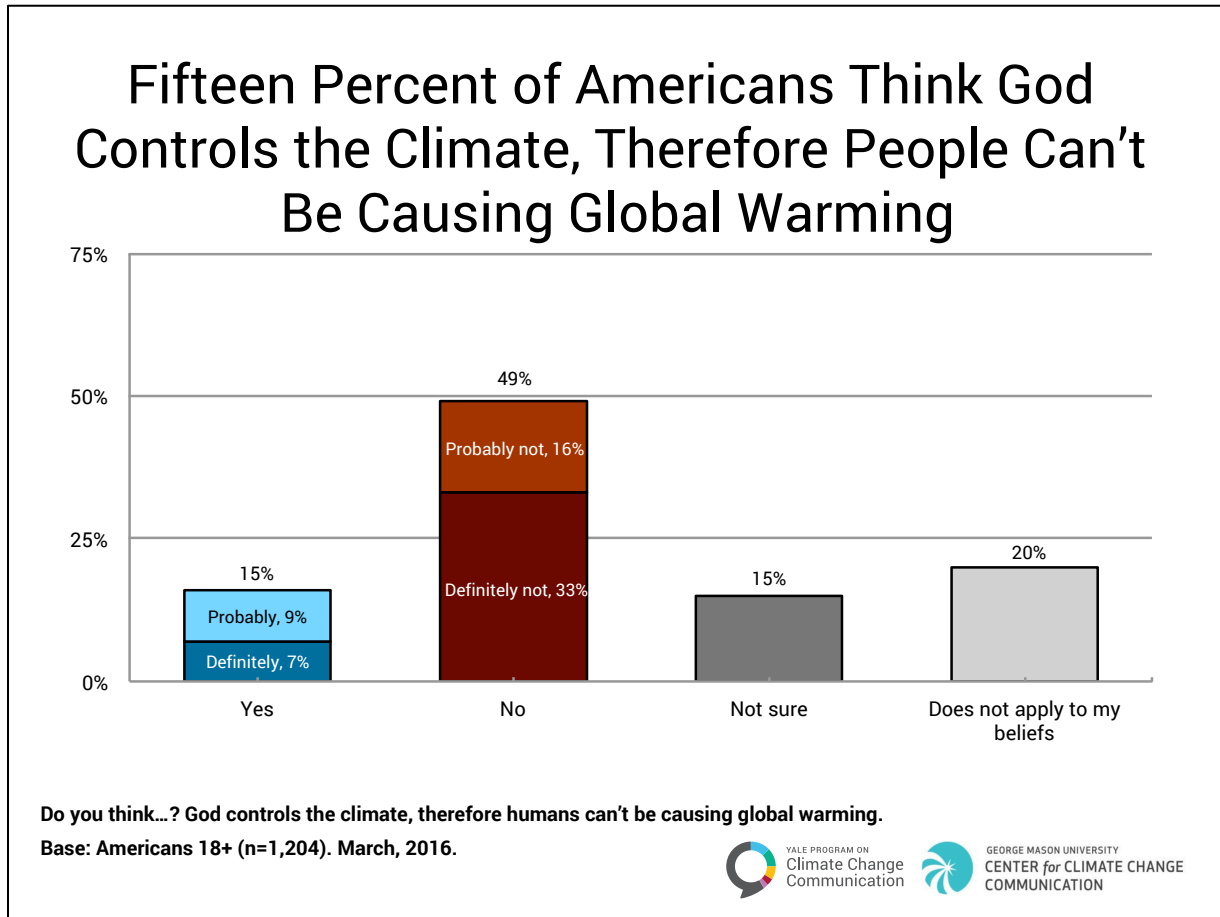


# Global Warming, God, and the “End Times”

For a significant number of Americans, the reality, causes and meaning of global warming are seen through the lens of their religious beliefs. Some reject the evidence that humans are causing global warming because they believe God controls the climate. Others believe that global warming is evidence that the world will be ending soon, and that we don’t need to worry about global warming in light of the approaching apocalypse. To assess the level of acceptance of these beliefs among Americans, we surveyed a nationally representative sample of 1,204 American adults in March, 2016.

