

Evangelical Christian and Muslim Relations in the U.S.

PSB Research

March 2019



INTRODUCTION

Overview

FFEU partnered with PSB Research to conduct a survey of American Evangelical Christians and Muslims.

This research aims to deepen the understanding of existing relationships and perceptions among American Evangelical Christians and Muslims, and identify opportunities for engagement between the two groups. Specifically, this research will:

- Determine how the two groups perceive one another
- Understand social interactions between the two groups
- Discover areas of common ground and points of contention

INTRODUCTION

Methodology

PSB conducted 1,000 online interviews nationwide between January 3rd-15th, 2019

Audience	N-Size	MoE
 American Evangelical Christians	500	+/- 4.38%
 American Muslims	500	+/- 4.38%

Throughout this presentation we cite a previous PSB poll conducted in 2018 comparing similar attitudes among Jewish and Muslim audiences

*Throughout this presentation we frequently cite two subgroups:

- American Evangelical Christians who interact with Muslims frequently (N=103, MoE = +/-9.66%)
- American Muslims who interact with Evangelical Christians frequently (N=269, MoE = +/-5.98%)

KEY FINDINGS

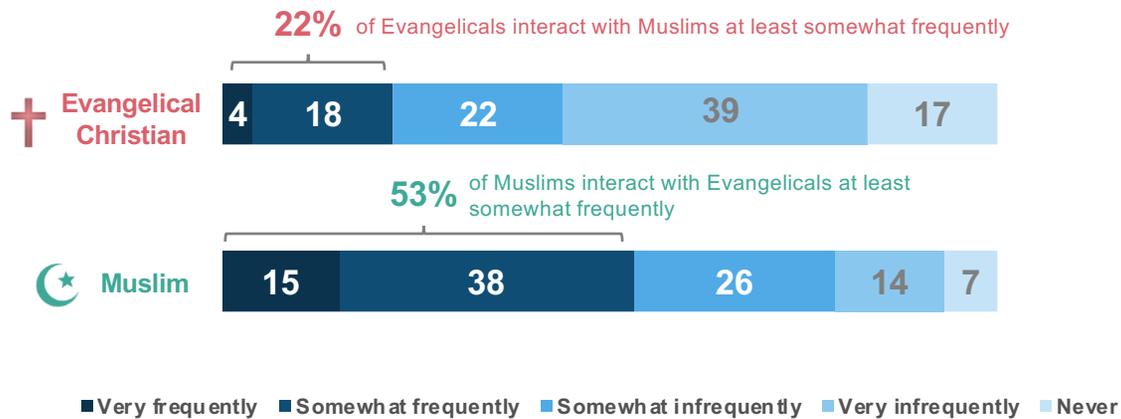
- ❖ **American Evangelical Christians and Muslims see many similarities in their religious values and rituals.** Both groups place high importance on daily prayer, family, and making the world a better place for everyone, and pray and attend religious services at similar frequencies.
- ❖ **However, these similarities get buried beneath a lack of understanding between the two religions, and both groups see room for improvement in their relationship with each other.** In particular, Evangelicals are more likely to see differences between the two religions and are not as familiar with Muslim terms/holidays as Muslims are with Christian terms/holidays.
- ❖ **Frequent interaction between the faiths would likely bring out similarities between the religions.** Evangelicals and Muslims who frequently interact with the other faith more often view the other religion as inclusive, evolving, and modern.
- ❖ **Both groups acknowledge that Muslims face significant discrimination based on their faith.** Evangelicals and Muslims alike agree that there is at least some anti-Muslim sentiment in the Evangelical community, but Evangelicals perceive more anti-Evangelical sentiment from the Muslim community than Muslims do.
- ❖ **While the groups share positions on a few key political issues (healthcare, religious freedom, immigration), few current news events present room for compromise.** Evangelicals tend to fall in line with President Trump on things like the travel ban, the migrant caravan, and moving the U.S. embassy in Israel to Jerusalem, while Muslims tend to side against the President.
- ❖ **Both Evangelicals and Muslims are receptive and favorable toward Muslim nations cooperating with and supporting Israel.**

INTERACTING & COMPARING EXPERIENCES

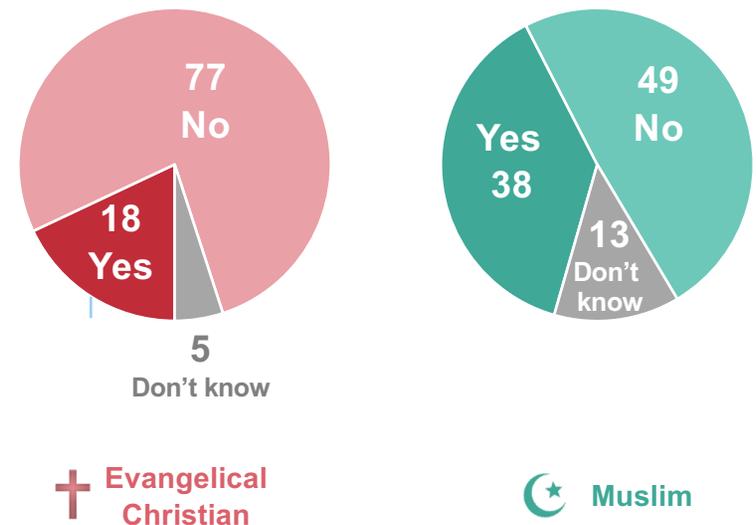
INTERACTION WITH THE OTHER FAITH

Muslims have more interactions and personal relationships with Evangelical Christians than vice versa

How often would you say you interact with people who are Muslim/Evangelical Christian?



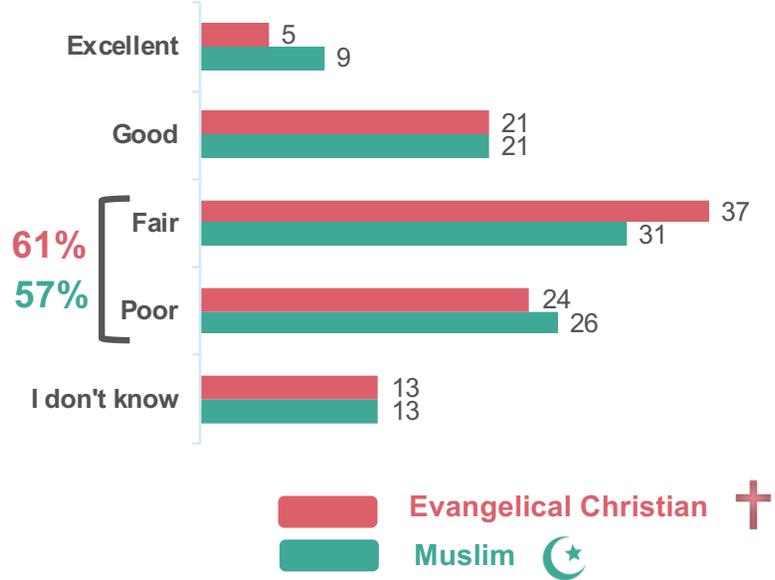
Do you have any family members or close friends who are Muslim/Evangelical Christian?



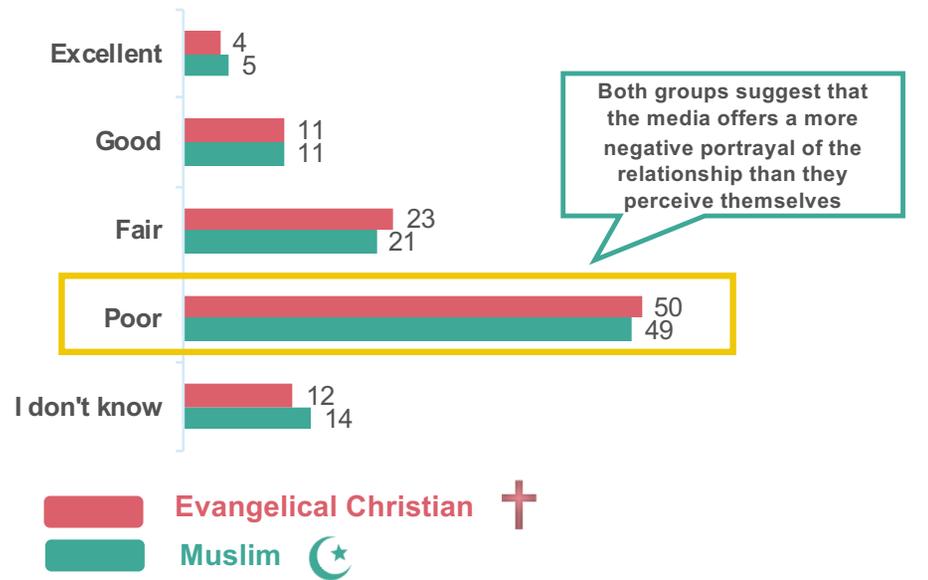
RELATIONSHIP

Both Muslims and Evangelicals see room for improvement in their relationship with the other group

How would you describe the relationship between Muslims and Evangelical Christians in the U.S. today?



How would you say the media describes the relationship between Muslims and Evangelical Christians in the U.S. today?



