical or born-again than to voters nationwide.

**HOW IMPORTANT IS ... IN YOUR VOTE FOR PRESIDENT?**

(Among registered voters)

	Social Issues	Iraq	Global Warming	Pledge not to raise taxes
<u>White Evangelicals</u>				
Extremely	42%	28%	12%	16
Very	32	44	31	29
Somewhat	16	25	30	34
Not too	8	2	27	19
<u>All Voters</u>				
Extremely	22%	37%	23%	18
Very	23	42	32	25
Somewhat	32	17	28	33
Not too	22	3	16	23

On taxes, similar numbers of white evangelicals and all voters say it is extremely important for a candidate to pledge not to raise taxes.

Over four in 10 white evangelicals think abortion should only be permitted to save the life of the mother or not at all. That position is held by just 20% of all adult Americans. Evangelicals' views on global warming are similar to Americans overall.

There is a sizable difference between white evangelicals and Americans overall when it comes to their views on immigration (which ranks third on the list of issues evangelicals want the candidates to discuss). 53% of white evangelicals say people immigrating to the U.S. will make American society worse. 39% of Americans overall agree with this position.

**IMMIGRANTS WILL MAKE AMERICAN SOCIETY ...**

	White Evangelicals	All Americans
Better	19%	26%
Worse	53	39
No effect	15	22

Looking beyond politics, when evangelicals are asked to choose among three issues which they think evangelical Christians should get involved in, more choose poverty and world hunger than either abortion or genocide and violence in places like Darfur.

**WHICH ISSUE SHOULD EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS BE INVOLVED IN?**

(Among white evangelicals)

Poverty	33%
Abortion	22
Genocide/violence	17
All three (vol.)	15

**WHO ARE THE WHITE EVANGELICALS?**

White evangelicals comprise about 22% of the population. 57% are female, and 57% are over age 45. Most are married. Half live in the South (50%), and another quarter resides in the Midwest (24%).

87% of them are registered to vote. White evangelical voters have similar demographic characteristics to all adult evangelicals.

**WHO ARE WHITE EVANGELICALS?**

Women	57%
Men	43
Age 18-29	17%
30-44	26
45-64	38
65 and over	19
Married	67%
Northeast	14%
Midwest	24
South	50
West	12
High school or less	49%
Some college	32
College grad or more	19
Registered to vote	87%

In this poll, respondents were asked if they ever think of themselves as "evangelical or born again Christians." This analysis is limited to whites who consider themselves as evangelical Christians. African-Americans who call themselves evangelical tend to have very different political views from white evangelicals.

**RELIGION IN EVANGELICALS' LIVES**

White evangelicals are overwhelmingly Protestant; 85% report that as their religion, and 6% say they are Catholic.

Their frequent attendance at religious services differentiates them from Americans overall. 58% say they attend religious services every

week, and 13% attend almost that often. Another 13% attend once or twice a month. Americans as a whole attend far less frequently.

**RELIGIOUS SERVICE ATTENDANCE**

	White	
	Evangelicals	All
Every week	58%	28%
Almost every week	13	9
Once or twice a month	13	18
Less often	16	45

63% of white evangelical voters think that people who have strong religious beliefs are discriminated against in this country.

**POLITICAL PERSUASION**

Politically, most white evangelical voters place themselves towards the right end of the political spectrum, and are far more likely than voters overall to describe themselves as conservative and Republican. 57% identify themselves as Republicans, and 58% describe themselves as conservatives in this poll. Only 16% identify themselves as Democrats.

**POLITICAL IDENTIFICATION AND VIEWS**

(Among registered voters)

	White	
	Evangelicals	All
Republican	57%	33%
Democrat	16	34
Independent	27	33
Conservative	58%	32%
Moderate	31	42
Liberal	7	22

In exit polls conducted for the 2004 Presidential election, 59% of white evangelical voters said they were Republicans. 19% identified themselves as Democrats, and 22% said they were Independents.

Most white evangelicals (59%) say they will vote in a Republican primary next year. 20% say they expect to vote in a Democratic primary.

**PRIMARY VOTE INTENT**

(White Evangelical voters)

Republican primary	59%
Democratic primary	20

**THE CANDIDATES AND RELIGION**

It is overwhelmingly important to white evangelicals that a Presidential candidate shares their religious beliefs -- 84% say it

is. Compared to voters nationwide, evangelicals are much more likely to consider this important.

**IMPORTANT CANDIDATE SHARES YOUR RELIGIOUS BELIEFS?**

(Among registered voters)

	White	
	Evangelicals	All
Very important	39%	20%
Somewhat important	45	30
Not very/not at all	16	49

Yet none of the Republican candidates is seen as having strong religious beliefs. Only 15% of white evangelical voters see front-runner Rudy Giuliani as strongly religious, while John McCain and Mitt Romney are the most likely to be seen that way.

