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Nationwide study shows concerns of evangelical Christians over global warming

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Details from a nationally representative study of 1,000 born-again or evangelical Protestant Christians show a higher-than-expected level of concern over the environment.

Overall, three out of four evangelicals tend to support environmental issues and causes such as reducing global warming or protecting wilderness areas from development, including one out of four who tend to support these issues strongly. The main reasons for environmental support among those who felt strongly about the issue include the belief that supporting environmental issues is part of God's command for Christians to take care of the earth, the desire to leave the earth as a place their own children and grandchildren can enjoy, the concern that not enough people take environmental issues seriously, and the perception that government and business tend to focus too much on money and need to be reminded of their environmental responsibility.

A majority of evangelicals (54%) also believe that a person's Christian faith should generally encourage them to support environmental issues.

The study also delved specifically into the issue of climate change. The findings show that while only 19% of all evangelicals feel they know a lot about the issue, almost two-thirds are either completely or mostly convinced that global warming is actually taking place. In addition, seven out of ten believe global climate change will pose a serious threat to future generations.

Sixty-three percent believe that while global warming may be a long-term issue, the problem is being caused today, so we must start addressing it immediately. Half went so far as to say steps need to be taken to reduce global warming, even if there is a high economic cost to the U.S. Even among evangelicals who are political conservatives, over four out of ten believe global warming must be reduced even if there's a high economic cost, and half feel we must begin addressing the issue immediately.

The study was conducted by Ellison Research, a marketing research company located in Phoenix, Arizona. The study's total sample is accurate to within ± 3.1 percentage points at the 95% confidence level with a 50% response distribution. The study was designed independently by Ellison Research, and funded by the Evangelical Environmental Network.

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