



# Seventh-day Adventist® Church

NORTHERN-ASIA PACIFIC DIVISION

## Global Church Member Survey 2023



INSTITUTE of CHURCH MINISTRY

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# NSD Executive Summary

## *Introduction*

This Executive Summary highlights key findings from the study, which include:

- Respondent demographics describing the characteristics of survey participants;
- Demographic information about the participants' churches;
- Religious and spiritual behaviors of respondents;
- Members' acceptance of key fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church;
- Participants' engagement with the local church;
- The pandemic's impact on churches;
- Church members' awareness of and participation in local Adventist Church mission initiatives;
- Respondents' awareness of and participation in General Conference sponsored programming; and
- Participants' personal well-being, including psychological and spiritual, and issues regarding healing.

## *Participant and Church Demographics*

The Global Church Member Survey (GCMS) offers a snapshot of the beliefs and behaviors of NSD Adventist church members from the perspective of those who thoroughly identify as Seventh-day Adventists. Two out of five (39%) respondents joined the Church as an adult over the age of 20, and more than half (58%) of respondents have been baptized for more than 30 years. Nearly three in five (58%) are at least second-generation church members. A clear majority (94%) state that they will likely or very likely attend an Adventist Church for the rest of their lives. A quarter (27%) of respondents are currently employed by the Adventist Church.

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of participants have a college or graduate degree. One in five (18%) only completed a high school degree, and 3% of participants did not complete basic schooling. Almost half (48%) of participants attended an Adventist school at some point in their education.

Three in five (61%) participants are aged 55 or older. More than half of participants are female (53%) and married and living with their spouses (78%). Most respondents are from South Korea (46%) or Japan (44%).

These church members are typically part of households with three or more members (67%) and were raised by two biological parents (84%). Over a quarter (27%) of respondents currently have children living at home. Among the respondents with children, nearly two-thirds (63%) are raising their children in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, or at least some of their adult children are still members of the Church.

A small percentage (6%) of individuals responding to this study experience challenges with their physical, emotional, mental, cognitive, developmental, visual, or hearing abilities. Of the members with various challenges, 10% report that they sometimes or often find it more difficult to participate in church activities than other people in their church.

Participants' churches are most often located in a suburb or smaller city (43%), or a large city (39%). Over half (55%) attend services with 50 or fewer attendees, and another one in five (21%) attends church with 51–100 people. Typical church membership is less than 100 members (57%). Two in five (39%) members live near an Adventist educational institution, such as a school or university, and nearly another third (30%) reside close to an Adventist medical institution.

### *Religious and Devotional Life Practices*

Study participants maintain a devotional life by reading their Bible (78%), studying the Sabbath School lesson (67%), and reading the writings of Ellen G. White (EGW) (58%) more than once a week.

A majority (72%) of respondents pray every day (outside of mealtimes), and 27% report that they think about Jesus's life every day. Putting their reading to good use, the majority of church members report applying their learning from studying the Bible (85%), Sabbath School lessons (77%), and EGW's writings (74%) in their daily lives.

Besides engaging in individual devotions, nearly half (45%) of participants report having family worship at least weekly. However, a similar number (46%) of respondents report that they never have family worship.

Far fewer participants regularly read Adventist publications. Two-thirds (65%) of church members never read *Adventist World* magazine or access the *Adventist World* website or do so less than once a month. Three-fourths (75%) share that they never use the *Adventist Review* magazine or website or do so less than once a month. Respondents are more likely to read a magazine or newsletter from their local union or conference, with 71% reporting that they do so at least monthly. This lack of reading may be due to lack of access to these publications in their language; only 67% of respondents have access to electronic books and/or other digital publications available for free.

Similar to church members not reading Adventist publications, study participants seldom listen to Adventist radio, with 68% never tuning into an Adventist radio broadcast. The trend is similar to Adventist TV, with 43% of respondents never watching Hope Channel programming, and 57% never watching other Adventist television channels or programming.

Most (84%) respondents agree that tithing is still required of all people by God. The majority of participants engage in tithing either through the official tithe envelope (82%), distributing that 10% at their own discretion (8%), or simply placing their contributions in the offering plate (6%). Only a few (4%) report not returning tithe.

### *Social Media Use*

Two-thirds (66%) of survey participants use social media about once per week or more for a variety of purposes. The top reasons that members engage with social media include reading the Bible (62%), praying with others (48%), and sharing prayer requests and answered prayers (43%) about once per week or more often.

The respondents share positive views over the benefit of using social media, with 55% of survey participants reporting that using social media helps them feel more connected to friends and family. Also, 37% believe that social media is good for their mental health. Another 41% report that their spiritual lives are enhanced by social media use.

### *Fundamental Beliefs*

NSD GCMS participants overwhelmingly support the fundamental beliefs of the Adventist Church. The majority (96%) of participants agree that the Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs are the teaching of the Holy Scripture, and 90% believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, as a whole, reflect the loving and gracious character of God.

Respondents consistently affirm their alignment with the fundamental beliefs of the Adventist Church at levels of 70% and greater. These beliefs include those pertaining creation, Ellen White's gift of prophecy, the Sabbath, Christian behavior (including the health message), the state of the dead, and issues of marriage and the family.

However, some areas have greater variation among the respondents. Concerning the nature of humanity, two-thirds (65%) agree that "it is possible for believers to grow in Christian maturity so that in the final days of Earth's history [they] will reach a state of sinless perfection." Moreover, regarding salvation, 34% agree that they will not get to Heaven unless they obey God's law perfectly.

Regarding the definition of church unity, 44% of participants agree that "church unity means uniformity in more than doctrinal belief," while over half (54%) disagree with or are unsure about this statement. In addition, 43% of respondents agree that "different world regions of

the Adventist Church should be allowed after consultation with the worldwide church to set their own administrative policies.” Thus, there is less agreement among church members concerning the issue of church unity.

### *Engagement with the Local Church and Pandemic Involvement*

Survey participants demonstrate high levels of engagement with their local church. The involvement and affirmation include:

- 88% report attending church in person almost every week.
- 87% believe that other church members care about them.
- 84% feel that their pastor cares about them.
- 75% agree that their Sabbath School teachers care about them.
- 67% state that they are satisfied or very satisfied with their local church.

The data reveal several areas that could be strengthened in local churches. For example:

- 82% of respondents report that in the last 12 months, they *never* attended a Pathfinder meeting. (Note: this is likely attributed to the age of respondents.)
- 39% of respondents share that in the last 12 months, they attended a prayer meeting at their local church almost every week or more often.
- 42% report that in the last 12 months, they participated in a communion service at least once a quarter.
- 46% of respondents agree that youth and young adults play an important role in decision-making in their local churches.
- 44% of respondents share that in the last 12 months, they attended a small group organized through their church almost every week or more often.
- 56% agree that they attend a church that plans activities for everyone in the family.

Examining local church involvement during the pandemic, the data reveal very little difference in participants who consider themselves active participants and active leaders in their churches. Nearly three-fourths (72%) of respondents report that their church met remotely for a period of time when they could not meet face-to-face. Most members share that they were provided with a way to continue their normal pattern of giving both tithes (78%) and offerings (78%) during the pandemic.

## *Adventist Missions*

Nearly two-thirds of respondents (63%) feel that their church needs to increase its overall evangelistic outreach in the local community. A similar number (62%) respondents desire to increase their personal involvement in these efforts. In addition, it appears that the type of outreach that these church members will support is slightly more personal rather than public evangelism. Most (84%) respondents agree that “the most effective method for reaching people for Christ is to mingle with them, meet their needs, win their confidence, and then bid them to follow Christ.” Thus, it makes sense that nearly two-thirds (65%) of respondents express that their church needs to increase its overall effort to meet the local community’s needs, while about half (57%) of respondents never attended a public evangelistic meeting in their area.

The data on reclaiming former members reveal that 77% of respondents feel that their church needs to increase its efforts to reclaim former members, with similar numbers (75%) expressing the need to increase their own involvement with these efforts.

Looking at young people’s involvement in the local church’s mission, almost half (46%) of respondents agree that youth and young adults are actively involved in carrying out the mission of their local church. Thus, it makes sense that two-thirds (66%) of respondents feel that their church needs to increase the overall inclusion of young people in carrying out the mission of the local church.

## *General Conference Sponsored Programming*

Eight of the 11 General Conference initiatives polled show a member awareness rate of 50% or more. These programs include: I Will Go Strategic Focus 2020–2025, Revival and Reformation, Mission to the Cities, Comprehensive Health Ministry, 10 Days of Prayer, Annual Week of Prayer, and Global Mission. Three of these programs have a 30% or greater engagement rate: Annual Week of Prayer (51%), Total Member Involvement (37%), and 10 Days of Prayer (30%).

Most often, participants hear of the programs by reading a church publication (39%), at church (27%), or by reading a website (21%) once a month or more often in the past 12 months.

## *Personal Well-being*

Although nearly three-fourths (73%) of members report that they feel that their life is filled with meaning and purpose, two in five (42%) participants report that in the past two weeks they felt little interest or pleasure in doing things. Over a third (36%) share that they felt down, depressed, or hopeless in the previous two weeks. According to the sample data, 7% of

respondents admit that in the last 12 months, they had suicidal thoughts, 1% attempted suicide, and 1% harmed themselves.

Nearly all (93%) respondents state that they have grown spiritually in the past 12 months, and because of this growth, the same number (93%) of respondents claim to have changed their priorities. Yet, 61% feel that they are spiritually lost to some degree, and 41% have lost some important spiritual meaning that they had before.

Nearly all (98%) respondents feel that over the last 12 months they had a sense of gratitude. And 96% report spending more time thinking about spiritual questions.

The respondents are also concerned about other people's well-being, with 80% sharing that they feel a deep sense of responsibility for reducing pain and suffering in the world half the time or more often. And in response to these needs, respondents give a significant amount of time (70%) or money (6%) to help other people. Beyond the individual level of helping, 55% of respondents share that they apply their faith to political and social issues about half the time or more often.

## *Conclusions and Recommendations*

These data reflect the beliefs, practices, and experiences of Seventh-day Adventist Church members who are mature in their faith and age and central to their local congregations' functioning. These members have active devotional lives and regularly engage in personal spiritual practices, although there is a lack of reading of Adventist publications. While the perspectives of these faithful, old-guard church members are necessary, they give limited insights into the full spectrum of Adventist church members as a whole, especially younger church members and those who consider themselves Adventist believers but are more estranged from the local church.

Church members in this study affirm the fundamental beliefs of the Adventist Church. The one issue that appears unclear to some church members is human perfection and legalism, with nearly two-thirds agreeing with the statement, "Because Jesus was able to live without sinning, it is possible for believers to grow in Christian maturity so that in the final days of Earth's history, we will reach a state of sinless perfection." Also, nearly one-third agree that "they will not go to Heaven unless they obey God's law perfectly." Addressing this issue with preaching and teaching will be necessary for the congregation to have a balanced view of salvation.

Similarly, there is diversity of thought when defining and understanding church unity. Therefore, it may be beneficial to hold discussions with local church leaders about the issue of church unity and clarify how supporting unity and diversity may help congregations flourish.