## 1. God controls the climate

One in seven Americans think it is definitely (7%) or probably (9%) true that “God controls the climate, therefore people can’t be causing global warming.”<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Total “yes” responses = 15% as a result of rounding.

Groups that are more likely to believe “God controls the climate, therefore people can’t be causing global warming” (i.e., to say “yes, definitely” or “yes, probably”) include:

- Tea Party members (38%)
- Conservative Republicans (31%)
- Evangelical and Born-Again Christians (30%)
- Registered voters who support Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton (30%)
- Republicans (26%)
- People who believe Earth was created in six days, as described in the Bible (26%)
- People who watch the Fox News Cable Channel often (24%) or sometimes (21%)
- People who do not believe humans evolved from earlier species (24%)
- African Americans (23%)
- High school graduates (22%)
- People whose household income is less than \$30,000 annually (21%)<sup>2</sup>

Groups that are less likely to hold this belief (i.e., to say “no, definitely not” or “no, probably not”) include:

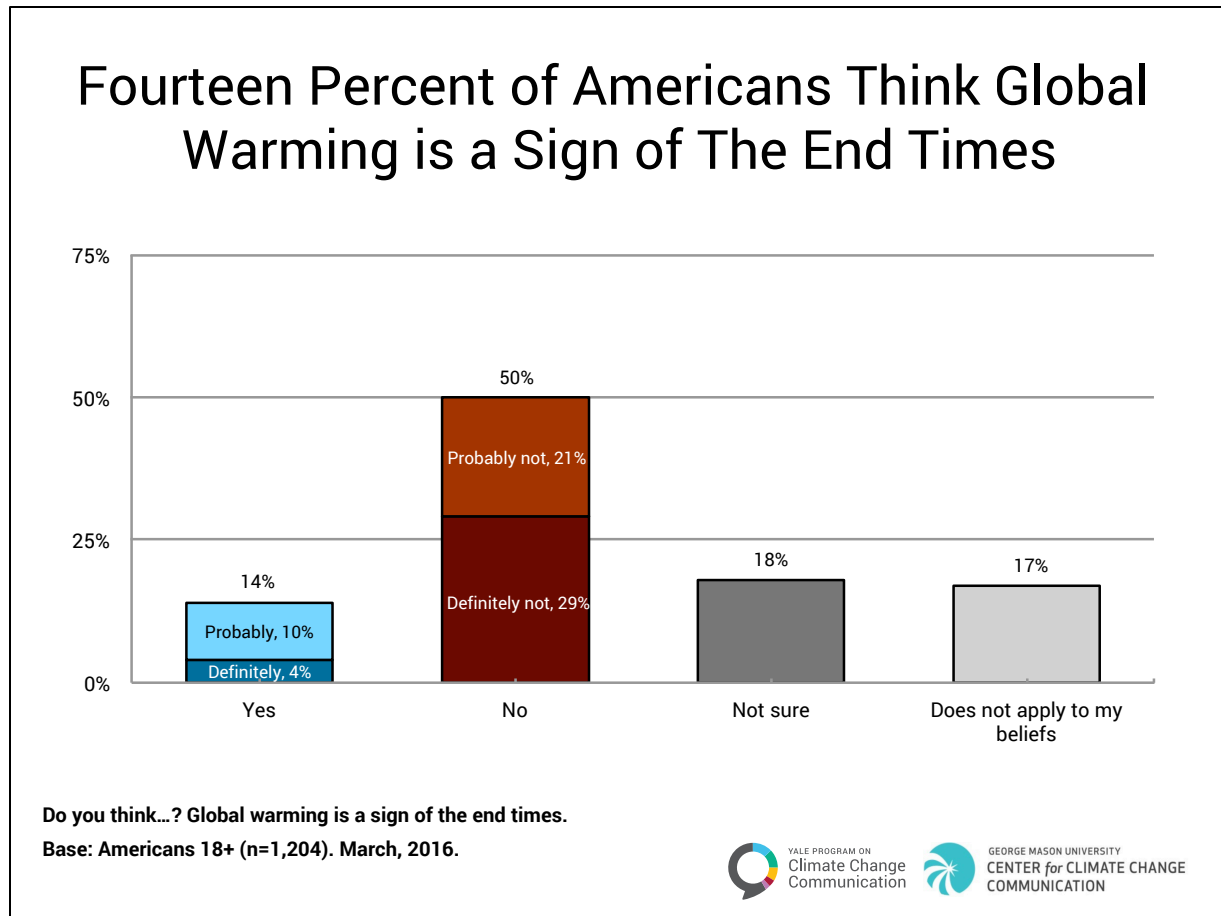
- Agnostics and atheists (1%)
- People who do not believe that the Earth was created in six days, as described in the Bible (5%)
- People who listen to National Public Radio (NPR) often (3%) or sometimes (8%)
- People who have no religious affiliation (6%)
- Liberal Democrats (6%)
- Democrats (9%)
- People who believe humans evolved from earlier species (9%)
- Registered voters who support Hillary Clinton over Donald Trump (10%)
- People with a Bachelor’s degree or higher (11%)
- People who never watch the Fox News Cable Channel (11%)

