

A dark teal map of Europe is the background. The text is overlaid in white. The main title is in a large, bold, sans-serif font. The subtitle is in a smaller, regular, sans-serif font.

Learning from Europe's Failure

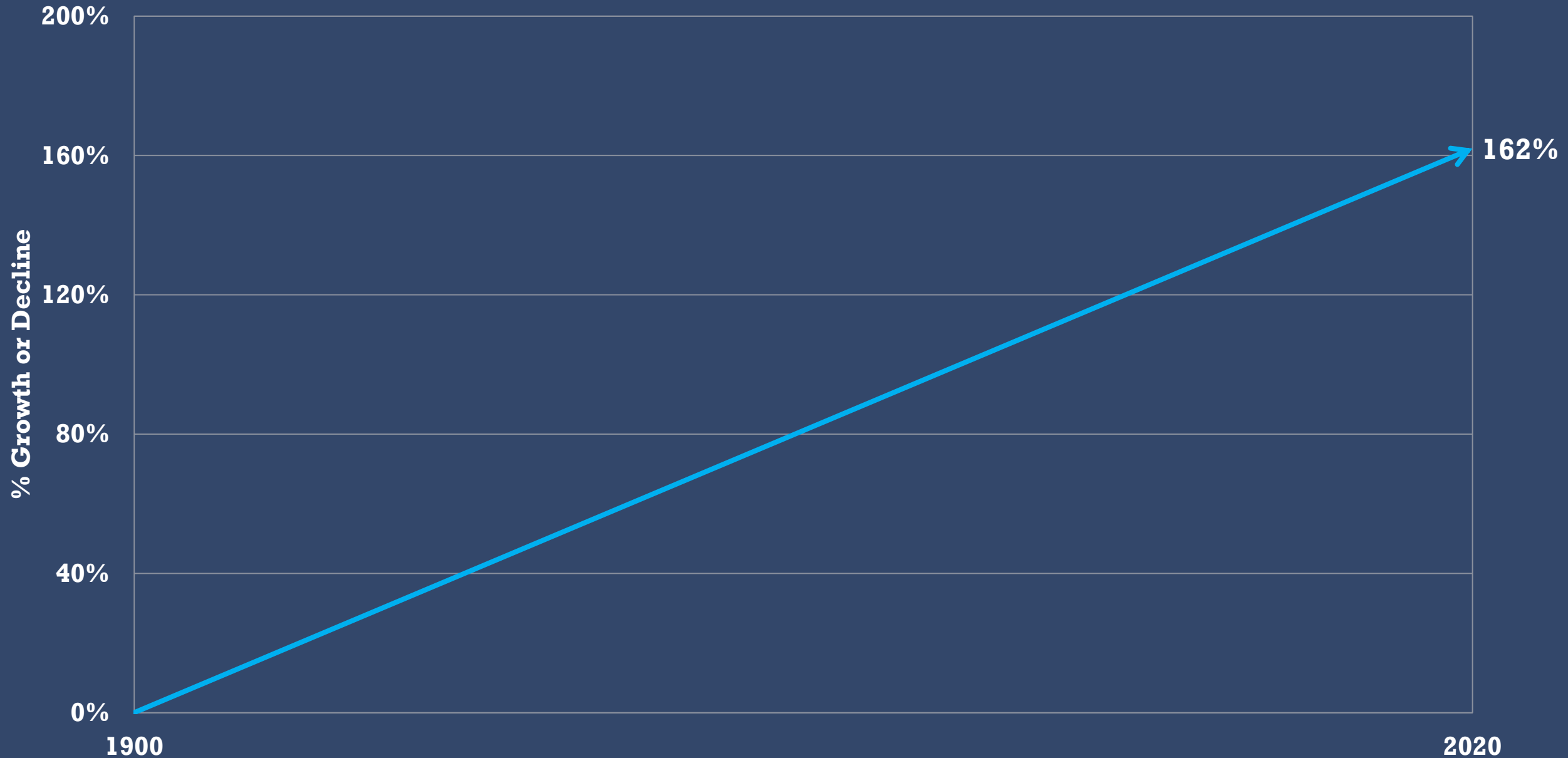
Responding to the Gospel's
Greatest Competitor

Defining Reality

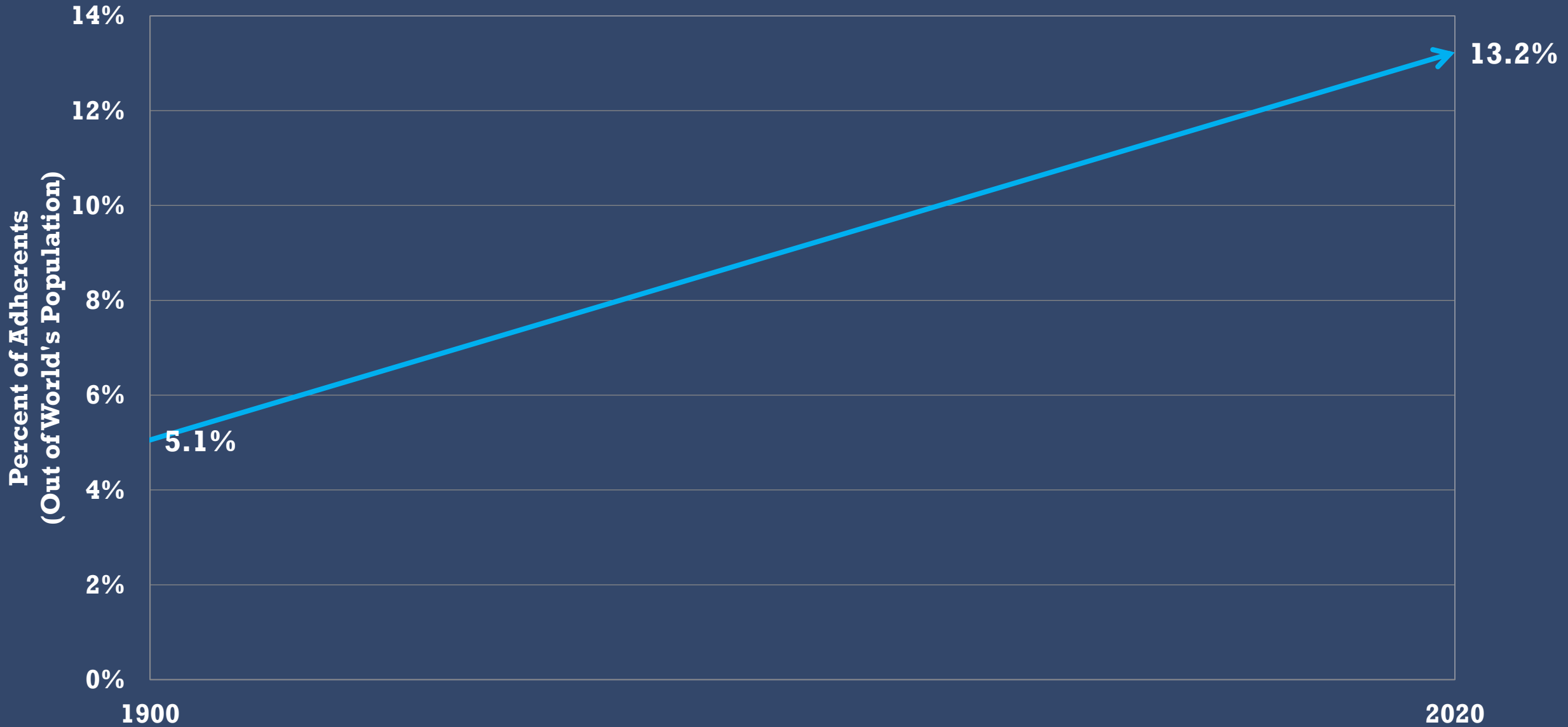


How did Dwight Eisenhower, an elderly colonel who considered resigning a few weeks before Pearl Harbor, become Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in Europe during World War II?