Participants in this study are oriented to their local churches as noted through church attendance, church leadership, and feeling connected to and cared about by their pastor, Sabbath School leaders, and other church members. Regarding carrying out the mission of the Church, most participants agree with the need to reach their local communities, mainly through efforts based on personal and more relational rather than public and formal.

Participants are generally well aware of General Conference publications and programs; more than half of the respondents are aware of about three-quarters of the programs. Although the participation rates are not as high as the awareness rate, it seems optimistic that church members are getting information from their leadership and for the relationship between the world Church and local church in terms of providing leadership and resources to move the work of the Church forward.

Respondents in this study generally report being spiritually healthy. However, carefully considering the respondents' psychological well-being may be necessary since it yielded some ambivalent results. Despite most of them expressing their lives filled with meaning and purpose, a considerable number of respondents also report having symptoms of depression to various degrees.

The study findings support the church members' commitment to the Adventist Church, adherence to its beliefs, and faithfulness to following Christ. However, while this report encourages the leadership of the NSD that the church members in their division remain faithful to the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, it also reveals some challenges and issues that the Church would benefit from when deliberately examined and appropriately addressed.

## Methodology

### *Sample Strategy*

In preparation for data collection, the research team selected a multistage cluster random sampling approach to select survey respondents for participation for this study.

The initial phase involved translating the survey into traditional Chinese, Japanese and Korean language. To ensure linguistic fidelity, a meticulous back translation process was diligently executed, validating the accuracy of the translations.

### *Data Collection*

The secretariat office of the NSD was quite helpful in communicating with the secretaries of unions who were to facilitate the data collection from local churches via a SurveyMonkey link. While this method produced desired results with the Japanese Union, it did not yield expected outcomes from the Korean Union. A number of reminders were sent without results. Researchers also tried to use the acquaintances network, which helped somewhat in the Taiwan Conference, but the Korean Union Conference remained at the same initial number of respondents. While a total of 630 surveys were collected from the NSD unions, only 478 were included in the study after the data cleaning.

### *Data Analysis*

Researchers used descriptive methods to analyze the data. For each survey question and answer category, researchers computed frequencies and percentages showing the range of answers in the dataset.

The research team employed cross-tabulation analysis to identify possible associations and examine the differences between groups based on multiple variables. To assess the relationship between demographic and other variables, researchers used correlational analysis. The insights garnered through inferential analysis are incorporated in each section of the report.

## Demographic Characteristics

This section reviews the demographic characteristics of the individuals who completed the 2023 GCMS. The data provide an overall picture of the “typical” participant, allowing the reader to understand the context from which the survey findings come. The demographics include the country and language of the participant, gender, age, marital status, information about the household and children, participants’ health profiles, and immigration status. These results cover survey questions P1–P7, P12, and D1–D5. The charts and tables detailing these findings appear in the appendices.

### *Location, Language, Gender, Marital Status, and Age*

NSD GCMS 2022–23 respondents consist of church members from four countries/regions in East Asia. Most respondents are from South Korea (46%) or Japan (44%); 9% of respondents are from Hong Kong. The language participants used to fill out the surveys varies accordingly, with the highest percentages being Korean (47%) and Japanese (42%), and a small percentage using traditional Chinese (8%), English (1%), or Spanish (1%). For more detailed information, please see Tables P1 and P2 in Appendix 2.

In terms of gender, more than half (53%) of survey respondents are women; more men participated in this survey than in the GCMS 2017–18 (2017–18: 43%). A majority (78%) of NSD members report that they are married and living with their spouses; another 7% are widowed. Eleven percent of respondents are single/never married, and another 3% are divorced and single. Only a very small percentage of respondents report that they are married but living apart (1%).

In general, the participants are older adults. Over a third (36%) are 65 or older, and another quarter (25%) are 55–64. Thirty percent of respondents are 36–54, and 8% are 21–35. Only a small percentage (1%) are 20 or younger.

### *Household and Children*

The typical household in the NSD contains four people; a quarter (26%) of respondents live in a four-person household. Approximately 24% of respondents live in a two-person household, and 17% live in a three-person household. About a quarter (24%) of respondents live in a household with five or more people, while 9% live alone.

GCMS 2022–23 respondents were also asked how many people (including themselves) observe the Sabbath. The largest percentage (26%) of households contain four people who keep the Sabbath, while another quarter (24%) report that two people observe the Sabbath.

Households with four people report the highest percentage (71%) of all members attending, followed by three-person households (69%).

All people in the household keep the Sabbath	All people in the household keep the Sabbath	Not all people in the household keep the Sabbath	How many people live in household
1	100%		8.9%
2	69%	31%	24.2%
3	45%	55%	16.7%
4	71%	29%	25.6%
5	58%	42%	11.0%
6	33%	67%	4.4%
7+	41%	59%	6.7%
Total	63%	37%	100.0%

**Table 1. Households (D1 & D2) – NSD: Number of people living in household / number of people in household observing the Sabbath (n = 462)**

A quarter (27%) of GCMS 2022–23 respondents report that they have at least one of their biological children (either a child or teenager) living at home; in addition, 7% of respondents have at least one non-biological child (either a child or teenager) who lives with them. A greater percentage of GCMS 2017–18 respondents reported having at least one child or teenager living in their home (2017–18: 50%).

Slightly more than half (51%) are raising all their children in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, or their adult children are still members of the Church. Twelve percent of respondents have at least one child who is part of the Church but at least one who is not. Nearly two in five (18%) respondents' children are not being raised in the Church or are not still part of the Church as adults. (Note: 18% of respondents report that they do not have children.)

## *Health Profiles*

The GCMS 2023–2023 results enrich our understanding of how church members vary across physical, emotional, mental, cognitive, developmental, visual, and hearing abilities. Six percent of respondents report that they have challenges in these areas. Specifically, 1% of respondents identify as a person who is deaf. For those who report challenges or impairments, 2% report that they often find it more difficult to participate in church activities than other people in their church; another 8% report that they sometimes do so. Conversely, 14% of those who report challenges or impairments share that they rarely or never impact their ability to participate in church activities.

## Commitment to the Church

This section addresses church members' commitment to the church, including baptism, Adventist employment, and holding church offices. These variables help explain how strongly connected the respondents are to the church as an institution. This section includes survey questions P8, D6, D7, D9, and A6.

Most (95%) NSD GMCS 2022–23 respondents consider themselves to be Seventh-day Adventists (less than 2017–18: 99%), with a majority (79%) of respondents reporting that they hold a church office at their local church (greater than 2017–18: 67%). Interestingly, a slightly greater number (97%) report that they have been baptized as a member of the Adventist Church or joined the Church by profession of faith. Well over half (58%) of respondents have been baptized for 30 years or more, while an additional 16% have been baptized for 21–30 years. Thirteen percent of respondents have been baptized for 11–20 years, and 13% have been baptized for ten years or less. This survey included a greater percentage of those who have been baptized for less years than did the GCMS 2017–18 (2017–18: 30+ years – 29%; 21–30 years – 20%; 11–20 years – 21%; 6–10 years – 13%; less than 5 years – 10%).

When asked how likely it is that they will be attending an Adventist Church for the rest of their lives, most (94%) respondents feel that it is very likely (84%) or likely (10%) that they will do so. Five percent admit that they are unsure, and 2% say that it is unlikely that they will remain for life.

Over half (53%) report never being employed by the Adventist Church. Over a quarter (27%) share that they have been employed by the Adventist Church in the past but are not current employees, and 20% are currently employed by the Adventist Church. This sample included a greater percentage of those who have been or are currently employed by the Adventist Church than the GCMS 2017–18 (2017–18: Yes, but not currently – 12%; Yes, currently – 24%; No – 64%).

## Family Matters

This section examines the church members' family history with the Adventist Church, current family configuration, and parenting styles the respondents recall during their growing-up years. This section includes survey questions D6, D8, D14, and D15.

Twenty-nine percent of respondents grew up in the Church and have been connected to the Church since birth (2017–18: 17%). Another 5% grew up in the Church but left for a while before returning (one or more times). A small percentage (8%) joined the Adventist Church with their immediate family before they reached the age of 13, and another 2% joined before they reached the age of 13, even though their family did not join (2017–18: 14% joined as a child). One in five (19%) did not grow up in the Church but joined between the ages of 13 and 20 (2017–18: 14% joined as a teen), while two out of five (39%) respondents joined as an adult over the age of 20 (2017–18: 49% joined as an adult).

Over half (58%) of respondents report that at least one of their parents was an Adventist, a third (35%) report that at least one of their grandparents was an Adventist, and 16% report that at least four continuous generations of their family have been members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. However, half (50%) of respondents claim to be first-generation Adventists, and 13% share that they are unsure of their family's full history with the Adventist Church.

Most (84%) NSD respondents grew up in a family comprised of two biological/adoptive parents or other guardians. Another 9% grew up in a family with one biological/adoptive parent or other guardians, and 7% grew up in an alternate situation. When it comes to parenting style and decision-making in the household, one in five (21%) of respondents had their parent(s), guardian(s), or other authority figure(s) making decisions for them when they were teenagers. Fourteen percent of respondents report that they made decisions together with their families, and over half (55%) of respondents made decisions for themselves.

## Education

The Adventist educational system often plays a large role in church members' lives. This section notes the levels of education in general and in Adventist institutions specifically. The section draws on survey questions P9–P11.

Across the division, 3% of participants report that they did not complete basic schooling (high school or less) (2017–18: 19%). One in five (18%) participants has a high school degree but did not complete any further education (2017–18: 30%); another 9% attended vocational school. Six percent of respondents started but did not complete college. Two in five (39%) members completed college/university (2017–18: 30%), and a quarter (25%) completed graduate school (2017–18: 14%).

Nearly half (48%) of respondents attended an Adventist school at some point in their education. Fifteen percent attended Adventist elementary or primary school while living in the community, while 6% did so while living on campus. Sixteen percent attended Adventist secondary school while living in the community, and over a quarter (28%) did so while living on campus. Finally, 19% attended Adventist college or university while living in the community, while another 30% did so while living on campus. (Note: the GCMS 2017–18 showed that 40% of respondents had received no Adventist education whatsoever.)

One in five (20%) respondents reports attending 1–4 years at an Adventist school (2017–18: 25%), another quarter (23%) attended 5–8 years at an Adventist school (2017–18: 16%), and 15% attended 9–12 years at an Adventist school. Twelve percent of respondents had 13 years or more of Adventist education.

## Local Church Demographics

Just as describing the demographics of survey respondents aids in our understanding of the findings, noting the local church demographics offers insights into the types of settings in which these church members are located. This section addresses the geography of church locations, the numbers of church members and their attendance patterns, and nearby Adventist institutions. This section draws data from survey questions D10–D13.

When asked about their church's setting, two in five (39%) respondents report that their church is in a large city (2017–18: 46%), with 25% of them indicating that their church is actually downtown. Forty-three percent of respondents indicate that their church is in a suburb or smaller city (2017–18: 27%), and 18% attend church in a less populated area (15% in a town or village; 3% in a rural area) (2017–18: 26%).

