

# Looking Forward: An Overview of World Evangelization, 2005-2025

A special report for the Lausanne 2004 Forum on World Evangelization  
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Every year Christian churches carefully canvas their members, spending over \$1.1 billion U.S. dollars, sending out over 10 million questionnaires in 3,000 languages, covering 180 major religious subjects. At the same time, over half of the world's governments ask one or more questions about religion in their censuses. The purpose of this brief report is to look forward to the next 20 years by collating and analyzing this enormous amount of information as it relates to world evangelization in 2005. Statistical reports, beginning with William Carey's *Enquiry* published in 1792, have always generated strategic planning on the part of churches and mission agencies. This has resulted in a proliferation of global plans that have set forth the conditions necessary to evangelize the world in a relatively short period of time, usually 20-30 years. However, up until today, these plans have not been ultimately successful in evangelizing the world. In fact, if current trends continue, over 2 billion people in 2025 will still have no access to the gospel. Nonetheless, this report illustrates that there are many encouraging signs in world evangelization. The next 20 years could be some of the most fruitful in Christian history.

The information presented in this report covers the following (normally on one page):

1. Global Summary of World Evangelization
2. Global Demography and the Urban World
3. Global Human Need
4. Global Health
5. Women and Children
6. World Religions
7. Global Christianity
8. Christian Resources
9. Evangelization
10. The Unfinished Task: The Latest Update on Unreached Peoples
11. World Evangelization in 2025

On each page we present statistics in the form of tables, charts, diagrams, and maps. At the bottom of each page we go "Beyond the Numbers" to present five trend statements, each preceded by a single keyword describing that statement.

The major source for the Christian statistics in this report is the new online World Christian Database found at [www.worldchristiandatabase.org](http://www.worldchristiandatabase.org). The detailed methodology behind these figures can be found in Barrett and Johnson, *World Christian Trends, AD 30-AD 2200* (William Carey Library, 2001). In addition, an annual update of many of the statistics in this report is produced every January in the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*.

## A Global Summary of World Evangelization, mid-2005

BIRTHS Total 134.3 million		Global population, 6,454 million Natural global increase p.a. 76.0 million		DEATHS Total 58.3 million	
<b>UNEVANGELIZED NON-CHRISTIANS</b> 1,800 million—Increase p.a. 6.0 million		Births in unevangelized families 40.7 million		Unevangelized who are evangelized 70.7 million	
<b>EVANGELIZED NON-CHRISTIANS</b> 2,518 million—Increase p.a. 47.8 m		Births in evangelized non-Christian families 51.5 million		Defectors 19.7 million Newly-evangelized 70.7 million Converts 17.7 million	
<b>CHRISTIANS</b> 2,136 million—Increase p.a. 22.2 million		Christian births 42.1 million		Converts 19.7 million Defectors 17.7 million	
				Unevangelized deaths 15.4 million	
				Evangelized deaths 21.0 million	
				Christian deaths 21.9 million	

To evangelize the world by 2025 the number of unevangelized who are evangelized would have to increase from 70.7 million per year to 174.2 million per year. But these 100 million unevangelized non-Christians are far-removed from current Christian outreach.

### Beyond the Numbers

1. **SHIFT.** The center of gravity of Christianity continues to shift southward. In 2005, 62.5% of all Christians live in the South, by 2025 this will increase to 70%.
2. **GLOCAL.** Local churches around the world are getting more involved in mission, often by sending their own missionaries directly.
3. **PROXIMITY.** The peoples of the world are on the move. Millions of non-Christians have moved into close proximity to Christians.
4. **RESPONSE.** The least evangelized peoples of the world have been shown to be the most responsive to the gospel.
5. **POSTMODERNS.** Compared to their parents, emerging postmodern youth around the world are more open to other cultures—a distinct advantage for effective mission work.

Source: World Christian Database.

## Global Demography and the Urban World

Global Demography and the Urban World			
Population Trends	mid-2005	2025	20 year trend % p.a.
Global population	6,453,628,000	7,851,455,000	0.99
Urban dwellers (urbanites)	3,158,016,000	4,572,884,000	1.87
Rural dwellers	3,295,612,000	3,278,571,000	0.03
Adult population (over 15s)	4,624,300,000	5,950,587,000	1.27
Literates	3,546,029,000	5,015,884,000	1.75
Nonliterates	1,078,271,000	934,703,000	0.71
Percentage 14 and under	28.3	24.2	0.78
Percentage 60 and over	10.3	15.0	1.90
Median age	27.4	31.9	0.76
Urban Trends	mid-2005	2025	20 year trend % p.a.
Metropolises (over 100,000 population)	4,500	6,500	1.86
Mega-cities (over 1 million population)	440	650	1.97
Urban poor	1,630 million	3,000 million	3.10
Urban slum dwellers	830 million	1,600 million	3.34

