

Hospitality is a tangible way
of displaying God's grace to others

Luke 7:33-35

Hospitality

- Jesus ate with Pharisees and sinners, tax collectors and fishermen, questionable women and the religious elite.
- Jesus ate with everyone. In this, Jesus was incredibly unusual for His day.
- That is why the religious leaders criticized Him heavily for it.
- In their culture, dinner parties were an important element of the social structure.
- A very strict code of conduct governed whom you should eat with and why.

Hospitality

- Meals were one of the ways people expressed honor, gained honor, or lost honor in society.
- Everything in society was dependent on your honor – whom you could do business with, whom you could marry, etc.
- Typically, people ate meals only with those who were of the same honor level as them.
- Even where you sat at a meal was based on honor. The right hand of the host was the place of highest honor and the rest were arranged down the line.

Hospitality

- As a well-known rabbi, Jesus enjoyed a position of high honor even though.
- Pharisees who invited Him to dinner were recognizing His honor or giving Him even more honor.
- By eating with sinners, Jesus was intentionally giving up His honor.
- It was one of the many ways He showed God's love and grace to all people.
- Jesus was telling the world that these levels we create in society are not valid in God's eyes.

Hospitality

- The Pharisees were used to only showing hospitality to those who were like them, on their social level.
- Last week we saw that Jesus showed the lawyer that loving your neighbor means showing love to everyone in need.
- It also means showing hospitality to everyone, regardless of honor.
- Hospitality may be a spiritual gift, but it's a command given to all believers.

Hospitality

- We share meals with those we love – our family at Thanksgiving, fun nights out with friends, date nights with our spouse.
- Christian hospitality means reaching out to everyone – strangers, those in need, even our enemies.
- Jesus calls us to love our enemies also tells us to invite all different kinds of people to our tables for fellowship. Peter even adds that we should offer hospitality without *grumbling* (1 Peter 4:9).
- Hospitality is an act of love and generosity.

Hospitality

- The word hospitality literally means “to show love to strangers.”
- You can do that in a spotless home or a messy home. What really matters is that you have a heart of hospitality.
- When Jesus told the parable of the dinner guests: “When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you” (Luke 14:12–14).

Hospitality is an
invitation to a relationship

Luke 7:36-39, 44-46

Hospitality

- Studies show it is good for a family to have regular meals together.
- Children who have regular family dinners have better vocabularies and read earlier, get better grades, and have a healthier diet, even later as adults.
- They have a lower rate of teen risk behaviors, lower rates of depression, a more positive view of the future, less stress, and a better relationship with their parents.
- Just as sharing meals connects families, it can connect us with our friends and neighbors.

Hospitality

- Notice the relationships contrasted in this story: Simon and the woman.
- When Simon the Pharisee invited Jesus to dinner, he was showing Jesus honor by the standards of their society.
- Then Jesus pointed out that the sinful woman who anointed His feet actually showed Him more real honor than Simon had.
- Simon would have gained honor by having a famous rabbi in his home, by being associated with Him.

Hospitality

- Simon didn't believe Jesus was really a prophet (verse 39).
- He didn't show Jesus any of the basic respect when He arrived, such as kissing Him in greeting, giving Him water to wash his feet, or anointing His head with oil (verses 44–46).
- These were things a host usually did for all his guests, the customary elements of hospitality, yet Simon did none of them.
- Simon's reception of Jesus had been a cold and discourteous one, not one of love, respect, and authentic relationship.

Hospitality

- It was not unusual for uninvited persons to enter a home in which a dinner was being given to sit along the wall and observe.
- But the fact that this woman, a known sinner, entered the home of a strict Pharisee was surprising.
- Overcome with sorrow for her own sin and gratitude for His grace, she did what no woman of those days was supposed to do in public.
- She let down her hair. A woman's hair represented her dignity (1 Cor. 11). If married, she never took it down in public.

Hospitality

- She anointed Him with a costly and fragrant perfume, not just olive oil.
- Mark and John added that it was pure nard, a highly prized extract from a plant native to India and imported at great expense.
- This woman saw her own brokenness and offered thanks to Jesus for His love and grace. Simon, on the other hand, did not see his brokenness and only sat in judgment of both the woman and of Jesus.
- The woman came to Jesus with humility, gratitude and worship. Simon came to Jesus with self-righteousness and cynicism.

Hospitality

- Dave Ferguson, *Discover Your Mission Now*, gives us a great acronym (BLESS) for a method we can use to build authentic relationships with people.
- B—begin with prayer, L—listen, E—eat. S—serve, S—share your story.
- The first three steps are focused on relationship building, including eating together, expressing hospitality.
- Step 4 is serving others. Then at step 5 that we share the Gospel – only *after* we have built an authentic relationship and shown our love through service.

Hospitality is a picture of heaven

Luke 7:40-50

Hospitality

- Jesus welcomed all people to His table. He ate with everyone – tax collectors and Pharisees, rich and poor.
- When Jesus described God's future banqueting table in heaven, He described a table filled with the lame, the crippled, the blind and the poor – all people with a very low honor status in the eyes of someone like Simon.
- This would have been absolutely shocking for Jesus to praise this sinful woman over Simon.
- The impact is lost unless you understand the deep value they had for honor.