**DOES...HAVE STRONG RELIGIOUS BELIEFS?**

(Among registered voters)

	Giuliani	Thompson	McCain	Romney	Huckabee
Yes	18%	14%	34%	33%	13%
No	68	49	46	36	38
Don't know	14	37	20	31	49

(Among white evangelical voters)

	Giuliani	Thompson	McCain	Romney	Huckabee
Yes	15%	13%	35%	32%	15%
No	64	40	38	29	28
Don't know	21	47	27	39	57

This may be one reason that evangelicals who feel it is very important that a candidate share their beliefs are dissatisfied with the choice of candidates. White evangelicals who expect to vote in a Republican primary have mixed feelings about the candidates running. 44% are satisfied with their choices, but more, 51%, want others. Republican primary voters in general are divided: 48% are satisfied with their choices and 49% are not.

White evangelicals are disheartened in general about the upcoming presidential election. 40% say that compared to previous presidential elections, they are less enthusiastic about voting next year. 43% say their enthusiasm level is the same as in previous elections.

That's markedly more downbeat than the enthusiasm felt by voters overall.

**ENTHUSIASM ABOUT VOTING IN 2008 ELECTION**

(Among registered voters)

	White	
	Evangelicals	All
Less than usual	40%	24%
More than usual	16	28
Same as usual	43	47

Although Giuliani is the front-runner among all Republican primary voters, evangelicals who expect to vote in a Republican primary or caucus are behind Fred Thompson, who receives support from 29% of them. However, Giuliani is a close second, with 26%. McCain is third.

**THE REPUBLICAN NOMINATION**  
(Among Republican Primary Voters)

	White	
	Evangelicals	All
Thompson	29%	21%
Giuliani	26	29
McCain	15	18
Romney	7	12
Huckabee	6	4

Should Giuliani win the Republican nomination, about half of those white evangelical Republican primary voters who are not supporting him say they would definitely vote for him or would consider voting for him. 23% would not vote for him, and about a quarter think it is too early to say.

**WOULD EVANGELICALS SACRIFICE ISSUES FOR VICTORY?**

42% of white evangelicals say they are willing to vote for a candidate who disagrees with their position on the Iraq war, but fewer (29%) say it is possible to back a candidate who differs with them on the social issues of abortion and same-sex marriage. Voters overall are more likely to sacrifice their positions on social issues than their view on the war in Iraq.

**VOTE FOR CANDIDATE YOU DISAGREE WITH ON ...**

(Among registered voters)

	<u>SOCIAL ISSUES</u>		<u>IRAQ WAR</u>	
	White		White	
	Evang.	All	Evang.	All
Yes	29%	50%	42%	35%
No	60	41	45	55

However, 61% of white evangelicals who plan to vote in a Republican primary say they are willing to vote for a candidate who is less conservative than they are if they thought that candidate had a good chance of winning the presidency in November 2008.

**VOTE FOR LESS CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE IF THEY COULD WIN?**

(Among Republican Primary Voters)

	White	
	Evangelicals	All
Yes	61%	64%
No	26	23

If the general election of November 2008 were being held today, white evangelicals would still be mostly in the Republican camp, as they have been in recent years - but not by as strong a margin as in 2004. As of now, 60% would vote for a generic Republican candidate over a generic Democrat. In 2004, more than three in four white evangelicals (78%) voted for President George W. Bush.

**IF THE NOVEMBER 2008 ELECTION WERE TODAY, WOULD VOTE...**

(Among registered voters)

	White Evangelicals	All	White Evangelicals 2004 Election Results
Republican	60%	33%	78% Bush
Democrat	21	48	21 Kerry
It depends (vol)	13	9	

On the whole, evangelicals' overall evaluations of the candidates are much like those of all voters nationwide.

Evangelicals are slightly less engaged in the presidential race compared to voters overall. Just under one in five are paying a lot of attention to the presidential campaign now, while 24% of voters overall are.

**ATTENTION TO THE CAMPAIGN**

(Among registered voters)

	White Evangelicals	All
A lot	18%	24%
Some	54	52
Not much/none	27	24

The lack of a clear Republican candidate who appeals to evangelical voters may have caused evangelicals who will vote in a Republican primary to feel some disenfranchisement from the party. Although 38% of white evangelical Republican primary voters think that evangelicals generally have the right amount of influence in the Republican Party, more, 47%, think they have too little influence.