Looking at attendance, over half (55%) of respondents indicate that they attend church with 50 people or less in weekly attendance (2017–18: 36%), while another 21% claim that they attend church with 51–100 people in weekly attendance (2017–18: 26%). Another 14% of respondents share that they attend church with 101–200 people (2017–18: 18%), while the remaining 10% attend church with over 200 people (2017–18: 21%).

The most typical NSD church membership in our sample is 100 people or less (57%) (2017–18: 43%). Nineteen percent attend a church with a membership of 101–200 people (2017–18: 24%). A quarter (25%) attend a church with a membership of more than 200 people (2017–18: 33%).

In 4% of churches, the actual attendance is higher than the size of the membership. A third (33%) of churches have membership and attendance in their church in the same size category. In 63% of churches, the attendance is at least one size category smaller than the official membership.

Reconfiguring the data into three church-size categories reveals that less than one out of five (16%) churches are large (151 or more people), 29% are mid-size (51–150 people), and over half (55%) are small (50 people or less).

Correlation analysis found that respondents with higher education levels tend to attend larger churches.

Thirty-nine percent of NSD GCMS 2022–23 respondents report that they live near an Adventist educational institution, such as a school or university (2017–18: 22%). Thirty percent live near an Adventist medical institution, such as a hospital or clinic (2017–18: 10%). A quarter (24%) live near a church administrative office, such as a conference, union, or division office (2017–18: 10%), and 21% live near some other Adventist institution, such as a publishing house or health food business (2017–18: 8%).



## Adventist Practices and Beliefs

This section summarizes the findings related to church members' spiritual practices, such as devotional reading, prayer, and family worship. In addition, it addresses church members' use of specific resources such as Adventist media and literature. Finally, this section explores the connection between church members' beliefs and their application in everyday life, including tithing and the use of social media. These results draw from survey questions R2–R5, A1, A2, A6, B1, and B3.

NSD survey respondents show a high level of commitment to Christ (Q48). Eight percent share that they have been committed to Christ since they were a young child and continue to be fully committed to Him now (2017–18: 18%). Over a third (37%) feel that their commitment to Christ developed gradually over a period of time and that they are fully committed to Christ now. Seventeen percent of respondents feel that their commitment to Christ came suddenly and changed them and that they are fully committed to Christ now. Sixteen percent report that they committed their lives to Christ at a specific moment, but it didn't last. However, one in five (20%) is not sure if they are committed to Christ (2017–18: 14%); 1% are not committed to Christ at all.

### *Bible and Religious Reading*

Over half (53%) of respondents report that they read their Bible every day (2017–18: 48%), a quarter (25%) read it more than once a week, and 7% read their Bible about once a week (2017–18: 12%). The remaining 15% admit that they read their Bible once a month or less often.

Three in ten (29%) GCMS 2022–23 participants report that they study the Sabbath School lesson every day (2017–18: 25%), 38% study it more than once a week (2017–18: 31%), and 26% share that they study the Sabbath School lesson about once a week (2017–18: 20%). One in ten (10%) admits that they study their Sabbath School lesson only a few times or less than once a month, and 6% never do so (2017–18: 11%).

Correlation analysis reveals that the older the respondents are, the more frequently they read the Bible or study the Sabbath School lessons.

Three in five (61%) GCMS 2022–23 respondents report reading the writings of EGW about once a week or more often. A quarter (25%) of respondents report that they read EGW once or a few times a month, and 14% never read her writings.

In addition, three quarters (74%) of respondents have access to all of the writings of EGW in a language they understand. Another 19% share that they only have access to her major works (i.e., Patriarchs and Prophets, Prophets and Kings, Desire of Ages, The Acts of the Apostles, The Great Controversy, and Steps to Christ) in a language they understand, 3%

share that they can only “sometimes” access books in a language they understand, and 2% cannot access EGW writings in a language they understand.

### *Prayer and Meditation on the Life of Jesus*

Nearly three-fourths (72%) of NSD GCMS 2022–23 respondents engage in personal prayer every day (outside of mealtimes) (2017–18: 67%). Eighteen percent report that they engage in personal prayer more than once a week or about once a week (2017–18: 23%). The remaining 10% only engage in personal prayer once or a few times a month or less often.

A quarter (27%) of NSD GCMS 2022–23 participants think about Jesus’s life every day (2017–18: 23%); in addition, 20% meditate on Jesus’s life more than once a week, and 11% do so about once a week (2017–18: 15%). A quarter (24%) do so a few times a month or less than once a month (2017–18: 28%), while 17% never do so.

Also, the older respondents are, the more often they pray or meditate on the life of Jesus.

### *Family Worship*

A third (32%) of respondents engage in daily morning or evening family worship (2017–18: 19%). Another 13% of respondents have morning or evening family worship more than once a week (9%) (2017–18: 15%) or about once a week (4%) (2017–18: 8%). Three percent have family worship once or a few times a month, and 5% have family worship less than once a month (2017–18: 16% less than once a month). Sadly, nearly half (46%) of respondents report that they never have morning or evening family worship (2017–18: 27%).

Correlation analysis found that the bigger the households are, the more frequently they have family worship.

### *Religious Literature Reading Habits*

The Adventist Church provides many different religious literature avenues for members to utilize; each of these is designed to help members’ faith grow.

In the NSD, over half (54%) of respondents share that they never read the Adventist World magazine or access the Adventist World website; another 11% do so less than once a month, while 15% do so once or a few times a month. Only one in five (21%) respondents reads the Adventist World magazine or accesses the Adventist World website about once a week or more often.

Three in five (62%) GCMS 2022–23 respondents share that they never use the Adventist Review magazine or website; 13% do so less than once a month, and 10% do so once or a few times a month. Fifteen percent of respondents use the Adventist Review magazine or website about once a week or more often.

Respondents are more likely to read a magazine or newsletter from their local union or conference. Twenty-nine percent of survey participants report that they read a magazine or newsletter from their local union or conference about once a week or more often; over a third (36%) do so once or a few times a month. However, 23% of respondents share that they engage with local union or conference publications less than once a month, and 12% never do so. Also, younger respondents are less likely to engage in these magazines or newsletters.

GCMS 2022–23 respondents were asked if they have access to Adventist publications in their own language through a variety of sources. Two-thirds (67%) have access to electronic books and/or other digital publications available for free, and 57% have access to electronic books and/or other digital publications available to be purchased. A majority (84%) have access to printed publications through their local church book center, while 91% can access printed publications at an Adventist Book Center store. Finally, 74% have access to printed publications available at major church gatherings, such as camp meetings or conferences.

Survey participants were asked how often they hear sermons on reading and sharing Adventist literature and publications. Nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents hear sermons on this topic frequently (53%) or very frequently (10%). However, a quarter (25%) report that they seldom hear sermons on reading and sharing Adventist literature and publications. Four percent report that they never hear sermons on this topic, and 8% admit that they don't know.

### *Adventist Radio and TV*

Adventist radio seems to be an underutilized resource in the NSD. Two-thirds (68%) of members report that they never listen to an Adventist radio broadcast. Another 9% report that they do so less than once a month, and 6% only do so once or a few times a month. Only 17% of respondents listen to an Adventist radio broadcast about once a week or more often.

More than two in five (43%) respondents report never watching Hope Channel programming. Seventeen percent watch it less than once a month, and another 17% do so once a month. Nearly a quarter (23%) of respondents watch Hope Channel programming about once a week or more often.

Well over half (57%) of respondents share that they never watch other Adventist television channels or programming, while 14% do so less than once a month; one in ten (10%) survey participants does so once or a few times a month. One in five (19%) respondents watches other Adventist television channels or programming about once a week or more often.

### *Applying Religion to Daily Life*

Church members report being intentional about applying their learning from studying the Bible, Sabbath School lessons, EGW writings, and from church involvement in their daily

lives. A majority (85%) of respondents agree to one degree or another that “I apply what I learn from the Bible to my daily life” (2017–18: 80%). Three-fourths (77%) of respondents agree to one degree or another that “I apply what I learn from Sabbath School lessons to my daily life” (2017–18: 73%). Again, three-fourths (74%) of respondents agree to one degree or another that “I apply what I learn from Ellen White’s writings to my daily life” (2017–18: 79%).

Slightly less than a quarter (23%) of GCMS 2022–23 respondents disagree to one degree or another with the statement, “Although I am religious, it does not affect my daily life” (2017–18: 42%). However, 10% are unsure (2017–18: 16%), and the majority (68%) agree to one degree or another with this statement (2017–18: 41%).

### *Habit of Tithing*

Most (84%) respondents agree to one extent or another that tithing is still required of all people by God. Eight percent are not sure, and 8% disagree to one degree or another. When it comes to returning tithe, most (82%) respondents share that they specify their giving as “tithe” on the giving envelope (electronic or regular), and 6% do not indicate it as tithe at the time of giving, simply placing it in the offering plate. Another 8% distribute that 10% at their own discretion, giving to entities other than formal church “tithe.” Four percent of respondents admit that they do not return tithe.

### *Use of Social Media*

GCMS 2022–23 respondents were asked if they use social media (and how often) for specific purposes. Almost half (47%) report using social media for any purpose on a daily basis (2017–18: 11%); another 14% use it more than once a week (2017–18: 8%), and 5% use it about once a week (2017–18: 9%). Five percent use it once or a few times a week, and 8% use it less than once a month. However, one in five (21%) reports that they never use social media (2017–18: 57%). Correlation analysis found that the younger the respondents are, the more frequently they use social media.

GCMS 2022–23 respondents were also asked if they use social media for a variety of purposes.

- 39% read or respond to posts by Adventist churches, organizations, and institutions about once a week or more often (2017–18: 19%), while 27% never do so (2017–18: 60%).
- 56% never read or respond to posts by other Christian churches, organizations, and institutions (2017–18: 72%), while 15% do so once a week or more often.
- 62% of respondents use social media to study their Bible about once a week or more, while only 17% never do so.

- 43% use social media to share prayer requests and answered prayers about once a week or more often, while only 31% never do so.
- 48% of respondents use social media to pray with others about once a week or more often, while 31% never do so.
- 32% of respondents use social media to learn about the life of EGW about once a week or more often, but 41% never use social media for this purpose.
- 45% of respondents use social media to read and connect with the writings of EGW about once a week or more often, while only 29% never do so.
- 41% of respondents use social media to help advance the mission of the Adventist Church about once a week or more often; however, 34% never do so.
- 32% of respondents use social media to learn about religious topics that their pastors or Sabbath School teachers have not talked about once a week or more often, while 45% never do so.
- 30% of respondents use social media to share Bible studies with family, friends, or other people in their social network about once a week or more often. Conversely, 47% do so less than once a month.
- 64% of respondents use social media to attend church about once a week or more often, while 31% do so less than once a month.
- 30% of respondents use social media to worship with other believers (outside of a church service) about once a week or more. Well over half (56%) never use social media to worship with other believers (outside of a church service). Correlation analysis found that the higher the respondents' education levels, the more frequently they use social media for this purpose.

The GCMS 2022–23 also assessed how NSD members feel about social media usage.