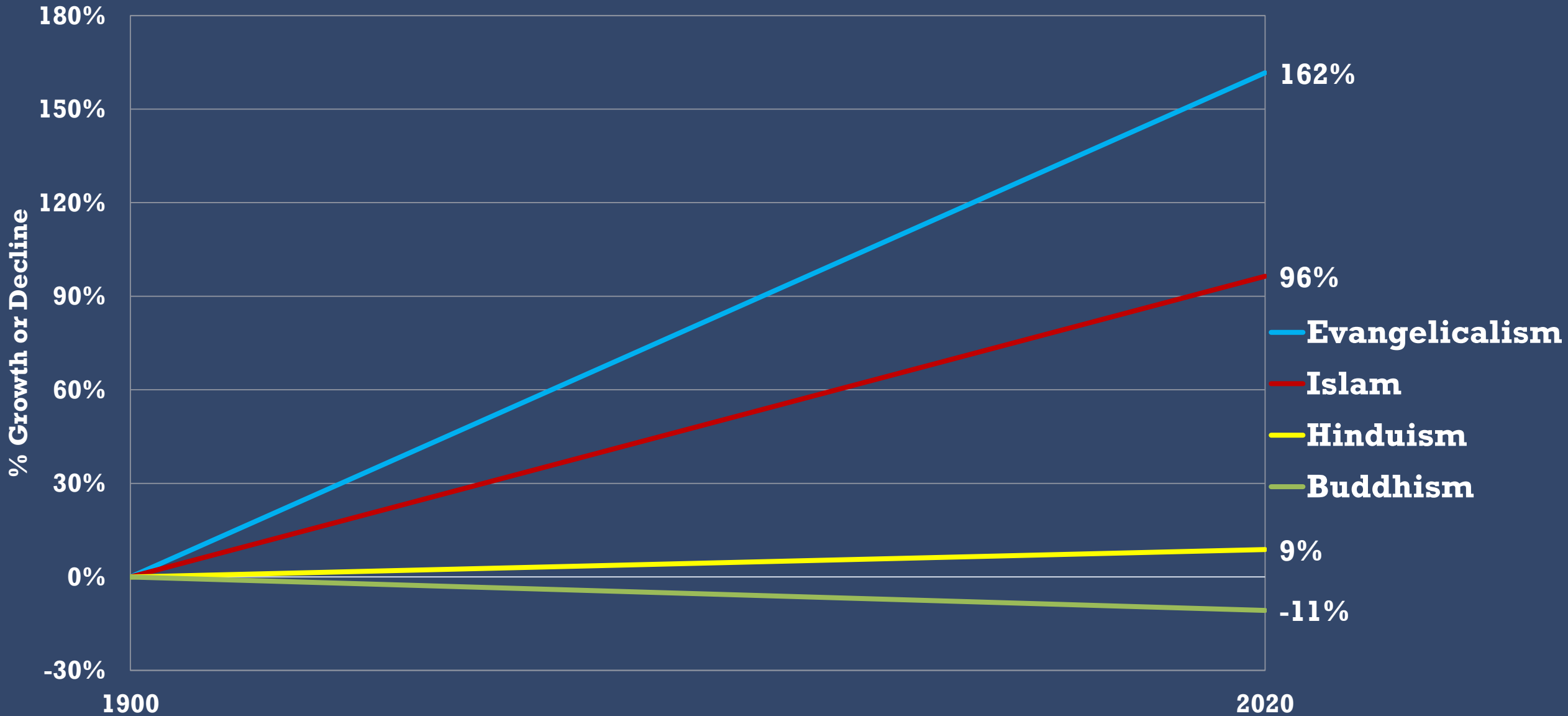
Worldwide Growth of Evangelicalism (1900-2020)



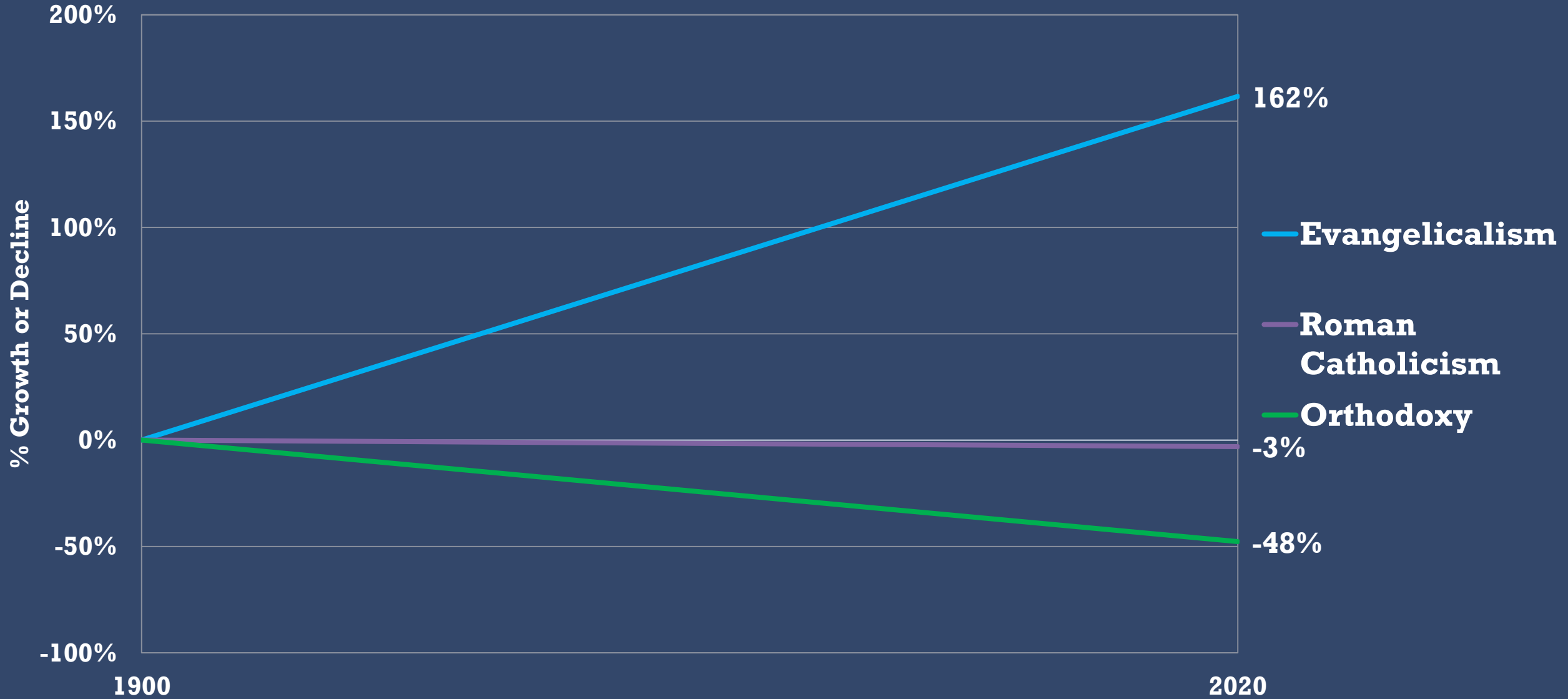
Growth of Evangelicalism in the World's Population (1900 – 2020)