Hospitality

- Jesus taught and showed that every human being has inherent worth in God's eyes.
- He valued children, considered nothing more than property in their culture.
- He spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well, who lost honor.
- He showed care for lepers, the blind, the poor, the sinners, and the outcast.
- He chose fishermen and tax collectors to be His closest disciples.
- All are welcome at God's banqueting table.

Hospitality

- A few chapters later, at another banquet at the home of another Pharisee, one of the men said to Jesus, “Blessed is the one who will eat bread in the kingdom of God.”
- Jesus answered with another parable about a dinner party. All of the “honorable” people rejected the host’s invitation, so he filled his table with the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame (Luke 14:15–24).
- Both in this story and that one, Jesus was telling these Pharisees that they would be surprised at what the banqueting table in the kingdom of heaven looked like.

Hospitality

- Jesus taught that “the last shall be first.”
- It sounds great to those who are “last” in this world, but it’s a much harder thing for those who are “first” in this world.
- It would have been very hard for the Pharisees to hear that the banqueting table of God would include the poor, crippled, blind and lame.
- That doesn’t mean that a rich or powerful person or a person of high honor can’t follow Jesus. Just look at the apostle Paul. He had every reason to consider himself worthy (Philippians 3:4–6) but considered it worthless.

Hospitality

- Heaven is described as a grand banquet.
- Isaiah described it as a feast of rich food with the best meats and the finest wines (Isaiah 25).
- Revelation calls it a wedding feast, which in the ancient world would have been the most lavish celebration the family could afford, lasting for a week (Revelation 19).
- David wrote, at God's table we will sit with our former enemies (Psalm 23).

Hospitality

- As God's people, we should have that same heart of hospitality that makes everyone feel welcome and loved.
- Hospitality is the natural outflow of a heart that loves people as God loves them. Hospitality is about welcoming strangers.
- It doesn't matter if it's in your home or out at a restaurant, if it's a homecooked meal, a pizza delivered to your door, or a cup of coffee.
- What matters is opening your heart and making them feel welcome, and loving them as Jesus loves them.

