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RANDOMIZING RELIGION:
THE IMPACT OF PROTESTANT EVANGELISM ON ECONOMIC OUTCOMES

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Randomizing Religion: The Impact of Protestant Evangelism on Economic Outcomes

To test the causal impact of religiosity, we conducted a randomized evaluation of an evangelical Protestant Christian values and theology education program that consisted of 15 weekly half-hour sessions. We analyze outcomes for 6,276 ultra-poor Filipino households six months after the program ended. We find significant increases in religiosity and income, no significant changes in total labor supply, assets, consumption, food security, or life

satisfaction, and a significant decrease in perceived relative economic status. Exploratory analysis suggests the program may have improved hygienic practices and increased household discord, and that the income treatment effect may operate through increasing grit.

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