COMPARING EXPERIENCES

Both populations have similar religious values: daily prayer, family, and improving the world

Which of the following things would you say are most important to your religious tradition?*

Rank	Evangelical Christian	%	Muslim	%
1	Daily prayer	65	Daily prayer	53
2	Family	56	Family	39
3	Making the world a better place for everyone	34	Making the world a better place for everyone	30
4	Respect for your neighbor	26	Fasting	27
5	Pride in your faith	24	Respect for your neighbor	22
6	Holy texts	23	Pride in your faith	20
7	Donating personal wealth / charitable giving	19	Holy texts	20
8	Community events/gatherings	10	Donating personal wealth / charitable giving	18
9	Volunteerism	9	Restrictions on certain foods	16
10	Fasting	3	Special clothing or ways of dressing	11
11	Rituals	2	Rituals	10
12	Special clothing or ways of dressing	2	Community events/gatherings	7
13	Oral tradition	1	Volunteerism	6
14	Restrictions on certain foods	1	Oral tradition	2

Both groups have the same 3 most important religious values

Food-related traditions are of greater importance to Muslim Americans

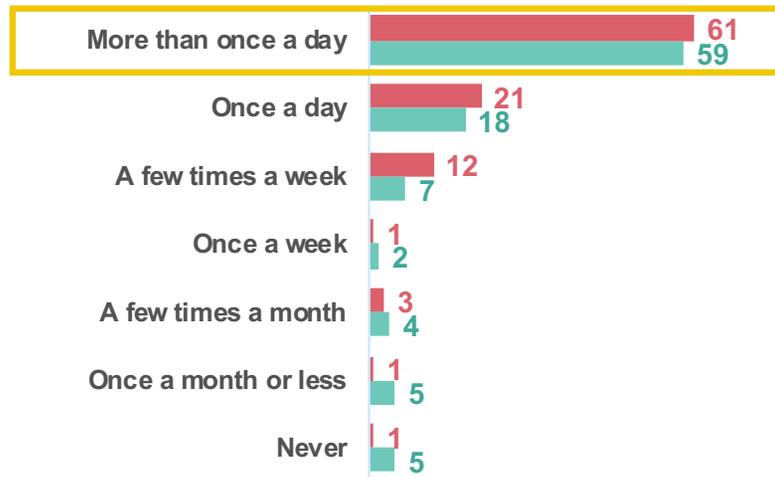
Evangelicals overestimate how important rituals and clothing/dress are to Muslims, who in turn underestimate the importance of daily prayer to Evangelicals

*Other, I don't know, and None of the above not shown

RELIGIOUS RITUALS

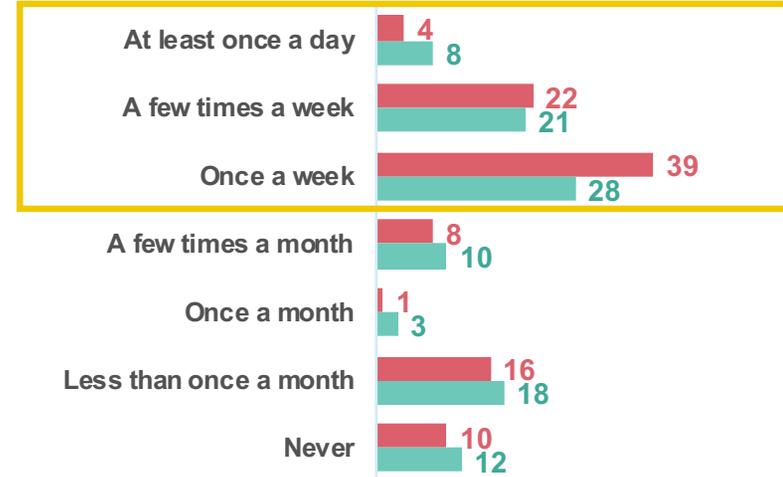
Both American Evangelicals and Muslims pray and attend religious services at similar frequencies: a majority pray more than once a day and attend religious services at least once a week

How often do you pray?



+ Evangelical Christian
 ☾ Muslim

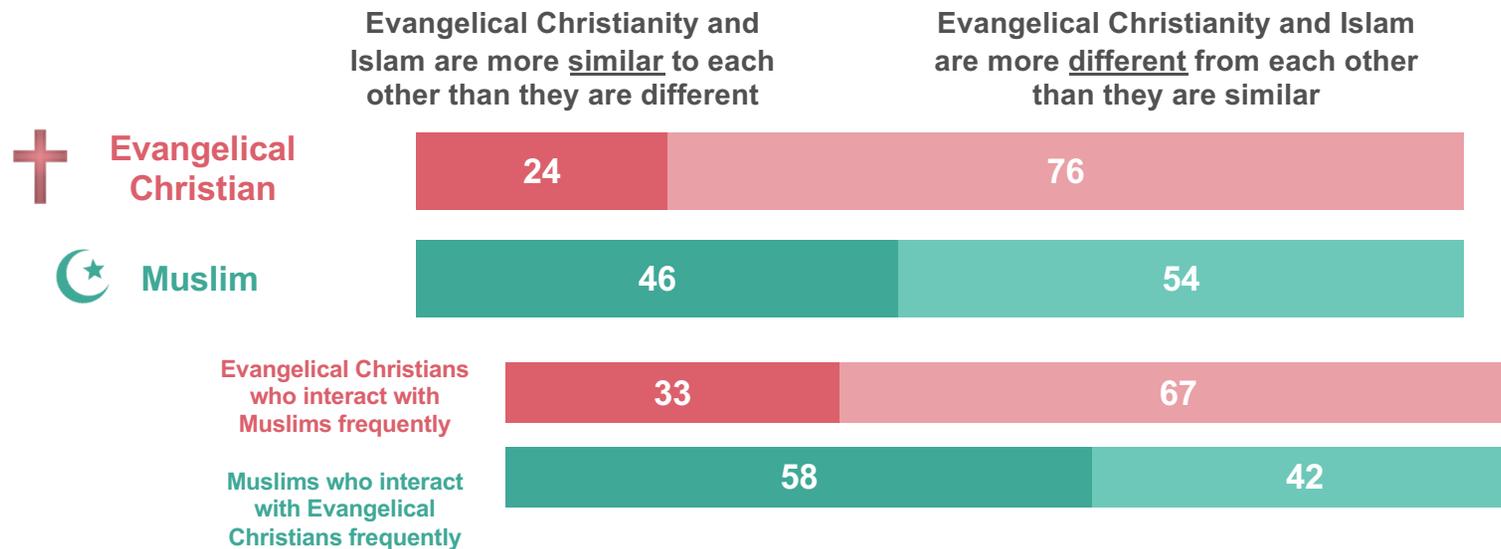
How often do you attend religious services?



+ Evangelical Christian
 ☾ Muslim

COMPARING RELIGIONS

Evangelicals are more likely to see differences between the two religions; frequent interactions lead to more perceived similarities

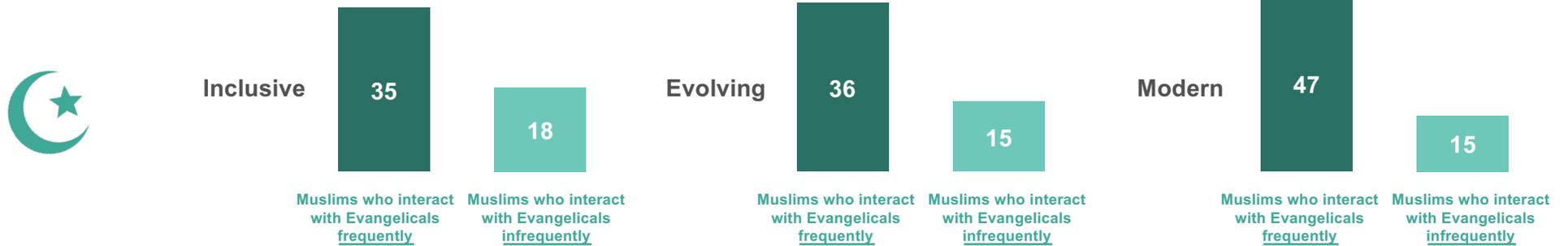


The 2018 FFEU report showed that American Jews and Muslims are more likely to see similarities between their respective religions than American Evangelicals and Muslims are

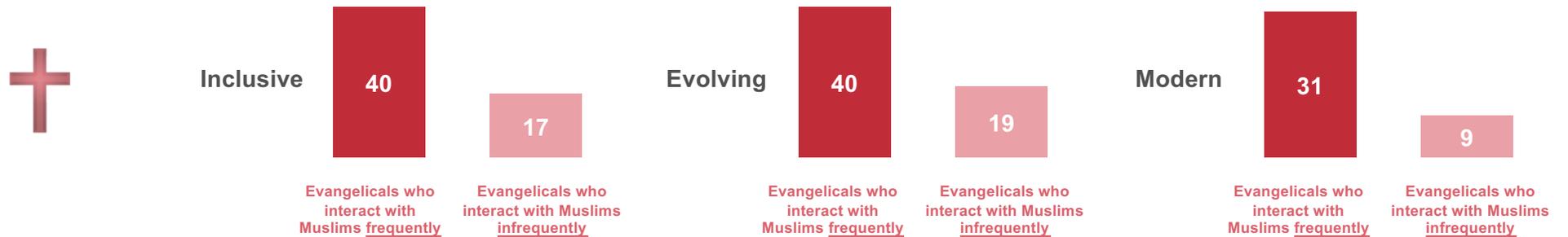
COMPARING VIEWS

The more frequently Evangelicals and Muslims interact, the more likely they are to see the other faith as inclusive and progressive

Evangelical Christianity is more...



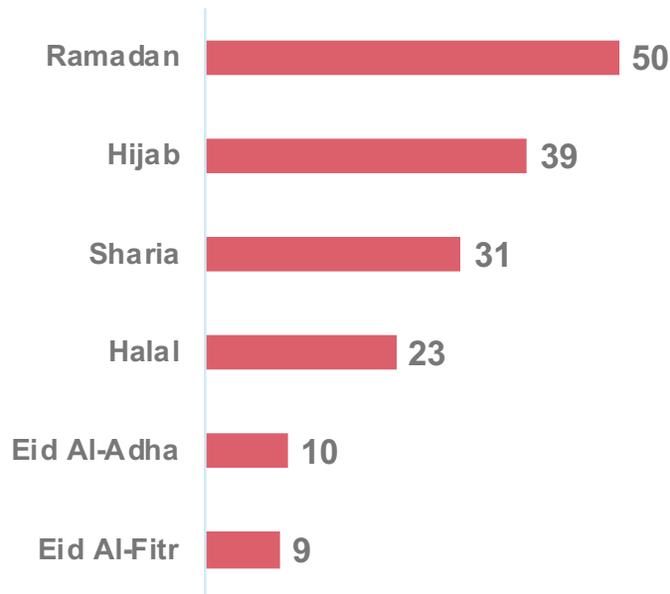
Islam is more...



