

ARE CHRISTIANS A “PRIVILEGED” GROUP?

This is the article that appeared in the March 2024 edition of Catalyst, our monthly journal. The date that prints out reflects the day that it was uploaded to our website. For a more accurate date of when the article was first published, check out the news release, [here](#).

Bill Donohue sent the following letter to the Chief Diversity Officer at The Johns Hopkins University wanting to see the evidence that Christians constitute a “privileged” group.

January 29, 2024

Dr. Sherita H. Golden
Chief Diversity Officer
The Johns Hopkins University
2024 E. Monument Street, Ste. 2-600
Baltimore, MD 21205

Dear Dr. Golden:

You recently posted a piece in the university’s “Monthly Diversity Digest” listing various demographic groups which, you claim, enjoy a “privileged” position in American society. They include “whites, Christians, males, and heterosexuals.”

I am aware that a spokesman for Johns Hopkins Medicine addressed the ensuing controversy and that you have since retracted your comments. That is all fine and good, but there is one demographic group that you mentioned that is of particular interest to me, namely, Christians.

I would like to know how you determined that Christians are a “privileged” group. As a sociologist and the president of the nation’s largest Catholic civil rights organization, I am concerned that if your assessment is wrong, it could have far-reaching consequences for Christians.

In a survey done by the Pew Research Center on the income of various religious groups, it listed 15 Christian ones. Only two of them—those who belong to the Episcopal Church and the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)—have a family income above that of atheists and agnostics. (The two wealthiest religious groups are Jewish and Hindu.)

Those who earn less than atheists and agnostics, but who are nonetheless above the median income, belong to the following groups: Orthodox Christian, United Church of Christ, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, United Methodist Church, Presbyterian Church in America, and Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

Those who earn below the median income, and are considerably less well off than atheists and agnostics, belong to the following groups: Catholic, Churches of Christ, Southern Baptist Convention, Assemblies of God, American Baptist Churches USA, Church of God in Christ and National Baptist Convention.

The data do not support your conviction that Christians are a “privileged group.” But they do indicate that atheists and agnostics qualify as such. Could you explain why they were not listed as “privileged” groups but Christians were?

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William A. Donohue, Ph.D.

President

cc: Ronald J. Daniels, President, The Johns Hopkins University
Louis J. Forster, Chairman, Board of Trustees