Top Ten Cities, 2005 and 2025							
Rank	2005	Pop.	% Christian	Rank	2025	Pop.	% Christian
1	Tokyo, Japan	35,327,000	3.0	1	Tokyo, Japan	36,838,000	4.0
2	Mexico City, Mexico	19,013,000	94.5	2	Mumbai, India	27,116,000	17.0
3	New York, USA	18,498,000	65.0	3	Delhi, India	26,818,000	4.5
4	Mumbai, India	18,336,000	15.0	4	Dhaka, Bangladesh	24,080,000	1.5
5	Sao Paulo, Brazil	18,333,000	90.0	5	Lagos, Nigeria	23,992,000	48.0
6	Delhi, India	15,334,000	3.0	6	Mexico City, Mexico	22,143,000	94.0
7	Calcutta, India	14,299,000	2.0	7	Jakarta, Indonesia	21,782,000	23.0
8	Buenos Aires, Argentina	13,349,000	90.5	8	Sao Paulo, Brazil	21,295,000	89.0
9	Jakarta, Indonesia	13,194,000	21.0	9	Karachi, Pakistan	21,272,000	3.0
10	Shanghai, China	12,665,000	14.0	10	New York, USA	20,789,000	63.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>178,348,000</b>	<b>37.9</b>		<b>Total</b>	<b>246,125,000</b>	<b>31.6</b>

### Beyond the Numbers

1. **AGING.** By 2025, 15% of the world's population will be over 60, nearly twice the proportion at the time of the first Lausanne conference in 1974.
2. **SLUMS.** Every single day there are 50,000 new urban slum-dwellers.
3. **URBAN.** The world will become over 50% urban in 2007 but this will not happen in China until 2017 and in India until 2040.
4. **ILLITERATE.** By 2025, nearly 1 billion people will still be illiterate, underlining the need for audio-visual communication.
5. **DECLINE.** The top ten cities in the world are gradually becoming less Christian, declining from 37.9% in 2005 to 31.6% by 2025.

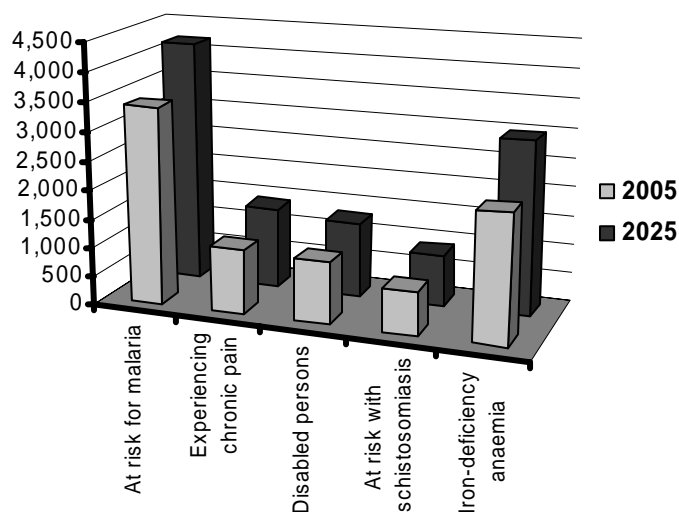
Source: *World Population Prospects*, 2002 Revision, United Nations; *World Urbanization Prospects*, 2003 Revision, United Nations; World Christian Database.



## Global Health

Indicators of Need (in millions)	Global Health		
	2005	2025	20 yr. trend % p.a.
Malaria: at risk	3,400	4,200	1.06
deaths p.a.	2.7	3	.53
malaria cases p.a.	480	600	1.12
Exp. chronic pain	1,100	1,400	1.21
Disabled	1,070	1,300	.98
Schistosomiasis: at risk	740	900	.98
infected	260	320	1.04
Iron-def. anemia	2,200	3,000	1.56
Anemic women	750	950	1.19
Elephantiasis	330	400	.97
Deaf: Partial	390	480	1.05
Severe	160	200	1.12
Total	25	33	1.41
Dumb (deaf-mutes)	12	17	1.50
Diabetics	155	200	1.28
River blindness: at risk	108	150	1.64
Actual	21	26	1.06
Psychotics	65	90	1.64
Legally blind	53	70	1.41
Totally blind	20	25	1.12
Leprosy sufferers	22	28	1.21

