

## **The Faith of America's Hispanics**

Summarized and posted by Bob Young

May 2010

A 2009 survey from the Barna group indicates that Hispanics are assimilating the faith of the Caucasian population faster than anyone would have predicted, essentially mirroring the faith of the nation's white population. A few years ago the Hispanic population passed the African-American population as the largest ethnic group in the U.S.

An overview of the faith practices and beliefs of Hispanics and the total adult population shows that there are few significant differences between the two groups. The Barna study found that these segments have nearly identical profiles on the following, among others:

- Belief that their faith is very important in their life
- Perceived accuracy of the principles taught in the Bible
- A personal sense of responsibility to share their faith with others
- Perception about the existence of Satan
- Perception about the holiness of Jesus Christ
- Understanding of the nature of God

When Barna separated out the born again Hispanics and compared them to the nation's born again population at-large, relatively few differences were identified between the two groups. The differences that were statistically significant included the fact that Hispanic born again Christians are more likely to believe that it is possible for people to earn their way into Heaven through good behavior, even though their salvation was based on confessing their sins and accepting Christ as their Savior. Hispanics who identified themselves as born again were also more likely than all born again Americans to contend that they have been greatly transformed by their faith (85% versus 78%); less likely than all born again adults in the U.S. to claim to be absolutely committed to Christianity (63% versus 74%), and were twice as likely as all born again adults to be aligned with the Catholic Church (35% versus 17%).

When Barna compared the faith of Hispanics today to their faith profile of 15 years ago, the assessment showed that Hispanics have been rapidly moving toward adopting the mainstream beliefs and practices of all Americans. The study discovered 11 faith dimensions on which there has been substantial change. A few of those areas of change include alignment with the Catholic Church (down by 25 percentage points); identifying oneself as a born again Christian (up by 17 percentage points); having made a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that is important in their life today (up by 15 percentage points), and church attendance (up 10 percentage points in an average week).

For the complete report, visit [barna.org](http://barna.org).