

AMERICA ON RELIGION

On February 25, 2008, the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life released a study entitled *The U.S. Religious Landscape Survey*. Based on interviews with 35,556 adults, America is "constantly shifting amid religious choices" and "unaware or unconcerned with doctrinal distinctions." Here are some telling highlights from the study:

Forty-four percent of those surveyed said they've abandoned "the religious or secular upbringing of their childhood."

Twelve percent said their religious identity is "nothing in particular."

Fifty-one percent claimed to be Protestants, but one third of that number did not want to be identified with any one denomination.

According to the Forum's report, Christianity is the religious choice of 78 percent of Americans. However, only non-denominational Christian churches showed growth that outpaced their losses.

The co-author of the study, John Green, says, "Fluidity is the rule today, not the exception. There's greater diversity and greater movements—a quantum leap in the rate of change." He goes on to note: "It will become increasingly difficult to find people who share a love for a distinct doctrine. But there are always niches in the marketplace, and there will always be a place for religions that are strict. They just may cater to a smaller number of people."