Major Health Issues, 2005-2025



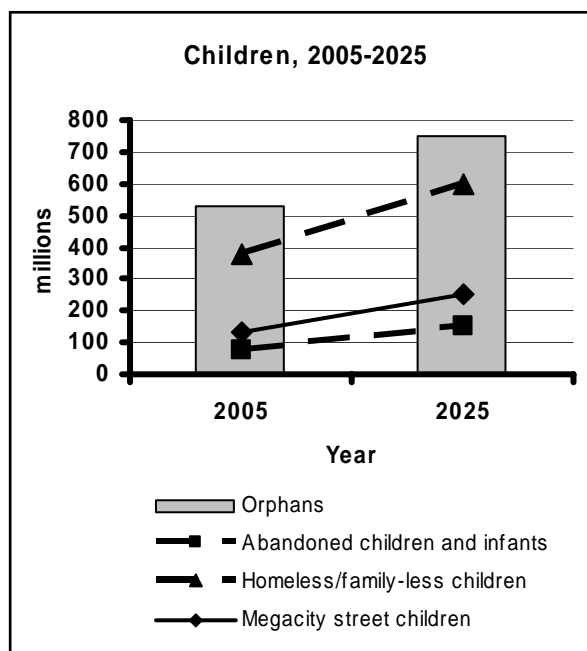
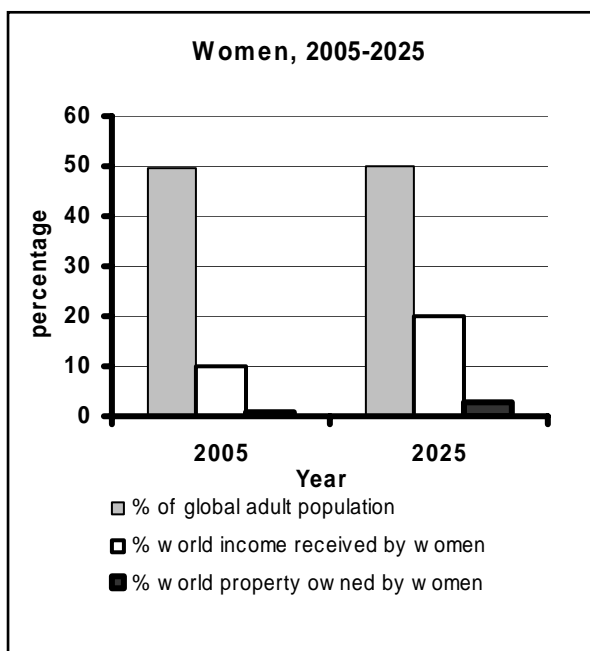
### Beyond the Numbers

- DISEASE.** Developing countries will experience a surge in both infectious and noninfectious diseases and in general will have inadequate health care capacities and spending.
- ANEMIA.** By 2025 the number of women suffering from anemia will total almost 1 billion women.
- AIDS.** Tuberculosis, malaria, hepatitis, and particularly AIDS will continue to increase rapidly. AIDS and TB together are likely to account for the majority of deaths in most developing countries.
- LIFESPAN.** In some African countries, the average lifespan will be reduced by as much as 30 to 40 years, generating more than 40 million orphans and contributing to poverty, crime, and instability.
- BLIND.** China, the country with the fastest Christian expansion ever, is also the country that by 2025 will rank first or second in the world in total numbers of blind, deaf, and leprosy persons.

Source: United Nations, World Health Organization, World Christian Database.

## Women and Children

Women (in millions)	2005	2025	20 year trend % p.a.
Global population of women	2,301	2,970	1.28
% of global adult population	49.7	49.9	0.02
% literate	60	70	0.77
% world income received by women	10	20	3.53
% world property owned by women	1	3	5.65
Female life expectancy	68.4	72.5	0.29
Women of childbearing age (15-49)	1,662	1,916	0.71
Induced abortions	70	130	3.14
Battered women	250	400	2.38
Maternal mortality p.a.	540,000	600,000	0.53
Children (in millions)			
Global population aged 0-14	1,826	1,900	0.20
% of global population	28.3	24.2	-0.78
Babies born malnourished p.a.	17	25	1.95
Hunger-related deaths of under 5s	19.7	25	1.19
Abandoned children and infants	75	150	3.53
Homeless/family-less children	375	600	2.38
Mega-city street children	135	250	3.13
Orphans	530	750	1.75
Exploited child labor	150	300	3.53