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<sup>2</sup> To see the results for all groups examined, please see the data tables at the end of this report.

## 2. Global warming signals the “end times”

Global warming is interpreted as a sign of the end times by one in seven Americans, with 4 percent saying this is definitely so, and another 10 percent that it is probably so.



Groups that are more likely to believe “global warming is a sign of the end times” include:

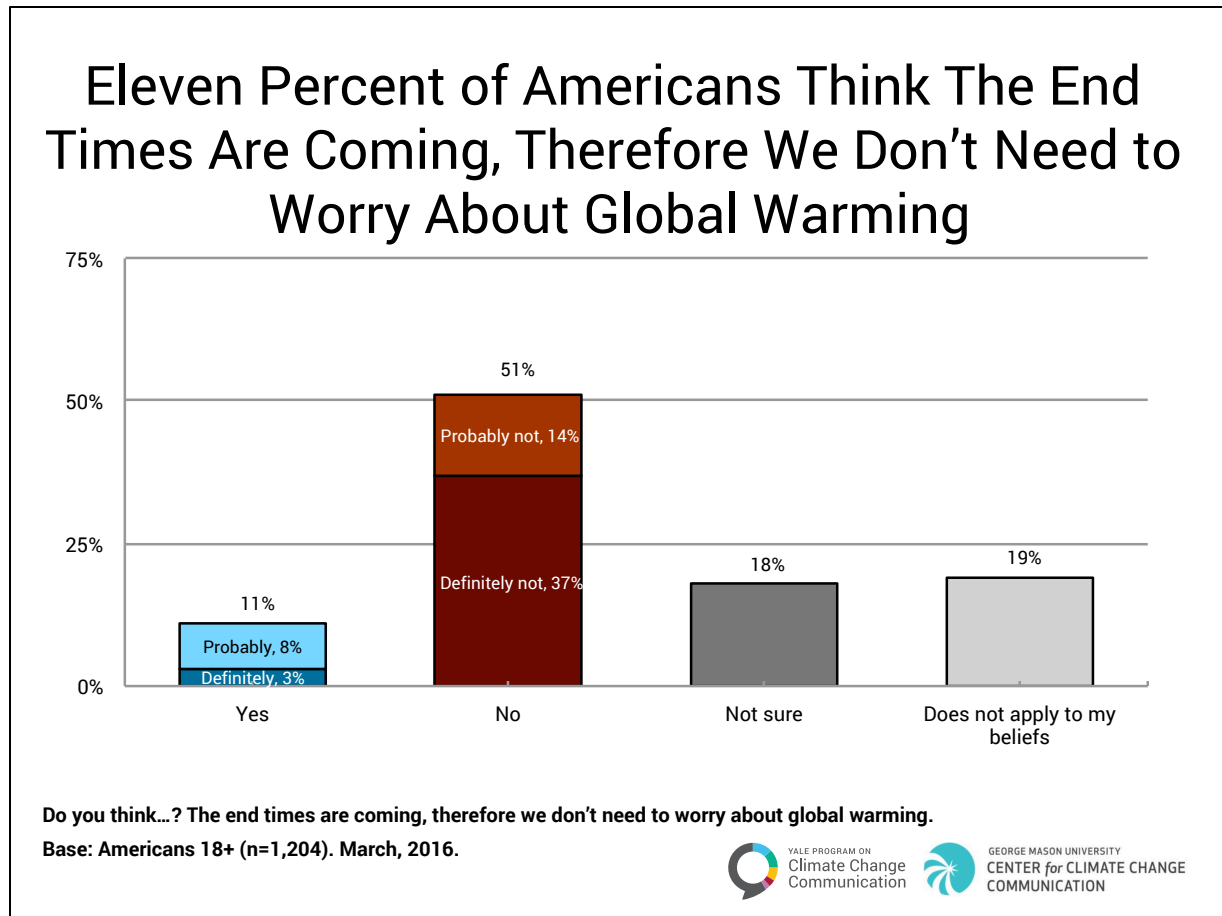
- Evangelical and Born-Again Christians (24%)
- Adults who have not completed high school (23%)
- People who do not believe humans evolved from earlier species (20%)
- People who believe Earth was created in six days, as described in the Bible (20%)
- People with an annual household income of less than \$30,000 (19%)
- Conservative Republicans (18%)
- Republicans (17%)
- People aged 45-59 (18%)
- Hispanics (18%)

