

The numbers, the decline of the church in America

I've been told there is about 2 million in the (conservative) church of Christ in America. But this stat is referencing to any group that calls themselves "church of Christ." A stat from 2008. See their above notation in article that clarifies the broad terminology for "church of Christ"

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Churches_of_Christ

See this article on what a Bible based/conservative church is <https://www.facebook.com/notes/joseph-sullivan/institutionalism-the-red-line-of-bible-authority/10154396962271139>

If you look past institutional, etc and see just conservative Bible pattern churches, the stat's are this "Churches of Christ that are non-institutional were estimated in 2009 to comprise 113,656 members across 1,898 congregations."

See link [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_churches_of_Christ_\(non-institutional\)#Present_day](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_churches_of_Christ_(non-institutional)#Present_day)

We as a small, little known group doesn't even make it in the rankings of religious bodies.

See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Christian_denominations_by_number_of_members

And even in lumping us with other folks, as liberal "churches of Christ" The decline is still staggering See quote: "In the newly released directory, 21st Century Christian identifies 12,629 a cappella Churches of Christ with 1,578,281 adherents nationwide.

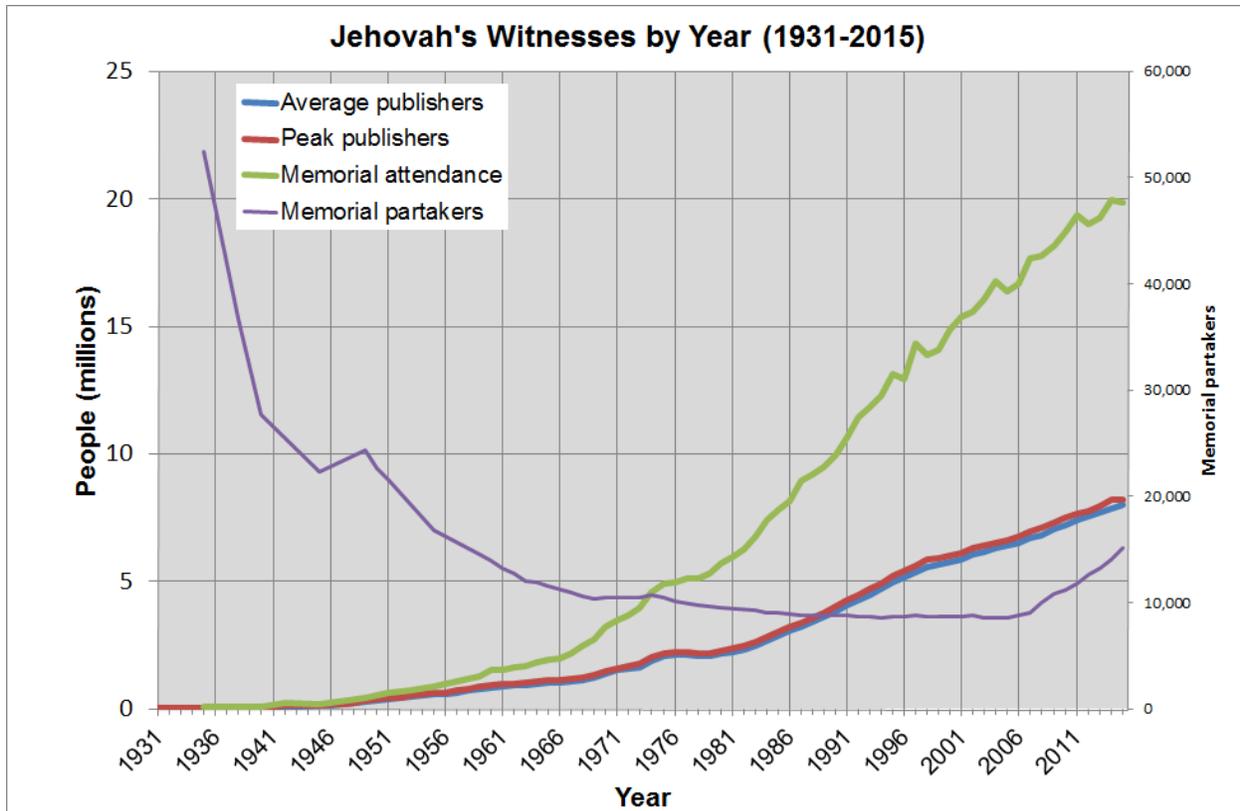
Those figures represent 526 fewer churches and 78,436 fewer people in the pews than just six years ago." - See more at: <http://www.christianchronicle.org/article/church-in-america-marked-by-decline#sthash.Db9M4pPt.dpuf>

