

“As Religion Weakens, Socialism Strengthens”

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By Star Parker

RESTON, Va.—Per new polling reported by Gallup, religion is no longer important to most Americans.

In response to the question “Is religion an important part of your daily life?” 49 percent said yes.

Ten years ago, in 2015, 66 percent responded affirmatively.

Gallup notes that this 17-point drop “ranks among the largest Gallup has recorded in any country over any 10-year period since 2007.”

This departure from religion has partisan characteristics.

In 2001, per Gallup, 11 percent of Democrats and 7 percent of Republicans said they have no religion. In 2023, this difference widened to 33 percent of Democrats and 12 percent of Republicans saying they have no religion.

What are the practical implications?

Two major social institutions derive authority from religion. One is marriage. We refer to marriage as “holy matrimony.” Another is private property. The Eighth Commandment says, “Thou shalt not steal.”

Regarding marriage, again from Gallup, among 30- to 50-year-olds—in 1981, there was little difference between Democrats and Republicans: 82 percent of Democrats and 84 percent of Republicans were married. By 2024, the spread increased to 18 points: 67 percent of Republicans and 49 percent of Democrats were married.

A reasonable proxy for attitudes about private property is attitudes towards socialism. Socialism disregards the sanctity of private property. A socialist government can take what is Peter’s and redistribute it to Paul.

In 2025, 66 percent of Democrats and 14 percent of Republicans said they have a “positive” view of socialism.

How is this playing out, and how will this play out, regarding day-to-day realities in our country?

Let's consider the unabashed socialist who was just elected mayor of New York City. Among the giveaways he has promised is a freeze on rents.

A group of property owners in New York City has filed a lawsuit in federal court challenging the constitutionality of government-imposed rent control. Their claim is that rent control preventing an owner from profitably managing his property violates the Constitution's "takings" clause. The Constitution's Fifth Amendment says, "No person shall . . . be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of the law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation."

Let's hope this case finds its way to the Supreme Court. Private property is a core institution of our free nation under God.

Let's also consider those New Yorkers howling about the cost of living in New York City, that their new mayor wants to make happy at the expense of others.

Last year, *The New York Post* reported on a study done by law firm Schmidt and Clark, noting "One in three adults in New York have never been married . . . 17.4 percent more than the national average."

The study reported on all of New York state, but it's reasonable to assume that the statistics in New York City are above the state average.

Among women in New York, per the study, 36.3 percent have never married, the highest in the nation. Among men, 41.1 percent have never married, the second-highest in the nation.

The economic penalty of living alone in New York City is the highest in the nation, per real-estate platforms StreetEasy and Zillow. They call this the "singles tax."

Per these firms, as reported by CNN, in New York City, "singles pay an average of \$20,100 more to live alone."

The siren song of the welfare-state culture is the problem does not lie with individual behavior, but getting others to foot the bill.

New York City is but a microcosm of our whole nation. The Economic Innovation Group reports that transfer payments—funds received by one set of citizens that are transferred from other citizens—total now "almost 18 percent of total personal income in the United States, up from 8 percent in 1970."

We are drowning more and more in debt.

The answer is the return of individual responsibility and the institutions that enable it.

All this is informed by religion, which we must again strengthen.