- Seven in ten respondents (71%) share that they never use social media as a distraction from other activities that they should be doing, while 15% admit that they experience social media as a distraction weekly or more often. In addition, those who are younger are more likely to believe that using social media interferes with their daily tasks.
- 21% of respondents disagree with the statement, “When I use social media, it is good for my mental health,” while a higher percentage (37%) agree that social media is good for mental health. (Note: 17% report not using social media.)

- 20% of survey participants disagree with the statement, “When I use social media, it is good for my spiritual well-being.” However, 41% believe social media is good for their spiritual well-being. (Note: 15% report not using social media.)
- 55% of survey participants agree with the statement, “When I use social media, I feel more connected to friends and family,” while only 12% of respondents disagree. (Note: 14% report not using social media.)
- 62% of respondents disagree with the statement, “When I use social media, I often respond in anger to people online.” However, 5% admit that this is true. (Note: 24% report not using social media.)
- 37% of respondents disagree with the statement, “When I use social media, I have been hurt by other people’s words,” while 29% have been hurt by others’ words on social media. (Note: 19% report not using social media.)
- 37% of respondents disagree with the statement, “When I use social media, I find it hard to stop when I need to.” However, 24% do find it hard to stop when they need to. (Note: 20% report not using social media.)
- 29% of survey participants agree with the statement, “When I cannot use social media, I feel like I am missing out on what is happening.” Seventeen percent of respondents are not sure, while 37% of respondents disagree with this statement. (Note: 16% report not using social media.)

## Fundamental Beliefs

This section explores the findings regarding church members' endorsement of the fundamental beliefs of the Seventh-day Adventist Church and reveals to what extent study respondents support the Church's official belief statements. This section addresses survey questions A9, B1, B3, B4, B6, and H1–H6.

Overall, a majority (96%) of NSD GCMS 2022–23 participants agree that the Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs are the teaching of the Holy Scripture; only a small percentage are unsure (3%). Most (90%) also believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs, as a whole, reflect the loving and gracious character of God (2017–18: 95%). Only a few respondents are not sure (8%) or disagree (2%).

### *The Bible, God, and Humanity*

Well over half (57%) of survey participants believe that the Bible is the work of people who were inspired by God and who, though expressing their message in terms of their own time and place, expressed eternal truths (2017–18: 64%). Another one in five (21%) believes that the Bible is the work of people who were inspired by God and who represented God's message in terms of their own place and time. Nine percent believe that the Bible is the work of people who copied what God told them word for word, and who wrote without being influenced by their own place and time (2017–18: 5%), while another 8% believe that the Bible is the work of people who genuinely loved God and who wanted to share their understanding of God's activity in the world. Four percent agree that the Bible contains no more truth or wisdom than the religious books of other world religions.

Most (88%) GCMS 2022–23 respondents wholeheartedly believe in the Triune God (i.e., one God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, a unity of three eternal, equal Persons). Another 10% accept this teaching because the Church teaches it. Two thirds (64%) of respondents disagree with the statement “the Holy Spirit is God's power in the world, not a Person”; however, 14% remain unsure, and almost a quarter (23%) agree. In addition, people who attend smaller churches and have less education are likely to agree with this assertion more. Almost all (94%) respondents also believe in a personal God who seeks a relationship with human beings. Four percent are unsure, and only a small percentage (2%) disagree.

A majority (85%) of respondents believe that they are loved by God, even when they sin. However, 7% are unsure, and 7% disagree.

### Creation

When it comes to beliefs on Creation, almost all (96%) GCMS 2022–23 respondents believe that God created the world in six literal days in the relatively recent past (2017–18: 85%). Four percent admit that they are unsure.

GCMS 2022–23 participants are even more certain that God created the universe; 98% of respondents agree with this statement.

### **Nature of Humanity**

Two-thirds (65%) of respondents agree with the statement, “Because Jesus was able to live without sinning, it is possible for believers to grow in Christian maturity so that in the final days of Earth’s history, we will reach a state of sinless perfection.” Another 17% are unsure, and the remaining 18% disagree with this statement.

Participants were also asked to respond to the statement, “People have a certain amount of faith, and they really cannot do much to change it.” Sixty-five percent of respondents disagree with this statement. However, nearly a quarter (22%) of respondents admit that they are not sure, and the remaining 14% of respondents agree that people have a certain amount of faith, and they really cannot do much to change it.

### *Salvation*

Almost all (98%) NSD GCMS 2022–23 respondents believe that salvation is through Jesus Christ alone. When members were asked to respond to the statement, “Only people who accept Jesus as their personal Savior can go to Heaven,” 70% survey participants agree with this statement (13% are unsure; 17% disagree). A majority (80%) of respondents agree that the reason that good works are done is as a result of being saved by grace (10% unsure; 10% disagree).

However, there is less agreement when members were asked about other questions regarding salvation. Most interestingly, a third (34%) of respondents agree that they will not get to Heaven unless they obey God’s law perfectly (2017–18: 45%). Sixteen percent of respondents are unsure, and half (50%) of respondents disagree (2017–18: 41%).

Moreover, while seven in ten (70%) survey participants agree with this statement, “Only people who accept Jesus as their personal Savior can go to Heaven,” 13% are unsure, and 17% disagree. Almost half (48%) of respondents disagree that “in order to receive God’s grace, I must first live by His rules.” However, 12% are unsure, and 40% agree that they must first live by God’s rules in order to receive His grace. Most (92%) respondents agree that “I am saved the moment I believe and accept what Jesus has done for me” (2017–18: 79%). However, 4% are unsure (2017–18: 9%), and 5% disagree (2017–18: 12%), implying that they feel there is something they must do to earn or achieve salvation. Half (53%) of participants disagree with the statement, “The more that I follow Adventist health and lifestyle standards, the more likely I will be saved.” However, 17% are unsure (2017–18: 21%), and 30% agree that their salvation is somehow linked to their adherence to Adventist health and lifestyle standards.



In addition, the more educated the respondents, the closer they are to the Church's beliefs on some of these issues about salvation.

When members were asked how often they hear sermons on the topic of righteousness by faith, four in five (82%) report that they hear sermons on this topic very frequently (16%) (2017–18: 32%) or frequently (66%) (2017–18: 55%).

## *Church*

Most (98%) NSD respondents agree that Christ is the head of the church (Q57.13). They also agree (96%) that all believers are called by God to serve each other without distinction of race, culture, education, nationality, gender, or wealth.

### **Church Unity**

Forty-four percent of GCMS 2022–23 participants agree that “church unity means uniformity in more than doctrinal belief” (2017–18: 68%), while 30% disagree with this statement (2017–18: 20%).

Two in five (43%) respondents agree that “different world regions of the Adventist Church should be allowed after consultation with the worldwide church to set their own administrative policies” (2017–18: 63%). However, over a third (36%) are unsure (2017–18: 23%), and 20% disagree (2017–18: 15%).

### **Adventist Exclusivity**

Most (93%) NSD respondents agree that “the Seventh-day Adventist Church is God's true last-day church with a message to prepare the world for the Second Coming of Christ by proclaiming the Three Angels' Message.”

GCMS 2022–23 participants also report the frequency with which they hear sermons on exclusively Adventist topics:

- 68% of respondents frequently or very frequently hear sermons on Daniel and Revelation. A quarter (24%) seldom hear sermons on this topic, and 3% report that they never do so.
- 75% of respondents frequently or very frequently hear sermons on the Three Angels' Messages. Seventeen percent report that they seldom hear sermons on this topic, and 2% share that they never do.
- 76% of respondents frequently or very frequently hear sermons on the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Sixteen percent report that they seldom hear sermons on this topic, while 3% never do.

## *Ellen G. White and the Gift of Prophecy*

Most (91%) NSD GCMS 2022–23 respondents agree that Ellen White’s writings were the result of the spiritual gift of prophecy. Seven percent of respondents share that they are not sure, while 2% disagree. Almost three-fourths (72%) of respondents wholeheartedly embrace the idea that Ellen G. White was a prophet (2017–18: 76%). Another 21% accept her as a prophet because the Adventist Church teaches it. Four percent admit that they have some questions.

Three-fourths (74%) of NSD GCMS 2022–23 participants believe that “Ellen G. White was inspired by God, and though she presented God’s message in terms of her own place and time, she expressed eternal truths in harmony with and pointing to the Bible.” Twelve percent of respondents believe that “Ellen G. White was inspired by God and presented God’s message in terms of her own place and time.” Nine percent agree that “Ellen G. White copied what God told her word for word and wrote without being influenced by her own place and time” (2017–18: 22%). Another 2% believe that “Ellen G. White was a person who created stories of supernatural guidance in order to explain the mysteries of life. Her writings contain a great deal of wisdom about the human experience.”

Three-fourths (74%) of respondents report that they frequently/very frequently hear sermons on the topic of the Spirit of Prophecy (2017–18: 84%). Sixteen percent share that they seldom hear sermons on this topic (2017–18: 11%), and 3% never do so. (Note: 8% share that they do not know.)

## *Christian Living*

### **Sabbath Keeping**

The results on Sabbath keeping reveal a clear pattern of agreement among survey respondents. Almost all (98%) respondents agree that the true Sabbath is the seventh day (Saturday). Most (85%) respondents also agree that when they keep the Sabbath faithfully, they cope better with the stresses of the week (2017–18: 89%). Ninety percent of respondents agree that they keep the Sabbath not because it is something they have to do but because it is part of who they are (2017–18: 95%).

A majority (82%) of respondents report that they hear sermons on the topic of the Sabbath frequently or very frequently (2017–18: 91%). However, 12% share that they seldom hear sermons on this important topic (2017–18: 6%), and 2% never do so. (Note: 4% share that they do not know.)

### **Health - Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs**

Almost all (93%) respondents agree that “God wants me to take care of my body by avoiding alcohol, tobacco, and the irresponsible use of other drugs” (2017–18: 97%). There is also strong agreement (94%) with the statement, “My body is the temple of the Holy Spirit.”

Accordingly, 83% of respondents wholeheartedly agree that Adventists should abstain from alcohol, tobacco, and the irresponsible use of drugs.

When asked how often in the last 12 months they have used alcohol, tobacco, and drugs:

- 85% never used alcohol.
- 99% never used tobacco products.
- 100% report that they never used marijuana products.
- 97% of respondents report that they never used opiates without a prescription.

Respondents were also asked about their understanding of scientific research on alcohol consumption (Q65). Most (83%) respondents believe that, overall, there is no safe level of alcohol use (2017–18: 72%). Six percent believe that alcohol, in moderation (i.e., 1–2 drinks a day), does not do much harm. A smaller percentage (3%) believe that alcohol, in moderation (i.e., 1–2 drinks a day), actually promotes health and is safe to use. However, 8% admit that they are not sure (2017–18: 18%).

### Health - Diet

Seventy percent of NSD respondents believe wholeheartedly that Adventists should eat a healthful diet and abstain from unclean foods identified in Scripture (2017–18: 82%). Correlation analysis reveals that the bigger the church the respondents attend, the stronger they believe that Adventists should adhere to a diet based on the Scripture.