Groups that are less likely to hold this belief include:

- Agnostics and atheists (4%)
- People who do not believe the Earth was created in six days, as described in the Bible (9%)
- People who have completed a Bachelor’s degree or higher (9%)
- People who are 60 or older (9%)
- People who believe that humans evolved from earlier species (10%)
- People who have no religious affiliation (10%)
- People with household incomes of \$100,00 or more annually (10%)

### 3. We don’t need to worry about global warming

Just over one in ten (11%) think the end times are coming, therefore we don’t need to worry about global warming.



Groups that are more likely to believe “the end times are coming, therefore we don’t need to worry about global warming” include:

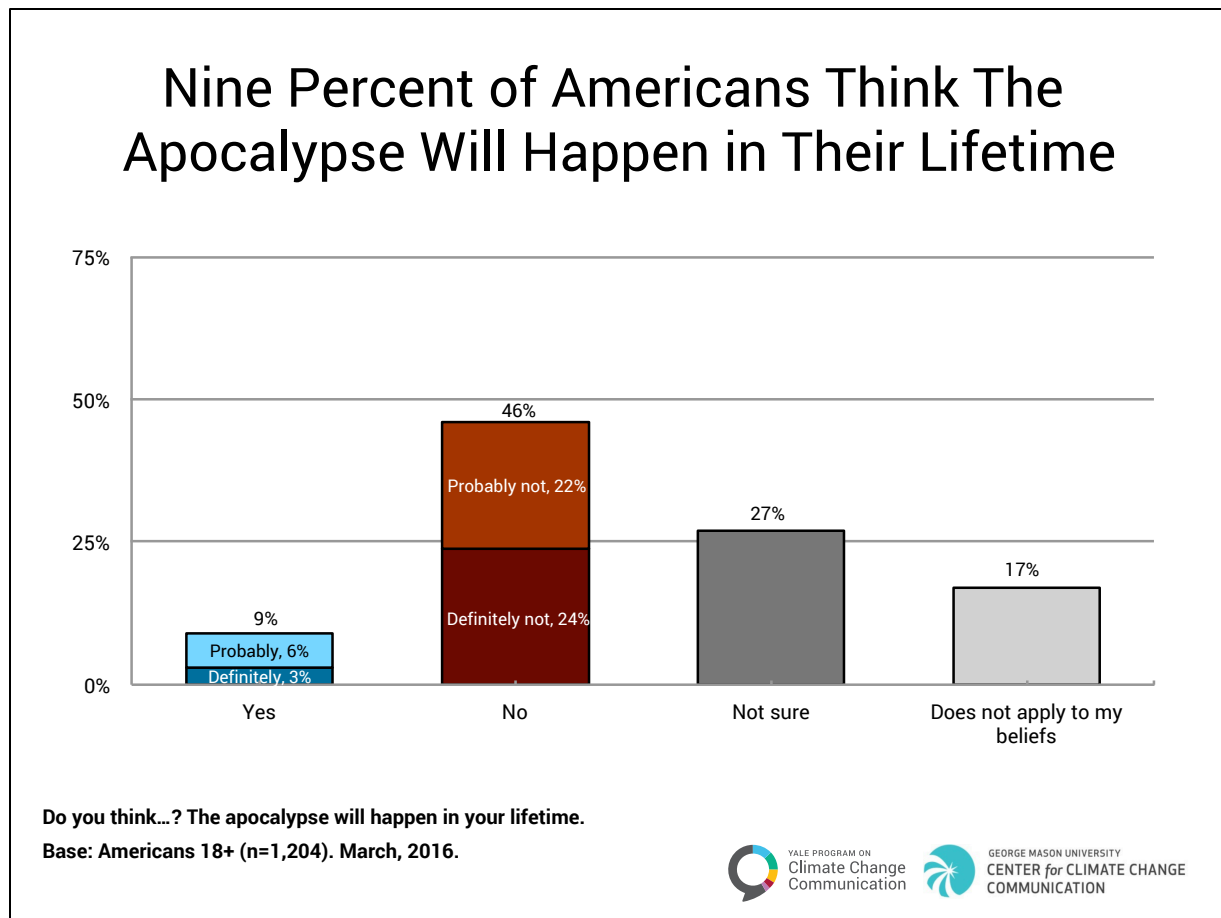
- Evangelicals and Born-Again Christians (26%)
- Conservative Republicans (21%)
- Republicans (19%)
- Tea Party members (18%)
- Adults who have not completed high school (18%)
- People who do not believe humans evolved from earlier species (18%)
- Registered voters who support Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton (18%)
- People who believe Earth was created in six days, as described in the Bible (17%)
- People with an annual household income of less than \$30,000 (17%)
- African Americans (16%)
- People aged 30-44 (15%)
- Moderate/Liberal Republicans (15%)