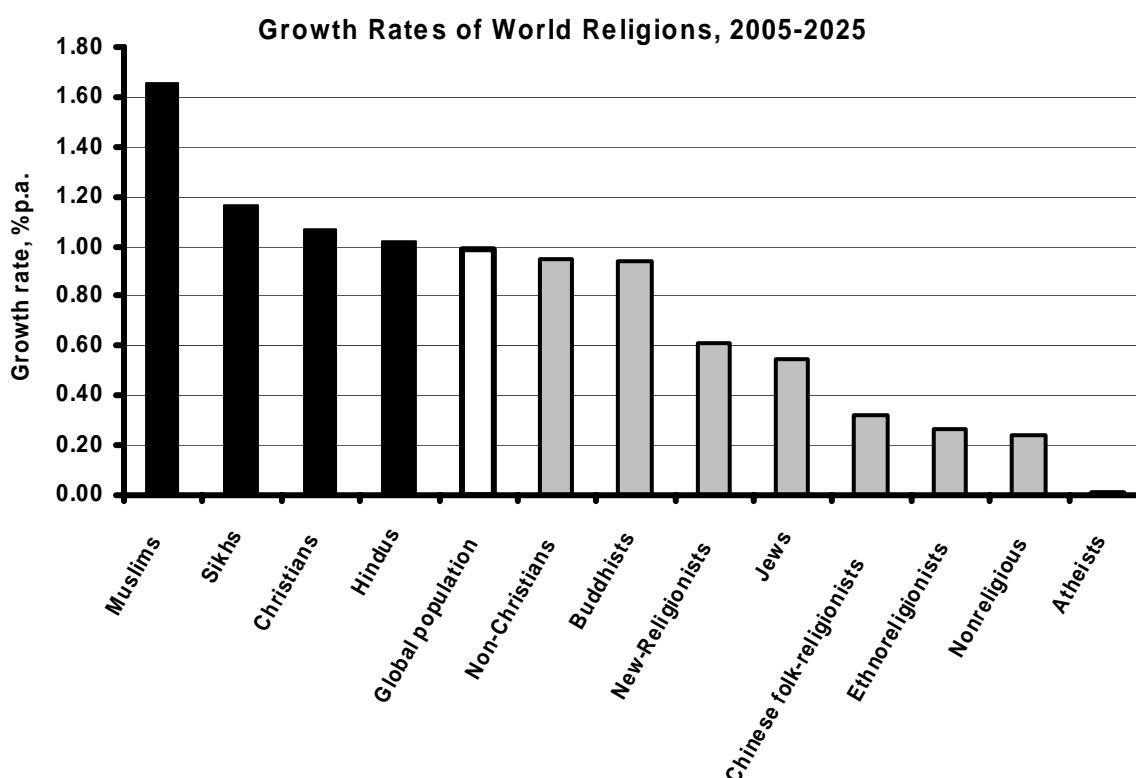
### Beyond the Numbers

- PROPERTY.** In 20 years, women will still live more than 4 years longer than men but own little property and receive far less income.
- ABORTION.** By 2025 the number of induced abortions per year will nearly double, from 70 million to 130 million. At the same time, total fertility rates and birth rates will continue to decrease.
- REFUGEES.** 80% of all refugees are women who are also more likely to be illiterate, poor, and sick.
- ABANDONED.** The number of abandoned children and infants will double to 150 million by 2025.
- EXPLOITED.** The number of exploited children is increasing at a staggering rate, underscoring the need to disempower the structures of evil that profit from and perpetuate it.

Source: United Nations Development Programme.

## World Religions

Adherents of World Religions					
Sorted by fastest 20 year trend rate					
	2005	%	2025	%	20 yr. trend % p.a.
Muslims	1,313,984,000	20.4	1,825,283,000	23.2	1.66
Sikhs	25,374,000	0.4	31,985,000	0.4	1.16
Christians	2,135,783,000	33.1	2,640,665,000	33.6	1.07
Hindus	870,047,000	13.5	1,065,868,000	13.6	1.02
<i>Non-Christians</i>	<i>4,317,845,000</i>	<i>66.9</i>	<i>5,210,790,000</i>	<i>66.4</i>	<i>.94</i>
Buddhists	378,809,000	5.9	457,048,000	5.8	.94
New-Religionists	108,132,000	1.7	122,188,000	1.6	.61
Jews	15,146,000	0.2	16,895,000	0.2	.55
Chinese folk-religionists	404,922,000	6.3	431,956,000	5.5	.32
Ethnoreligionists	256,341,000	4	270,210,000	3.4	.26
Nonreligious	768,598,000	11.9	806,884,000	10.3	.24
Atheists	151,548,000	2.3	151,742,000	1.9	.01
<b>Global population</b>	<b>6,453,628,000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,851,455,000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>.99</b>



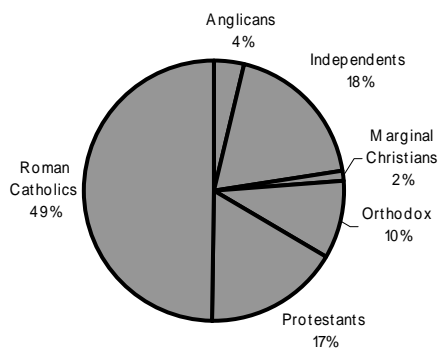
### Beyond the Numbers

1. **BABIES.** Muslims have the fastest growth rate of any world religion but this is due a high natural growth rate (births) and less to conversion.
2. **CONTACT.** Organized Christianity has total contact with 3,590 religions but no contact at all with 353 other religions and their over 500 million adherents.
3. **HIDDEN.** 15 million converted Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims have opted to remain within those religions in order to witness for Christ as active believers in Jesus as Lord.
4. **UNBELIEF.** The nonreligious and atheists are gradually declining as a percentage of the world's population, from 13.2% in 2005 to only 12.2% by 2025.
5. **TRIBALS.** Ethnoreligionists, widely expected to be extinct by 1950, will likely number over 270 million by 2025.

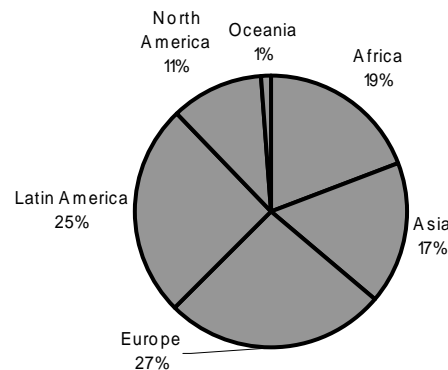
Source: World Christian Database.

