

Christianity 2014: Independent Christianity and Slum Dwellers

This two-page report is the thirtieth in an annual series in the *IBMR*. The series began three years after the publication of the first edition of David Barrett's *World Christian Encyclopedia* (WCE, Oxford Univ. Press, 1982). The purpose of the series is to present, in summary form on a single page, an annual update of the most significant global and regional statistics presented in the WCE. The WCE itself was expanded into a second edition in 2001 and accompanied by an analytic volume, *World Christian Trends* (WCT, William Carey Library, 2001). In 2003 an online database, the *World Christian Database* (WCD, later published by Brill), was launched, updating most of the statistics in the WCE and WCT. The *Atlas of Global Christianity* (Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2009), based on these data, was featured throughout 2010, most notably at the centennial celebrations of the 1910 Edinburgh World Missionary Conference. *The World's Religions in Figures: An Introduction to International Religious Demography*, by Todd M. Johnson and Brian J. Grim (Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), covers the rationale, techniques, and specific problems associated with counting religionists around the world. And in mid-2013 the Center for the Study of Global Christianity also released a ninety-two-page report, *Christianity in Its Global Context, 1970–2020* (available for free PDF download at www.globalchristianity.org/globalcontext).

Independent Christianity

In the 1982 *World Christian Encyclopedia* David Barrett introduced the first comprehensive classification of Christians into major traditions. This included well-known categories such as Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox, but it also included the category “non-White indigenous” to take into account the burgeoning movement of churches (especially in Africa) that were intentionally independent of the European and American historic churches. In 2001 Barrett and his colleagues found that there were too many white-led independent movements to justify the phrase “non-White” and renamed the category “Independents.” The designation of “Independent” has appeared to be the best overall label for these churches, but this year we are introducing a more detailed breakdown based on continent of origin and current

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geographic location. In table A below we present Independents by where they began and where they have subsequently spread. For example, under this schema an African Independent church in the United Kingdom is counted in the Africa row in the Europe column. These numbers are preliminary; much work is needed to verify the true extent of Independent churches around the world.

Retiring the Category “Marginal Christians”

For some time, we have perceived problems in using the term “Marginal” in categorizing Christian churches. The term was originally created to distinguish self-identified Christian groups that had markedly different practices and doctrines from “orthodox” or “mainstream” Christianity. Doing so, however, has never yielded satisfactory results. Many groups *not* listed in the Marginal category also had “unorthodox” doctrines and practices. In addition, “Marginal” groups, now global, were mainly North American in origin, with roots in the nineteenth century. Consequently, to be more consistent and to simplify the second level of our Christian classification (making it more comparable to Jewish, Muslim, and other religious classifications), we are moving all Marginals into the Independent category. Thus, while formerly the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was categorized as Marginal (coded m-LdS), it is now categorized as a Northern American Independent church (NI-LdS). Each of these denominations can be tracked as before, but now they appear as a subset of Independents.

Slum Dwellers

For nearly thirty years we have reported on the urban poor (line 8) and urban slum dwellers (line 9). The latter has grown from 260 million in 1970 to over 1 billion today. This current figure is approximately one in six people in the world. Unfortunately, Christian involvement in slums is disappointingly small. In his book *Slum Life Rising* (UNOH Publishing, 2012), Ash Barker states that even the largest Christian mission organization is devoting only around 7 percent of its budget to urban programs and less than 2 percent to slum ministry. In addition, we estimate that fewer than 1 in 500 Christian foreign missionaries (line 50) works in slums. A tiny fraction (perhaps 1 in 10,000) of national workers (line 47: pastors, evangelists, and similar persons) work in slums in their own countries. The vast majority of Christians who do work in the slums live outside the slums. While many of these have effective ministry, the most promising work appears to be that of incarnational teams living in the slums.

Table A. Independents by Continent of Origin, mid-2010

Continent of origin	Global total	Current distribution by continent					
		Africa	Asia	Europe	Latin America	Northern America	Oceania
Africa	95,773,000	95,569,000	17,000	151,000	—	36,000	—
Asia	128,749,000	6,000	127,798,000	154,000	111,000	670,000	10,000
Europe	21,523,000	8,752,000	2,229,000	9,833,000	518,000	79,000	112,000
Latin America	39,982,000	77,000	28,000	671,000	38,416,000	790,000	—
Northern America	89,669,000	3,921,000	2,309,000	3,713,000	11,168,000	67,911,000	647,000
Oceania	1,137,000	—	—	—	—	—	1,137,000
Total by location	376,833,000	108,325,000	132,381,000	14,522,000	50,213,000	69,486,000	1,906,000

Source: Todd M. Johnson, ed., *World Christian Database* (Leiden: Brill, accessed August 2013).