When respondents were asked about the type of diet they eat:

- 2% maintain a vegan diet (2017–18: 6%).
- 18% are vegetarians who eat eggs and dairy products (lacto ovo). According to crosstabulation analysis, individuals with graduate degrees are more likely to identify as vegetarians.
- 14% are pescatarian (i.e., they include fish in their diet but no other meat) (2017–18: 22%).
- 39% eat meat once a week or less (2017–18: 32%).
- 18% eat meat a few times a week (2017–18: 14%).
- 8% eat meat most days.

### Health Message

Half (50%) of NSD GCMS 2022–23 respondents are very familiar with the Adventist health message while another 40% are somewhat familiar with it. A majority (82%) follow the Adventist health message a great deal (34%) or a moderate amount (48%). According to

correlation research, persons with longer church membership and higher Adventist education are more familiar with the Adventist health message. In addition, the more formally educated the respondents, the more seriously they apply the message to their daily lives.

A majority (80%) of NSD respondents agree/strongly agree that “the Health Message is a core part of Seventh-day Adventist belief that cannot be questioned” (2017–18: 89%) while 10% disagree to one degree or another (2017–18: 5%).

Most (83%) NSD respondents agree that “following the Health Message increases the probability that a person will live longer” (2017–18: 91%), and 80% agree that the Adventist health message has largely been supported by scientific discoveries (2017–18: 87%).

However, 53% agree that “I can choose which parts of the Health Message to follow and which to ignore” (2017–18: 44%), with 32% disagreeing with the statement (2017–18: 40%).

Half (50%) of respondents disagree that “following the health message ensures my salvation,” while another 26% hold a legalistic view, agreeing that following the health message does, indeed, ensure their salvation. A majority (85%) of NSD survey participants agree that “The Adventist health message emphasizes physical health (e.g., diet, exercise), mental health, emotional well-being, social support, and relationships as a part of spiritual growth” (2017–18: 91%).

NSD GCMS 2022–23 respondents were asked how often they hear Sabbath sermons on the topic of wholistic, healthful living (the importance of health for the body, mind, spirit, and social relationships). Seventy-one percent of respondents hear such sermons very frequently (12%) (2017–18: 28%) or frequently (59%) (2017–18: 55%).

## Marriage

A vast majority (91%) of respondents agree that “the Bible teaches that sexual intercourse should be exclusively reserved for marriage.” Six percent are unsure, and the remaining 3% disagree, indicating that there is a time and place where premarital sex is acceptable.

Similarly, 92% of respondents agree that “the Bible teaches that marriage is a union between an adult man and an adult woman” (2017–18: 97%); 6% are unsure, and another 2% disagree.

## *Eschatological Beliefs*

### Sanctuary

Most (88%) respondents agree that the sanctuary doctrine is vital to Adventist theology. However, 10% are unsure, and 2% disagree with the vitalness of this doctrine. Two thirds (65%) of respondents wholeheartedly accept the biblical teaching of the investigative pre-Advent judgment that began in 1844 (2017–18: 69%); another 24% accept this because the

Church teaches it. However, 8% share that they have questions about this doctrine, and 1% do not accept it at all.

A majority (84%) of NSD survey participants wholeheartedly believe that Christ is acting as our advocate before God in the heavenly sanctuary right now. Seventy percent of respondents wholeheartedly agree that before Christ returns, God will decide who is to be saved and who will be eternally lost. Sixty percent of members report that they hear sermons on the topic of the sanctuary very frequently (12%) (2017–18: 18%) or frequently (48%).

### **Second Coming of Jesus**

Seventy percent of NSD respondents wholeheartedly accept the Church's interpretation of end-time prophecies; another 20% accept this interpretation because the Church teaches it. However, 9% of respondents have questions.

Most (93%) respondents agree that fulfillment of prophecy and events in the world indicate that Christ's coming is very near. In contrast, less than two in five (38%) respondents believe that Jesus will return in their lifetime (2017–18: 43%). However, about half (51%) admit that they are not sure if Jesus will return before they die (2017–18: 46%). The remaining 11% do not believe that Jesus will return in their lifetime.

Sabbath sermons on the topic of the Second Coming of Jesus are reported as common in the NSD Adventist churches; 81% of respondents very frequently/frequently hear sermons on this topic (2017–18: 89%).

### **State of the Dead**

The Seventh-day Adventist Church holds a unique belief on the state of the dead, yet this topic remains one of the most successful and persistent lies of the enemy. Thus, it is encouraging that a vast majority (95%) of NSD GCMS 2022–23 respondents agree that “when people die, their bodily remains decay, and they have no consciousness or activity until they are resurrected” (2017–18: 90%). Eighty-eight percent of survey participants also disagree that “people who have died believing in Christ are in Heaven right now.” Eighty-six percent of respondents disagree with the statement, “The soul is a separate, spiritual part of a person and lives on after death” (2017–18: 77%).

When respondents were asked for their agreement level on the statement, “People who have rejected Christ are burning in Hell right now,” 88% of respondents disagree. Respondents also show strong disagreement (91%) with the statement, “The dead have powers to communicate with and influence the living” (2017–18: 86%).

Nearly two-thirds (63%) of respondents report that they hear sermons on the state of the dead very frequently (10%) (2017–18: 14%) or frequently (53%) (2017–18: 47%). However,

23% seldom hear sermons on this important topic (2017–18: 30%), and 5% report that they never do (2017–18: 9%).

## *Adventist Education*

Four in five (79%) respondents agree that there are very distinct theological and worldview differences between what is being taught in a public or government school and what is being taught in a Seventh-day Adventist school. Fifteen percent of respondents are not sure, and the remaining 5% disagree, implying that public/government schools do not differ much from Adventist schools. In addition, correlation analysis found that the higher the respondents' education levels are or the longer they received Adventist education, the more they agree with this statement.

Members offer more diversity in their responses to the statement, "Every local church should either operate or contribute to the operation of a school." While 44% agree with this statement, a third (32%) are unsure, and 24% disagree.

## *Church in Cultural Context*

The GCMS 2022–23 posed new questions to members about the church within today's cultural context. Some interesting trends emerged.

- 38% of respondents agree that "to be a Seventh-day Adventist means to reject certain elements of the culture around you." Nineteen percent are unsure, and 44% disagree.
- 58% of respondents agree that "when I meet or hear about Adventists from other parts of the world, they are very much like me in the way they live their faith." A third (34%) of respondents are unsure, and 8% disagree.
- 31% of respondents agree that "people outside of the Adventist Church can have important insights into God's character and plans." However, 38% are unsure, and 32% disagree.
- 65% of respondents agree that "there are ideas in my culture that contradict my faith." Interestingly, 20% of respondents are unsure, and 15% disagree, indicating that ideas within culture today match their faith/beliefs as Adventists.
- 44% of respondents agree that they are most comfortable in a church where everyone shares their cultural background. A quarter (27%) are unsure, and 29% disagree with this statement. Respondents who attend larger churches tend to agree more with this statement.
- 87% of respondents agree with the statement, "I would welcome someone from a different cultural background as part of my local church family."

- 85% of respondents agree that Adventists should avoid amusements and entertainments that are not in harmony with the Spirit of Christ (2017–18: 80%).

## Engagement with the Local Church

This section discusses the findings related to how church members engage in their local churches. It covers survey questions R1, A1, A4, A5, and A8.

### *Church Attendance*

Most (88%) respondents report attending church in person almost every week (30%) (2017–18: 53%), or every week or more often (58%) (28%), in the last 12 months. According to a correlation study, respondents visit church in person more frequently the larger their household is.

A quarter (23%) of respondents report that in the last 12 months, they attended church services remotely by radio, TV, or Internet once every week or more often. Fifteen percent did so almost every week, 13% once a month, and 10% at least once a quarter. Eighteen percent attended church services remotely by radio, TV, or internet once or twice in the last 12 months, while 22% never did so. Three-fourths (74%) of members attend a church that makes worship services available online. Correlation analysis found that the larger the church is, the more frequently respondents remotely attend the service.

### *Church Experience*

Two-thirds (67%) of GCMS 2022–23 respondents report that they are very satisfied (30%) (2017–18: 36%) or satisfied (37%) with their local church. Another 21% share that they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. However, 6% of respondents admit that they are dissatisfied with their local church, and another 7% report that they are very dissatisfied. Respondents who attend larger churches tend to be more satisfied with their churches.

### **Pastor and Lay Leaders**

More than four out of five (84%) respondents agree that their pastor cares about them.

In the past 12 months, well over half (56%) of members report that they did not receive a visit from their pastor (2017–18: 44%). One in five (19%) received a visit once or twice (2017–18: 25%), and 8% received a visit at least once a quarter. Only a small percentage of respondents received a pastoral visit once a month (6%), almost every week (2%), or more often (8%).

Even fewer respondents received a visit from a church elder in the past 12 months. Three-fourths (73%) of members never received a visit from an elder (2017–18: 48%). Thirteen percent received an elder visit once or twice (2017–18: 25%), and 4% report receiving a visit at least once a quarter (2017–18: 23%). Only 10% of respondents received an elder visit once a month or more often (2017–18: 15%).



## **Caring and Nurturing**

Three-fourths (75%) of church members agree that their Sabbath School teachers care about them (2017–18: 81%). More respondents (87%) agree that other people in their church care about them. Moreover, 62% of respondents feel that their church needs to increase efforts for the overall care and nurturing of members (2017–18: 47%).

In the last 12 months, well over half (55%) of GCMS 2022–23 respondents share that they never received a visit from another church member (2017–18: 33%).

## **Relational and Discipleship Training**

Half (50%) of respondents agree that their local church has the ability to communicate across cultures, clans, tribes, and religions.

Regarding the training offered by the church, a third (35%) of respondents agree that their local church offers training on conflict resolution and reconciliation (2017–18: 47%).

However, 32% are unsure if their church offers such training, while 29% disagree that their church does so (2017–18: 20%). Similarly, a third (33%) of NSD survey participants agree that their local church has a program for preparing new members to become leaders.

Twenty-seven percent of respondents share that they are not sure, and 40% disagree that their church offers such a program. More training is done on nurturing and disciplining church members; half (49%) of respondents agree that their local church offers these types of training (2017–18: 67%). Also, more of this training is provided by larger congregations.

## **Family Focus**

Over half (56%) of NSD respondents agree that they attend a church that plans activities for everyone in the family (2017–18: 61%). Nineteen percent of respondents are unsure, and 25% disagree (2017–18: 17%).

Thirty-one percent of GCMS 2022–23 participants agree with the statement, “I currently provide financial support for children (mine or others) to attend an Adventist school.”

Twenty-two percent are unsure. However, 37% of respondents disagree with this statement to one degree or another, indicating that they do not provide financial support.

## **Youth and Young Adults**

Forty-six percent of respondents agree that youth and young adults play an important role in decision-making in their local church (2017–18: 59%).

Thirty percent of respondents agree that their local church has a program for preparing young people to become leaders. Also, 44% of respondents agree that their conference/mission has a program for preparing young people to become leaders. However, a similar percentage share that they do not know whether their local church (26%) or conference/mission (31%) has such a program. The larger churches are, the more they offer leadership

development programs for youth and young adults and include them in important roles in their churches.