## Global Christianity

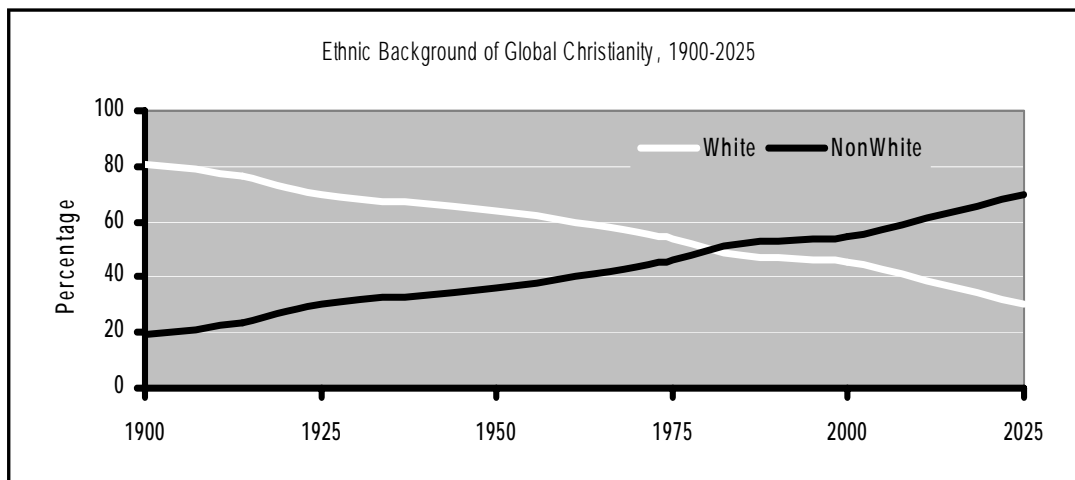
Christianity	2005	2025	20 yr. trend % p.a.
Unaffiliated Christians	109,711,000	112,779,000	0.14
Affiliated Christians	2,026,072,000	2,527,886,000	1.11
Anglicans	79,719,000	108,257,000	1.54
Independents	426,672,000	612,670,000	1.83
Marginal Christians	34,150,000	49,768,000	1.90
Orthodox	219,501,000	235,834,000	0.36
Protestants	375,814,000	491,084,000	1.35
Roman Catholics	1,118,992,000	1,336,338,000	0.89
Doubly-affiliated	-207,663,000	-285,309,000	1.60
Disaffiliated	-21,111,000	-20,575,000	-0.08
Membership by 6 Continents			
Africa	389,304,000	595,821,000	2.15
Asia	344,828,000	498,119,000	1.86
Europe	531,086,000	513,706,000	-0.17
Latin America	511,908,000	623,355,000	0.99
Northern America	226,685,000	270,186,000	0.88
Oceania	22,258,000	26,691,000	0.91