KNOWLEDGE OF ISLAMIC TERMS

Evangelicals show low familiarity of Muslim terms/holidays, but many of those familiar are able to correctly define those terms/holidays

How familiar are you with each of the following terms?
Showing % Very/somewhat familiar, among Evangelicals



(If at least "somewhat familiar", among Evangelicals)
To the best of your ability, how would you define this word? (Coded Open-end)

Term	(Among Familiar) % that Correctly Define Term
Ramadan	66
Hijab	61
Sharia	63
Halal	57
Eid Al-Adha	44
Eid Fitr	51

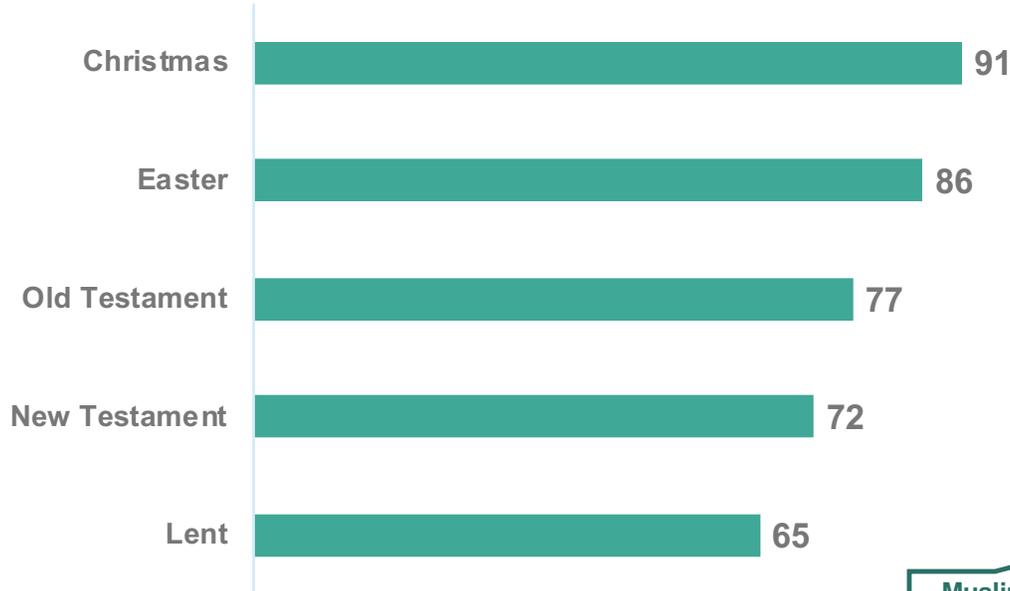
10% of Evangelicals incorrectly categorize "Halal" as special Islamic religious food

A small portion (3%) of Evangelicals think Ramadan is a Jewish term/holiday

KNOWLEDGE OF CHRISTIAN TERMS

Muslims report strong familiarity and understanding of Christian terms/holidays

How familiar are you with each of the following terms?
Showing % Very/somewhat familiar, among Muslims



(If at least "somewhat familiar", among Muslims)
To the best of your ability, how would you define this word? (Coded Open-end)

Term	(Among Familiar) % that Correctly Define Term
Christmas	70
Easter	64
Old Testament	76
New Testament	73
Lent	55

Muslims are less likely than Evangelicals to mention the birth of Jesus when defining "Christmas"

Muslims may see similarities between Ramadan and Lent – many of the correct definitions mention "fasting" or "giving something up"

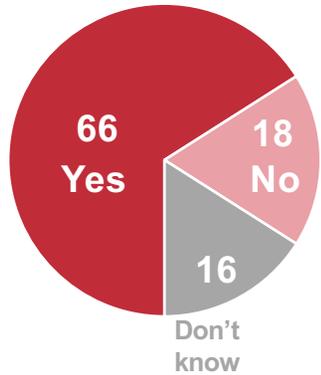
DISCRIMINATION

DISCRIMINATION

Evangelicals and Muslims alike acknowledge that Muslims have been discriminated against because of their faith

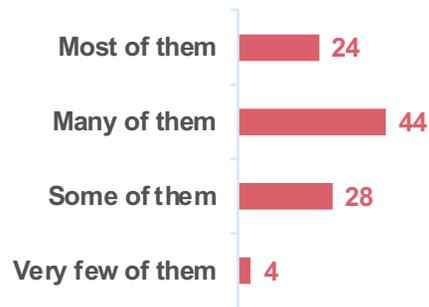
✝ Evangelical Christian

Do you think that **American Muslims** have been discriminated against based on their faith?



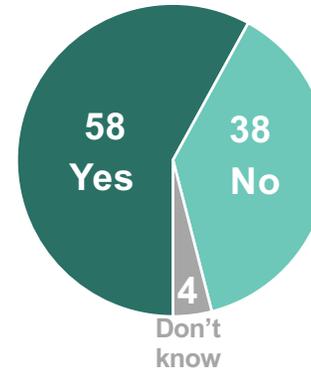
(IF YES) How many of them would you estimate have been discriminated against because of their faith?

(n=329)

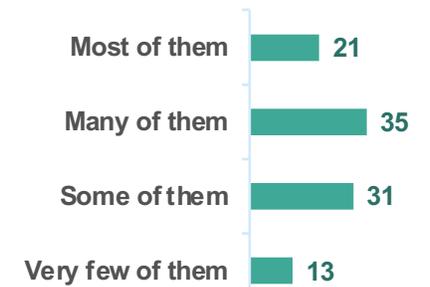


☾ Muslim

Do you feel that you have ever been discriminated against because of your faith?



How many Americans who share your faith would you estimate have been discriminated against because of it?



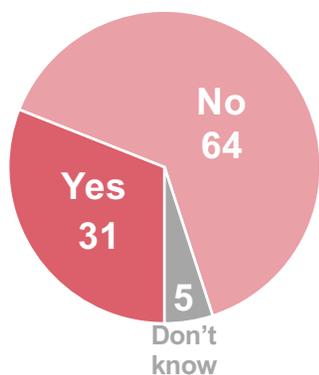
57% say most or many of fellow Muslims experience discrimination

DISCRIMINATION

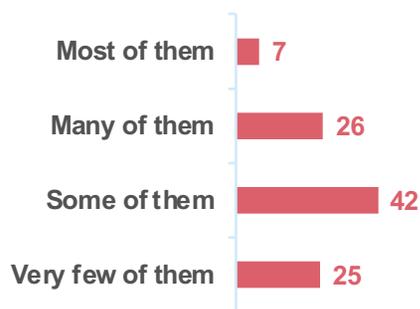
Further, both groups recognize that Evangelicals do not face as much discrimination

✝ Evangelical Christian

Do you feel that you have ever been discriminated against because of your faith?

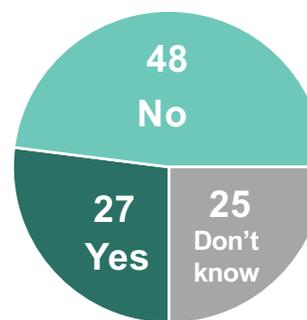


How many Americans who share your faith would you estimate have been discriminated against because of it?



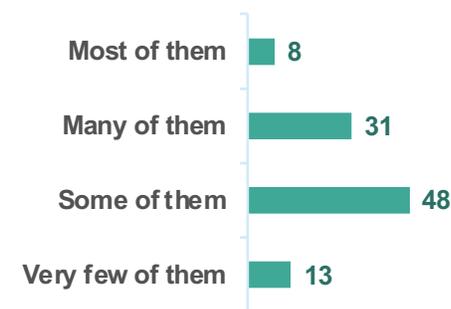
☾ Muslim

Do you think that American Evangelical Christians have been discriminated against based on their faith?



(IF YES) How many of them would you estimate have been discriminated against because of their faith?

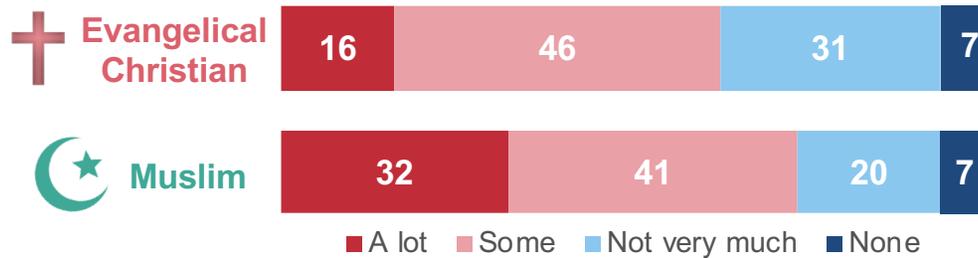
(n=134)



DISCRIMINATION

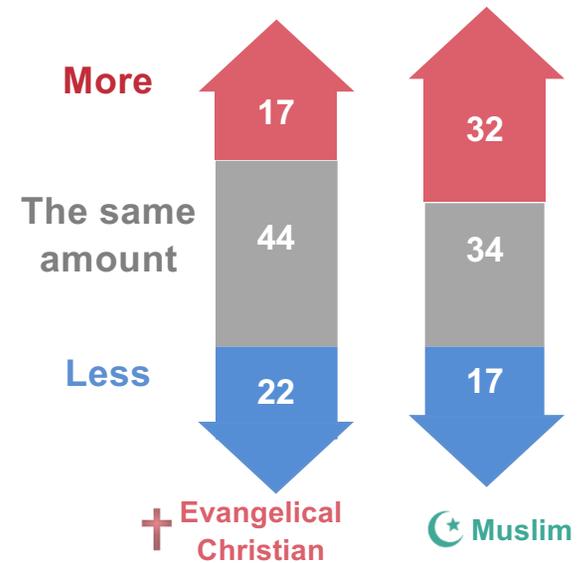
Both Evangelicals and Muslims agree that there is at least some anti-Muslim sentiment in the Evangelical Christian community

How much anti-Muslim sentiment do you think there is in the Evangelical Christian community?