### *Involvement in Church*

Two in five (42%) respondents share that in the last 12 months, they participated in a communion service at least once a quarter (2017–18: 81%). However, 22% share that in the last year, they only participated in communion once or twice (2017–18: 12%), and another 36% report that they never did so (2017–18: 7%).

Nearly two out of five (38%) respondents share that they helped with a church ministry on Sabbath every week or more often (2017–18: 48%). Another 26% report that in the last 12 months, they did so almost every week (2017–18: 15%). Ten percent helped once a month, 5% helped at least once a quarter, and 6% helped once or twice in the last year. The remaining 15%, however, share that in the last year, they never helped with a church ministry on Sabbath (2017–18: 11%).

A quarter (24%) of members report that in the last year, they helped with a church ministry during the week every week or more often (2017–18: 36%). Another 15% helped about once a week (2017–18: 11%), and 12% helped once a month. However, another 9% only helped at least once a quarter, 10% helped once or twice in the last year (2017–18: 14%), and 30% of respondents never helped with a church ministry during the week (2017–18: 22%).

Multiple questions under this next section relate to the respondents' current involvement in their church and whether they hold church offices. Respondents active in their local church and serving it by taking positions show more significant participation in communion service, Sabbath School, prayer meetings, small groups, or activities during the week or on Sabbaths.

### **Sabbath School**

Half (51%) of survey participants share that in the last 12 months, they attended Sabbath School in person every week or more often (2017–18: 73%). Another 32% attended almost every week (2017–18: 15%). Five percent attended once a month, 3% attended at least once a quarter, and 3% attended only once or twice. Only 6% of respondents never attended Sabbath School in person in the last 12 months.

One in five (21%) respondents shares that in the last 12 months, they attended Sabbath School remotely via radio, TV, or the Internet every week or more often; another 13% did so almost every week. Eleven percent attended remotely once a month, 8% at least once a quarter, and 16% did so once or twice in the last year. Thirty-two percent of respondents report that in the last 12 months, they never attended Sabbath School remotely by radio, TV, or the Internet.

### **Prayer Meetings and Small Group**

Almost a quarter (23%) of respondents share that in the last 12 months, they attended a prayer meeting at their local church every week or more often (2017–18: 30%); another 16% did so almost every week (2017–18: 9%). Four percent attended once a month, and 7% at least once a quarter (2017–18: 11%). Eight percent did so once or twice in the last year (2017–18: 15%), and two in five (42%) never attended a prayer meeting at their local church (2017–18: 28%).

A quarter (26%) of respondents report that in the last 12 months, they attended a small group organized through their church every week or more often (2017–18: 47%). Another 18% did so almost every week (2017–18: 14%), and 11% did so once a month. Six percent attended a small group at least once a quarter, 6% did so once or twice in the last 12 months, and a third (34%) never attended a small group organized by their church (2017–18: 14%). In addition, respondents attending larger churches tend to attend small groups more frequently.

### **Pathfinders**

A vast majority (82%) of respondents report that in the last 12 months, they never attended a Pathfinder meeting; this is likely attributed to the age of respondents (i.e., not active in Pathfinders and/or no longer having children of participation age) (2017–18: 72%).

### **Nurturing Church Members**

Twenty-eight percent of respondents share that they often help others with their religious questions and struggles (2017–18: 34% often), and 25% share that they usually do so (2017–18: 20% sometimes/often). One in five (20%) reports that they help others with their religious questions and struggles about half the time (2017–18: 26% sometimes), while 15% seldom do. One in ten (11%) admits that they never help others in this way (2017–18: 7%). Almost two-thirds (62%) of NSD participants feel that they need to increase their involvement in caring for and nurturing local church members (2017–18: 49%). A third (33%) feel that their involvement is at the right level.

## The Pandemic's Impact on Churches

This section focuses on church members' experiences related to the coronavirus pandemic in three ways: Church members' involvement in the local church, their experiences with worship services, and giving offerings. These cover survey questions D16–D21.

### *Involvement in the Local Church*

The coronavirus pandemic changed the way that some people participate in their church. GCMS 2022–23 participants were asked to think back to a time just before the pandemic started in late 2019; they were then asked to describe their involvement in their local church before the coronavirus pandemic. Over a third (36%) of respondents consider themselves as active participants in their local church, while a similar number (30%) consider themselves active leaders. Five percent consider themselves casual participants, and 13% report that they attended church activities and services but rarely participated or interacted with church members. Twelve percent share that pre-COVID, they attended church through recorded or live-streamed audio or video but otherwise did not interact with the church; the remaining 3% did not attend church or participate at all in church activities.

After answering this question about their involvement in the local church pre-COVID, members were asked to describe their current involvement in their local church. Two in five (42%) of respondents consider themselves active participants, and another 32% consider themselves active leaders in their local church. Five percent of participants currently consider themselves casual participants, and 14% report that they attend church activities and services but rarely participate or interact with church members. Six percent currently attend church through recorded or live-streamed audio or video but otherwise do not interact with the church; only 1% do not attend church or participate at all in church activities. These results show that the COVID-19 pandemic had little impact on members' involvement in their local church.

While two-thirds (64%) of respondents share that their involvement in their local church was the same before and after COVID, a quarter (23%) report that their involvement increased after COVID. However, 12% admit that their involvement has decreased.

### *Worship Service and Experiences*

Members were asked what happened to worship services at the church they attended during the coronavirus pandemic. A majority (72%) of respondents report that their church met remotely for a period of time when they could not meet face-to-face. Sixteen percent of respondents share that their church continued to meet face-to-face throughout the pandemic. Ten percent report that their church closed for a period of time, and there was no remote worship option, and sadly, 2% of respondents' churches closed permanently.

Members were then asked to describe their own worship experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic. Over half (52%) attended their local church remotely for a period of time. Twenty-two percent of members continued to meet face-to-face, and 12% report that they attended an Adventist church located in a different place remotely for a period of time. Seven percent stopped attending church for a period of time, and 5% met face-to-face with other Adventists, but not in a church (for example, in a home church). A small percentage (2%) report that they attended a non-Adventist church either face-to-face or remotely.

Half (51%) of NSD GCMS 2022–23 participants report that their church developed new ministries during or as a result of the pandemic. Over a third (37%) of respondents share that their church did not do so. The remaining 13% of respondents do not know.

### *Impact on Offering*

Respondents were asked if, during any period of time in which they were unable to meet on-site with their local church due to the coronavirus pandemic, they were provided with one or more methods (electronic or otherwise) that enabled them to continue their normal pattern of giving. Approximately three-fourths of respondents share that they were provided with a way to continue their normal pattern of giving both tithes (78%) and offerings (78%).

## Adventist Mission

This section focuses on Adventist missions, noting various approaches to evangelism. The data come from survey questions D21, R1, R6, R7, A1, A4, and B1.

### *Mission Outreach Values and Practices*

Nearly two thirds (63%) of respondents feel that their church needs to increase its overall evangelistic outreach in the local community. A little over a quarter (28%) feel that their church's evangelistic outreach efforts are at the right level. Two percent feel that their church actually needs to decrease its evangelistic outreach in the local community. (Note: 8% do not feel that this question applies to their church.)

Making it more personal, three in five (62%) feel that they, themselves, need to increase their involvement in their church's evangelistic outreach in the community. Twenty-nine percent feel that their personal involvement is at the right level. A small percentage (2%) feel that they need to decrease their involvement in their church's evangelistic outreach in the community.

### **Christ's Method**

Most (84%) respondents agree that "the most effective method for reaching people for Christ is to mingle with them, meet their needs, win their confidence, and then bid them to follow Christ" (2017–18: 79%). Eleven percent are unsure, and the remaining 5% disagree that Christ's method is the most effective way to reach people (2017–18: 12%).

Similarly, most (83%) survey participants agree that "In order to reach people for Christ, we need to get to know them and their needs before we preach the Gospel to them" (2017–18: 91%). However, only 12% of survey participants report that in the last 12 months, they spent time forming new friendships with non-Adventists in their community every week or more often, with another 9% reporting that they did so almost every week. Seventeen percent did so once a month (2017–18: 13%), 11% did so at least once a quarter, and 17% did so only once or twice (2017–18: 25%). The remaining third (33%) never spent time forming new friendships with non-Adventists in their community (2017–18: 29%). Correlation analysis reveals that the younger and more educated the respondents are, the more they adhere to this approach.

Ten percent of NSD respondents share that in the last 12 months, they spent time meeting the needs of non-Adventists in their community once a week or more often. Another 9% did so almost every week. Fourteen percent spent time meeting non-Adventists' needs in their community once a month, 11% at least once a quarter, and 19% did so once or twice (2017–18: 26%). The remaining third (36%) report never doing so.

Two-thirds (67%) of respondents feel proud of their local church and its role and reputation in the community, while a quarter (23%) are not sure, and 10% disagree.

Two-thirds (65%) of respondents feel that their church needs to increase its overall efforts to meet the local community's needs (2017–18: 49%). Twenty-six percent of respondents feel that their church's overall efforts to meet the local community's needs are at the right level. (Note: 8% do not feel that this question applies to their church.)

Regarding their involvement in meeting the local community's needs, about two-thirds (64%) feel that they, themselves, need to increase their involvement (2017–18: 50%). Twenty-eight percent feel that their personal involvement and efforts are at the right level. (Note: 8% do not feel that this question applies to their church.)

### **Public Evangelism & Witnessing**

In the last 12 months, well over half (57%) of respondents never attended a public evangelistic meeting in their area. One in five (18%) did so once or twice, and 12% did so at least once a quarter. Only 13% attended a public evangelistic meeting in their area once a month or more often. According to correlation analysis, the smaller the respondent's church is, the less often the respondent attended a public evangelistic meeting.

In the past 12 months, 7% of respondents witnessed to non-Adventists in their community every week or more often. Another 8% did so almost every week. Twelve percent did so once a month, 11% did so at least once a quarter, and 18% did so once or twice (2017–18: 30%). Almost half (45%) never did so (2017–18: 32%).

### **Reclaiming Former Church Members**

Over three-quarters (77%) of respondents feel that their church needs to increase its efforts to reclaim former members (2017–18: 55%). Seventeen percent of respondents feel that their church's efforts are at the right level (2017–18: 27%). (Note: 4% of respondents do not feel that this applies to their church.)

Again, three-fourths (75%) of respondents feel that they need to increase their involvement with their church's efforts to reclaim former members (2017–18: 56%). Nineteen percent of respondents feel that their personal involvement is at the right level (2017–18: 27%). (Note: 5% of respondents do not feel that this applies to their church.)

### **Youth Involvement in Local Church Mission**

The last item in this section deals with young people's involvement in the local church's mission. Almost half (46%) of respondents agree that youth and young adults are actively involved in carrying out the mission of their local church (2017–18: 64%). Another quarter (25%) of respondents is not sure. The remaining 28% disagree that youth and young adults are actively involved in carrying out the mission of their local church (2017–18: 13%).

According to correlation analysis, the bigger the church is, the more young people are involved in carrying out the church's mission.