Probe Religious Survey 2020

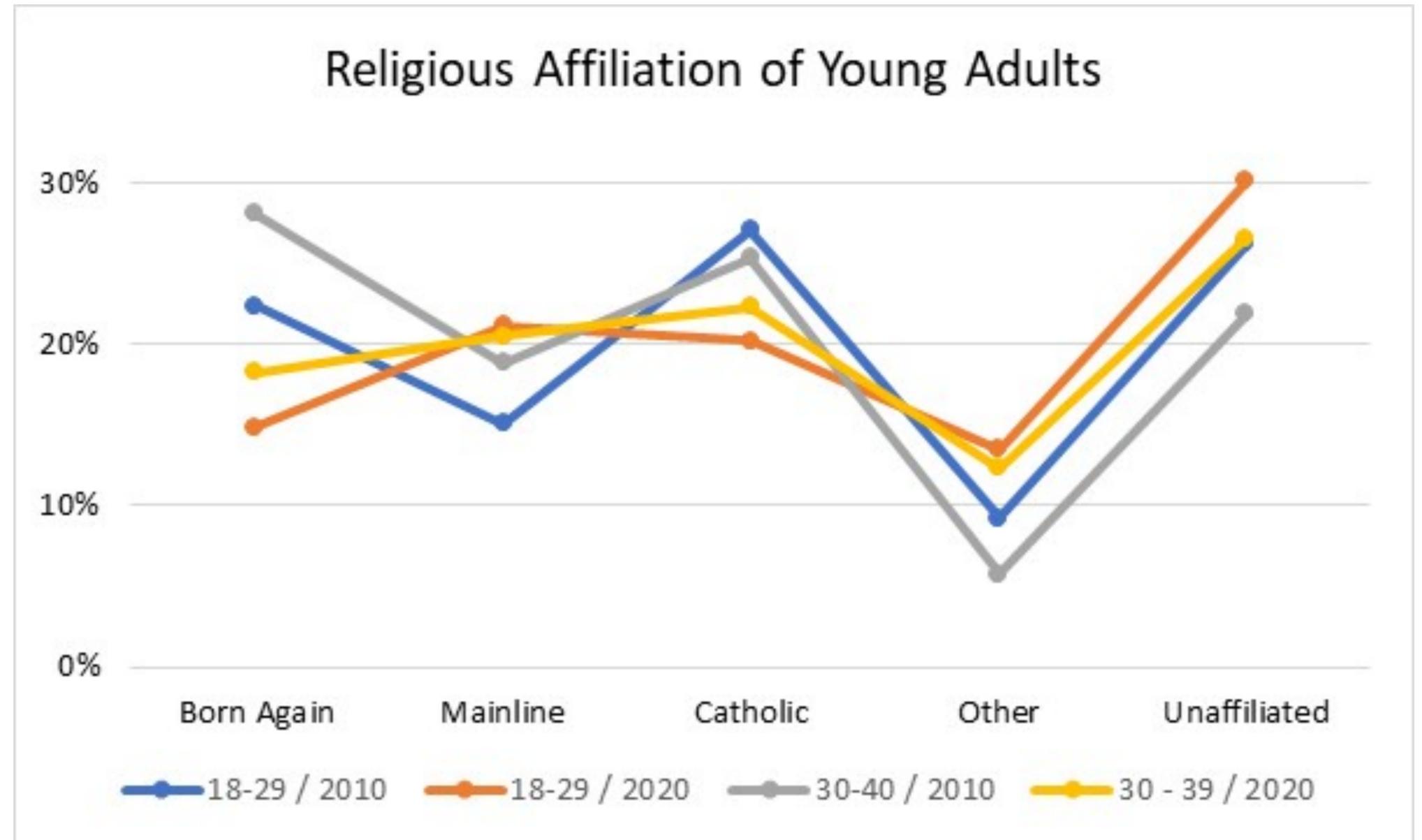
Preliminary Results

A subset of topics and data which needs
further review

Religious Affiliations over Last 10 years

Affiliations

- Born Again – Protestants who:
 - Made a personal commitment to Jesus that is still important in their lives today and
 - Will go to heaven because they confessed their sins and accept Jesus as their savior
- Mainline – Protestants who are not born-again
- Catholic – Roman and Orthodox
- Other – Christian cults, Jewish, other world religions
- Unaffiliated – atheist, agnostic, nothing in particular

