



**SCHOLARS**  
STRATEGY NETWORK

## What Do Students' Beliefs About God Have To Do With Grades and Going to College?

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In America, the demographic circumstances of a child's birth substantially **shape academic success**. Sociologists have spent decades studying how factors beyond students' control – including the **race, wealth** and **ZIP code** of their parents – affect their educational **opportunities** and **achievement**.

But one often overlooked demographic factor is religion. The U.S. is **the most devout wealthy Western democracy**. Does a religious upbringing influence teens' academic outcomes?