Fewer Republican primary voters overall think evangelicals have too little influence.

**EVANGELICALS' INFLUENCE IN REPUBLICAN PARTY**

(Among Republican Primary Voters)

	White Evangelicals	All
Right amount	39%	40%
Too little	47	28
Too much	5	16

## WHITE EVANGELICALS AND THE WAR

Evangelicals express stronger support than Americans overall for the war in Iraq and for the President. Most white evangelical Christians say going into Iraq was the right thing for the U.S. - 62% do; compared to 45% of the public overall.

### WAS GOING TO WAR WITH IRAQ THE RIGHT THING TO DO?

	White Evangelicals	All Americans
Right thing	62%	45%
Stayed out	32	51

Evangelicals have consistently been strong backers of U.S. military action in Iraq.

### WHITE EVANGELICALS: WAS GOING TO WAR WITH IRAQ THE RIGHT THING TO DO?

	Now	1/2007	10/2006	10/2005
Right thing	62%	58%	61%	63%
Stayed out	32	35	31	34

In addition, white evangelicals think the U.S. troop surge in Iraq is working. 54% say the surge is making things better, compared to 33% of Americans nationwide who say this.

### IMPACT OF U.S. TROOP SURGE

	White Evangelicals	All Americans
Made things better	54%	33%
Made things worse	8	13
No impact	27	41

Americans overall are not entirely convinced of the Bush Administration's assertions that Iraq represents a part of the war on terror: 46% think it is, and 48% think it is not. However, six in 10 white evangelicals say Iraq is part of the war on terror, including 49% who say it is a major part.

### IS IRAQ WAR PART OF THE WAR ON TERRORISM?

	White Evangelicals	All Americans
Yes, major part	49	35
Yes, minor part	13	11
No	32	48

## THE PRESIDENT

While President Bush's overall job approval rating remains low among the American public overall (30% in this poll), 53% of white evangelicals approve of the job he is doing as president.



**BUSH OVERALL JOB APPROVAL**

	White	All
	Evangelicals	Americans
Approve	53%	30%
Disapprove	38	61

On Election Day 2004, when the President was re-elected, 80% of white evangelicals said they approved of the job he was doing on Election Day. While they have generally continued to approve, that number has decreased 20 points since 2005.

**WHITE EVANGELICALS: BUSH JOB APPROVAL**

	Now	9/2007	1/2007	1/2006	1/2005
Approve	53%	48%	51%	68%	73%
Disapprove	38	42	39	26	22

---

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 1,282 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone October 12-16, 2007. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus three percentage points. 312 interviews were conducted with white evangelicals, and 283 with white evangelicals who are registered to vote. The margin of error for those subgroups is plus or minus six percentage points.

**CBS NEWS POLL**  
**White Evangelicals, the Issues and the 2008 Election**  
**October 12-16, 2007**

q1 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President?

	** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **		
	Total	White Evangelicals	Sep07b
	%	%	%
Approve	30	53	29
Disapprove	61	38	64
DK/NA	9	9	7

q2-10 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q11 What is your personal feeling about abortion? 1. It should be permitted in all cases OR 2. It should be permitted, but subject to greater restrictions than it is now OR 3. It should be permitted only in cases such as rape, incest and to save the woman's life OR 4. It should only be permitted to save the woman's life.

			Jan07c
Permitted in all cases	26	8	31
Greater restrictions	16	9	16
Rape/Incest/Save woman's life	34	35	30
Only to save woman's life	16	35	12
Not permitted at all (Vol.)	4	9	5
Don't know/No answer	4	4	6

q12 If the November 2008 election for President were being held today, would you probably vote for the Republican candidate or would you probably vote for the Democratic candidate?

	** REGISTERED VOTERS **		Sep07a*
Republican	33	60	32
Democratic	48	21	48
Other (vol.)	1	0	1
Won't vote (vol.)	0	0	1
Depends (vol.)	9	13	10
DK/NA	9	6	8

\*Wording change: If the 2008 Presidential election...

q13 How much attention have you been able to pay to the 2008 presidential campaign--a lot, some, not much, or no attention so far?

			Sep07a
A lot	24	18	21
Some	52	54	45
Not much	19	21	27
None at all	5	6	8
Don't know/No answer	0	0	0

q14 BLANK

q15 Which ONE issue would you most like to hear the candidates for president discuss during the 2008 presidential campaign?

\*\* REGISTERED VOTERS \*\*

	Total	White Evangelicals
	%	%
War in Iraq	26	20
Health Care	25	23
Economy / Jobs	11	7
Immigration	6	8
Education	3	2
Environment	2	0
Social Security	2	3
Defense / Military	2	3
Terrorism (general)	2	2
Abortion	1	2
Same-sex marriage	0	0
Other	12	17
DK/NA	8	13

q16 From what you have seen or heard, do you think any of the candidates are talking about that issue?