Status of Global Mission, 2014, in the Context of AD 1800–2025

	1800	1900	1970	mid-2000	Trend % p.a.	24-hour change	mid-2014	2025
GLOBAL POPULATION								
1. Total population	903,650,000	1,619,626,000	3,696,186,000	6,122,770,000	1.17	231,000	7,207,460,000	8,002,978,000
2. Urban dwellers (urbanites)	36,146,000	232,695,000	1,352,391,000	2,858,267,000	2.09	219,000	3,819,994,000	4,642,689,000
3. Rural dwellers	867,504,000	1,386,931,000	2,343,795,000	3,264,503,000	0.26	12,000	3,387,466,000	3,360,289,000
4. Adult population (over 15s)	619,000,000	1,073,646,000	2,312,040,000	4,272,601,000	1.56	227,000	5,306,784,000	6,087,749,000
5. Literates	123,800,000	296,153,000	1,476,150,000	3,275,110,000	2.07	248,000	4,364,795,000	5,131,501,000
6. Nonliterates	495,200,000	777,493,000	835,890,000	997,491,000	-0.41	-21,000	941,989,000	956,248,000
WORLDWIDE EXPANSION OF CITIES								
7. Megacities (over 1 million population)	1	20	161	402	1.97	–	528	650
8. Urban poor	18 million	100 million	650 million	1,400 million	3.11	183,000	2,150 million	3,000 million
9. Urban slum dwellers	3 million	20 million	260 million	700 million	3.35	102,000	1,110 million	1,600 million
GLOBAL POPULATION BY RELIGION								
10. Christians (total all kinds) (=World C)	204,980,000	558,131,000	1,228,616,000	1,985,420,000	1.29	84,000	2,375,619,000	2,700,343,000
11. Muslims	90,500,000	199,818,000	577,225,000	1,291,046,000	1.81	83,000	1,660,729,000	1,966,759,000
12. Hindus	108,000,000	202,973,000	463,216,000	825,000,000	1.38	38,000	1,000,193,000	1,116,730,000
13. Nonreligious (agnostics)	300,000	3,029,000	542,631,000	655,428,000	0.29	5,500	683,000,000	685,123,000
14. Buddhists	69,400,000	126,956,000	235,095,000	448,303,000	0.98	13,700	513,593,000	561,948,000
15. Chinese folk-religionists	310,000,000	379,974,000	227,822,000	427,765,000	0.14	1,700	436,413,000	420,191,000
16. Ethnoreligionists	92,000,000	117,437,000	169,276,000	218,173,000	1.00	6,800	250,672,000	260,625,000
17. Atheists	10,000	226,000	165,506,000	135,898,000	0.03	100	136,553,000	130,320,000
18. New-Religionists (neoreligionists)	0	5,986,000	39,382,000	61,181,000	0.29	500	63,669,000	63,669,000
19. Sikhs	1,800,000	2,962,000	10,678,000	20,628,000	1.53	1,100	25,511,000	29,217,000
20. Jews	9,000,000	12,292,000	13,500,000	13,745,000	0.16	100	14,064,000	15,000,000
21. Non-Christians (=Worlds A and B)	698,670,000	1,061,495,000	2,467,570,000	4,137,350,000	1.11	147,000	4,831,841,000	5,302,635,000
GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY								
22. Total Christians as % of world (=World C)	22.7	34.5	33.2	32.4	0.12	–	33.0	33.7
23. Affiliated Christians (church members)	195,680,000	521,683,000	1,119,596,000	1,886,440,000	1.32	82,000	2,265,824,000	2,582,980,000
24. Church attenders	180,100,000	469,303,000	885,777,000	1,359,420,000	1.04	45,000	1,571,235,000	1,760,568,000
25. Evangelicals	25,000,000	71,728,000	95,042,000	228,142,000	2.21	19,000	309,701,000	386,315,000
26. Great Commission Christians	21,000,000	77,924,000	275,950,000	596,249,000	1.10	21,000	694,592,000	789,045,000
27. Pentecostals/Charismatics/Neocharismatics	10,000	981,000	62,674,000	459,836,000	2.29	40,000	631,230,000	795,734,000
28. Christian martyrs per year (10-year average)	2,500	34,400	377,000	160,000	-3.30	270	100,000	150,000
MEMBERSHIP BY 6 ECCLESIASTICAL MEGABLOCKS								
29. Roman Catholics	106,430,000	266,566,000	664,988,000	1,043,543,000	1.12	37,000	1,219,952,000	1,332,968,000
30. Protestants	30,980,000	103,028,000	207,609,000	351,807,000	1.63	20,000	441,444,000	511,380,000
31. Independents	440,000	8,859,000	96,408,000	301,628,000	2.18	24,000	407,703,000	506,950,000
32. Orthodox	55,220,000	115,855,000	144,247,000	257,042,000	0.61	5,000	279,961,000	287,402,000
33. Anglicans	11,910,000	30,578,000	47,408,000	74,892,000	1.50	4,000	92,268,000	110,017,000
34. Unaffiliated Christians	10,000,000	36,448,000	109,020,000	98,980,000	0.74	2,000	109,795,000	117,363,000
MEMBERSHIP BY 6 CONTINENTS, 21 UN REGIONS								
35. Africa (5 regions)	4,330,000	8,736,000	115,629,000	361,515,000	2.63	37,000	520,119,000	680,388,000