Groups that are less likely to hold this belief include:

- Agnostics and atheists (2%)
- Catholics (3%)
- People who have no religious affiliation (5%)
- People who do not believe the Earth was created in six days, as described in the Bible (5%)
- Liberal Democrats (5%)
- People who believe humans evolved from earlier species (6%)
- People with an annual household income of \$100,000 or more (7%)
- Democrats (7%)
- Political Independents (7%)

#### 4. The apocalypse will happen in my lifetime

Close to one in ten Americans (9%) think the apocalypse will happen within their lifetime.



Groups that are more likely to believe “the apocalypse will happen in your lifetime” include:

- Adults who have not completed high school (20%)
- Evangelical and Born-Again Christians (19%)
- People with an annual household income of less than \$30,000 (15%)
- People who often watch Fox News Cable Channel (15%)
- Hispanics (15%)
- People who do not believe humans evolved from earlier species (14%)
- People who believe Earth was created in six days, as described in the Bible (13%)
- Tea Party members (13%)

Groups that are less likely to hold this belief include:

- Agnostics and atheists (1%)
- People with a Bachelor’s degree or higher (4%)
- People who often listen to National Public Radio (NPR; 4%)
- People who do not believe Earth was created in six days, as described in the Bible (5%)
- Protestants (non-Evangelical; 5%)
- Liberal Democrats (5%)



**DATA TABLES**  
**Global Warming, God, and the “End Times”**  
**by Demographic and Social Group**

**“God controls the climate, therefore humans can’t be causing global warming”**

Proportion of total sample who say "Yes, definitely" and "Yes, probably" = **15%**

*Proportions that answer “yes” by group:*

<b>Age</b>	<i>18-29</i>	12%
	<i>30-44</i>	18%
	<i>45-59</i>	17%
	<i>60+</i>	14%

<b>Education</b>	<i>Less than high school</i>	16%
	<i>High school</i>	22%
	<i>Some college</i>	13%
	<i>Bachelor’s degree or higher</i>	11%

<b>Gender</b>	<i>Male</i>	15%
	<i>Female</i>	15%

<b>Race / Ethnicity</b>	<i>White, Non-Hispanic</i>	15%
	<i>Black, Non-Hispanic</i>	23%
	<i>Hispanic</i>	17%

<b>Household Income</b>	<i>&lt;\$30K</i>	21%
	<i>\$30K-\$59.99K</i>	13%
	<i>\$60K-\$99.99K</i>	14%
	<i>\$100K+</i>	15%