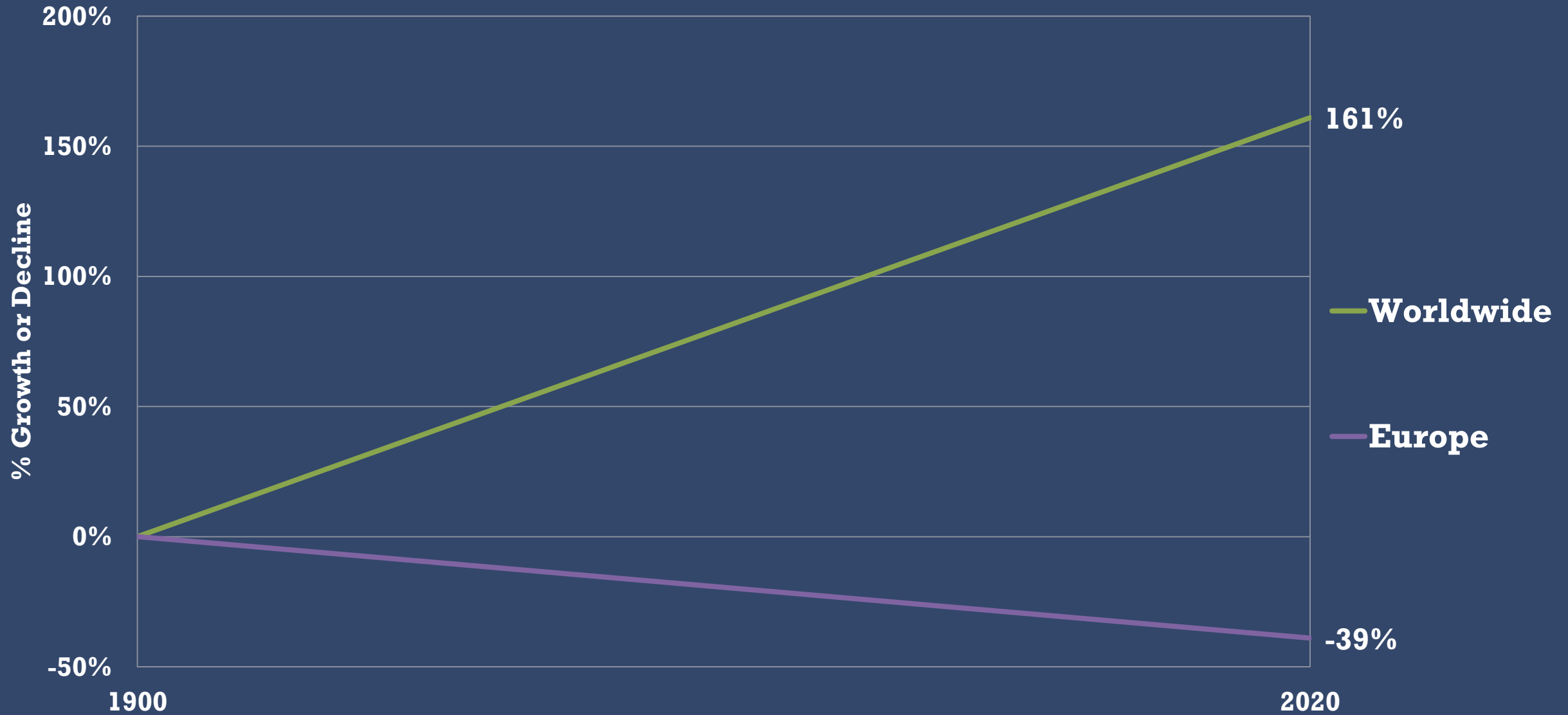
Worldwide Growth of Evangelicalism vs. Worldwide Growth and Decline of Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism (1900 – 2020)



Worldwide Growth or Decline of Evangelicalism, Roman Catholicism, and Orthodoxy (1900-2020)



Growth or Decline of Evangelicalism Worldwide and in Europe (1900-2020)

