

# La religion aux Etats-Unis

The USA was founded by a large community of protestant settlers, who left Europe because they were persecuted. Particularly, settlers were from Germany, Netherland, England and some French Calvinist. They wanted to avoid religious conflict and they based American thinking on religious freedom, with the creation of The Bill of Rights.

Protestantism became more attractive in several periods of American history, the first one in colonial period, the second in the 1830s, the third from 1880 to 1910 and the last started in 1970s.

American Protestantism developed the spirit to encourage the conversion or “saved” people. This Evangelicalism was born in 19<sup>th</sup>. Fundamentalism started in the early 20<sup>th</sup> to answer religious liberalism, this movement called for a strict reading of the Bible. These people put important opinions on many ideas in particular debates about same-sex weddings, abortion. Fundamentalism reached a heavy power and it is now everywhere in the media.

Americans are according an important area to religion, actually more half of the American population believe in God and they have one of the lowest rates of atheist for a western country.

## Milestones

1791 Bill of Rights  
First amendment  
1st Great  
Awakenings

The US constitution guarantees religious freedom and a free exercise of religion without discrimination. However, the separation of church and state are mysterious, the Court has limited religious practices such as the reading of the Bible in schools, but also the US president swears on the Bible. It is an interesting point which is called “common good”.

1868; 14th  
amendment  
3rd Great  
Awakening

The American society is divided in four categories (Protestant, Catholic, Jewish and Atheist), the beginning of social movements such as gay rights movements revealed the conception of a religion. Indeed many Americans are thinking religion is a question about spiritualities and not organized communities.

1970s; 4th Great  
Awakenings

Nowadays, the new challenge for Americans is religion which is brought with new immigrants. Indeed Protestantism is a part of American identity, but the new immigrants keep their religion and continue to convert. These new religions are Islam, Hinduism, and the The Roman Catholic Church. These religions are accepted with the trend of multiculturalism.

