



## AI is Becoming a Spiritual Authority in Americans' Lives, New Research Reveals

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*Nearly one in three U.S. adults say spiritual advice from AI is as trustworthy as advice from a pastor*

NASHVILLE, Tenn.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Feb. 19, 2026-- During this year's National Religious Broadcasters (NRB) International Christian Media Convention, [Barna Group](#), in partnership with [Gloo](#) (Nasdaq: GLOO), released new research as part of the [State of the Church](#) initiative on the ways Americans and particularly Christians are using AI in their lives. This year the joint research initiative will focus heavily on [trends in Faith and AI](#), as new research data drops will be released monthly throughout the year.

The research released at the NRB revealed that nearly one in three U.S. adults – with the figure rising to two in five among Gen Z and Millennials — say spiritual advice from AI is as trustworthy as advice from a pastor. In addition to becoming a spiritual authority, the research also revealed that AI is shaping spiritual habits and pastors feel ill-equipped to lead on this subject.

"Though the majority of practicing Christians remain the most cautious about embracing AI as a spiritual tool, their views are shifting and remain largely uninformed by their pastor," said Daniel Copeland, Barna's vice president of research. "There's a real opportunity here for pastors to disciple their congregants on how to use this technology in a beneficial way, especially as pastors remain among the most trusted guides for integrating faith and technology."

The research was released over several days as part of Gloo's Diamond Sponsorship of NRB. Other key findings of the research on Faith & AI include:

- Roughly four in ten practicing Christians say AI has helped them with prayer, Bible study, or spiritual growth
- Among pastors, about four in ten (41%) report using AI for Bible study
- One-third of practicing Christians (31%) say they want guidance from pastors on how to navigate AI
- Only a small minority of pastors (12%) report feeling comfortable teaching on AI

The Barna research also included findings on the influence of Christian media. Six in ten U.S. adults (61%) engage with Christian media in some form, and half do so weekly. In addition, two in three U.S. adults view Christian media as valuable and trustworthy. At the same time, heavy consumers of Christian media are the harshest critics with 45% judging the content to be divisive and 40% citing it as making "Christians look bad."

"As trust in mainstream media has declined in recent years, it's encouraging to see that confidence in Christian media remains relatively high," said Scott Beck, Gloo co-founder and CEO. "What a privilege to release these findings at an event full of Christian broadcasters and leaders who can return to their respective cities inspired to continue to do the important work they are doing to help people flourish and communities thrive."

New State of the Church research on trends in Faith and AI will be released monthly. Learn more at [stateofthechurch.com](#).

[Gloo](#) is a leading technology platform for the faith and flourishing ecosystem, providing values-aligned AI, resources, insights and funding so people and communities flourish and organizations thrive. Gloo serves over 140,000 faith, ministry and nonprofit leaders and is based in Boulder, Colorado.

[Barna Group](#) is a leading research organization focused on the intersection of faith and culture. Since 1984, Barna has conducted more than two million interviews over the course of thousands of studies and has become a go-to source for insights about religion, leadership, vocation and generations. Barna is an independent, privately-held, nonpartisan organization based in Dallas–Fort Worth, Texas.

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