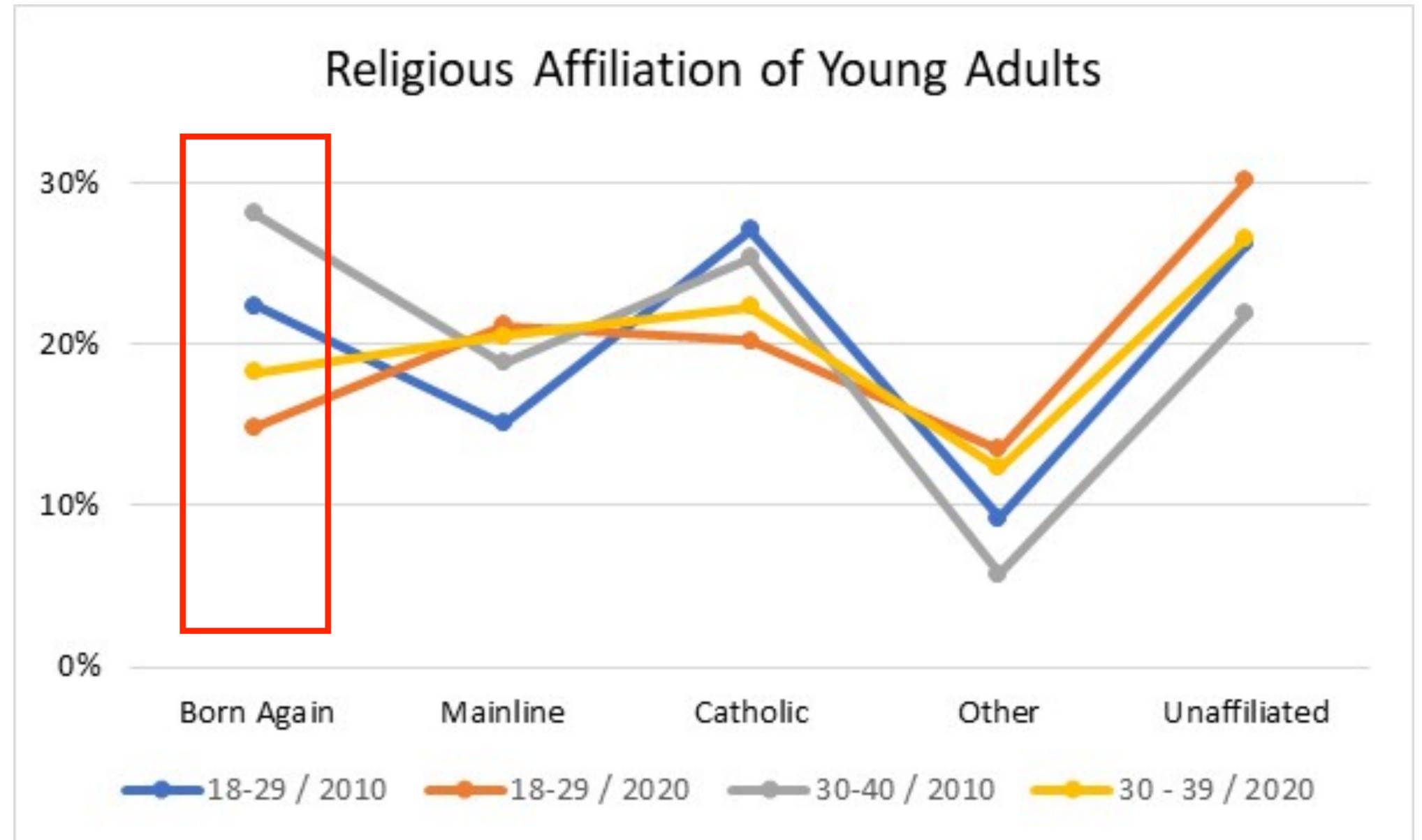


18-29 Born-Again has dropped by 34% and Unaffiliated has increased by 15%

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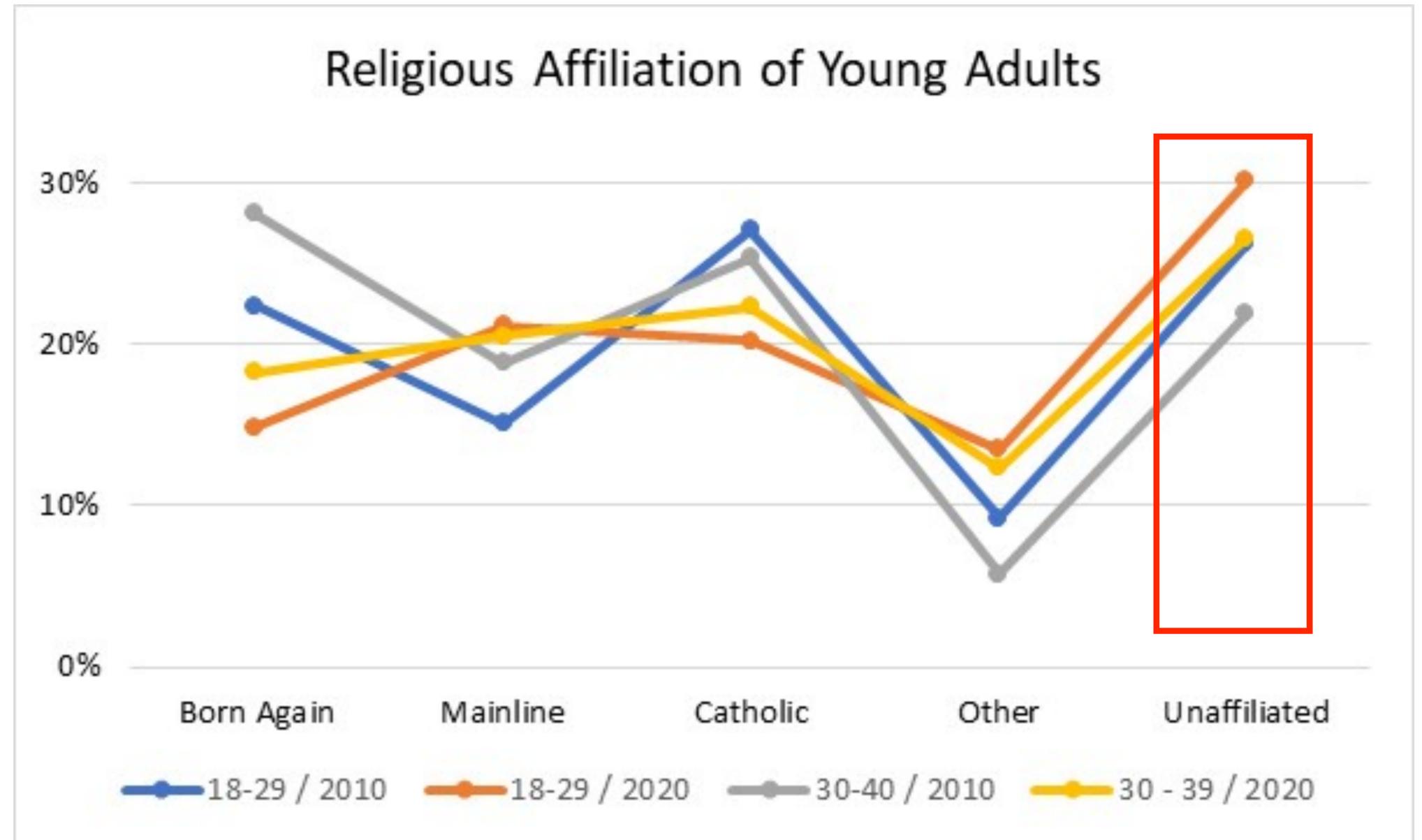