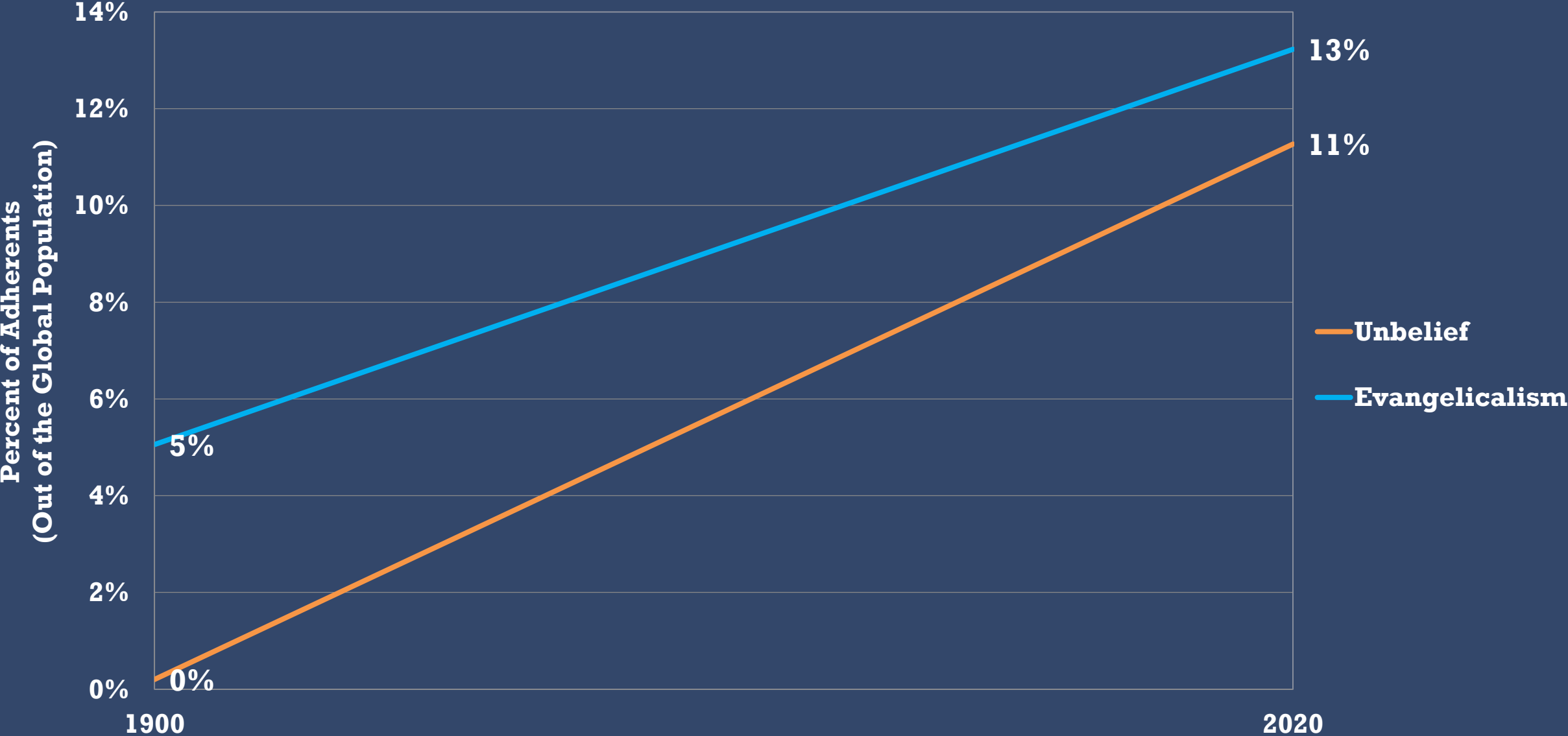


Influence of Enlightenment Thought

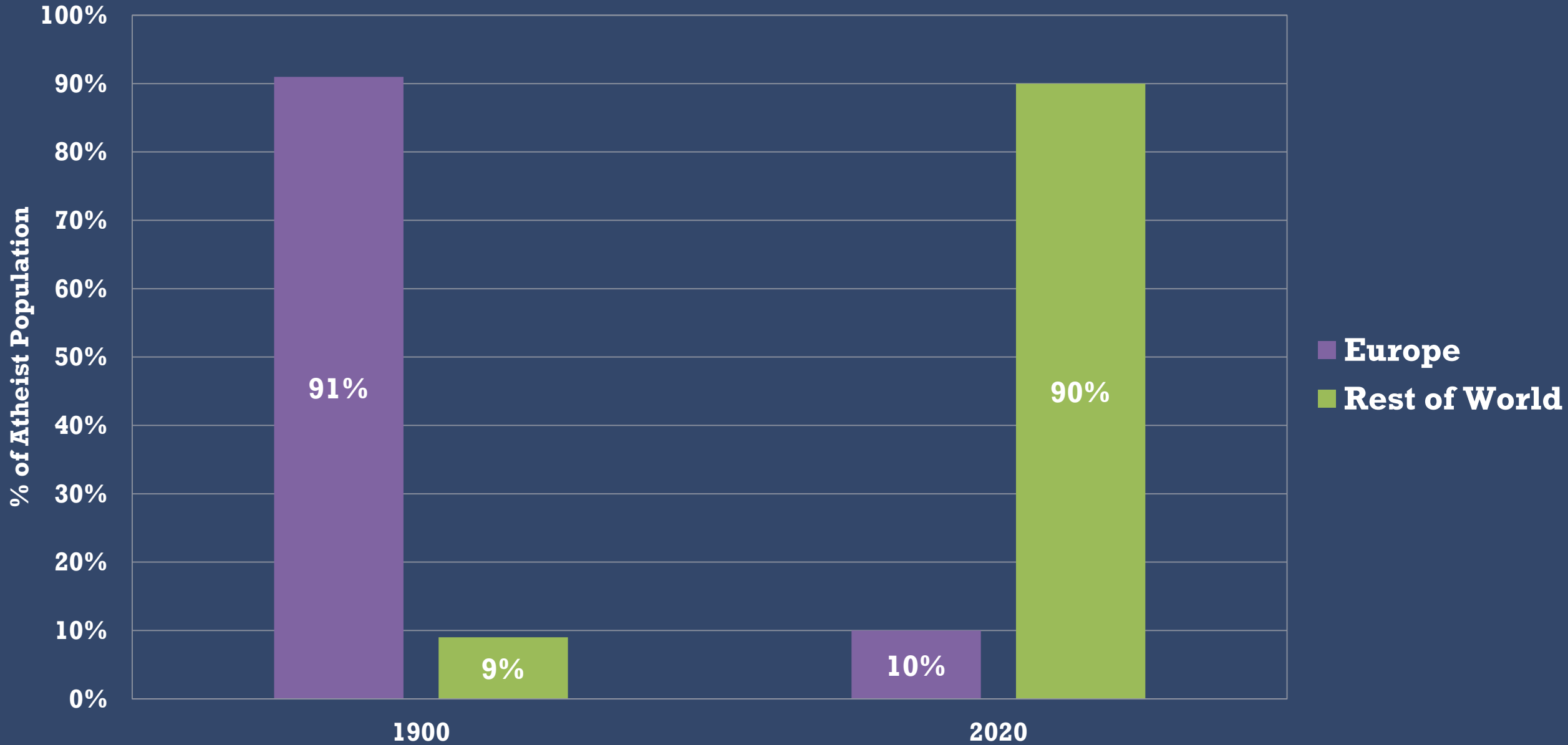
- Modern unbelief was born in the Enlightenment in the 18th century.
- It was considered impossible to know the truth about God.
- This left Christians with 3 options:
 - Convert to agnosticism or atheism
 - Conform to liberal Christianity
 - Retreat to pietism



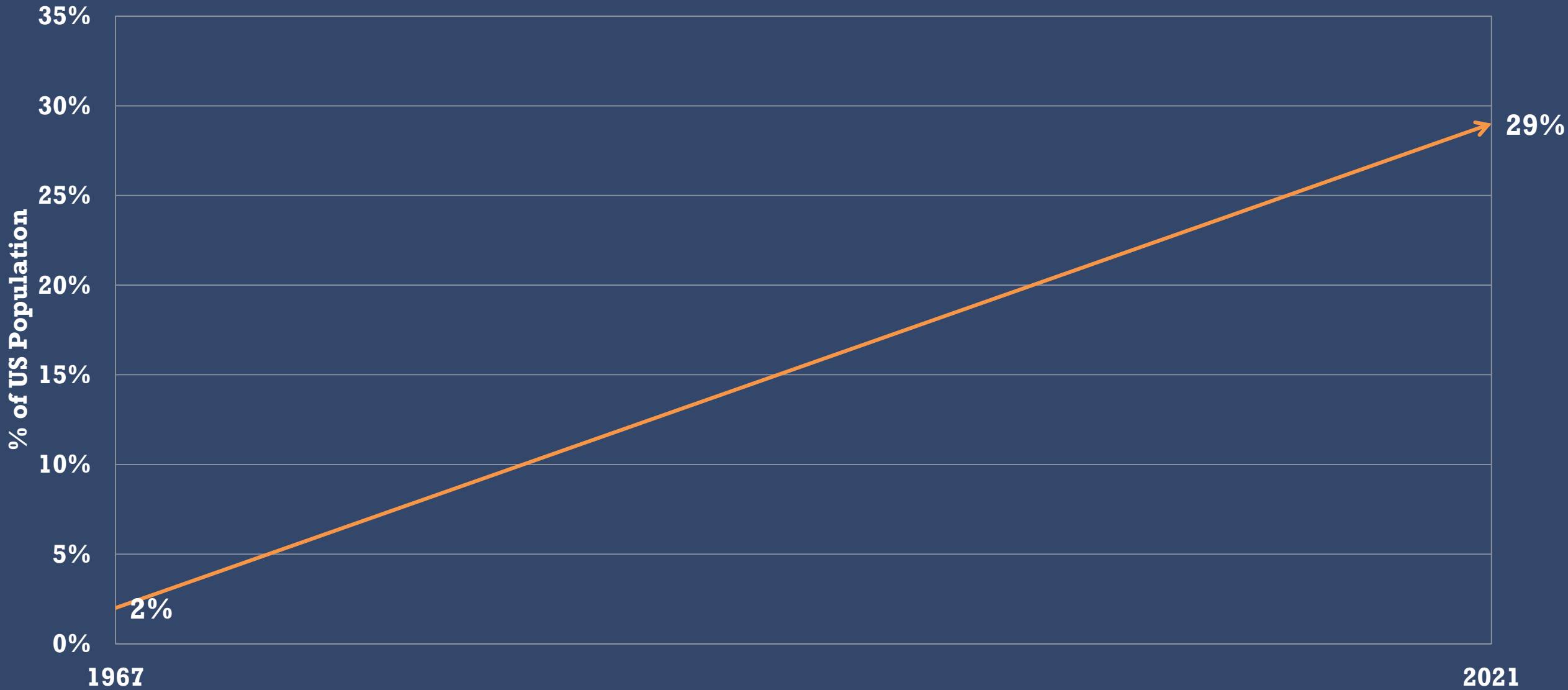
Worldwide Growth of Unbelief vs. Growth of Evangelicalism (1900-2020)