That's from the 2 million numbers, but also includes conservative as well. Does not take much math to know 2 million/2,000,000 subtracted from 78,436 is 1,921,564 in JUST 6 years!

Why? Let's compare "church of Christ" with two groups. Read about growth...

1. Jehovah Witness

"As of August 2015, Jehovah's Witnesses report an average membership of approximately 7.98 million actively involved in preaching, with a peak of 8.2 million.[1] Jehovah's Witnesses have an active presence in most countries, though they do not form a large part of the population of any country." Publishers are people doing evangelism.



See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Jehovah%27s_Witnesses

AND THEY ARE GROWING. <http://rawilsonfans.org/the-fastest-growing-religion-in-the-world/>

2. Mormons

“According to the records of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, its membership has grown every decade since its beginning in the 1830s,[62] that it is among the top ten largest Christian denominations in the U.S.,[63] and that it was the fastest growing church in the U.S. in 2012.[64] See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Growth_of_religion

“CBN.com - Mormonism is the fastest growing faith group in American history according to "U.S. News & World Report," which reports that if present trends continue there could be 265 million members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS) worldwide by 2080. Mormons have launched a major expansion program to keep up with growth, opening 32 temples across the country this year. There are now 100 temples internationally, serving 11 million Mormons. One reason for the LDS increase is that its message "strikes a spiritual resonance in people," Neal Maxwell, one of the church's elders, tells the newsweekly. Another, the magazine notes, is its aggressive missionary effort. Last year the church sent out almost 60,000 missionaries to 120 countries, where they won 306,000 converts. LDS teaching emphasizes the church's commitment to conservative and family values.”

SEE <http://www1.cbn.com/churchandministry/mormons-are-fastest-growing-religion>

Now if you know about these groups you know they do what I keep hearing preachers say is ineffective, Door knocking. And it is not the best. Yet when a person invests each week to it, and a religious body has all its members do it, even the least effective methods BECOME EFFECTIVE. Every year or so, they come to your door, men and women, in their ties and suits, to con-vase your neighborhood. WHY do they do this? Because it is an obligation these two religious bodies bind on its members.

COC does not actively door knock. They think it's the preachers job, the preacher thinks it needs to be done on annual gospel meetings, if that. COC members don't make this an obligation, like the Lord's Supper or Baptism...that the Bible commands, but an excuse to get out of. When most preachers don't evangelize what example do they set? And when it is not taught as a sin, and a need we must do, then most Christians won't feel the need. And if they don't feel like they MUST do this, they won't.

EACH member in the Mormon and Jehovah Witness faith, are active both in America OR overseas. They grow each year, doing even what COC people call ineffective evangelism. While most of the COC do none. In 50 years where will we be? If other religious bodies do what we are supposed to?

Until people stop looking at the great commission as a "command" suggestion, and ignoring His words as fine and non-sinful, complacency and apathy will continue to slowly kill Christ's body on the earth.

Preachers need to preach on this, and set an example and evangelize, elders need to lead their congregation in such works, COC member magazines need to make this a top responsibility to its readers, FC needs to have real application lessons on evangelism and stress this Bible pattern as essential, and have lectureships for such, individual Christians need to step up, churches, groups need to have workshops teaching people "how to" do evangelism. People in whatever place they are and in whatever roles they have, must start stirring things up. Silence and apathy will only continue to cause yearly decline.

Doing wrong like adultery is a sin, so is not doing right, like having love for people enough to share with them the gospel.

Joe Sullivan