<b>Religious Affiliation</b>	<i>Catholic</i>	14%
	<i>Protestant (non-Evangelical)</i>	17%
	<i>Evangelical/Born-Again</i>	30%
	<i>Agnostic/Atheist</i>	1%
	<i>None</i>	6%

**“God controls the climate, therefore humans can’t be causing global warming” (Cont’d)**

<b>Belief in Evolution: Humans evolved from earlier species</b>	<i>Believes humans evolved</i>	9%
	<i>Does not believe humans evolved</i>	24%

<b>Biblical Literalism: Belief that Earth was created by God in six days</b>	<i>Believes Earth was created in six days</i>	26%
	<i>Does not believe Earth was created in six days</i>	5%

<b>Political Party Identification (Registered Voters Only)</b>	<i>Republicans (total, including Independents who lean Republican)</i>	26%
	<i>Conservative Republicans</i>	31%
	<i>Moderate/Liberal Republicans</i>	17%
	<i>Democrats (total, including Independents who lean Democratic)</i>	9%
	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>	6%
	<i>Moderate/Conservative Democrats</i>	12%
	<i>Independent/Other (excluding leaners)</i>	12%

<b>Tea Party Member (Registered Voters Only)</b>		38%
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<b>Vote Preferences (Registered Voters Only)</b>	<i>Hillary Clinton (Democrat)</i>	10%
	<i>Donald Trump (Republican)</i>	30%

**“God controls the climate, therefore humans can’t be causing global warming” (Cont’d)**

<b>Frequency of Watching Fox Cable News</b>	<i>Often</i>	24%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	21%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	14%
	<i>Never</i>	11%

<b>Frequency of Listening to National Public Radio (NPR)</b>	<i>Often</i>	3%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	8%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	19%
	<i>Never</i>	18%

<b>Frequency of Watching the Weather Channel</b>	<i>Often</i>	16%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	16%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	16%
	<i>Never</i>	15%

**“Global warming is a sign of the end times.”**Proportion of total sample who say "Yes, definitely" and "Yes, probably" = **14%****Proportions that answer “yes” by group:**

<b>Age</b>	<i>18-29</i>	13%
	<i>30-44</i>	16%
	<i>45-59</i>	18%
	<i>60+</i>	9%

<b>Education</b>	<i>Less than high school</i>	23%
	<i>High school</i>	15%
	<i>Some college</i>	15%
	<i>Bachelor’s degree or higher</i>	9%

<b>Gender</b>	<i>Male</i>	13%
	<i>Female</i>	15%

<b>Race / Ethnicity</b>	<i>White, Non-Hispanic</i>	14%
	<i>Black, Non-Hispanic</i>	17%
	<i>Hispanic</i>	18%

<b>Household Income</b>	<i>&lt;\$30K</i>	19%
	<i>\$30K-\$59.99K</i>	11%
	<i>\$60K-\$99.99K</i>	17%
	<i>\$100K+</i>	10%

<b>Religious Affiliation</b>	<i>Catholic</i>	11%
	<i>Protestant (non-Evangelical)</i>	12%
	<i>Evangelical/Born-Again</i>	24%
	<i>Agnostic/Atheist</i>	4%
	<i>None</i>	10%

**“Global warming is a sign of the end times.” (Cont’d)**

<b>Belief in Evolution: Humans evolved from earlier species</b>	<i>Believes humans evolved</i>	10%
	<i>Does not believe humans evolved</i>	20%

<b>Biblical Literalism: Belief that Earth was created by God in six days</b>	<i>Believes Earth was created in six days</i>	20%
	<i>Does not believe Earth was created in six days</i>	9%

<b>Political Party Identification (Registered Voters Only)</b>	<i>Republicans (total, including Independents who lean Republican)</i>	17%
	<i>Conservative Republicans</i>	18%
	<i>Moderate/Liberal Republicans</i>	15%
	<i>Democrats (total, including Independents who lean Democratic)</i>	12%
	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>	11%
	<i>Moderate/Conservative Democrats</i>	13%
	<i>Independent/Other (excluding leaners)</i>	11%