Muslims see a stronger anti-Muslim sentiment in the Evangelical Christian community than Evangelical Christians do

Do you think there is **more**, **less**, or the same amount of anti-Muslim sentiment in the Evangelical Christian community as there is in the U.S. population overall?*

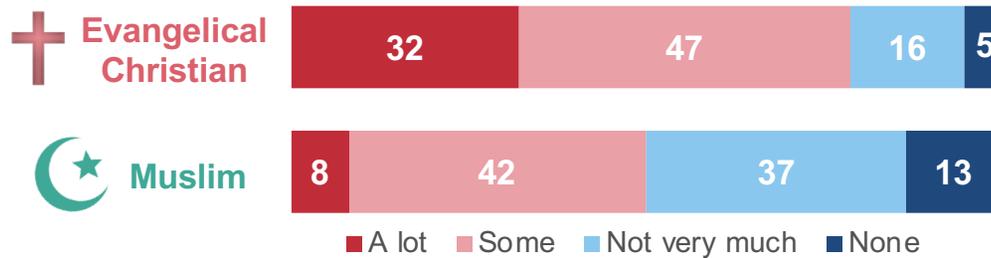


*I don't know not shown

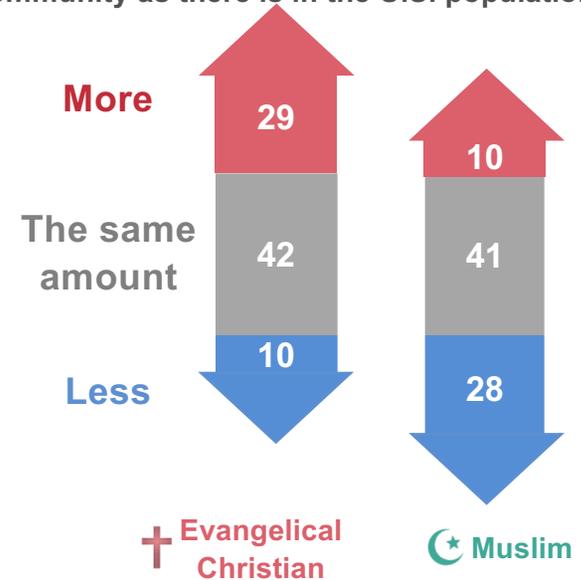
DISCRIMINATION

Evangelical Christians perceive much more anti-Evangelical sentiment from the Muslim community than Muslims believe exists

How much anti-Evangelical Christian sentiment do you think there is in the American Muslim community?



Do you think there is **more**, **less**, or the same amount of anti-Evangelical Christian sentiment in the American Muslim community as there is in the U.S. population overall?*



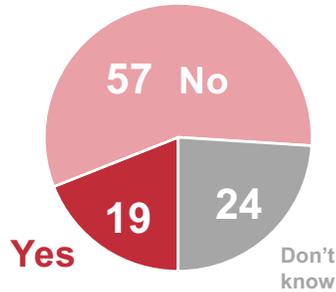
*I don't know not shown

DISCRIMINATION

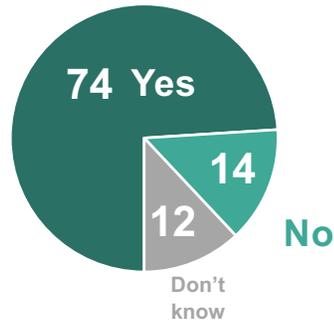
Evangelicals do not give equal consideration to Muslim holidays; many view America as a Christian nation

Do you think Muslim holidays such as Eid Al-Fitr and Eid Al-Adha should be observed in the United States with a day off from work/school like Christmas is?

 **Evangelical Christian**



 **Muslim**



Why do you say that? *Open End Responses*

Evangelicals who are opposed often say that Muslim holidays are not American or that America is a Christian country

“Because I believe our country is based on Christian beliefs and I honestly do not believe we could accommodate every religious holiday of every religion in America.”

“This country was founded on Christian principles; if we included Muslim holidays, we would have to celebrate every religious holiday of every faith.”

Muslims that say yes reference equality and fairness as top reasons

“Because Christians get Christmas off and all of their celebrations off, so should the Muslim community.”

“If a religious holiday such as Christmas is nationally celebrated, so too should Eid or Hanukkah. Or none should be nationally recognized. Equal treatment is key.”

US POLITICAL

US POLITICAL

Both groups share similar top concerns: religious freedom, healthcare, immigration, and the safety and security of their families

What are the issues that are of most concern to you right now?*

Evangelicals place a much greater emphasis on national security

Rank*	Evangelical Christian	%	Muslim	%
1	Healthcare	40	Religious freedom	30
2	Immigration	32	Healthcare	24
3	National security	28	Immigration	23
4	Religious freedom	26	Safety and security of my family	23
5	Safety and security of my family	26	Race relations	21
6	Economy/jobs	22	Civil rights/civil liberties	21
7	Terrorism	21	Economy/jobs	20
8	Gun policy	15	Terrorism	18
9	Environmental issues	13	Education	15
10	Taxes/tax reform	13	Gun policy	15
11	Race relations	11	Conflict in the Middle East	15
12	Civil rights/civil liberties	11	Women's rights	15
13	Education	10	Environmental issues	14
14	Women's rights	6	Taxes/tax reform	9
15	Infrastructure	4	National security	9
16	Conflict in the Middle East	3	Infrastructure	3

Muslims are more concerned about conflict in the Middle East and civil rights/civil liberties

*Other and None of the above not shown

PRESIDENT TRUMP

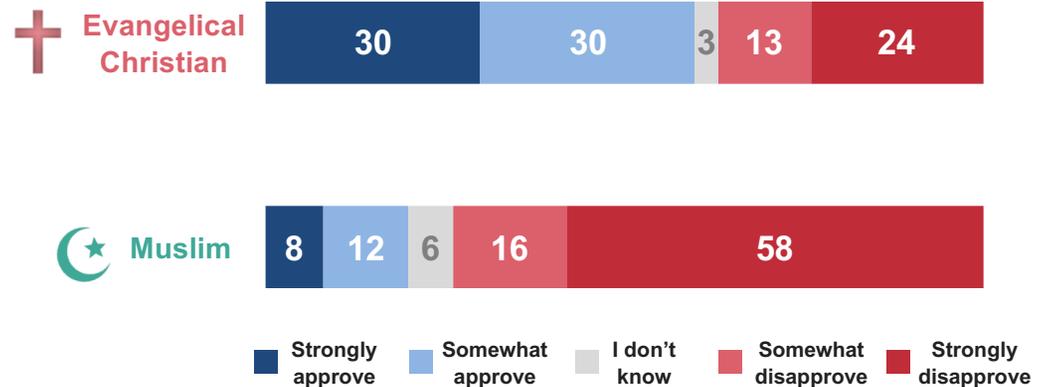
Muslims did not vote for President Trump and express strong disapproval of his performance in office; Evangelicals voted for and continue to support Trump

Whom did you vote for the in 2016 Presidential election ...?

	Evangelical Christian	Muslim
Donald Trump	56	12
Hilary Clinton	23	46
Someone else	6	10
Did not vote	15	32

1 in 3 American Muslims did not vote in the 2016 election

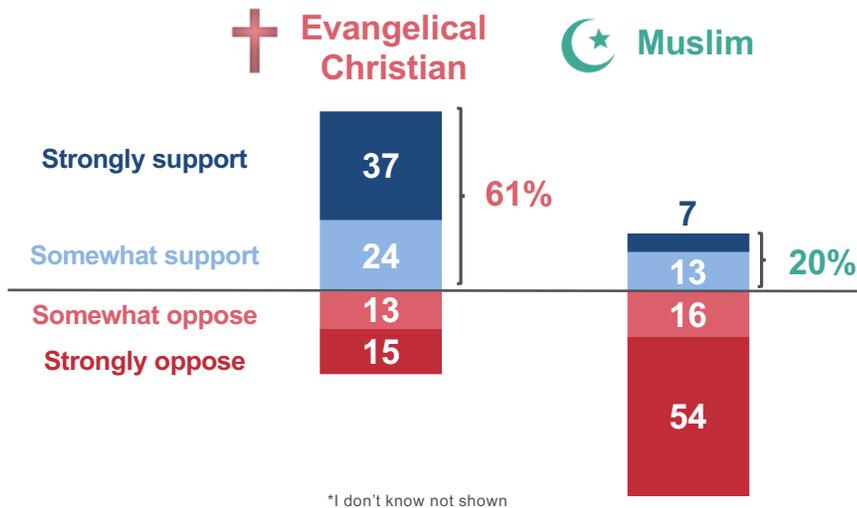
Do you approve or disapprove of President Trump's performance as President so far?