Christians by major tradition, mid-2005



Christians by continent, mid-2005



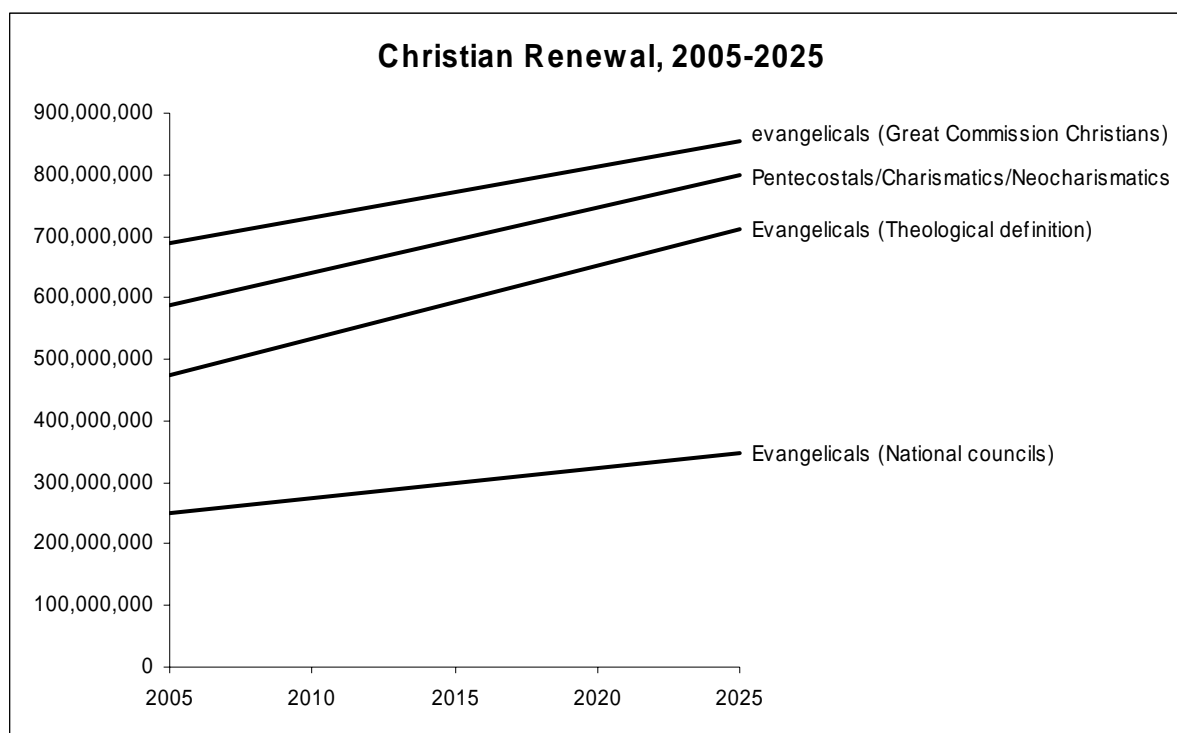
### Beyond the Numbers

- POSTCOLONIAL.** In 1900, 81% of all Christians were White, by AD 2025 this will drop to 30%.
- INDEPENDENTS.** A huge new Christian nonconfessional megabloc, the Independents/Post-denominationalists, is growing rapidly and numbers 21% of all Christians.
- EUROPE.** In 1900, 70% of all Christians lived in Europe, by 2025 this will drop to only 20%.
- UNAFFILIATED.** People who call themselves Christians but who are unaffiliated with any church, number over 100 million globally.
- LEADERS.** The fastest growing churches in North America and Europe are led by Africans, Asians, and Latin Americans.

Source: World Christian Database.

## Christian Resources

Christian Renewal	2005	2025	20 yr. trend % p.a.
Evangelicals ( <i>National councils/Self-definition</i> )	250,776,000	348,648,000	1.66
Evangelicals ( <i>Theological definition</i> )	475,000,000	710,000,000	2.03
evangelicals ( <i>Great Commission Christians</i> )	688,034,000	853,179,000	1.08
Pentecostals/Charismatics/Neocharismatics	588,502,000	798,320,000	1.54
Christian Workers			
National workers	5,357,000	6,500,000	0.97
Foreign missionaries	443,000	550,000	1.09
Christian Finance ( <i>billions of US \$/yr.</i> )			
Personal income of church members	17,350	26,000	2.04
Giving to Christian causes	340	870	4.81
Churches' income	130	300	4.27
Para-church and institutional income	210	570	5.12
Income of global foreign missions	20	60	5.65
Ecclesiastical crime	21	65	5.81
Cost-effectiveness ( <i>cost/baptism</i> )	\$349,000	\$650,000	3.16



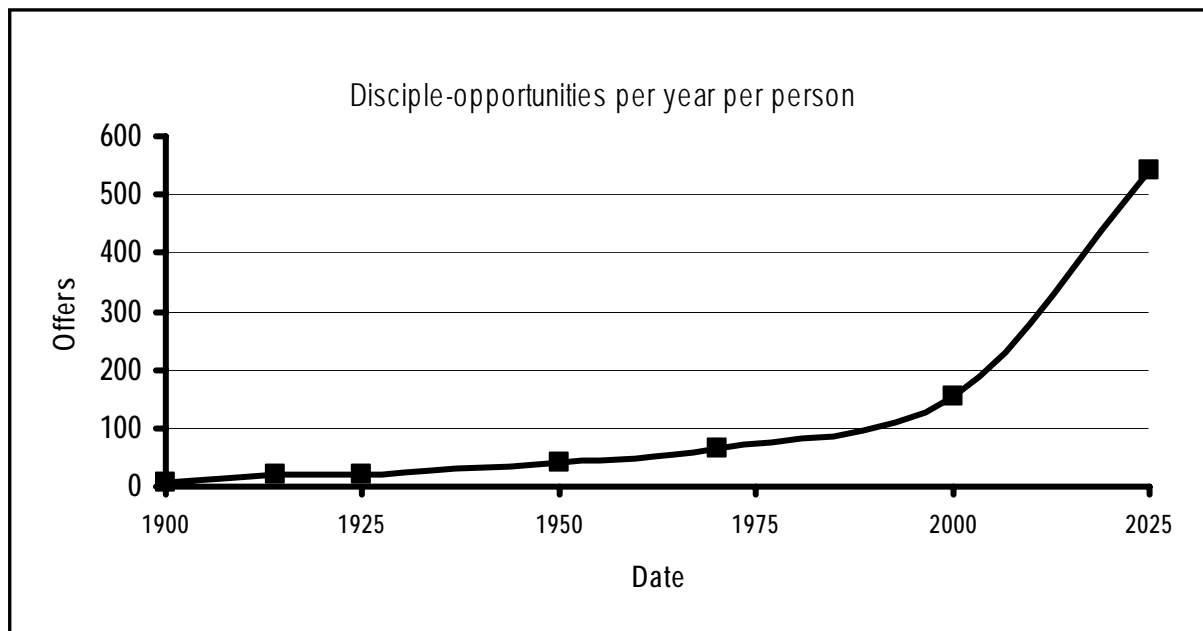
### Beyond the Numbers

- WEALTH.** 78 countries each have evangelicals whose personal incomes exceed US\$1 billion a year
- EMBEZZLEMENT.** Annual church embezzlements by top custodians exceed the entire cost of all foreign missions worldwide
- COST.** It costs Christians 700 times more money to baptize converts in rich Christian countries (Switzerland) than in poor unevangelized countries (Nepal)
- UNAWARE.** 70% of the 688 million evangelicals know very little about the world's 1.8 billion unevangelized individuals.
- CHARISMATICS.** From only one million in AD 1900, Pentecostals/Charismatics/Neocharismatics have mushroomed to 589 million affiliated (with unaffiliated believers, 650 million).