<b>Tea Party Member (Registered Voters Only)</b>		14%
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<b>Vote Preferences (Registered Voters Only)</b>	<i>Hillary Clinton (Democrat)</i>	11%
	<i>Donald Trump (Republican)</i>	16%

***“Global warming is a sign of the end times.” (Cont’d)***

<b>Frequency of Watching Fox Cable News</b>	<i>Often</i>	17%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	16%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	12%
	<i>Never</i>	13%

<b>Frequency of Listening to National Public Radio (NPR)</b>	<i>Often</i>	12%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	15%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	13%
	<i>Never</i>	14%

<b>Frequency of Watching the Weather Channel</b>	<i>Often</i>	13%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	15%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	12%
	<i>Never</i>	15%

**“The end times are coming, therefore we don’t need to worry about global warming.”**Proportion of total sample who say “Yes, definitely” and “Yes, probably” = **11%****Proportions that answer “yes” by group:**

<b>Age</b>	<i>18-29</i>	8%
	<i>30-44</i>	15%
	<i>45-59</i>	14%
	<i>60+</i>	7%

<b>Education</b>	<i>Less than high school</i>	18%
	<i>High school</i>	13%
	<i>Some college</i>	10%
	<i>Bachelor’s degree or higher</i>	8%

<b>Gender</b>	<i>Male</i>	10%
	<i>Female</i>	12%

<b>Race / Ethnicity</b>	<i>White, Non-Hispanic</i>	11%
	<i>Black, Non-Hispanic</i>	16%
	<i>Hispanic</i>	11%

<b>Household Income</b>	<i>&lt;\$30K</i>	17%
	<i>\$30K-\$59.99K</i>	9%
	<i>\$60K-\$99.99K</i>	12%
	<i>\$100K+</i>	7%

<b>Religious Affiliation</b>	<i>Catholic</i>	3%
	<i>Protestant (non-Evangelical)</i>	9%
	<i>Evangelical/Born-Again</i>	26%
	<i>Agnostic/Atheist</i>	2%
	<i>None</i>	5%

**“The end times are coming, therefore we don’t need to worry about global warming.” (Cont’d)**

<b>Belief in Evolution: Humans evolved from earlier species</b>	<i>Believes humans evolved</i>	6%
	<i>Does not believe humans evolved</i>	18%

<b>Biblical Literalism: Belief that Earth was created by God in six days</b>	<i>Believes Earth was created in six days</i>	17%
	<i>Does not believe Earth was created in six days</i>	5%

<b>Political Party Identification (Registered Voters Only)</b>	<i>Republicans (total, including Independents who lean Republican)</i>	19%
	<i>Conservative Republicans</i>	21%
	<i>Moderate/Liberal Republicans</i>	15%
	<i>Democrats (total, including Independents who lean Democratic)</i>	7%
	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>	5%
	<i>Moderate/Conservative Democrats</i>	10%
	<i>Independent/Other (excluding leaners)</i>	7%

<b>Tea Party Member (Registered Voters Only)</b>		18%
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<b>Vote Preferences (Registered Voters Only)</b>	<i>Hillary Clinton (Democrat)</i>	8%
	<i>Donald Trump (Republican)</i>	18%



**“The end times are coming, therefore we don’t need to worry about global warming.” (Cont’d)**

<b>Frequency of Watching Fox Cable News</b>	<i>Often</i>	12%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	9%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	9%
	<i>Never</i>	12%

<b>Frequency of Listening to National Public Radio (NPR)</b>	<i>Often</i>	7%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	9%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	9%
	<i>Never</i>	12%

<b>Frequency of Watching the Weather Channel</b>	<i>Often</i>	7%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	12%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	7%
	<i>Never</i>	14%

***“The apocalypse will happen in your lifetime.”***

Proportion of total sample who say "Yes, definitely" and "Yes, probably" = **9%**

***Proportions that answer “yes” by group:***

<b>Age</b>	<i>18-29</i>	10%
	<i>30-44</i>	11%
	<i>45-59</i>	10%
	<i>60+</i>	6%

<b>Education</b>	<i>Less than high school</i>	20%
	<i>High school</i>	11%
	<i>Some college</i>	7%
	<i>Bachelor’s degree or higher</i>	4%