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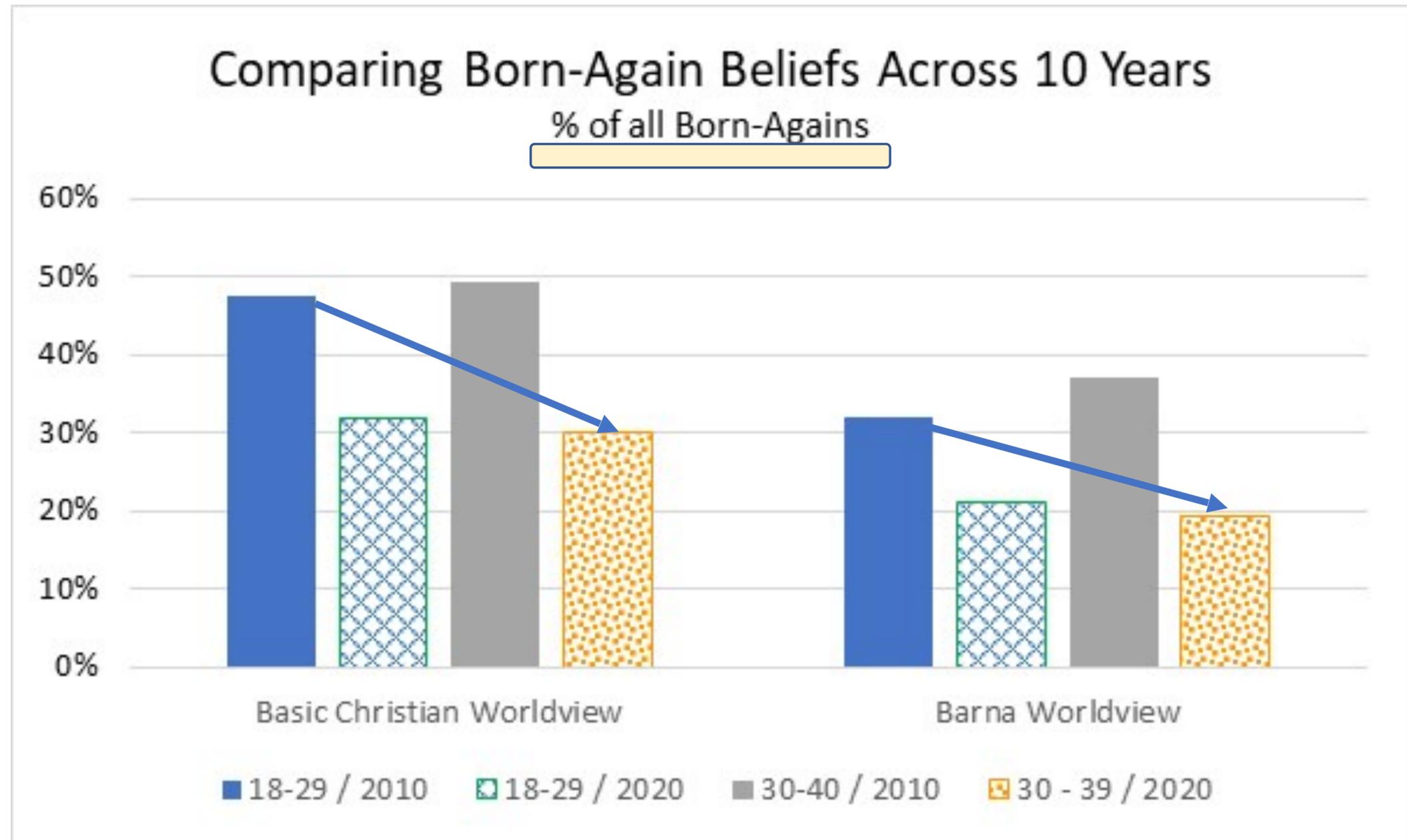
Born-Agains and a Biblical Worldview

Basic Christian Worldview

- God is the perfect creator who still rules the world today
- A person cannot earn a place in heaven
- Bible is totally accurate in all its teachings
- Jesus did not commit sins like other people

Barna Worldview (add to above)

- There are moral truths which are unchanging
- Satan is a real being



Same age group drops by over 35% over last 10 years as group ages

Born-Again: Religious Practice Eroding Over 10 Years

Nominal Lite Religious Practice

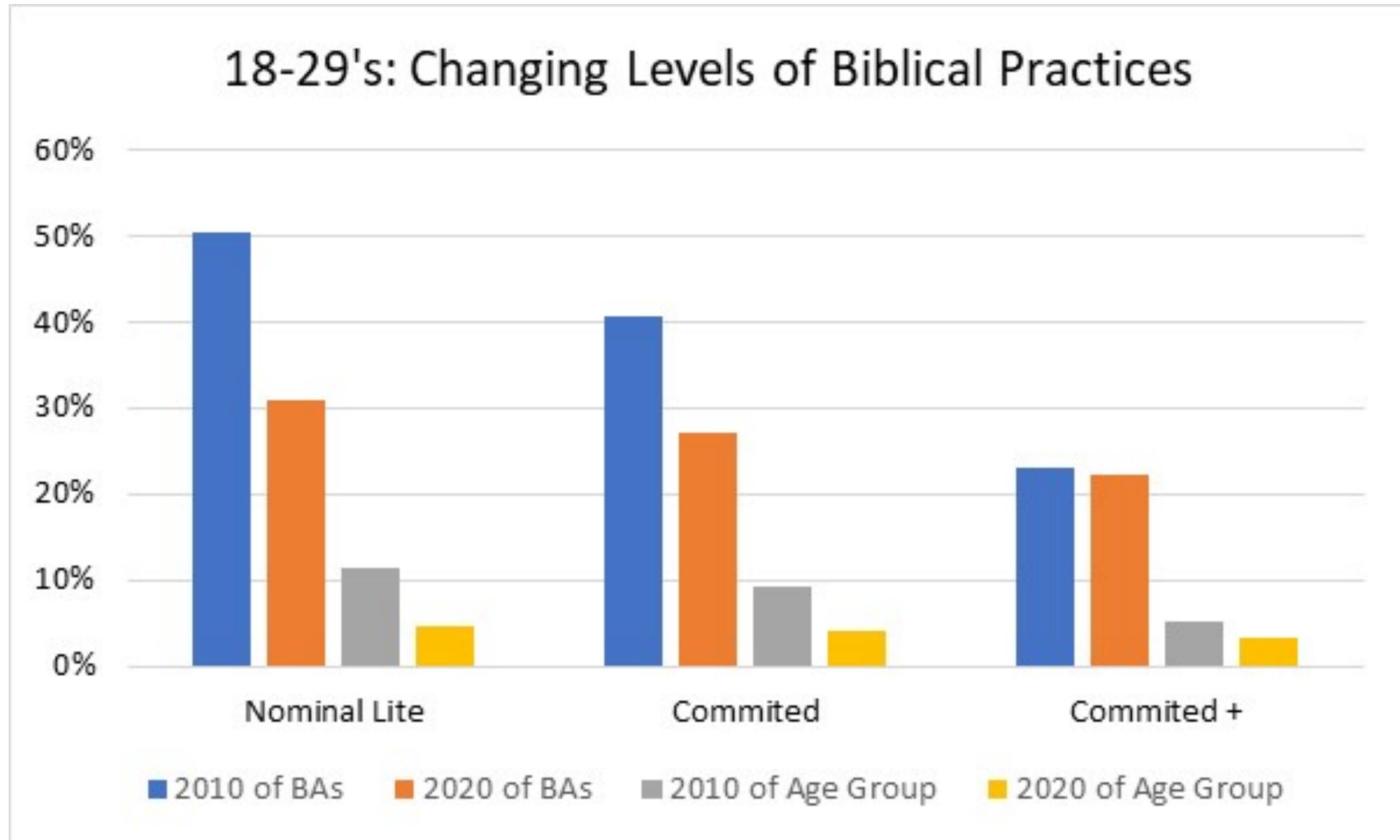
- Attend church at least once a month
- Read the Bible at least once a week