Seven in ten (69%) respondents feel that their church needs to increase the overall inclusion of young people in carrying out the mission of the local church. Twenty-one percent of respondents feel that their church's efforts are at the right level. Again, 66% of GCMS 2022–23 respondents feel that they need to personally increase their involvement in including young people in carrying out the mission of the local church. Another 22% feel that their personal efforts are at the right level.

### *Awareness and Involvement in Mission Programs*

As part of this study, church members were asked about their awareness of certain General Conference programs. The results show that:

- 25% of respondents have not heard of the “I Will Go Strategic Focus 2020–2025” initiative. Forty-five percent have heard of it but have not participated; 29% have participated in this program.
- 18% of members have not heard of “Total Member Involvement” (2017–18: 33%). Forty-five percent have heard of it but have not participated (2017–18: 36%), and 37% have participated in this program (2017–18: 31%).
- 29% of respondents have not heard of “Revival and Reformation” (2017–18 35%). Forty-seven percent of respondents have heard of it but have not participated, and a quarter (25%) have participated in this program (2017–18: 19%).
- 25% of respondents have not heard of “Mission to the Cities” (2017–18: 34%), while well over half (56%) have heard of it but have not participated (2017–18: 46%). One in five (19%) has participated in this program.
- 34% of respondents have not heard of the “Comprehensive Health Ministry” program (2017–18: 43%). Forty-three percent have heard of it but have not participated (2017–18: 34%), and 22% have participated.
- 51% of respondents have not heard of the “Believe His Prophets” initiative. A third (33%) have heard of it but have not participated, and 15% have participated in this program.
- 35% of respondents have not heard of the “10 Days of Prayer” program, while another 36% have heard of it but have not participated. Thirty percent have participated in this program.



- 58% of members have not heard of “Adventist Possibility Ministries.” A third (35%) have heard of this program but have not participated in it, while only 7% have participated in this program.
- 21% of respondents have not heard of “Annual Week of Prayer,” while 27% have heard of it but have not participated. Half (51%) of respondents have participated in this initiative.
- 19% of respondents have not heard of “Global Mission.” Fifty-seven percent have heard of it but have not participated, and a quarter (24%) have participated.
- 70% of respondents have not heard of the “Enditnow” program. A quarter (25%) have heard of it but have not participated, and 5% have participated.

When asked how often, in the last 12 months, they had heard about one or more of the General Conference initiatives listed previously:

- 39% of respondents share that they never heard about these initiatives via word of mouth, while a similar percentage (23%) heard of them via word of mouth once or twice. Twenty percent heard of them via word of mouth at least once a quarter, 9% once a month, and 5% almost every week. Four percent heard of them via word of mouth on a weekly basis.
- 19% never heard about GC programs at church, while 30% heard about them once or twice at church. Twenty-five percent heard of them at least once a quarter at church, 13% once a month, and 9% almost every week. Five percent heard about them at church every week.
- 37% of respondents never heard about these initiatives at a meeting or seminar. One in five (22%) heard about them once or twice at a seminar, 25% at least once a quarter, 10% once a month, and 4% almost every week. Two percent of respondents heard about these programs at a meeting or seminar on a weekly basis.
- 20% of respondents never heard about these GC initiatives by reading a church publication, while 20% did so once or twice in the last 12 months. Twenty-two percent did so at least once a quarter, 26% once a month, and 8% did so almost every week. Five percent heard about these programs by reading a church publication every week.
- 69% of respondents share that they never heard about these programs on television or radio. Ten percent heard about them via television or radio once or twice in the last 12 months, 9% at least once a quarter, 4% once a month, and 4% almost every week. Four percent heard of these programs via television or radio every week.
- 46% of respondents never heard of these GC initiatives via a website; another 17% did so once or twice in the last year. Sixteen percent of respondents did so at least once a quarter, 9% once a month, and 8% almost every week. Four percent heard of these programs via a website on a weekly basis.

- 47% of respondents never heard about GC programs via social media, while 18% did so once or twice. Fifteen percent did so at least once a quarter, 5% did once a month, and 10% did almost every week. Five percent report that they heard about these programs via social media on a weekly basis.

## Personal Well-being

This section discusses the various types of personal well-being of survey participants, such as psychological well-being, spiritual well-being, spiritual growth and transformation, purpose in life, and healing. The survey questions include A8, A10–A12, and B1.

### *Psychological Well-being*

Three in five (58%) respondents report that in the last two weeks, they never felt little interest or pleasure in doing things. A third (33%) admit that they felt this way for several days, and 4% felt this way for more than seven days. Five percent share that they felt this way every day.

Two-thirds (64%) of respondents share that in the last few weeks, they never felt down, depressed, or hopeless. Thirty-one percent admit that they felt this way for several days, and 3% felt this way for more than seven days. Three percent reveal that they felt this way every day. Seven percent of respondents admit that in the last 12 months, they had suicidal thoughts; small percentages of respondents share that in the last year, they attempted suicide (1%) or harmed themselves (1%). Age correlated with the symptoms of depression. According to the analysis, the younger the respondents are, the more they felt down, depressed, or hopeless.

### *Spiritual Well-being*

#### **Spiritual Growth and Transformation**

GCMS 2022–23 participants were asked to respond to the statement, “Over the last 12 months . . . I have grown spiritually.” A quarter (23%) of respondents report that this is true for them a great deal (2017–18: 27%), and for another 31%, this is mostly true. For 32%, this is somewhat true, 8% a little true, and 7% not true for them at all.

Respondents were also asked to respond to the statement, “Over the last 12 months . . . because of spiritual changes I have been through, I have changed my priorities.” Twenty percent of respondents feel that this is true for them a great deal (2017–18: 30%), while a third (34%) feel that this is mostly true for them. Over a quarter (28%) report that this is somewhat true for them, 11% a little true (2017–18: 6%), and 7% not true for them at all.

Thirty-nine percent of respondents share that it is not true for them at all that “Over the last 12 months . . . in some ways I think I am spiritually lost” (2017–18: 33%). For a quarter (25%) this statement is a little true, and for 22%, it is somewhat true. This statement is mostly true for 10% of respondents, while for 4%, it is true a great deal (2017–18: 8%).

Three in five (62%) respondents report that it is not at all true for them that “Over the last 12 months . . . my faith has been shaken, and I am not sure what I believe” (2017–18: 52%).

Twenty-one percent of respondents admit that this is a little true, and 8% share that it is somewhat true (2017–18: 14%). For 5%, this is mostly true, and for 4%, it is true a great deal.

### **Cultivating the Heart**

A third (33%) of respondents feel that it is true for them a great deal that “Over the last 12 months . . . I more often have a sense of gratitude” (2017–18: 43%). For 41% of respondents, this is mostly true (2017–18: 36%), 17% somewhat true, and 6% a little true. For the remaining 2%, this is not true for them at all.

A quarter (26%) of respondents feel that it is true for them a great deal that “Over the last 12 months . . . I spend more time thinking about spiritual questions” (2017–18: 36%) Another 37% report that this is mostly true for them, 25% somewhat true (2017–18: 21%), and 8% a little true. For 4%, this statement is not true for them at all.

Respondents were asked to respond to the statement, “Over the last 12 months . . . I feel I have lost some important spiritual meaning that I had before.” Three in five (59%) respondents share that this is not at all true for them (2017–18: 49%). Twenty-one percent share that this is a little true, and 11% feel that this is somewhat true (2017–18: 19%). For 6% of respondents, this is mostly true (2017–18: 11%), and it is a great deal true for 3% (2017–18: 8%).

### *Purpose in Life*

Three-fourths (73%) of members report that they often (44%) (2017–18: 48%) or usually (29%) (2017–18: 25%) feel that their “life is filled with meaning and purpose.” Sixteen percent feel this way about half the time, 8% seldom feel this way, and 3% never do.

Forty-three percent of respondents share that they often (22%) or usually (21%) (2017–18: 16% sometimes/often) “give a significant amount of time to help other people.” A quarter (27%) do so about half the time (2017–18: 33% sometimes), and 20% seldom do so. Ten percent of respondents never give a significant amount of time to help other people.

A third (33%) of respondents often (16%) or usually (17%) (2017–18: 13% sometimes/often) “give a significant amount of money to help other people.” Twenty-seven percent do so about half the time (2017–18: 34% sometimes), while 25% seldom do (2017–18: 30% rarely). Fifteen percent of members admit that they never give a significant amount of money to help other people (2017–18: 11% never).

Three in five (59%) respondents share that they often (32%) or usually (27%) feel “a deep sense of responsibility for reducing pain and suffering in the world.” Another 21% feel this way about half the time. However, 14% report that they seldom feel a deep sense of responsibility for reducing pain and suffering in the world, and 5% never feel this way.

Thirty-eight percent of respondents report that they often (20%) (2017–18: 16%) or usually (18%) show that they care a great deal about reducing poverty in society. Twenty-nine percent do so about half the time, while 23% seldom do. Nine percent of respondents self-report that they never show that they care a great deal about reducing poverty in society (2017–18: 13%).

A third (32%) of respondents often (15%) or usually (17%) apply their faith to political and social issues. One in five (23%) does so about half the time, 20% seldom do so, and a quarter (24%) never do so (2017–18: 30%).

### *On Healing*

Most (90%) respondents agree that “Prayer in the name of Jesus is the only way to defeat evil powers and demonic spirits.” Six percent are not sure, and 4% disagree.

A majority (94%) of respondents disagree that “Christians may go to witch doctors or spiritual healers for protection or healing” (2017–18: 89%). Two percent are unsure, and 3% agree that this practice is acceptable for Christians (2017–18: 9%).