Source: World Christian Database, *Operation World* (for Evangelicals, theological definition).

## Evangelization

Scripture Distribution	2005	2025	20 year trend % p.a.
Bibles, p.a.	68,397,000	180,000,000	4.96
New Testaments, p.a.	139,622,000	250,000,000	2.96
Scriptures including gospels, selections, p.a.	5,140,000	8,000,000	2.24
Bible density ( <i>copies in place</i> )	1,540,000	2,280,000	1.98
Christian Broadcasting			
Christian radio/TV stations	4,200	5,400	1.26
Total monthly listeners/viewers	2,409,000,000	3,800,000,000	2.31
Over Christian stations	700,000,000	1,300,000,000	3.14
Over secular stations	1,975,000,000	2,800,000,000	1.76
Christian Evangelism			
Evangelism-hours per year	200,000,000,000	425,000,000,000	3.84
Hearer-hours ( <i>offers</i> ) per year	1,270,000,000	4,250,000,000	6.23
Disciple-opportunities( <i>offers</i> ) / capita / year	197	541	5.19
World Evangelism			
Average Christian Martyrs/yr.	169,000	210,000	1.09
Unevangelized population	1,800,228,000	2,034,713,000	0.61
Unevangelized as % of world	27.9	25.9	-0.37



### Beyond the Numbers

1. **OFFERS.** By 2017 there will be enough evangelism in the world for every person to hear a one hour presentation of the gospel every day all year long.
2. **VARIETIES.** Everywhere on Earth can now easily be targeted with at least 3 of the 45 varieties of effective evangelism
3. **BROADCASTING.** Regular listeners to Christian programs over secular or religious radio/TV stations rose from 22% of the world in 1980 to 32% in 2005
4. **BIBLES.** Non-Christian countries have been found to have 227 million Bibles in place in their midst, more than needed to serve all Christians but poorly distributed
5. **MARTYRS.** 70 million Christians have been martyred since Christ, over half of these in the 20th century alone.

Source: World Christian Database.

## The Unfinished Task: the Latest Update on Unreached Peoples

All Humanity in Mission Perspective in mid-2005										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	Totals	Christian	Buddhist	Chinese	Hindu	Jewish	Muslim	Non religious	Tribal	Others
<b>Frontier Missions</b>										
1. Least Evangelized Ethno-linguistic Peoples	4,300	-	270	50	300	160	2,000	20	1,400	100
2. Unreached Unimax Peoples	13,000	-	1,500	300	3,200	200	5,500	100	2,000	200
3. Christians (in millions)	23	-	0.9	2.9	4.7	0.0	5.5	4.9	3.7	0.0
4. Non-Christians (in millions)	2,242	-	277	97	502	4	932	295	132	3
5. Total individuals (in millions)	2,265	-	278	100	507	4	938	300	136	3
6. Foreign Missionaries	12,000	-	1,000	1,200	1,700	100	2,000	1,700	3,800	500
<b>Evangelism and Domestic Missions</b>										
7. Most Evangelized Ethno-linguistic Peoples	9,030	7,000	200	100	160	70	450	50	900	100
8. Reached Unimax Peoples	14,000	10,000	300	200	500	100	600	200	1,700	400
9. Christians (in millions)	2,113	1,867	14	24	58	.2	32	82	22	14
10. Non-Christians (in millions)	2,076	326	68	256	437	12	291	518	62	106
11. Total individuals (in millions)	4,189	2,193	82	280	495	12	323	600	84	120
12. Foreign Missionaries	431,000	402,200	1,000	1,500	3,600	1,000	2,000	10,000	7,700	2,000
<b>Global Totals</b>										
13. All Ethno-linguistic peoples	13,330	7,000	470	150	460	230	2,450	70	2,300	200
14. All Unimax peoples	27,000	10,000	1,800	500	3,700	300	6,100	300	3,700	600
15. Christians (in millions)	2,136	1,867	15	27	63	0.2	38	87	26	14
16. Non-Christians (in millions)	4,318	326	345	353	939	16	1223	813	194	109
17. Total individuals (in millions)	6,454	2,193	360	380	1,002	16	1,261	900	220	123
18. All foreign missionaries	443,000	402,200	2,000	2,700	5,300	1,100	4,000	11,700	11,500	2,500