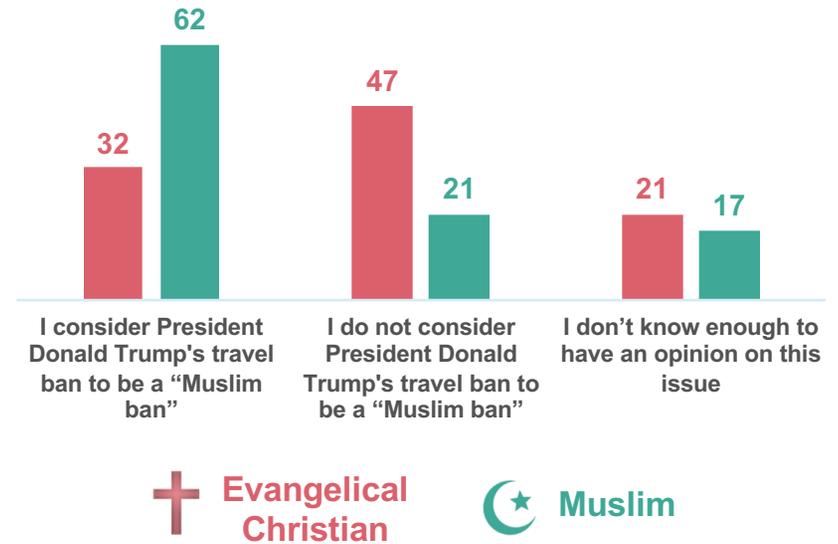
TRAVEL BAN

Evangelicals and Muslims do not agree on the travel ban – Evangelicals are more likely to support it, while Muslims consider it a “Muslim ban”

In June 2018, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld a ban proposed by President Donald Trump that indefinitely suspends the issuance of immigrant and non-immigrant visas to applicants from Libya, Iran, Somalia, Syria, Yemen, North Korea, and Venezuela. Do you support or oppose this ban?*



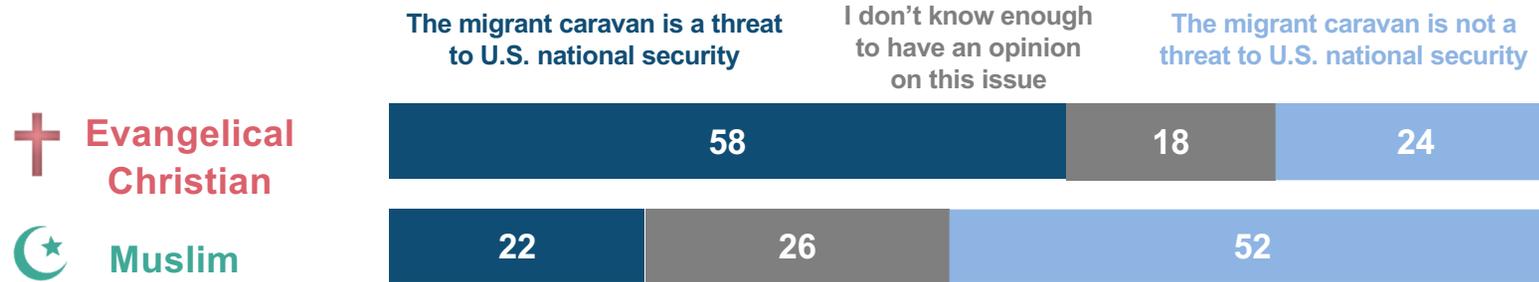
Many of the countries included in President Donald Trump's travel ban are majority Muslim, prompting some to refer to it as a “Muslim ban.” Which of the following is closer to your view?



MIGRANT CARAVAN

As with the travel ban, the two groups do not agree on the issue of the migrant caravan – Evangelicals see it as a threat, while Muslims do not

With regard to the ongoing migrant caravan issue, which of the following is closest to your opinion?

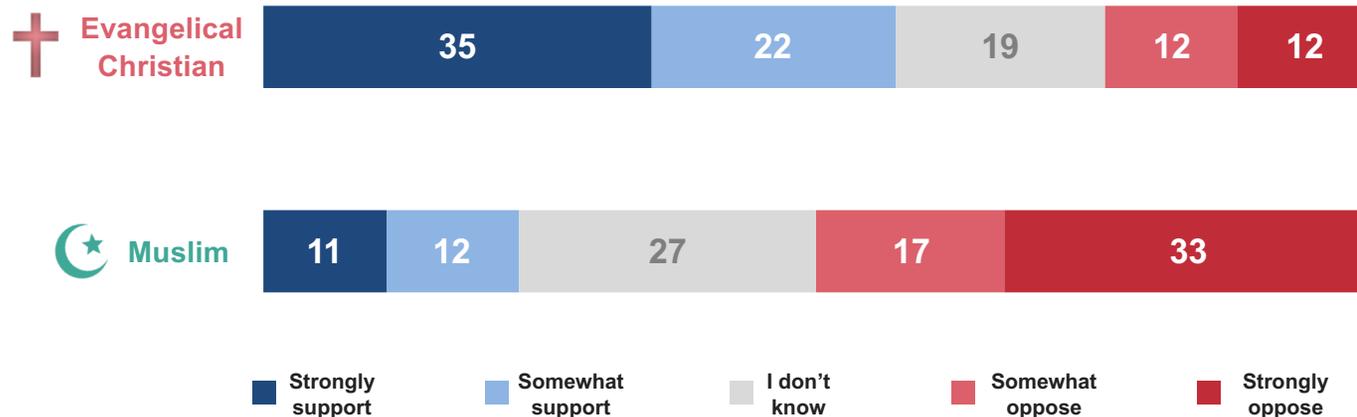


Beyond just the migrant caravan, national security is of greater concern to Evangelicals than to Muslims

JCPOA

Evangelicals tend to approve of President Trump's decision to pull out of the JCPOA, while Muslims are not nearly as supportive

In May 2018, President Donald Trump pulled out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) that was agreed upon between Iran and a group of world powers (U.S., United Kingdom, Russia, France, China, Germany, and the European Union) and announced he would re-impose economic sanctions on Iran, which he did in the fall of 2018. Do you support or oppose this action?

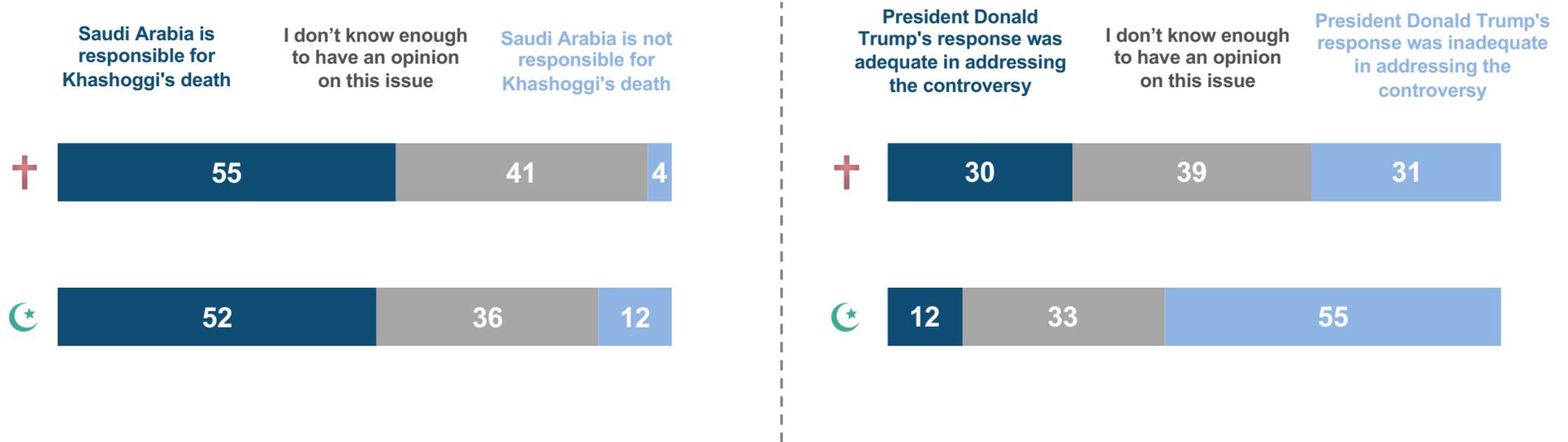


A large portion of both populations answering 'I don't know' may indicate overall lack of comprehensive knowledge of the JCPOA action – respondents may simply answer in line with their political beliefs

JAMAL KHASHOGGI

Both Muslims and Evangelicals fault Saudi Arabia for Khashoggi's death, but Muslims are more critical of President Trump's response to the event

With regard to the recent death of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, which of the following is closest to your opinion?



GEOPOLITICAL ISSUES

ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

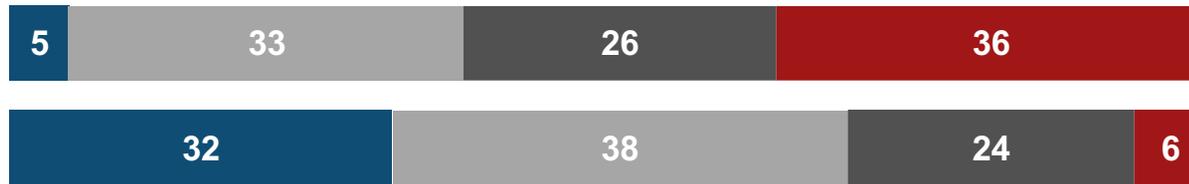
Across both religions, over half either blame both Israelis and Palestinians or don't have an opinion, signaling a potential area for common ground

With regard to the ongoing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, which of the following is closest to your opinion?