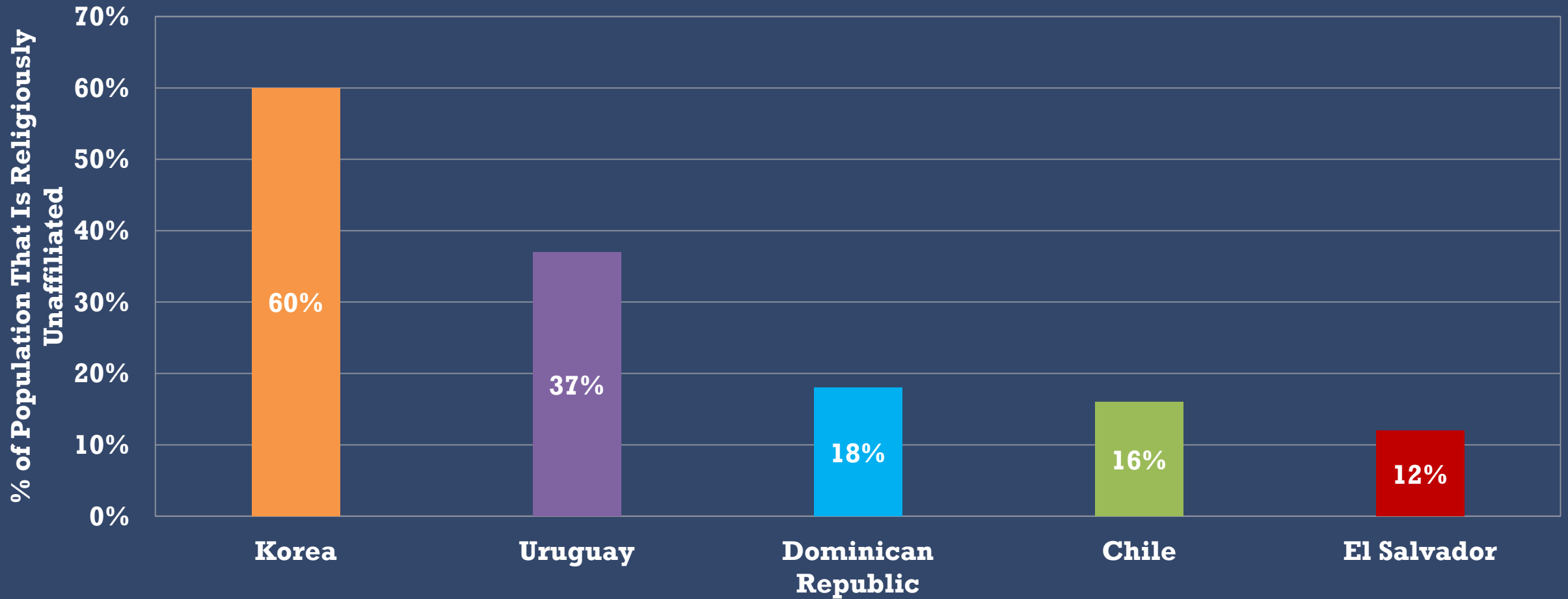
Spread of Atheism from Europe



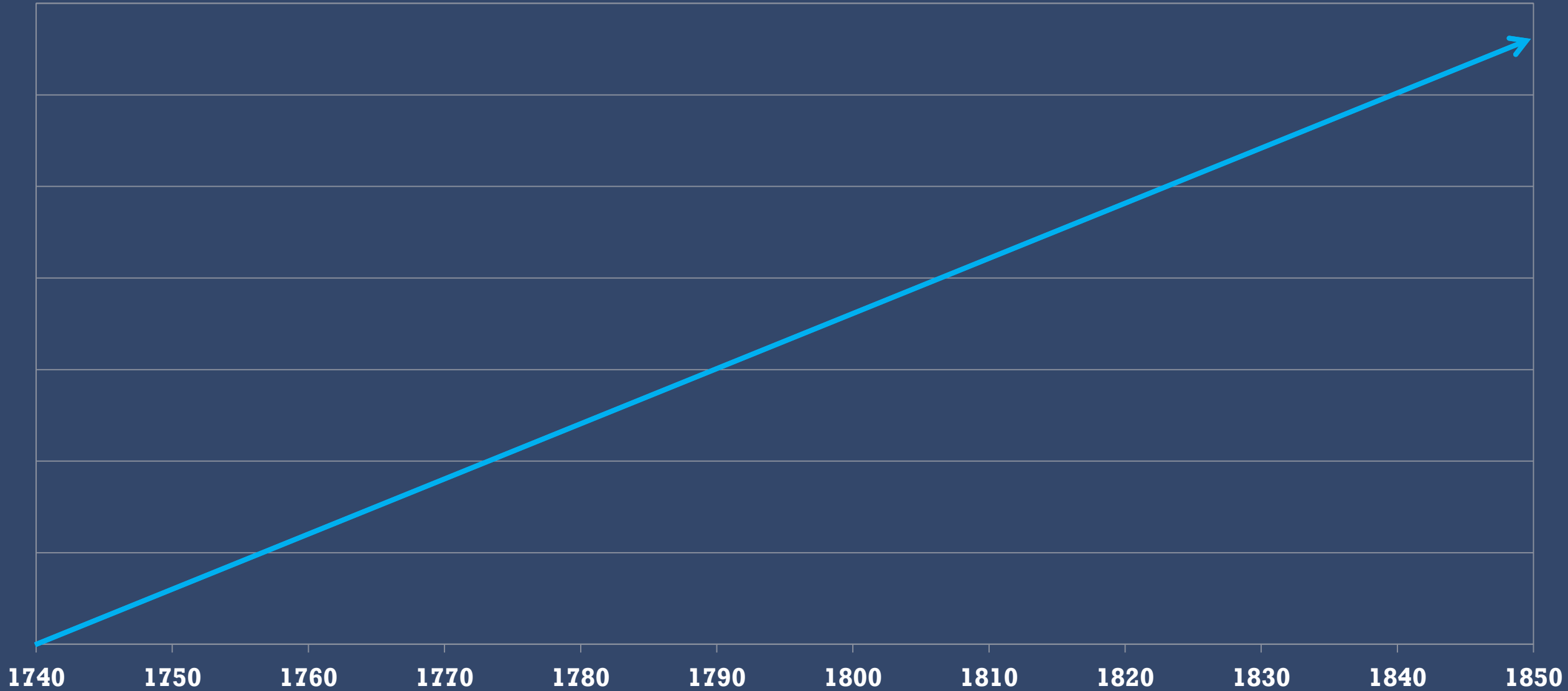
Growth in Religiously Unaffiliated in the US



