



Written by on September 23, 2008

Most Americans Believe in Guardian Angels

In a poll of 1,700 respondents, 55 percent answered affirmatively to the statement, "I was protected from harm by a guardian angel."

When interviewed by Time.com, Christopher Bader, director of the Baylor survey, explained why he thought the results of the study were surprising: "If you ask whether people believe in guardian angels, a lot of people will say, 'sure.' But this is different. It's experiential. It means that lots of Americans are having these lived supernatural experiences."



Rodney Stark, a professor of social sciences and co-director for studies of religion at Baylor University, told ABC News: "While I knew there were a lot of people who had such [beliefs in angels], I wasn't prepared for the frequency of it."

The complete results of the Baylor survey will be included in Professor Stark's new book, *What Americans Really Believe*, to be published on September 25. The survey polled respondents of various religious faiths, including evangelical Protestants, mainline Protestants, Catholics, and Jews.

The survey covered other topics, as well. It found that evangelical Protestants are 55 percent less likely than other religious groups to be alarmed about global climate change or to accept the view that there will be widespread destruction of life unless policy changes are made. Baylor sociologist F. Carson Mencken reported that while 56 percent of U.S. adults say the government is not spending enough to improve and protect the environment, only 41 percent of evangelicals agree.

The *Waco Tribune-Herald* interviewed Pastor Joe Carbajal of Mighty Wind Worship Center in Waco to get his take on the survey and he was not surprised: "The Bible has way too many references of angelic encounters not to believe in them. References such as angels of the church, fallen angels, as well as several angel encounters in the Bible are enough evidence for me to believe in created angelic beings."

Al Siddiq, president of the Islamic Center of Waco, told the *Tribune-Herald* that Muslims also believe in personal angels, explaining that they believe there is one angel on each shoulder, keeping track of each person's good and bad deeds. Muslims also believe in a very literal heaven and hell as the ultimate destination for all humankind. "Otherwise, God would not be just," Siddiq said.

Of those responding to the survey, 44 percent affirmed that they "heard the voice of God speaking to me," 23 percent "witnessed a miraculous, physical healing," 16 percent "received a miraculous, physical healing," and eight percent "Spoke or prayed in tongues."



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