Israelis are the main aggressors, and are most responsible for the conflict Both the Israelis and the Palestinians are equally responsible for the conflict I don't know enough to have an opinion on this issue Palestinians are the main aggressors, and are most responsible for the conflict

✝ Evangelical Christian

☾ Muslim



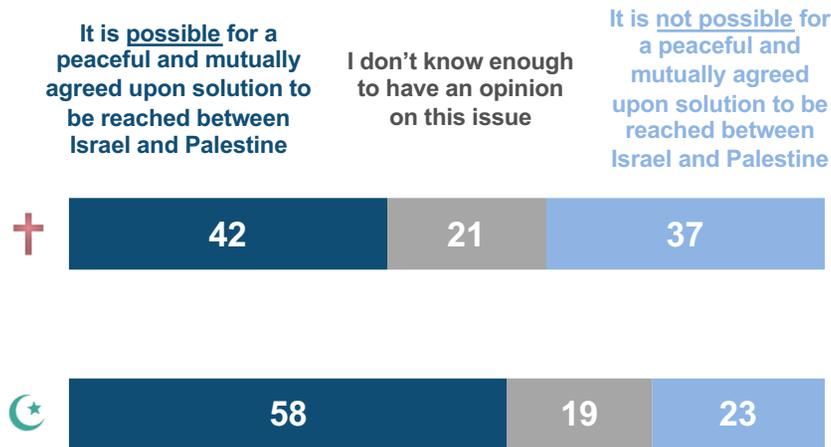
1 in 3 Muslims hold Israelis responsible

1 in 3 Evangelicals blame Palestinians for the conflict

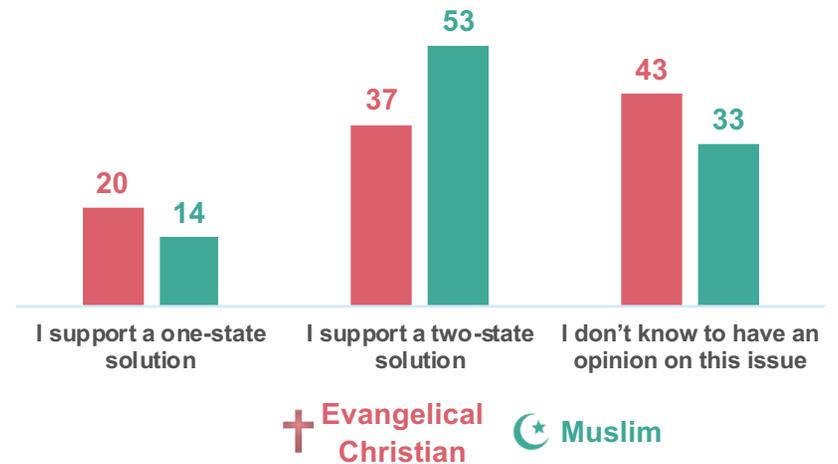
ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

Muslims are more optimistic for a peaceful solution between Israel and Palestine and support a two-state solution; Evangelicals do not rule out peace between the two nations

With regard to the ongoing conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, which of the following is closest to your opinion?



Which of the following is closest to your opinion?*



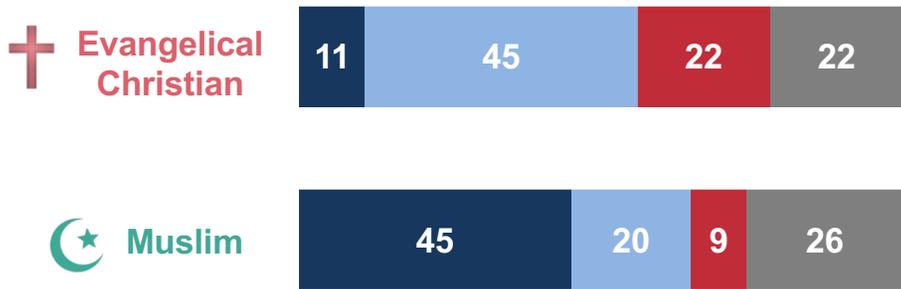
*Background text shown before question:

Some have called for a one-state solution as an answer to the conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, in which Israel would annex the West Bank and grant some form of citizenship to Palestinians. Others have called for a two-state solution, which would mean the creation of an independent Palestinian state that would exist alongside Israel.

ISRAEL AND PALESTINE

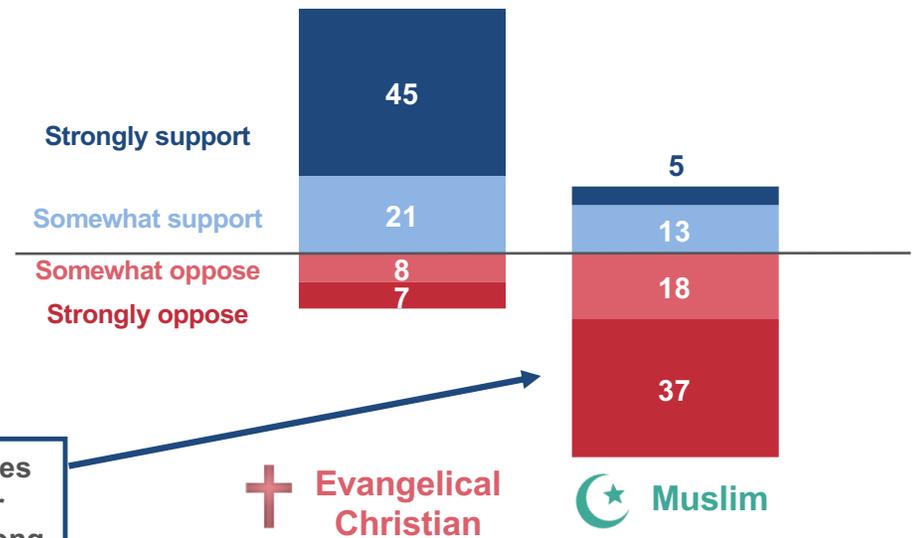
Evangelicals strongly support U.S. policies towards Israel – including moving the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem – while Muslims do not

Would you say that United States' foreign policy is too supportive of the State of Israel, not supportive enough, or has the right level of support for the State of Israel?



■ Too supportive ■ The right level of support ■ Not supportive enough ■ I don't know

In December 2017, President Donald Trump formally recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and ordered that the U.S. embassy in Israel move from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Do you support or oppose this action?*



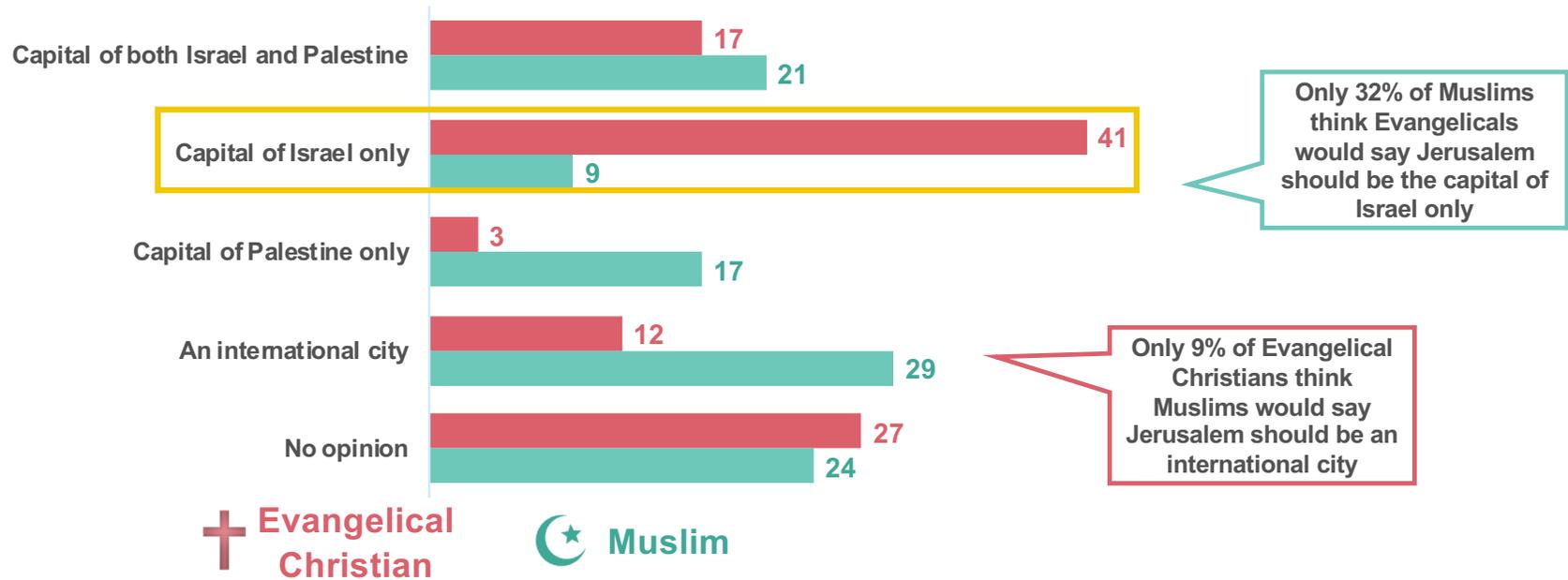
Strong feelings from both sides imply there is little room for compromise on this issue among the two religious groups

*I don't know not shown

JERUSALEM

Muslims are somewhat split in their feelings on Jerusalem; Evangelicals largely support Jerusalem as the capital of Israel only

Do you think that Jerusalem should be...