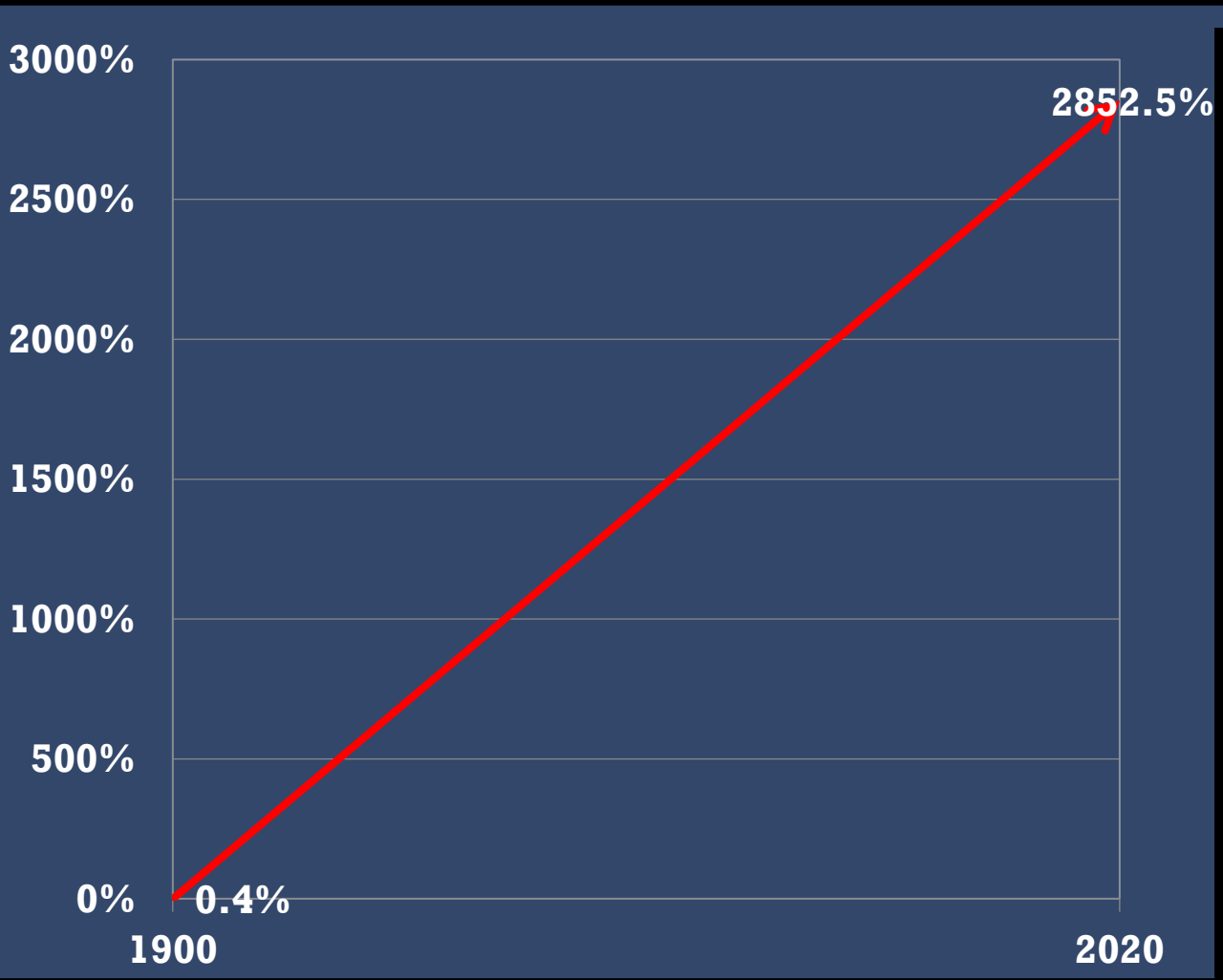
Growth of Religiously Unaffiliated in Korea and Latin America



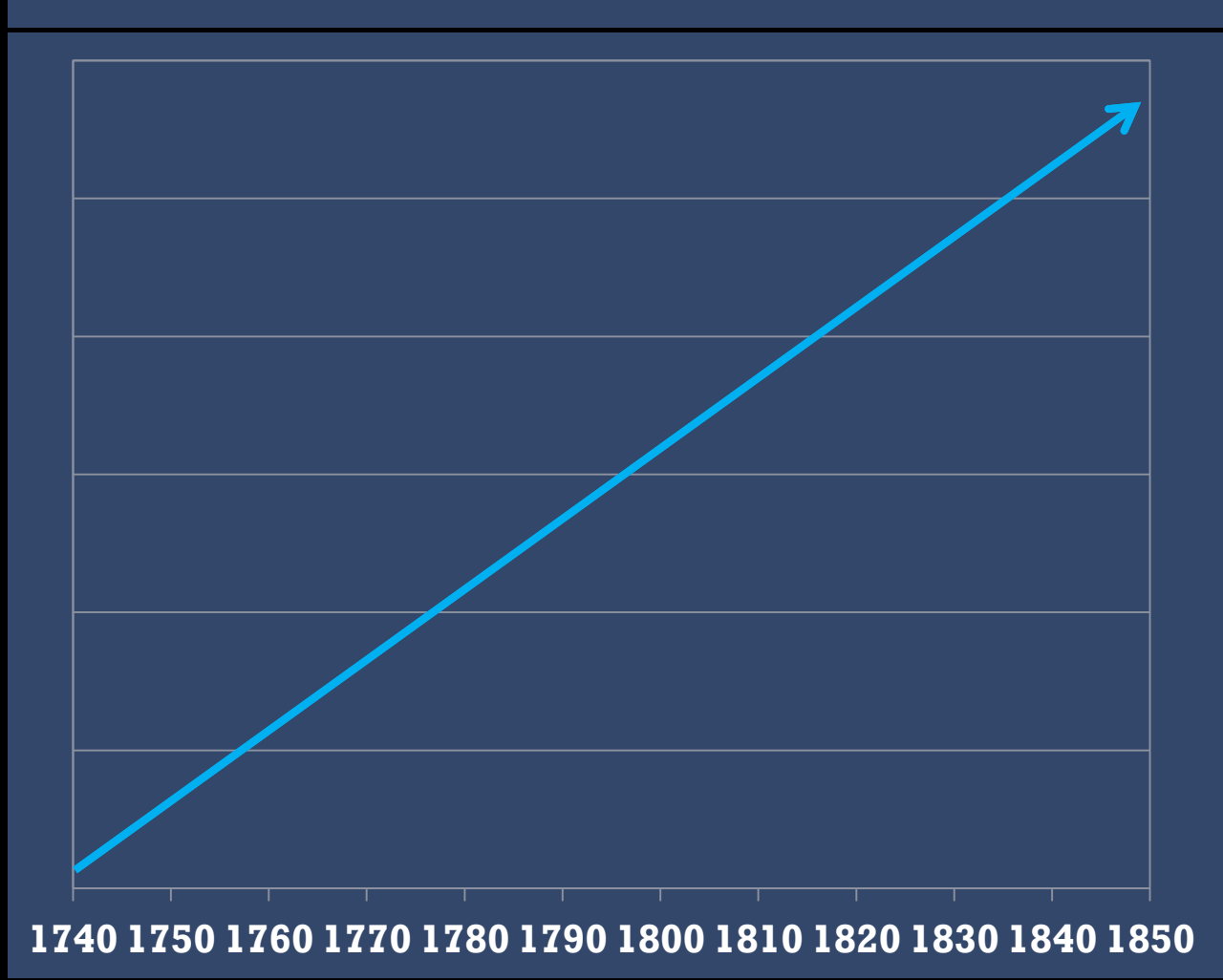
Growth of Evangelicalism during the Great Awakening in England (1740-1850)



