

Religion and Faith in the Public Square
October 24th – November 1st, 2019

[INTRO SCREEN]

Today's survey looks at some different issues in our lives and society today. Remember that there are no right or wrong answers; we're really just interested in everyone's views.

Q1. Please indicate your own personal level of satisfaction with each of the following:

[Rows -- This order]

Your own personal happiness and contentment with your life

The overall quality of life in the community where you live

The way things are going in Canada today

[Columns]

Very satisfied

Moderately satisfied

Moderately dissatisfied

Very dissatisfied

Q2. Overall, would you say you are optimistic or pessimistic about each of the following?

[Rows -- This order]

Your own future

The future of Canada

The future of the next generation

[Columns]

Very Optimistic

Moderately Optimistic

Moderately Pessimistic

Very Pessimistic

Q3. What is the best way to live life? Should we be MORE focused on:

Achieving our own dreams and happiness

OR

Being concerned about helping others

[STANDALONE SCREEN]

Now, let's consider the role of religious and faith communities in Canada today.

By "religious and faith communities" we are generally referring to a group of people who share a religious faith. This could be any religious tradition, such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, or any other shared faith. And the group could be members of a formal religious order (nuns, for example) or simply involved lay people, or a combination of the two.

Q4. How would you describe the overall contribution religious and faith communities are making to Canada and Canadian society today?

- Very good
- More good than bad
- A mix of good and bad
- More bad than good
- Very bad

Q5. What would you consider ideal when it comes to the overall participation and influence of religious and faith communities in Canadian public life today? In your view, should religious and faith communities have:

- A major influence on Canadian public life
- Some influence
- Not much
- No influence at all – religion doesn't belong in public life

Q6. Let's think for a moment about some of the various social issues and challenges facing Canada today. These could be issues of medical ethics, for example, or how we approach challenges such as poverty and homelessness. To what extent do you think religious communities and faith groups are relevant to addressing these types of social issues and challenges today?

- More relevant than ever
- As relevant as ever
- Becoming less relevant
- No longer relevant at all

Q7. What kind of contribution would you say religious and faith communities are making in the following areas of Canadian life and society?

[Rows – Randomize]

- Healthcare – hospitals, clinics, homes for the elderly, etc
- Education – schools and colleges
- Social services – helping people in need
- Social justice causes – peace, overseas development, poverty etc

[Columns]

- Very positive
- Positive
- A mix of good and bad
- Negative
- Very negative
- Not aware of any contribution

Q8. The Canadian Charter of Rights recognizes “freedom of religion”. Very briefly, this means there is no official national religion and people have the right to choose a religion – or no religion – and to practise it without government interference. In your view, does having “freedom of religion” make Canada a better or worse country?

Better

Worse

No real impact either way

Can't say/No idea

Q9. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

[Rows -- Randomize]

The Canadian government respects my own religious tradition or faith community

Religious and faith communities strengthen Canadian values such as equality and human rights

Having a religious or faith-focused upbringing helps shape good citizenship characteristics

I'm public about my religion and faith and don't mind other people knowing I'm a believer

Reducing the presence of religion in our public life is a sign of progress in our society

It's important for parents to teach their children religious beliefs

I'm uncomfortable with people wearing religious garments and symbols in the workplace

I think it's a definite plus to have people from different religious backgrounds and beliefs living here in my community

It doesn't make sense to continue giving organized religions tax-free charitable status in Canada

[Columns]

Agree strongly

Agree moderately

Disagree moderately

Disagree strongly

Q10. Overall, do you feel Canadian society today tends to make room for or shuts out your own personal values and faith?

Makes room for

Shuts out

No real impact either way

Don't know/can't say

[STANDALONE SCREEN]

These next questions are about you and your own personal beliefs. As always there are no right or wrong answers – we just want to understand people better.

Q11a. Do you believe that God or higher power exists?

Yes, I definitely do believe
 Yes, I think so
 No, I don't think so
 No, I definitely do not believe

Q11b. Do you believe in life after death?

[Columns]
 Yes, I definitely do believe
 Yes, I think so
 No, I don't think so
 No, I definitely do not believe

Q12. How often, if at all, do you:

[Rows – Randomize]
 Pray to God or some higher power
 Attend religious services (other than weddings or funerals)
 Feel you experience God's presence
 Read the Bible, Quran, or other sacred text

[Columns]
 Never
 Only rarely
 A few times a year
 Once or twice a month
 Once a week or so
 A few times a week
 Everyday

[If bottom two box (Don't think/Definitely do not believe) God or a higher power exists at Q11, ask Q13. Others skip ahead.]

Q13. You have indicated that you do not believe that God or a higher power exists -- or that you don't think so. Just to confirm, how would you describe yourself when it comes to the whole area of personal faith or spirituality? Would you say:

You do not have any feelings of faith or spirituality
 Have some/at some times
 You do have feelings of faith or spirituality in your life

Q14a. Do you ever think of yourself as part of a religious tradition? For example, do you consider yourself to be: (Please select what best applies to you.)