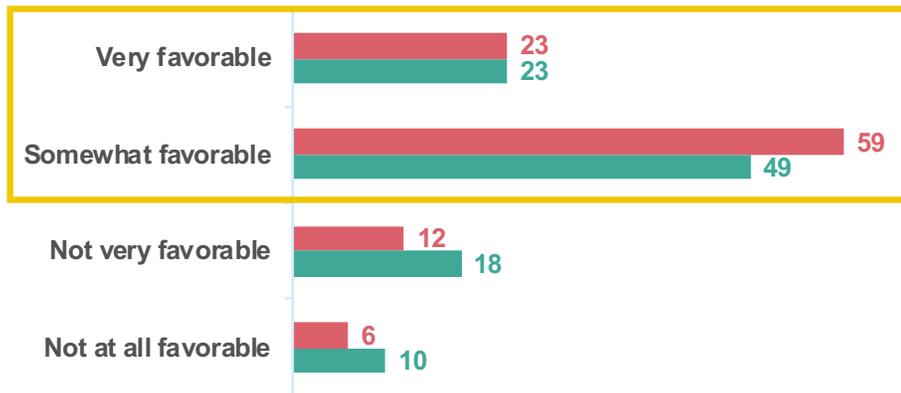


SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

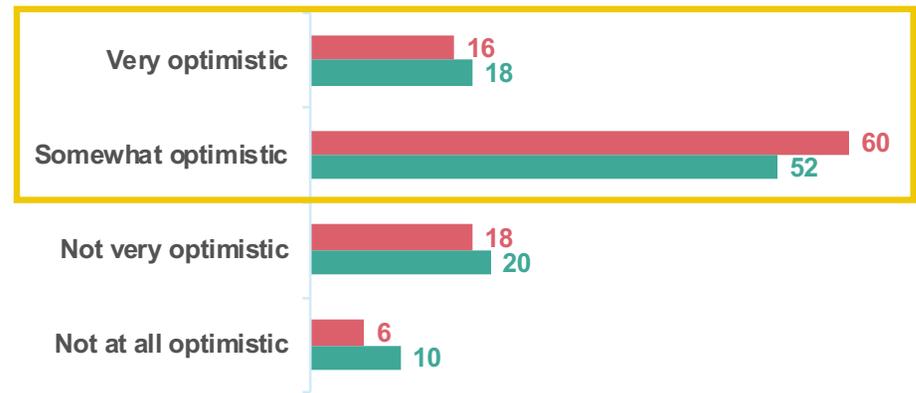
Both populations are receptive toward Muslim nations cooperating with and supporting Israel

If a Muslim nation were to engage in cooperation with Israel (develop bilateral strategic and economic relations, have an active Jewish community, supply oil to Israel, etc.)...

How would you feel towards that Muslim nation?



How would that make you feel about U.S. relations with Muslim nations in general?



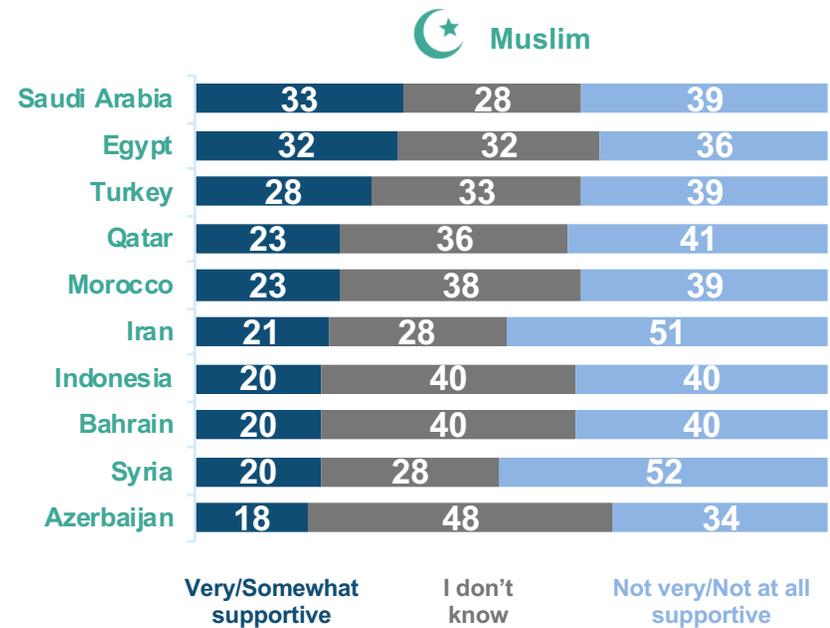
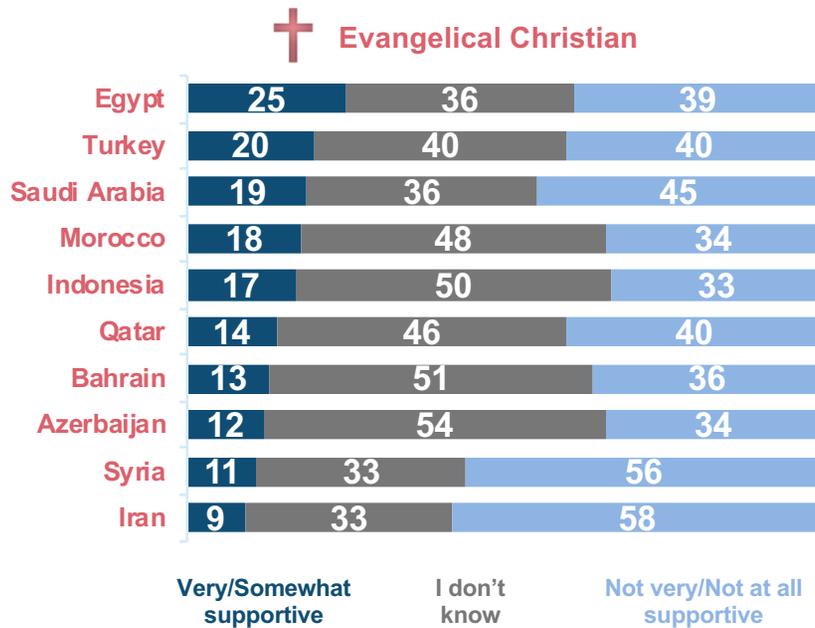
✝ Evangelical Christian

☾ Muslim

SUPPORT FOR ISRAEL

Evangelicals tend to perceive lower levels of support for Israel among Muslim nations

How supportive do you think each of the following countries is towards Israel?



APPENDIX

APPENDIX – COMPARING EXPERIENCES

Muslim perceptions of Evangelical values do not match what Evangelicals actually value most

Which of the following things would you say are most important to your religious tradition?*

Rank	Evangelical Christians said...	%	Muslims thought Evangelicals would say...	%
1	Daily prayer	65	Pride in your faith	37
2	Family	56	Holy texts	28
3	Making the world a better place for everyone	34	Family	27
4	Respect for your neighbor	26	Community events/gatherings	25
5	Pride in your faith	24	Daily prayer	18
6	Holy texts	23	Respect for your neighbor	16
7	Donating personal wealth / charitable giving	19	Rituals	16
8	Community events/gatherings	10	Making the world a better place for everyone	16
9	Volunteerism	9	Donating personal wealth / charitable giving	15
10	Fasting	3	Volunteerism	10
11	Rituals	2	Oral tradition	9
12	Special clothing or ways of dressing	2	Special clothing or ways of dressing	4
13	Oral tradition	1	Fasting	4
14	Restrictions on certain foods	1	Restrictions on certain foods	2

Muslims underestimate the importance Evangelicals place on daily prayer and making the world a better place

*Other, I don't know, and None of the above not shown

APPENDIX – COMPARING EXPERIENCES

Evangelicals accurately perceive the value Muslims put on daily prayer, but misperceive the value placed on most other traditions

Which of the following things would you say are most important to your religious tradition?*

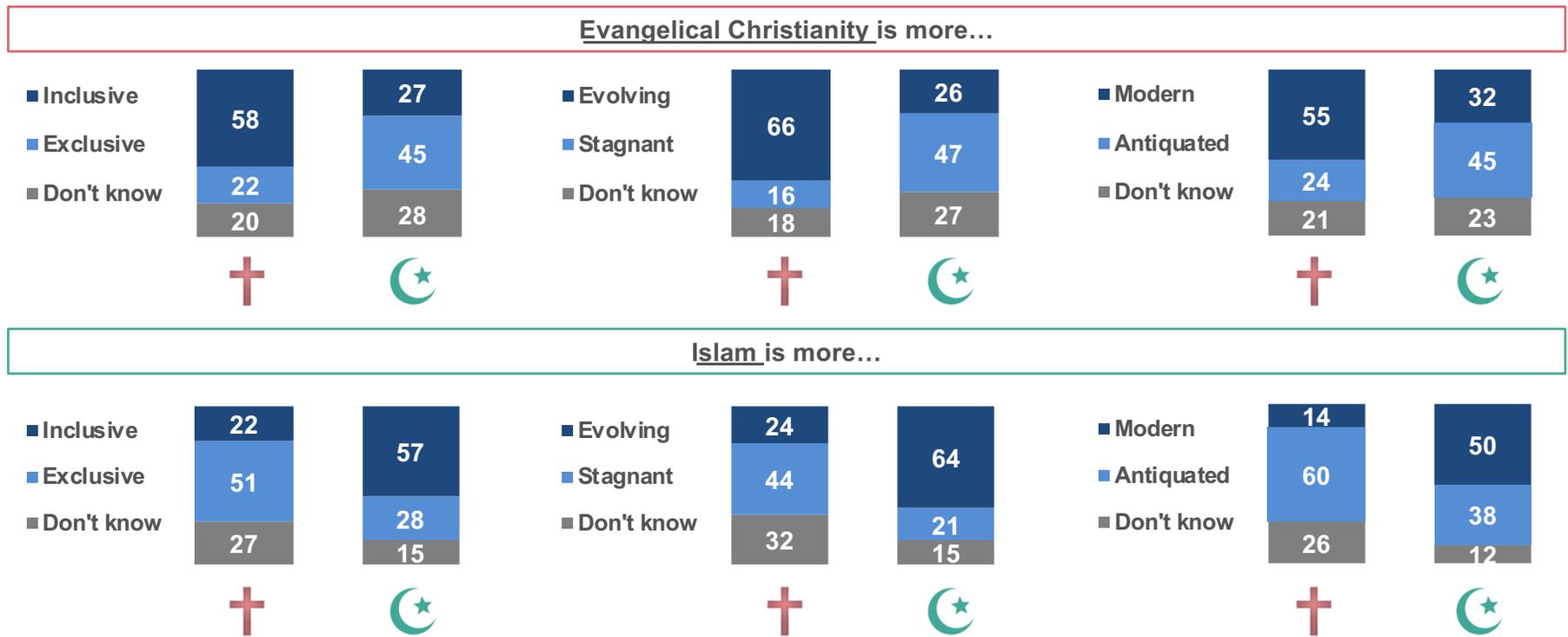
Rank	Muslims said...	%	Evangelicals thought Muslims would say...	%
1	Daily prayer	53	Daily prayer	47
2	Family	39	Rituals	40
3	Making the world a better place for everyone	30	Special clothing or ways of dressing	36
4	Fasting	27	Holy texts	26
5	Respect for your neighbor	22	Restrictions on certain foods	24
6	Pride in your faith	20	Pride in your faith	20
7	Holy texts	20	Family	12
8	Donating personal wealth / charitable giving	18	Fasting	12
9	Restrictions on certain foods	16	Oral tradition	7
10	Special clothing or ways of dressing	11	Respect for your neighbor	6
11	Rituals	10	Community events/gatherings	4
12	Community events/gatherings	7	Making the world a better place for everyone	4
13	Volunteerism	6	Donating personal wealth / charitable giving	3
14	Oral tradition	2	Volunteerism	2