Committed Religious Practice w/Faith

- Attend church twice a month or more
- Read Bible at least once a week

Committed + adds

- My religious faith (is very important – 2010) has a significant impact on my daily life: Agree Strongly



Note: In 2020, only 5% of 18-29's are Nominal Lite and only 3% are Committed +

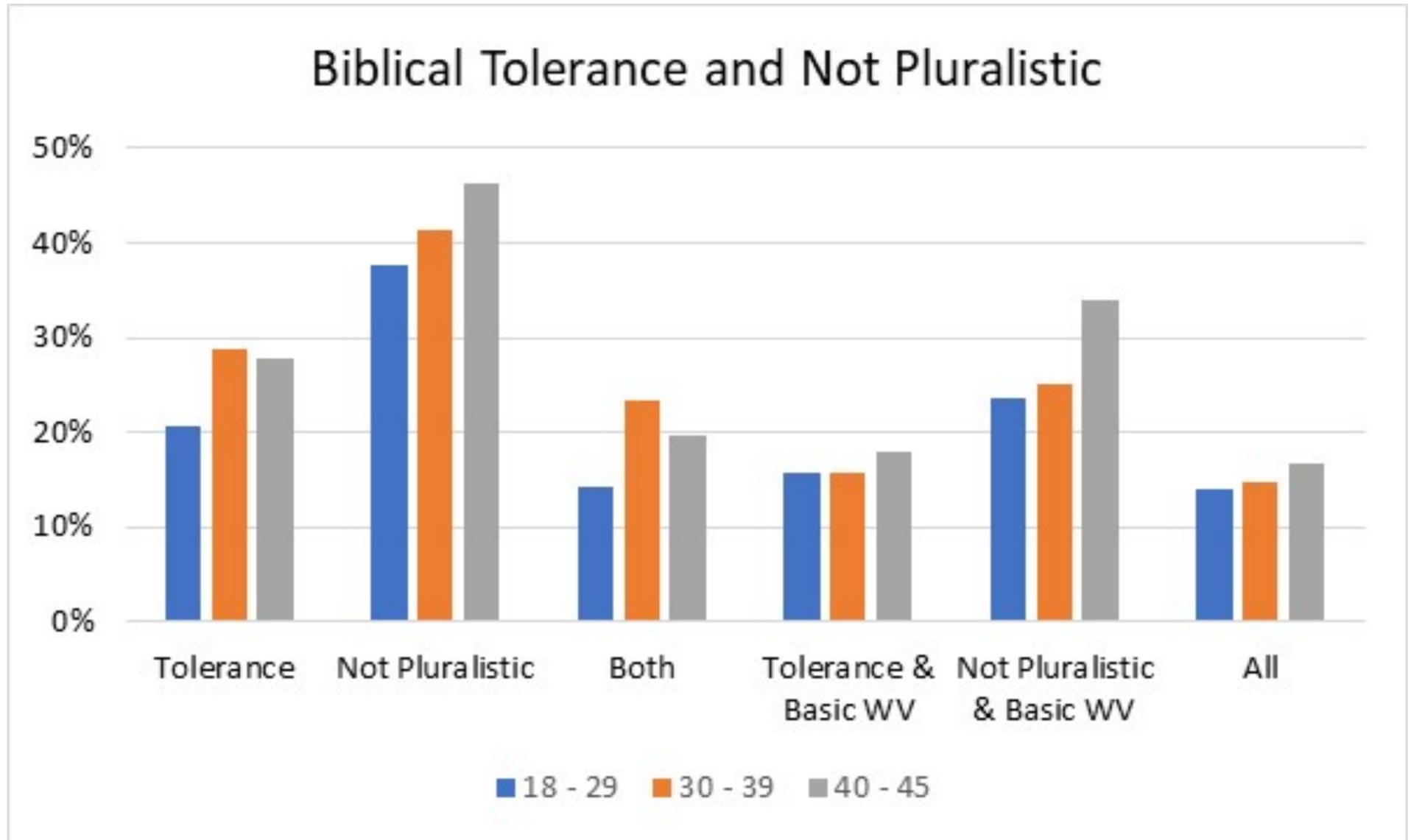
Biblical Tolerance and Pluralism Amongst Born-again