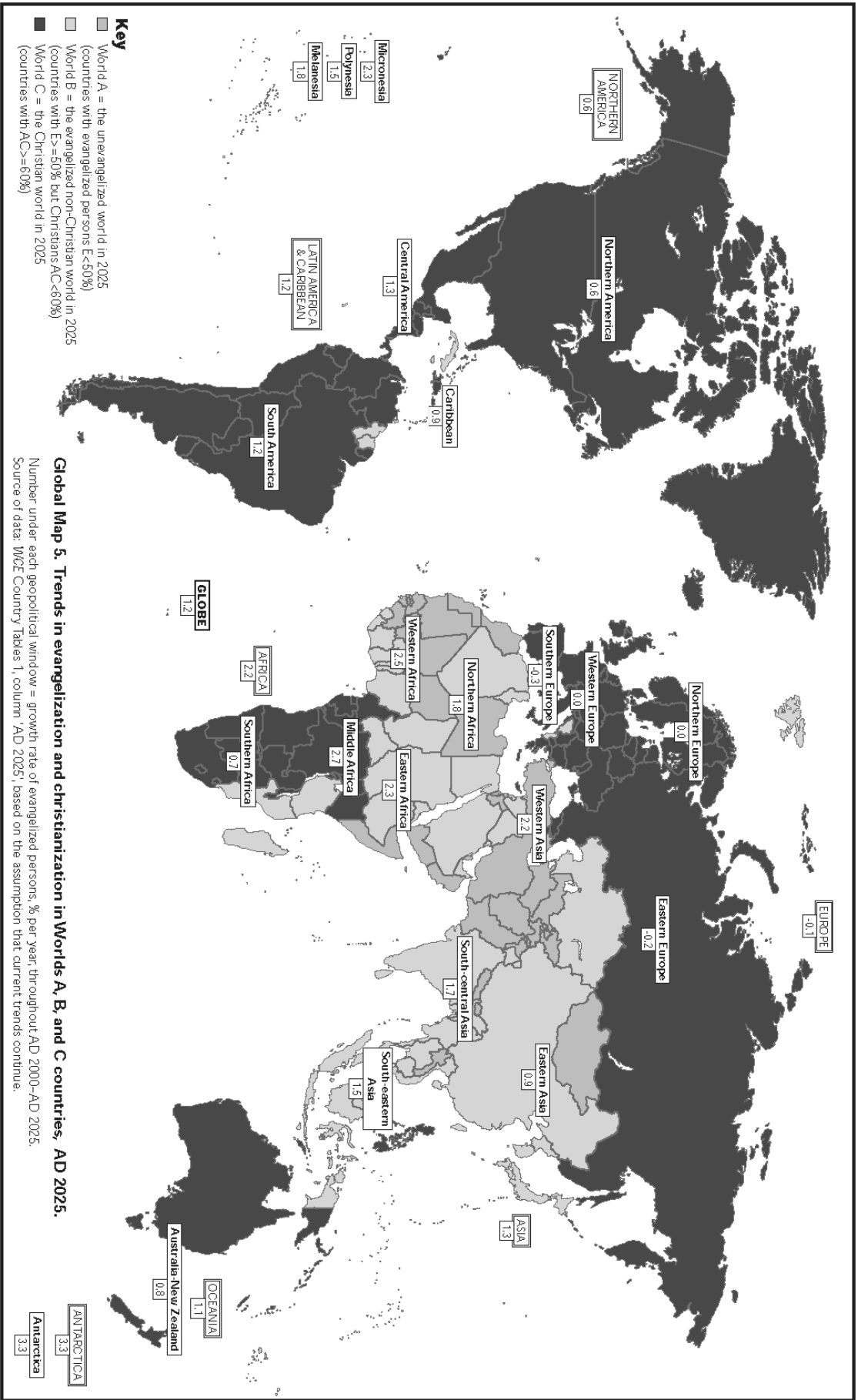
*Note. This chart represents a simplified update of "All Humanity in Mission Perspective in 2000 AD" found in R. Winter and S. Hawthorne, Perspectives on the World Christian Movement, WCL, 1999 where detailed notes appear. The number of unreached peoples has increased from 10,000 (in the 1999 chart) to 13,000 here because these estimates account for the significance of clan in Muslim, Buddhist, and Chinese cultures. This increase does not represent a lack of progress in world evangelization.*

### Beyond the Numbers

1. **DEPLOYMENT.** From 1974-2000, nine out of ten new missionaries sent out went to work among reached peoples where they mainly planted new churches or were involved in discipling ministry.
2. **RESPONSE.** Per hour of ministry, the peoples most responsive to Christianity have consistently been shown to be the least evangelized peoples.
3. **BAPTIZE.** 134 million new souls begin life on Earth each year, but Christianity's 4,000 foreign mission agencies baptize only 4 million new persons a year.
4. **HIDDEN.** 15 million converted Hindus, Buddhists, and Muslims have opted to remain within those religions in order to witness for Christ as active believers in Jesus as Lord.
5. **POSTMODERNS.** Compared to their parents, emerging postmodern youth around the world are more open to other cultures—a distinct advantage for effective mission work.

Source: World Christian Database, Research Version, June 2004.

# World Evangelization in 2025



Source: World Christian Trends.