Evangelicals assume that rituals and special clothing or ways of dressing are more important to Muslims than they actually are

*Other, I don't know, and None of the above not shown

APPENDIX – COMPARING VIEWS

Among Evangelicals and Muslims, both faiths view their religion as more inclusive, evolving, and modern than they do the other

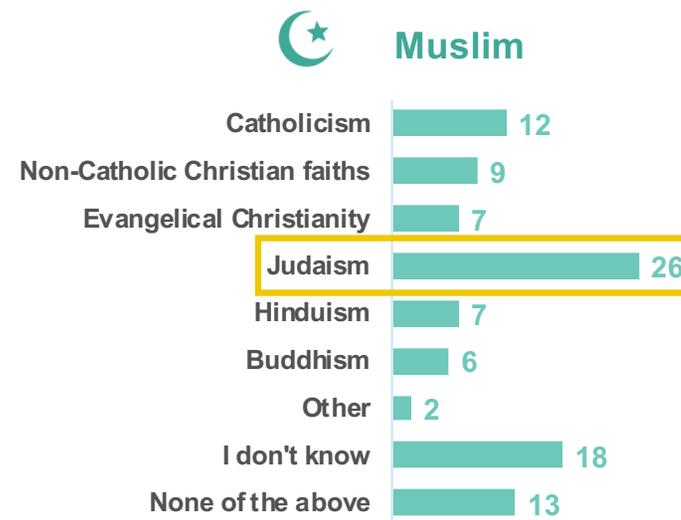
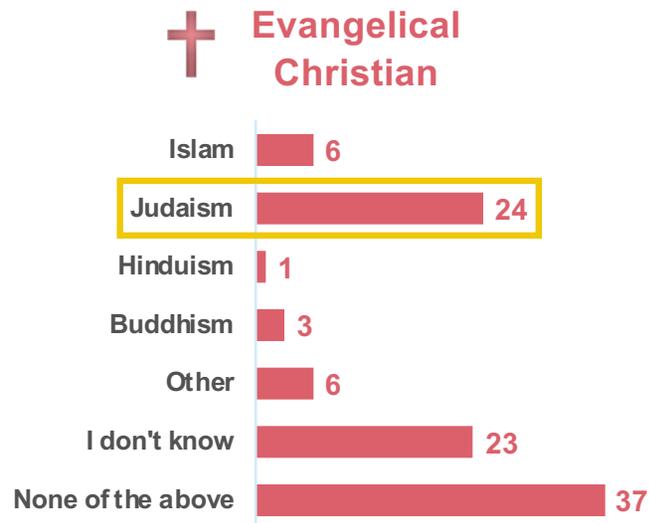


APPENDIX – RELIGIOUS RITUALS

Neither faith sees clear similarities to a different religion

- Judaism is the top religion selected among both groups: 1 in 4 Evangelical Christians and 1 in 4 Muslims say it is the religion most similar to their own

Which of the following religions do you think is the most similar to your own in its beliefs and practices?



APPENDIX – RELIGIOUS INFLUENCE

Both groups value religion, but Evangelicals say it has a stronger influence on their way of life

Percentage who say...	Evangelical	Muslim
	N=500	N=500
Religion is very important to them	80	67
Religion has a great deal of influence on their day-to-day life	76	57
Religion had a great deal of influence on their upbringing	66	59
Religion has (or will have) a great deal of influence on how they raise their family	72	56

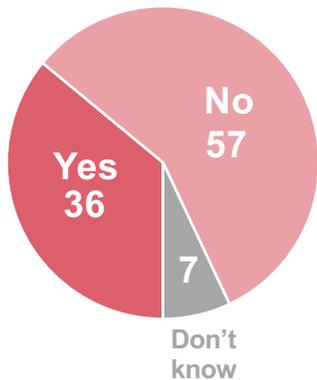
The largest difference in religious influence between the two groups is that on day-to-day life

APPENDIX – POLITICAL DISCRIMINATION

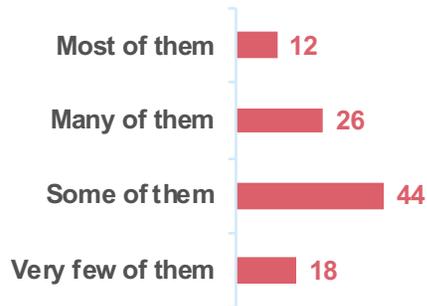
The majority of Evangelicals and Muslims do not feel that they have been discriminated against based on their political beliefs

✝ Evangelical Christian

Do you feel that you have ever been discriminated against because of your political beliefs?

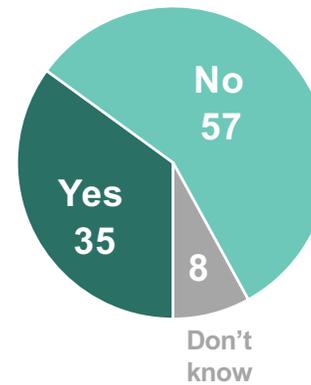


How many Americans who share your political beliefs would you estimate have been discriminated against because of it?

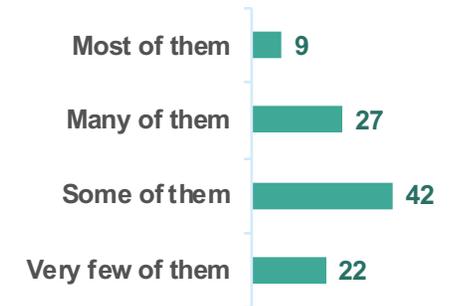


☾ Muslim

Do you feel that you have ever been discriminated against because of your political beliefs?



How many Americans who share your political beliefs would you estimate have been discriminated against because of it?



APPENDIX – FAVORABILITY TOWARDS EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS

The long definition of Evangelical Christianity may have been confusing to Muslims as it did not move favorability much in either direction

Generally speaking, how favorable of a view do you have towards people who are Evangelical Christian?
(Asked only of Muslim respondents)

Response	Pre-definition	Post-definition*	Net Change
Very favorable	19	13	-6
Somewhat favorable	27	28	+1
Somewhat unfavorable	18	16	-2
Very unfavorable	9	7	-2
I don't have an opinion	27	36	+9

*Muslim respondents were asked this favorability question before seeing questions about comparing the two faiths. They were then shown the below definition of Evangelical Christianity and asked the same favorability question after reading the definition.

“Evangelical Christianity is a transdenominational movement which maintains the belief that the essence of the Gospel consists of the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ's atonement. Evangelicals believe in the centrality of the conversion or "born again" experience in receiving salvation, in the authority of the Scripture as God's revelation to humanity, and in spreading the Christian message.”

APPENDIX – GEOPOLITICAL ISSUES

Muslims are more likely than Evangelicals to know where other Muslim countries are located; knowledge of Azerbaijan’s location is lowest among the countries listed

For each country below, please select the continent on which the country is located from the list

 **Evangelical Christian**

 **Muslim**

Country	Correct Continent	Incorrect Continent	Don't know	Correct Continent	Incorrect Continent	Don't Know
Azerbaijan	36	27	37	55	26	19
Turkey	71	10	19	83	8	9
Saudi Arabia	47	34	19	67	22	11
Egypt	55	28	17	74	17	9
Indonesia	67	13	20	81	9	10

APPENDIX – POLITICAL PARTY AND IDEOLOGY

Generally, which party's candidates or policies do you tend to align with most?	Evangelical Christian (n=500)	Muslim (n=500)
Democratic	23	46
Republican	44	11
Independent	21	24
Other	1	0
I don't align with any party	10	14
Prefer not to say	1	5

Politically, do you consider yourself to be...?	Evangelical Christian (n=500)	Muslim (n=500)
Very Liberal	7	14
Somewhat Liberal	7	18
Moderate	29	35
Somewhat Conservative	24	10
Very Conservative	27	10
None of the above	3	6
Prefer not to say	3	7

APPENDIX – DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender	Evangelical Christian (n=500)	Muslim (n=500)
Male	45	49
Female	55	51

Region	Evangelical Christian (n=500)	Muslim (n=500)
Northeast	16	24
Midwest	26	23
South	42	35
West	16	18

Religion	Evangelical Christian (n=500)
Catholic, Roman Catholic	11
Protestant	22
Christian	67

Age	Evangelical Christian (n=500)	Muslim (n=500)
18-24	8	21
25-34	16	22
35-49	26	35
50-64	30	16
65+	20	6

Education	Evangelical Christian (n=500)	Muslim (n=500)
High school graduate or below	23	20
Some college/Associate's	39	31
College graduate or higher	38	49

Religious Denomination	Muslim (n=500)
Sunni	62
Shiite	17
Other	3
None of the above	18

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