Biblical Tolerance

- Treating with respect people with ideas you believe to be wrong or misguided
- It is important to affirm as true (at least for them) their religious beliefs - DISAGREE

Not Pluralistic

- Muhammad, Buddha and Jesus all taught valid ways to God – STRONGLY DISAGREE
- The only path to a true relationship with God is through Jesus Christ



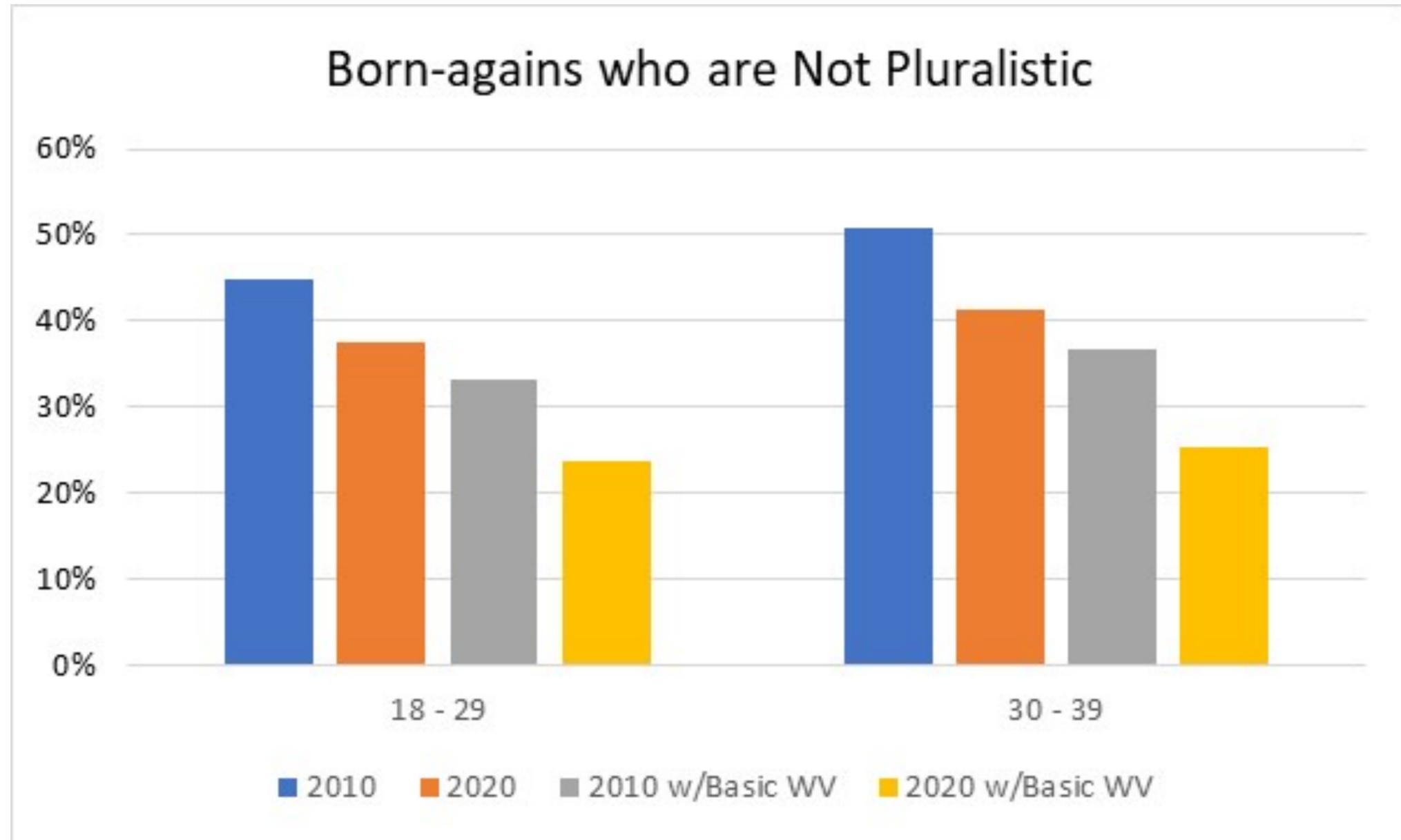
Pluralism and Worldview Amongst Born-Again's