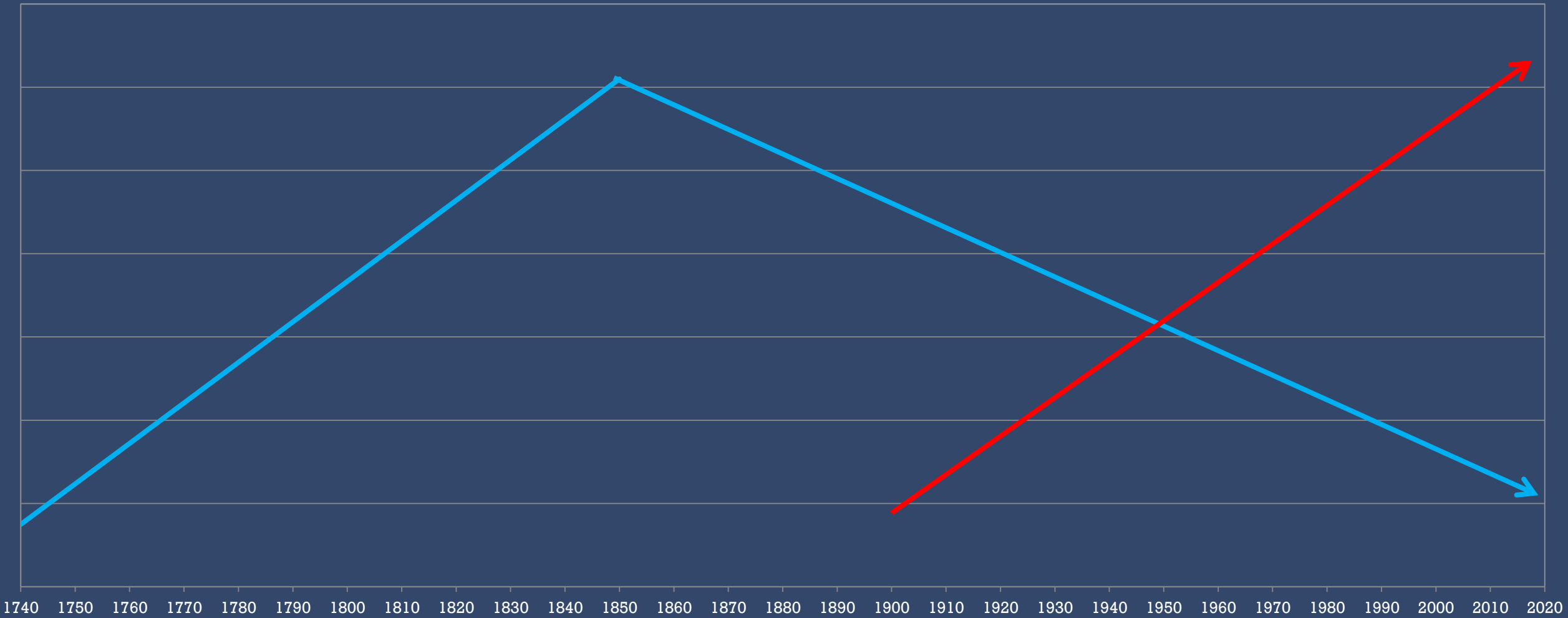
Growth of Evangelicalism in the Majority World (1900-2020)



Growth of Evangelicalism during the Great Awakening in England (1740-1850)

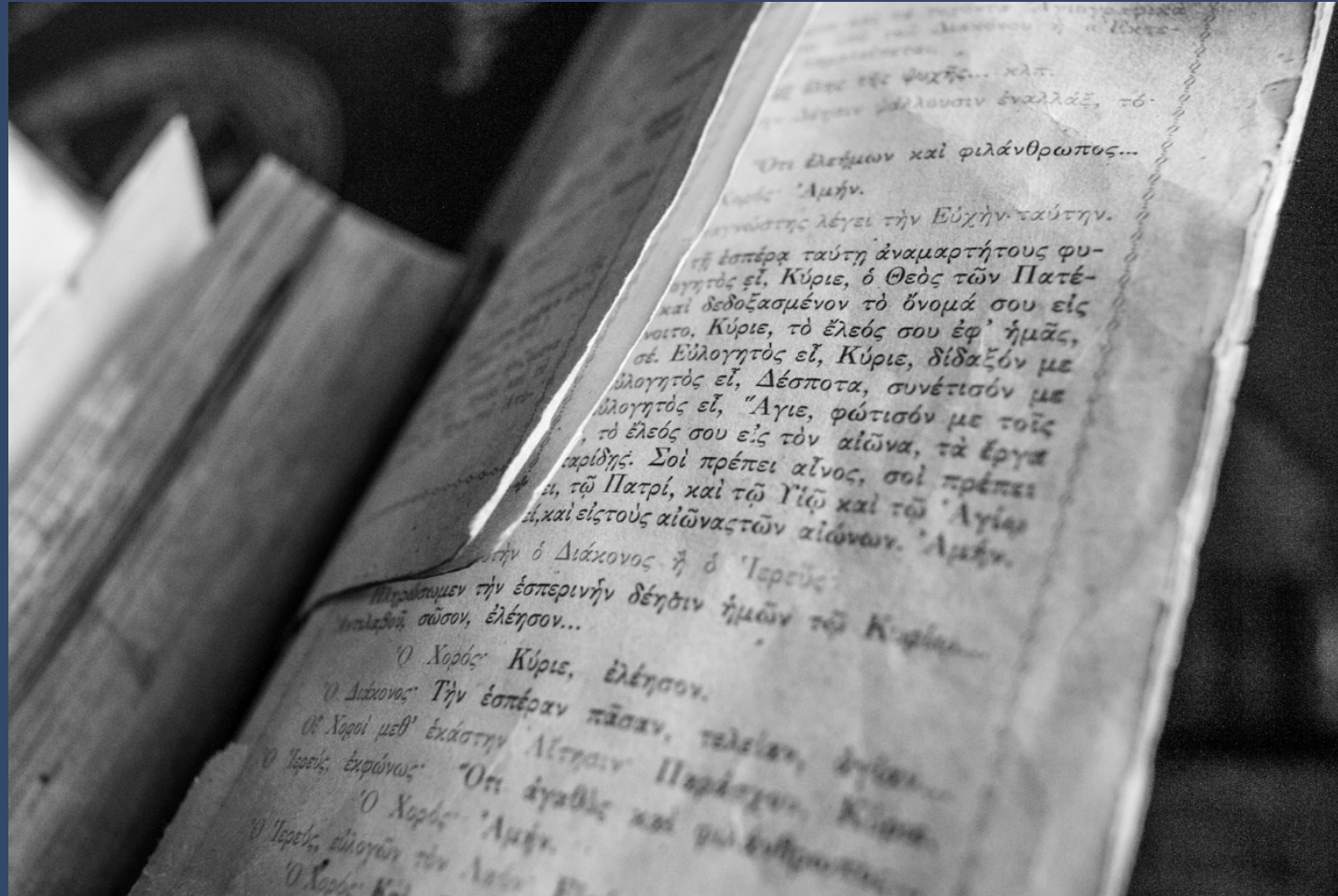


Evangelicalism in England and the Majority World (1740-2020)



Lesson 1)