<b>Gender</b>	<i>Male</i>	7%
	<i>Female</i>	11%

<b>Race / Ethnicity</b>	<i>White, Non-Hispanic</i>	9%
	<i>Black, Non-Hispanic</i>	10%
	<i>Hispanic</i>	15%

<b>Household Income</b>	<i>&lt;\$30K</i>	15%
	<i>\$30K-\$59.99K</i>	10%
	<i>\$60K-\$99.99K</i>	7%
	<i>\$100K+</i>	6%

<b>Religious Affiliation</b>	<i>Catholic</i>	7%
	<i>Protestant (non-Evangelical)</i>	5%
	<i>Evangelical/Born-Again</i>	19%
	<i>Agnostic/Atheist</i>	1%
	<i>None</i>	6%

***“The apocalypse will happen in your lifetime.” (Cont’d)***

<b>Belief in Evolution: Humans evolved from earlier species</b>	<i>Believes humans evolved</i>	6%
	<i>Does not believe humans evolved</i>	14%

<b>Biblical Literalism: Belief that Earth was created by God in six days</b>	<i>Believes Earth was created in six days</i>	13%
	<i>Does not believe Earth was created in six days</i>	5%

<b>Political Party Identification (Registered Voters Only)</b>	<i>Republicans (total, including Independents who lean Republican)</i>	12%
	<i>Conservative Republicans</i>	11%
	<i>Moderate/Liberal Republicans</i>	12%
	<i>Democrats (total, including Independents who lean Democratic)</i>	6%
	<i>Liberal Democrats</i>	5%
	<i>Moderate/Conservative Democrats</i>	7%
	<i>Independent/Other (excluding leaners)</i>	8%

<b>Tea Party Member (Registered Voters Only)</b>		13%
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<b>Vote Preferences (Registered Voters Only)</b>	<i>Hillary Clinton (Democrat)</i>	7%
	<i>Donald Trump (Republican)</i>	12%

***“The apocalypse will happen in your lifetime.” (Cont’d)***

<b>Frequency of Watching Fox Cable News</b>	<i>Often</i>	15%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	9%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	6%
	<i>Never</i>	9%

<b>Frequency of Listening to National Public Radio (NPR)</b>	<i>Often</i>	4%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	10%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	13%
	<i>Never</i>	9%

<b>Frequency of Watching the Weather Channel</b>	<i>Often</i>	10%
	<i>Sometimes</i>	9%
	<i>Hardly ever</i>	4%
	<i>Never</i>	11%

## Survey Method

Data are based on a nationally representative survey of 1,204 American adults, aged 18 and older. The survey was conducted March 18–31, 2016. All questionnaires were self-administered by respondents in a web-based environment. The survey took, on average, about 26 minutes to complete.

The sample was drawn from GfK’s KnowledgePanel<sup>®</sup>, an online panel of members drawn using probability sampling methods. Prospective members are recruited using a combination of random digit dial and address-based sampling techniques that cover virtually all (non-institutional) resident phone numbers and addresses in the United States. Those contacted who would choose to join the panel but do not have access to the Internet are loaned computers and given Internet access so they may participate. The sample therefore includes a representative cross-section of American adults—irrespective of whether they have Internet access, use only a cell phone, etc. Key demographic variables were weighted, post survey, to match US Census Bureau norms.

The survey instrument was designed by Anthony Leiserowitz, Geoff Feinberg, and Seth Rosenthal of Yale University, and Edward Maibach and Connie Roser-Renouf of George Mason University.

## Sample details and margins of error

All samples are subject to some degree of sampling error—that is, statistical results obtained from a sample can be expected to differ somewhat from results that would be obtained if every member of the target population were interviewed. The margins of error for this survey, at the 95% confidence level, was plus or minus 3 percentage.

## Rounding error

For tabulation purposes, percentage points are rounded off to the nearest whole number. As a result, percentages in a given chart may total slightly higher or lower than 100%. Summed response categories (e.g., “yes, definitely” + “yes, probably”) are also rounded.

## Citation

Roser-Renouf, C., Maibach, E., Leiserowitz, A., & Rosenthal, S. (2016). *Global Warming, God, and the “End Times”: March, 2016*. Yale University and George Mason University. New Haven, CT: Yale Program on Climate Change Communication.

## Funding

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