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Recent Poll Shows Christians Believe Religious Freedom is Crucial to Foreign Policy Issue

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More than half of Christians in America believe [religious freedom](#) should be a high priority in crafting U.S. foreign policy, according to a recent Wilson Research Strategies survey commissioned by Open Doors USA.

“The persecution of Christians in the world today is on the rise, with an estimated 100 million suffering some sort of repression and even death for their faith,” said Carl Moeller, president and chief executive officer of Open Doors USA, a [Christian ministry](#) that has served persecuted Christians around the world for more than 50 years. “Open Doors commissioned this study to try to understand what Christians in America feel about religious freedom. Clearly, it is a priority.”

Fifty-four percent of U.S. Christians polled consider religious freedom an important issue in making U.S. foreign policy, according to the survey. This is an especially high priority with those who attend church most frequently (60 percent), compared with those Christians who never attend (40 percent).

The study shows that 96 percent of respondents believe strongly that religious freedom is a basic human right, and that more than eight in 10 believe it is a very important basic right. Those who feel most strongly about the issue are women who frequently attend church. Ninety-one percent believe it is a very important issue.

Respondents did not believe that direct intervention should form our religious freedom foreign policy. Instead, they favored the U.S. using more indirect policies, such as economic sanctions (20 percent) and diplomatic measures to pressure persecuting regimes rather than having the U.S. directly intervene.

“The findings of this study demonstrate that senators McCain and Obama must address the issue of religious freedom in their foreign policy positions if they are intent on winning the vote of faithful Christians,” said Moeller.

Geographically, the weakest support for religious freedom as a basic human right is in New England, with only 76 percent of respondents ranking it as very important, compared with Mountain States, where 9 out of 10 say it is very important.

Among Christian groups, the strongest support came from [Baptists](#), non denominational/independent churches, Lutherans and charismatics. The weakest group support came from [Catholics](#), Presbyterians and Episcopalians.

Of special interest is the finding that 98 percent of frequent listeners to Christian radio believe strongly that religious freedom is a basic human right.



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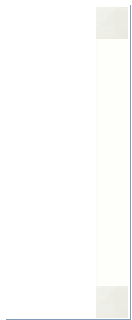
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