Biblical Worldview Beliefs from PALS Survey of 2012: No Rebound Seen

More Cultural Research from Steve Cable

In my previous blog post, we looked at the *Faith Matters* survey taken in 2011 to see if the trend was continuing toward fewer people holding a biblical worldview. In this post, we ask a similar question looking at the *Portraits in American Life Survey* (PALS) taken in 2012{1}. The PALS is an extensive, national-level panel study focused on religion in the U.S., with a particular focus on capturing ethnic and racial diversity. In this survey of over 1400 people across America, a set of questions was asked which
are very similar to the biblical worldview questions asked in the Probe and Barna surveys.

The questions used to establish a basic biblical worldview are as follows:

1. I definitely believe in God
2. Jesus Christ is the Son of God and physically rose from the dead
3. The bible was fully inspired by God
4. I believe in Heaven where people live with God forever
5. I believe there is a Hell where people experience pain as punishment for their sin
6. The devil, demons or evil spirits exist
7. Moral right or wrong should be determined by God's law

Let's begin by looking at how many have a biblical worldview; i.e., agreeing with all the statements above. The results look like this (where Evan/BP stands for Evangelical or Historically Black Protestant):

Biblical Worldview					
Evan/BP		Not Evan/BP		All	
20-29	30+	20-29	30+	20-29	30+
32.5%	46.2%	5.4%	11.4%	14.7%	22.9%

Note that the youngest respondents in this survey are 20 years old rather than 18 as in the other surveys. As you can see, about one in three evangelical or black Protestant believers under the age of 30 profess to holding a biblical worldview and only about one in 20 of those who do not affiliate with an evangelical or black Protestant denomination. These results are very similar to those reported in my book,