IF YES, ASK: Which party's candidates are talking about it more, the Democrats or the Republicans?

REGISTERED VOTERS WHO SELECTED AN ISSUE IN Q15

Yes, Democrats are	35	24
Yes, Republicans are	9	10
Yes, both equally (vol.)	10	12
Yes, not sure which party	5	6
No, none	33	35
DK/NA	8	13

q17 Compared to past Presidential elections, how would you describe your level of enthusiasm about voting in the 2008 Presidential election next year--are you more enthusiastic than usual, less enthusiastic, or about the same as usual?

\*\* REGISTERED VOTERS \*\*

More enthusiastic	28	16
Less enthusiastic	24	40
Same (Vol.)	47	43
Don't know/No answer	1	1

prim Next year, are you more likely to vote in a Democratic presidential primary or caucus, or a Republican primary or caucus or aren't you likely to vote in a primary or caucus at all?

\*\* WHITE EVANGELICAL VOTERS \*\*

	%
Democratic primary	20
Republican Primary	59
Not likely to vote	9
Never vote (Vol.)	1
DK/NA	11

q18-19 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

q20 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q21 Are you generally satisfied with the candidates now running for the Republican nomination for President, or do you wish there were more choices?

\*\* REPUBLICAN PRIMARY VOTERS \*\*

	Total	White Evangelicals	Sep07b
	%	%	
Satisfied	48	44	45
More choices	49	51	49
DK/NA	3	5	6

q22-26 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q27-31 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

q32 Suppose the race for the Republican Party's presidential nomination in 2008 comes down to a choice among John McCain, Rudy Giuliani, Mitt Romney, Fred Thompson, and Mike Huckabee. Who would you most like to see nominated -- McCain, Giuliani, Romney, Thompson, Huckabee, or would you rather see someone else nominated? IF SOMEONE ELSE, ASK: Who would you like to see nominated?

McCain	18	15
Giuliani	29	26
Romney	12	7
Fred Thompson	21	29
Huckabee	4	6
Someone else /None	9	10
Undecided (Vol.)	4	3
DK/NA	3	4

q33 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q34-45 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

q46 Do you think of Rudy Giuliani as having strong religious beliefs, or don't you think of Rudy Giuliani that way?

\*\* REGISTERED VOTERS \*\*

	Total	White Evangelicals
	%	%
Yes	18	15
No	68	64
DK/NA	14	21

q47 Do you think of Mitt Romney as having strong religious beliefs, or don't you think of Mitt Romney that way?

Yes	33	32
No	36	29
DK/NA	31	39

q48 Do you think of John McCain as having strong religious beliefs, or don't you think of John McCain that way?

Yes	34	35
No	46	38
DK/NA	20	27

q49 Do you think of Mike Huckabee as having strong religious beliefs, or don't you think of Mike Huckabee that way?

\*\* REGISTERED VOTERS \*\*

	Total	White Evangelicals
	%	%
Yes	13	15
No	38	28
DK/NA	49	57

q50 Do you think of Fred Thompson as having strong religious beliefs, or don't you think of Fred Thompson that way?

Yes	14	13
No	49	40
DK/NA	37	47

q51 Is it possible you would ever vote for a candidate who does not share your views on social issues like abortion or same-sex marriage, or are these social issues so important that you could not vote for a candidate who disagrees with you?

Yes, would vote	50	29
No, would not vote	41	60
Depends (Vol.)	6	8
Don't know/No answer	3	3

q52 Is it possible you would ever vote for a candidate who does not share your views on the war in Iraq, or is that issue so important that you could not vote for a candidate who disagrees with you?

Yes, would vote	35	42
No, would not vote	55	45
Depends (Vol.)	5	9
Don't know/No answer	5	4

q53 How important to you is it that a presidential candidate pledge NOT to raise taxes? Is that extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important?

Extremely important	18	16
Very important	25	29
Somewhat important	33	34
No too important	23	19
DK/NA	1	2

q54 How important will social issues such as abortion and same sex marriage be in your vote for president next year -- extremely important, very important, somewhat important, or not too important?

Extremely important	22	42
Very important	23	32
Somewhat important	32	16
Not too important	22	8
DK/NA	1	2

q55 How important will the war in Iraq be in your vote for president next year -- extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not too important?