36. Asia (4 regions)	8,350,000	20,774,000	91,331,000	271,288,000	2.21	22,000	368,174,000	463,833,000
37. Europe (including Russia; 4 regions)	171,700,000	368,254,000	467,008,000	546,417,000	0.19	3,000	561,023,000	555,782,000
38. Latin America (3 regions)	14,900,000	60,027,000	262,792,000	476,812,000	1.19	18,000	562,571,000	616,745,000
39. Northern America (1 region)	5,600,000	59,570,000	168,372,000	209,301,000	0.65	4,000	229,190,000	238,547,000
40. Oceania (4 regions)	100,000	4,323,000	14,464,000	21,107,000	1.14	1,000	24,747,000	27,684,000
CHRISTIAN ORGANIZATIONS								
41. Denominations	500	1,600	18,800	34,200	1.98	2.4	45,000	55,000
42. Congregations (worship centers)	150,000	400,000	1,416,000	3,400,000	2.40	310	4,736,000	7,500,000
43. Service agencies	600	1,500	14,100	23,000	1.92	1.6	30,000	36,000
44. Foreign-mission sending agencies	200	600	2,200	4,000	1.61	0.2	5,000	6,000
CONCILIARISM: ONGOING COUNCILS OF CHURCHES								
45. Confessional councils (CWCs, at world level)	20	40	150	310	1.07	–	360	600
46. National councils of churches	0	19	283	598	1.50	–	740	870
CHRISTIAN WORKERS (clergy, laypersons)								
47. Nationals (citizens; all denominations)	900,000	2,100,000	4,600,000	10,900,000	0.99	338	12,504,000	14,000,000
48. Men	800,000	1,900,000	3,100,000	6,540,000	0.89	181	7,405,000	8,000,000
49. Women	100,000	200,000	1,500,000	4,360,000	1.12	157	5,099,000	6,000,000
50. Aliens (foreign missionaries)	25,000	62,000	240,000	420,000	0.25	3	435,000	550,000
CHRISTIAN FINANCE (in US\$, per year)								
51. Personal income of church members	40 billion	270 billion	4,100 billion	17,000 billion	5.30	96 billion	35,050 billion	50,000 billion
52. Giving to Christian causes	1 billion	8 billion	70 billion	300 billion	5.40	1.7 billion	626 billion	880 billion
53. Churches' income	950 million	7 billion	50 billion	120 billion	5.37	680 million	249 billion	350 billion
54. Parachurch and institutional income	50 million	1 billion	20 billion	180 billion	5.42	1,030 million	377 billion	530 billion
55. Cost-effectiveness (cost per baptism)	7,500	17,500	128,000	330,000	6.07	125	753,000	1,440,000
56. Ecclesiastical crime	100,000	300,000	5,000,000	18 billion	5.79	110 million	39 billion	60 billion
57. Income of global foreign missions	25 million	200 million	3 billion	17 billion	5.47	100 million	35 billion	50 billion
58. Computers in Christian use (numbers)	0	0	1,000	328 million	5.35	100,000	680 million	1,200 million
CHRISTIAN LITERATURE (titles, not copies)								
59. Books about Christianity	75,000	300,000	1,800,000	4,800,000	3.62	800	7,900,000	11,800,000
60. Christian periodicals	800	3,500	23,000	35,000	4.29	7	63,000	100,000
SCRIPTURE DISTRIBUTION (all sources, per year)								
61. Bibles	500,000	5,452,600	25,000,000	53,700,000	2.91	220,000	80,200,000	110,000,000
62. Scriptures including gospels, selections	1,500,000	20 million	281 million	4,600 million	1.07	14 million	5,030 million	6,000 million
63. Bible density (copies in place)	20 million	108 million	443 million	1,400 million	1.97	99,000	1,840 million	2,280 million
CHRISTIAN BROADCASTING								
64. Total monthly listeners/viewers	0	0	750 million	1,830 million	1.12	66,000	2,140 million	2,400 million
CHRISTIAN URBAN MISSION								
65. Non-Christian megacities	1	5	65	226	1.31	–	271	300
66. New non-Christian urban dwellers per day	500	5,200	51,100	129,000	0.11	0.4	131,000	133,000
67. Urban Christians	5,500,000	159,600,000	660,800,000	1,227,252,000	1.55	64,700	1,522,474,000	1,788,346,000
GLOBAL EVANGELISM (per year)								
68. Evangelism-hours	600 million	5 billion	25 billion	165 billion	0.29	470 million	172 billion	300 billion
69. Hearer-hours (offers)	900 million	10 billion	99 billion	938 billion	1.92	3.4 billion	1,224 billion	3,000 billion
70. Disciple-opportunities (offers) per capita	1	6	27	153	0.74	0.5	170	375
WORLD EVANGELIZATION								
71. Unevangelized population (=World A)	674,350,000	880,122,000	1,653,168,000	1,833,191,000	1.00	57,000	2,106,206,000	2,310,860,000
72. Unevangelized as % of world	74.6	54.3	44.7	29.9	-0.17	–	29.2	28.9
73. World evangelization plans since AD 30	160	250	510	1,500	2.77	0.2	2,200	3,000