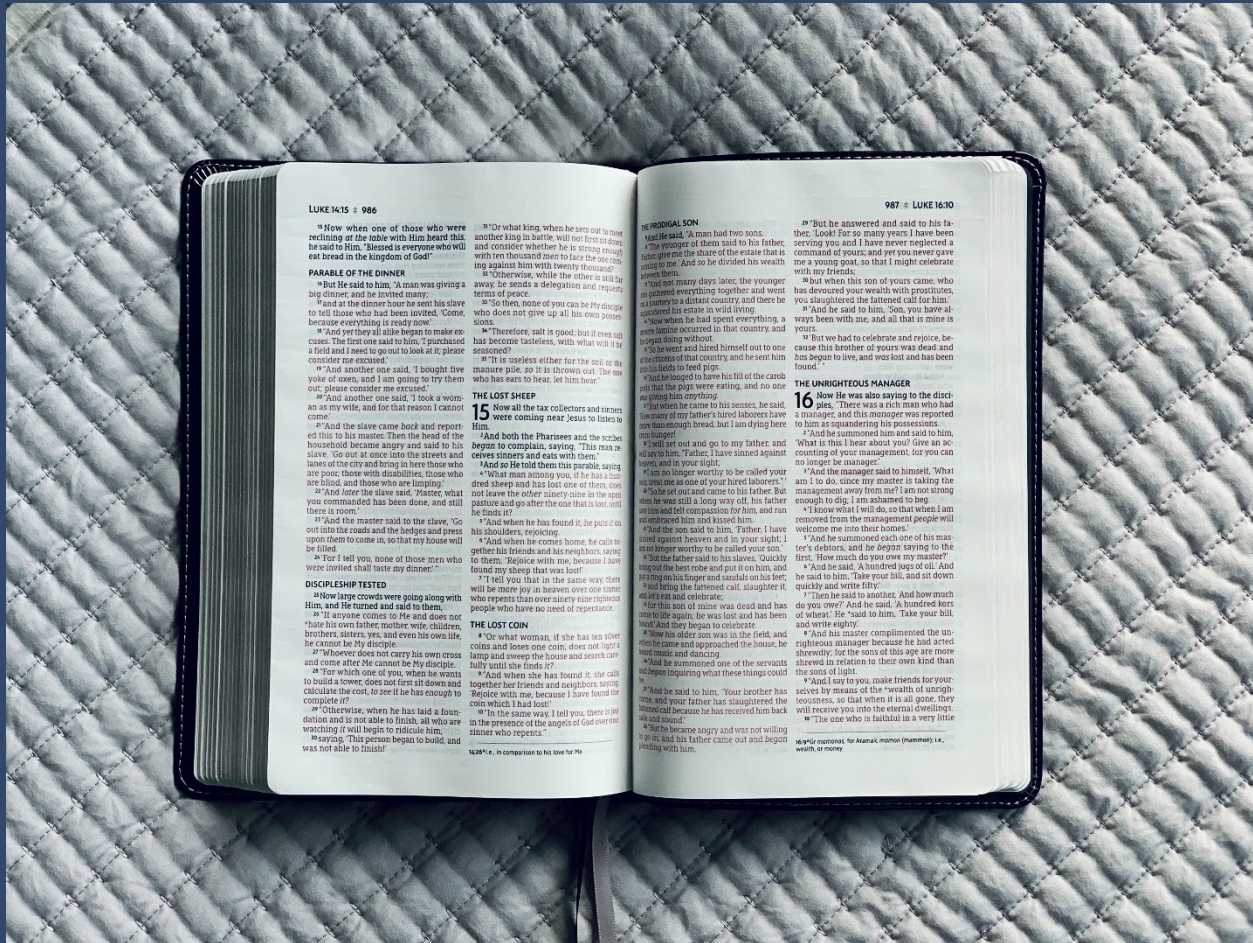
The Importance of Apologetics



Communicate the Word of Truth

- King Agrippa asked Paul, *“In a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian?”*
- Paul responded, *“Whether short or long, I would to God that not only you but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am – except for these chains.”* (Acts 26:24-29)

Lesson 2) Believers Must Maintain Clarity on the Gospel Message



The Apostle Paul wrote, “*For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*” (Ephesians 2:8-9)

The Gospel Gulf

- John Stott wrote,
- *“We are ready to co-operate with them (Roman Catholics, Orthodox or Liberal protestants) in good works of Christian compassion and social justice. It is when we are invited to evangelise with them that we find ourselves in a painful dilemma for common witness necessitates common faith, and co-operation in evangelism depends on agreement over the content of the gospel.”*

Marketing Strategy Distorts the Gospel Message

- The Apostle Paul wrote, *“For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.”* (2 Timothy 4:3-4)

Lessons 3) Believers Must Love Nonbelievers

As Jesus explained, *“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”*
(John 13:35)



Love for Others

- The church should be a place that *welcomes and attracts people to the Gospel.*
- Jesus said, “*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*” (John 3:16)

1 Peter 3:8-17

- *“Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing... Now who is there to harm you if you are eager to do what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, **always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect, having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God’s will, than for doing evil.**”*

“The Mark of the Christian”

- Francis Schaeffer wrote, *“Jesus is giving the world the right to judge if we are believers by the observable love we have for one another. Loving nonbelievers is not the responsibility of only some, but of every follower of Christ.”*

Lesson 4) Believers Must Understand Nonbelievers



Why is it important to understand each individual we share the Gospel with?

- Because there are so many different types of nonbelievers.
- Believers who effectively communicate the Gospel -- love the lost enough to try and understand them.
- Believers should first seek to understand their audience to lovingly and effectively communicate the Gospel.

Lesson 5) Believers Must Communicate the Gospel Responsively



Jesus Communicated Responsively

- New Testament scholar Walter Hollenweger explained, *“We find everywhere the same pattern: the starting point of Jesus’ evangelism is mostly (although not always) a question, or the concrete situation of the people around him... New Testament evangelism does not start from a proposition. It starts from a situation.”*

Jesus and Nicodemus

- Nicodemus affirmed Jesus: *“Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher come from God, for no one can do these signs that you do unless God is with him.”*
- Jesus said, *“Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*
- Bewildered, Nicodemus responded, *“How can a man be born when he is old?”* (John 3:1-21)

Jesus and the Samaritan Woman

- Jesus did not use the phrase “*born again.*”
- The woman was astonished “*that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria.*”
- As the author John explains, “*Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.*”
- Jesus said he was the “*living water*” and the source of “*eternal life.*” (John 4:1-38)

How Jesus Delivered Sermons

- Jesus did not deliver his message like a sermon in a typical church service.
- Jesus engaged people in two-way dialogue.
- Evangelicals need to create contexts outside the church that foster dialogue and conversation.
- Evangelicals must think creatively about what arguments show why Christianity is true and reasonable.

Lesson 6) Believers Must Identify and Deconstruct Roadblocks to the Gospel



Demolish Arguments and False Ideas

- Paul wrote, *“We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God.”* (2 Corinthians 10:5).
- Jesus often said:
 - *“You have heard it was said”* followed by *“But I say to you.”*
 - *“Woe to you scribes and Pharisees.”*

Lesson 7) Believers Must Identify with Nonbelievers



The European Director of a mission organization once told me, *“The secret that missionaries to France don’t want to tell is that we have not been successful in planting churches in France.”*

1 Corinthians 9:19-22

- Paul wrote, *“For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win more of them. To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law. To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.”*

Identify with Non-Christians

- Augustine biographer Peter Brown explained, *“This is the secret of Augustine’s enormous power as a preacher... He could identify himself sufficiently with his congregation to provoke them to identify themselves completely with himself.”*

Lesson 8) Believers Must Communicate Persuasively Why the Gospel Is True



The chief priests asked Jesus a question: *“By what authority are you doing these things?”* Jesus responded, *“I also will ask you one question, and if you tell me the answer, then I also will tell you by what authority I do these things.”* Jesus silenced His critics.

Lesson 9) Believers Must Challenge Nonbelievers to Pursue the Truth



Jesus regularly said:

“Those who have ears to hear, let them hear.”

Jesus promised, *“If anyone’s will is to do God’s will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority.”* (John 7:17)

Responsibility for Unbelief

- Jesus said, *“And if anyone will not receive you or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet when you leave that house or town. Truly, I say to you, it will be more bearable on the Day of Judgment for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town,”* (Matthew 10:14-15)
- Paul met with Jews: *“From morning till evening he expounded to them, testifying to the kingdom of God and trying to convince them about Jesus both from the Law of Moses and from the Prophets. And some were convinced by what he said, but others disbelieved.”* (Acts 28:23b-24)

Nonbelievers Need to Seek the Truth

- Proverbs says, *“Yes, if you call out for insight and raise your voice for understanding, if you seek it like silver and search for it as for hidden treasures, then you will understand the fear of the LORD and find the knowledge of God. For the LORD gives wisdom.”* (Proverbs 2:3-6a)

Lesson 10) Believers Must Resist the Temptation to Only Prioritize Evangelism



Loving God and Loving Others

- Jesus taught us that *“on these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”* (Matthew 22:40).
- If we emphasize evangelism without balancing it with the rest of biblical teaching, we create a lopsided theology that does not reflect the whole of Scripture.
- Jesus’ command to his disciples was to “make disciples,” not to “make converts.”



Questions?