\*\* REGISTERED VOTERS \*\*

	Total	White
	%	%
Extremely important	37	28
Very important	42	44
Somewhat important	17	25
Not too important	3	2
DK/NA	1	1

q56 How important will the environment and global warming be in your vote for president next year - extremely important, very important, somewhat important or not too important?

Extremely important	23	12
Very important	32	31
Somewhat important	28	30
Not too important	16	27
DK/NA	1	0

q57 Would you be willing or not willing to vote for a candidate for the Republican nomination who has views that are less conservative than yours if you thought that candidate had a good chance to win the presidency in November 2008?

	** REPUBLICAN PRIMARY VOTERS **	Sep07a
Willing	64	60
Not willing	23	29
DK/NA	13	11

q58 Do you think evangelical Christians have too much influence, too little influence, or the right amount of influence in the Republican party today?

Too much	16	5
Too little	28	47
Right amount	40	39
Don't know/no answer	16	9

q59-60 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

q61 If Rudy Giuliani is the Republican Party's nominee for president in 2008, would you definitely vote for him in the general election in 2008, would you consider voting for him, would you definitely not vote for him, or is it too early to say?

Definitely vote	27	29
Consider voting	36	32
Definitely would not vote	11	17
Too early to say	26	22
DK/NA	0	0

q62 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q63 BLANK

q64 Thinking about your vote for president next year, how important is it that a candidate shares your religious beliefs--is it very important, somewhat important, not very important, or not at all important?

** REGISTERED VOTERS **			
	Total	White Evangelicals	Jun07c
	%	%	%
Very important	20	39	15
Somewhat important	30	45	23
Not very important	24	12	23
Not at all important	25	4	38
DK/NA	1	0	1

q65 Do you think people who have strong religious beliefs are discriminated against in this country?

** REGISTERED VOTERS **			
	Total	White Evangelicals	Apr06a*
	%	%	%
Yes	46	63	48
No	46	28	43
Depends (Vol.)	6	7	5
DK/NA	2	2	4
*Total respondents			

q67-68 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q69 If you had to choose, which do you think should be the main issue for evangelical Christians to get involved in today: is it 1. trying to end poverty and hunger among the poor; OR 2. trying to stop abortions from taking place in the U.S., OR 3. trying to stop the genocide and violence in places like Darfur ?

** WHITE EVANGELICALS **	
	%
End poverty and world hunger	33
Try to stop abortions in the U.S.	22
Darfur genocide	17
All (vol.)	15
Combination (vol.)	5
DK/NA	8

q70 Do you think global warming is an environmental problem that is causing a serious impact now, or do you think the impact of global warming won't happen until sometime in the future, or do you think global warming won't have a serious impact at all?

** TOTAL RESPONDENTS **			
	Total	White Evangelicals	Apr06b
	%	%	%
Impact now	52	46	49
In the future	28	22	36
No serious impact	13	23	11
Global warming doesn't exist	2	3	1
DK/NA	5	6	3

q71 In the long run, do you think the people who are immigrating to the United States today will make American society better, will make American society worse, or do you think today's immigrants won't affect American society one way or the other?

\*\* TOTAL RESPONDENTS \*\*

	Total	White Evangelicals
	%	%
Better	26	19
Worse	39	53
Won't affect society	22	15
DK/NA	13	13

q72 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q73 BLANK

q74 Looking back, do you think the United States did the right thing in taking military action against Iraq, or should the U.S. have stayed out?

			Sep07b
			%
Right thing	45	62	39
Stayed out	51	32	53
Don't know/No answer	4	6	8

q75-78 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q79 As you may know, the U.S. has sent a troop surge to Iraq. From what you have heard or read, would you say the troop surge is making the situation in Iraq better, making it worse, or is it having no impact on the situation in Iraq so far?

Making it better	33	54	30
Making worse	13	8	14
No impact	41	27	51
DK/NA	13	11	5

q80 Do you think of the war with Iraq as part of the war on terrorism, or do you think of it as separate from the war on terrorism?

IF YES, ASK: Is it a major part of the war on terrorism, or a minor part of the war on terrorism?

Major part	35	49	31
Minor part	11	13	11
Not part	48	32	51
DK/NA	6	6	7



q96 Would you say you attend religious services every week, almost every week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, or never?

**\*\* TOTAL RESPONDENTS \*\***

	Total	White Evangelicals
	%	%
Every week	28	58
Almost every week	9	13
Once or twice a month	18	13
A few times a year	27	13
Never	18	3
DK/NA	0	0

	<u>UNWEIGHTED</u>	<u>WEIGHTED</u>
Total Respondents	1282	
Registered Voters	1143	1059
Total White Evangelicals	312	285
White Evangelical Voters	283	248
Republican Primary Voters	372	319