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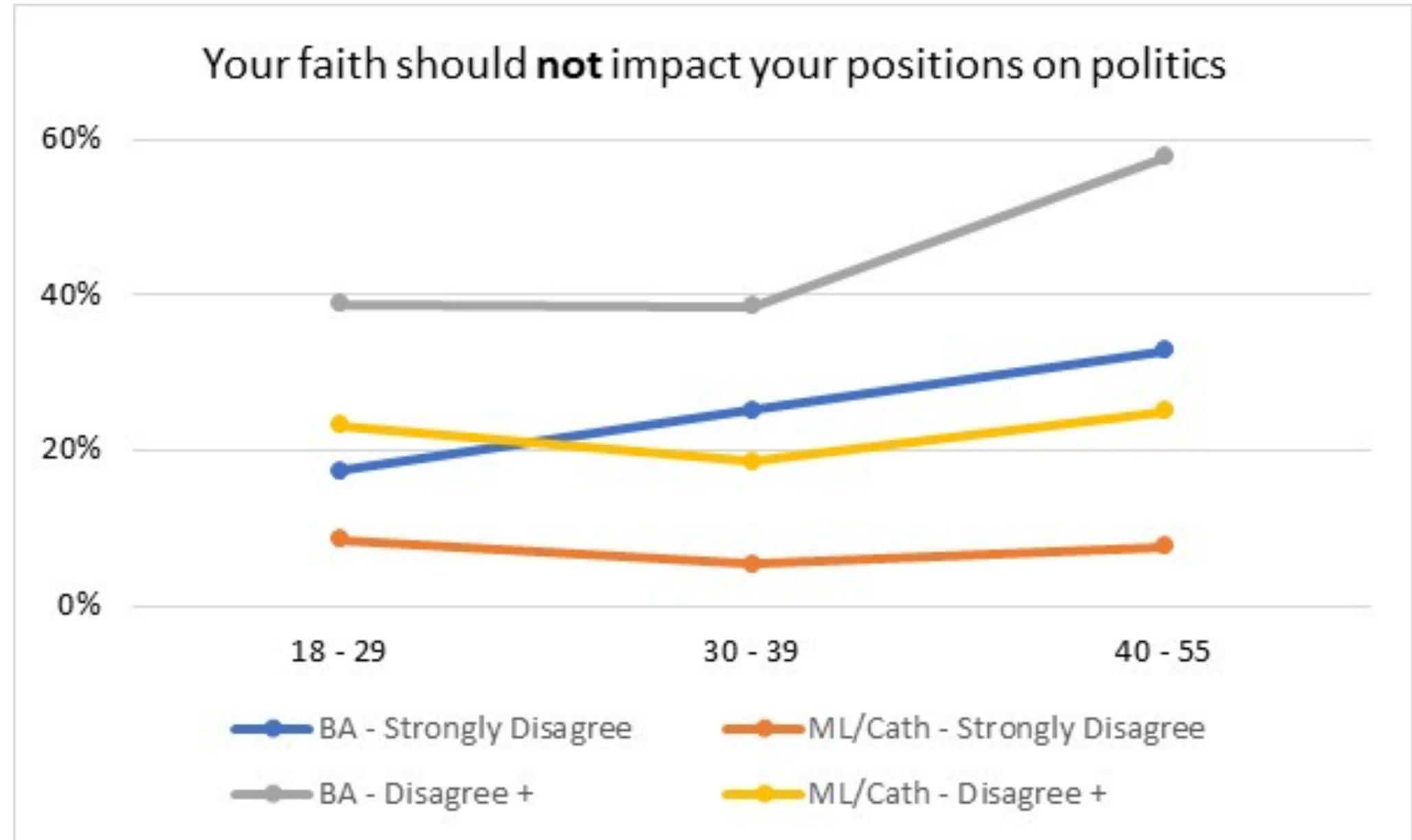


Religious Beliefs & Government

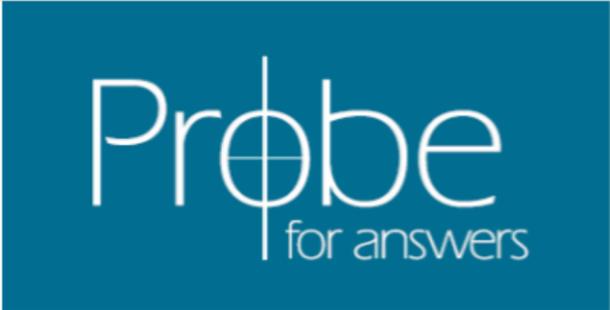
Survey statement: Just as the government should not be involved in the internal workings of churches, Christians should not let their faith impact their positions on how government functions.

Blue line: < than 20% of born-again 18-29's strongly disagree with the statement growing to about 35% of 40-55's

Orange line: for Mainlines and Catholics less than 10% strongly disagree across the entire range of ages



Do not be conformed to this present world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may test and approve what is the will of God Romans 12:2

The logo for 'Probe for answers' is displayed on a teal square background. The word 'Probe' is written in a large, white, sans-serif font, with a vertical line passing through the letter 'o'. Below 'Probe', the words 'for answers' are written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

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Cultural Research by Steve Cable