[This order]

Christian

Jewish

Muslim

Other non-Christian

No, none of these

[If "No, none of these" at Q14a:]

Q14b. Would you say you are:

Agnostic

Atheist

Nothing in particular

Something else

QL1. Now, let's get a little more specific for a moment and think about some of the main values and beliefs related to faith and religion.

In your view, would you say the overall presence of each of these in Canadian public life is benefitting or damaging Canada and Canadian society?

[Rows -- Randomize]

Catholicism

Protestantism

Evangelical Christianity

Judaism

Islam

Hinduism

Sikhism

Atheism [Fixed last]

[Columns]

Damaging

No real impact

Benefitting

Don't know/Can't say

[QL2 to be asked of those NOT choosing: “No, none of these” at Q14a OR “Definitely do not believe -- God or a higher power” at Q11]

QL2. Generally speaking, to what extent do you or would you personally feel comfortable expressing your own views about each of the following in a public setting – say, at work or somewhere else in the community (not your place of worship) with people outside your own close circle of friends?

[ROWS – THIS ORDER]

Your personal faith beliefs and practises

Views on issues like abortion or assisted dying that may not be shared by the majority of public opinion

[Columns:]

Always feel comfortable expressing views on that

Usually comfortable

Usually uncomfortable

Always feel uncomfortable expressing views on that

Really depends – could be either

QL3. How comfortable do you or would you feel asking co-workers or others (not from your own close circle and not from your place of worship) for donations for a cause sponsored by a religious group you belong to or support?

Always comfortable with that

Usually comfortable

Usually uncomfortable

Always uncomfortable with that

Really depends – could be either

[standalone screen]

Turning towards the realm of politics for a moment...

QE1. Overall, would you say:

The personal faith and beliefs of political leaders should be off limits and not the subject of media coverage

OR

It's appropriate for the media to cover the personal faith and beliefs of political leaders

QE2. During this recent federal election campaign, were you aware of any media coverage or attention on the personal faith and beliefs of any of the following political party leaders?

[rows][Randomize]

Andrew Scheer, Conservative leader

Justin Trudeau, Liberal leader

Jagmeet Singh, NDP leader

Yves-Francois Blanchet, BQ leader [QC ONLY]

Elizabeth May, Green Party leader

[columns]

Yes, aware

No, didn't see anything

[For each one aware:]

QE3. And did whatever you saw, heard or read about that party leader's personal faith and beliefs have a positive or negative impact on your opinion of them, or no impact either way?

[rows][Same order]

Andrew Scheer, Conservative leader

Justin Trudeau, Liberal leader

Jagmeet Singh, NDP leader

Yves-Francois Blanchet, BQ leader [QC ONLY]

Elizabeth May, Green Party leader

[columns]

Positive

Negative

No impact

QA1. All things considered (and setting aside what party they might be running for), does the idea of a political candidate being a person of faith attract you to that candidate, does it repel you away from them, or do you feel quite neutral about it?

Strongly Attracts

Attracts

Neutral

Repels

Strongly repels

QA2. To what extent, if at all, would a party leader's personal views on issues such as abortion and same sex marriage have an impact on your own decision as to whether or not you'd vote for them? (And again -- thinking generally, and still setting aside which political party they might be with.)

Huge impact on my vote
 Important impact, among other factors
 Not much of an impact
 No impact on my vote

QA3a) Suppose you hear a party leader acknowledge they are personally "pro-life" and believe abortion is wrong, but also say they will definitely NOT support any attempts to introduce any legislation that would restrict a woman's right to choose an abortion.

Do you tend to believe their assurance that they will keep those personal views out of the political realm?

Yes, believe them
 Have doubts
 No, do not believe them

QA3b) Suppose it becomes clear that they are 100% convicted when they say their own "pro-life" views will NOT enter their politics and actions in office whatsoever. If that were the case, would you consider that:

An acceptable situation
 Disappointing – should use politics to promote personal views on important subjects like abortion
 Not acceptable for a political leader to be personally "pro life" even if they keep it out of their politics

Socio-demographics and Other info:

QS1. Finally, just to wrap up, some additional questions for our statistical analysis.

More specifically now, which one of the following best describes your religion?

Roman Catholic
 United Church
 Anglican
 Lutheran
 Presbyterian
 Baptist
 Pentecostal
 Other evangelical Christian
 Other Christian
 Muslim

Hindu
Jewish
Sikh
Buddhist
No religious identity
Other (please specify)

QS2. Some people say Canadians variously (1) embrace faith and religion, (2) reject faith and religion, or (3) are somewhere in between the two extremes.

Where would you tend to locate yourself?

I am inclined to embrace my faith and/or religion
I am inclined to reject any faith and/or religion
I am somewhere in between

QS3. Thinking of this recent October 2019 Canadian federal election, which party's candidate did you yourself support in that election?

Did not vote
Conservative
Liberal
NDP/New Democrat
Green Party
Bloc Quebecois [QC Only]
People's Party of Canada
Some other party
Rather Not Say