U.S. and Mexico: Biblical Worldview Lite or God-focused Worldview

A biblical worldview is a common topic in my book, *Cultural Captives*, and in some my other recent postings. What does this multi-national survey tell us about worldviews in Mexico as compared to the United States?

First of all, the surveys given do not have as complete a set of spiritual worldview questions as other surveys we have analyzed. For this discussion, we look at the answers to the following questions to constitute a God-focused worldview but not necessarily a full biblical worldview.

Question	Response
How important is religion in your life?	Very
How important is God in your life?	Very
Independently of whether you attend religious services or not, would you say you are a religious person?	Yes
Do you believe in God?	Yes
Do you believe in hell?	Yes

For purposes of this discussion, we will say a person who answer the questions above as shown has a God-focused Worldview (or GFW).

The only acceptable religion is my religion?	Yes

If they also state their religion is the only acceptable religion, we will call them "GFW Plus."

The table below summarizes the status of a God-focused worldview in both cultures.

Table 1 God-focused Worldview

Country	Age	Catholic (%)		Protestant (%)		Atheist, Agnostic, None (%)	
		GFW	GFW Plus	GFW	GFW Plus	GFW	GFW Plus
Mexico	All	35	16	38	19	13	6
	Under 30	26	9	25	7	10	2
	60 plus	42	26	38	25	22	22
United States	All	27	6	51	22	10	3
	Under 30	8	5	44	28	6	2
	60 plus	37	5	5	12	8	2

Let’s begin by looking at Catholics since they are the dominant religious group in Mexico. Only a minority of Catholics of any age profess to having a God-focused worldview. In both countries, there is a significant difference between those under 30 and those 60 and over: 26% vs. 42% in Mexico and 8% vs. 37% in the United States. The percentage of Catholic emerging adults with a GFW in Mexico is small (26%) but completely dwarfs the United States percentage (8%).

Adding the question regarding pluralism (GFW Plus), only about 16% of Mexican Catholics answer all the questions as indicated above. There is a wide discrepancy based on age, with only 9% of those under 30 and over 26% of those over 60 professing a GFW Plus view. In the United States, we see a much different story, with only about 5% of self-identified Catholics professing to hold a GFW Plus view across all age groups.

We see a similar set of distributions for those who self-identify as an atheist, agnostic or none (AAN). In both countries, only a small percentage of AAN people hold to this abbreviated God-focused worldview.

Protestants in Mexico have a similar distribution of GFW and GFW Plus adherents, as do the Catholics. In the United States, the picture is significantly different between Catholics and Protestants. First, almost twice as many Protestants hold to a GFW view as do Catholics. Similarly, for a GFW Plus view, three to four times as many Protestants as Catholics hold that view (about 20% to 5%).

One odd result is that 29% of Protestant, emerging adults profess to hold a GFW Plus view, while only 12% of Protestants age 60 and above hold to that view. Although we cannot know for sure, this result may be an artifact of the question "The only acceptable religion is my religion?" Perhaps the older adults interpreted "my religion" to be my denomination and certainly other Christian denominations could be acceptable. Those below age 45 interpreted "my religion" to be Christianity, and other religions were other major world faiths. This interpretation is plausible because the emerging adults have grown up in a society where they know people of other religions at work and at school, much more so than their elders.

In summary, most self-identified Christians in both countries do not hold to a God-focused worldview. Among that minority, Catholics in Mexico are much more likely than Catholics in the United States to hold such a worldview, while the inverse is true among Protestants. In all instances except one, emerging adults are significantly less likely to hold a GFW or GFW Plus view than are older adults.