## Appendix A - NSD Charts

# Global Church Member Survey 2023

Northern Asia-Pacific Division  
Charts (N = 478)

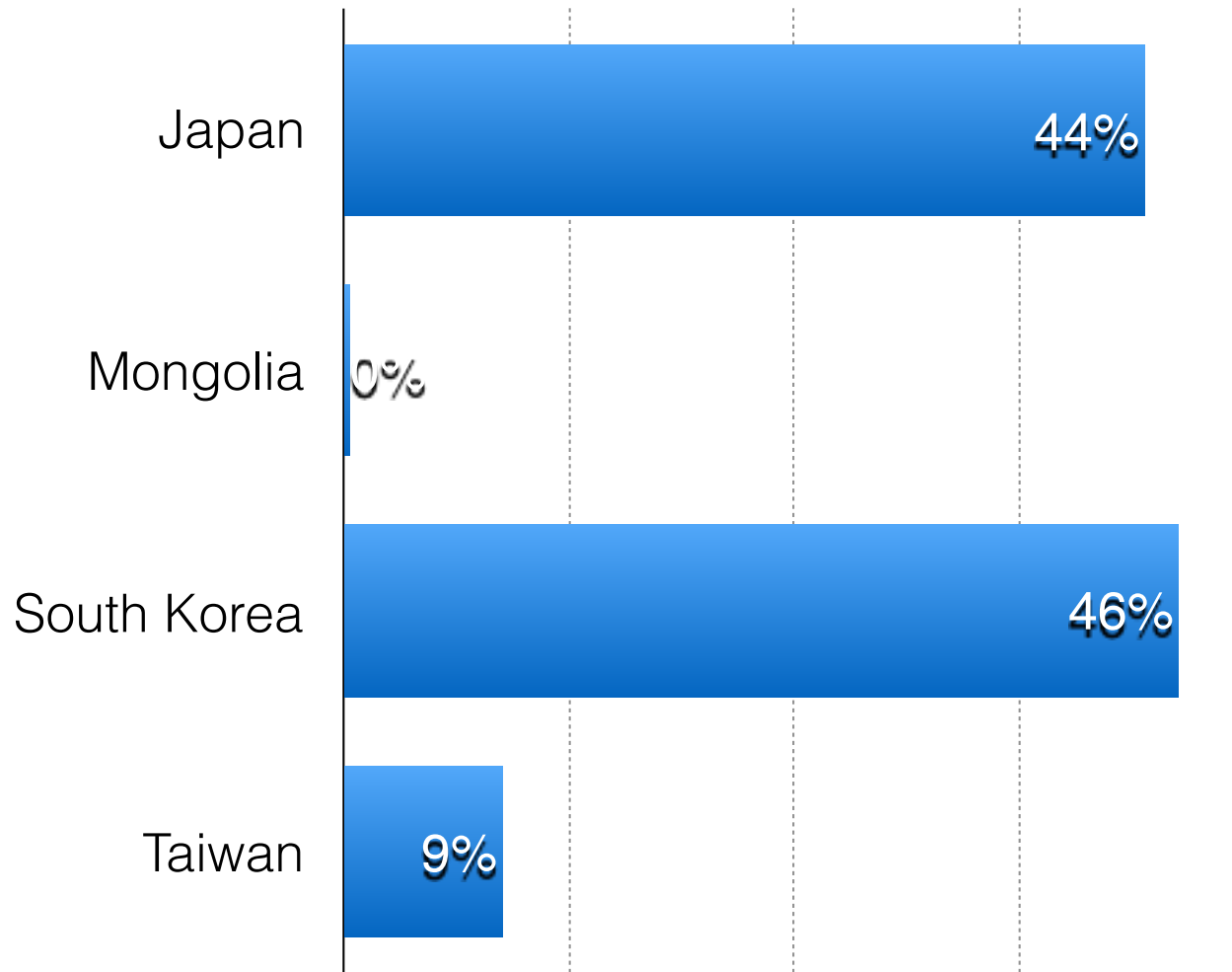


INSTITUTE *of* CHURCH MINISTRY

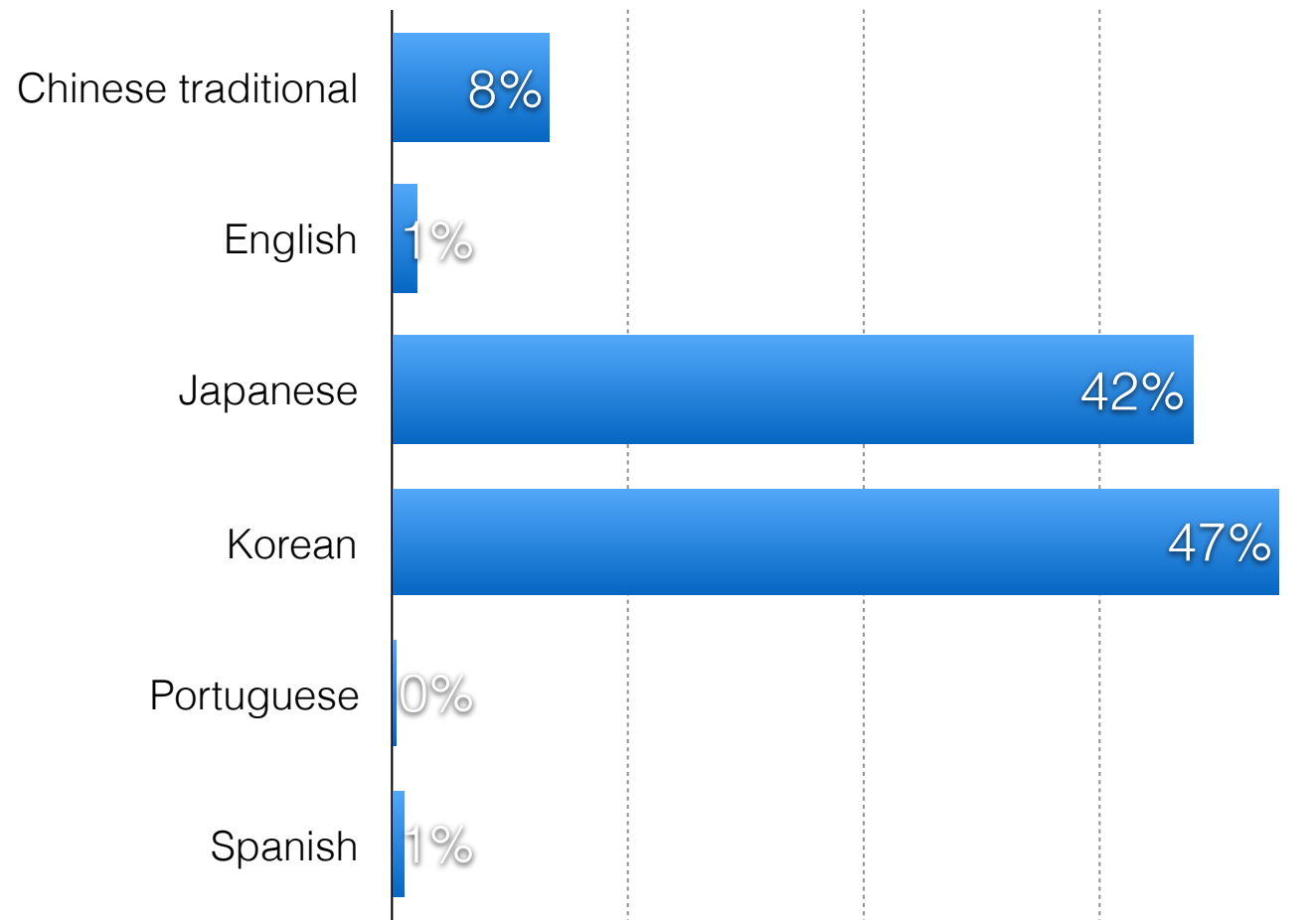
# **PERSONAL DEMOGRAPHICS**



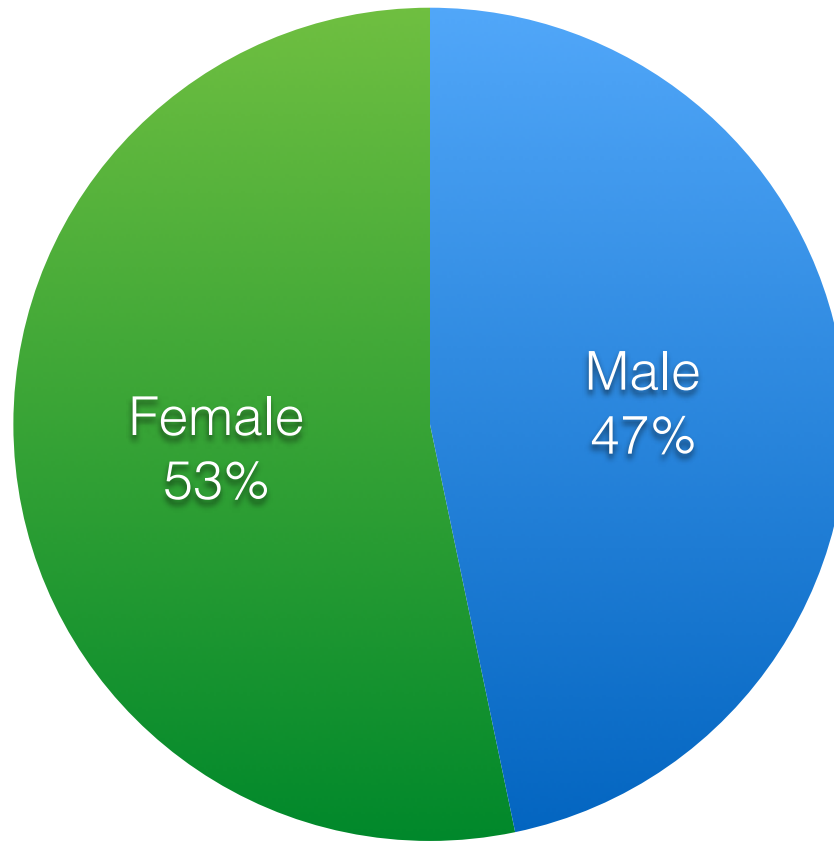
# P1. IN WHAT COUNTRY DO YOU LIVE?



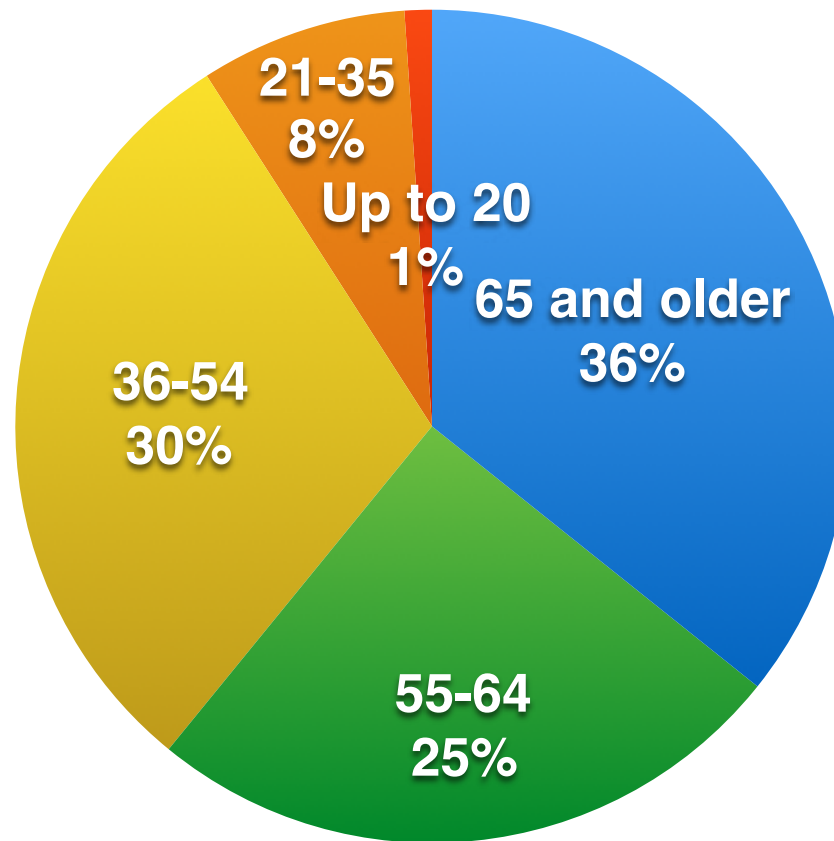
## P2. IN WHAT LANGUAGE ARE YOU COMPLETING THIS SURVEY?



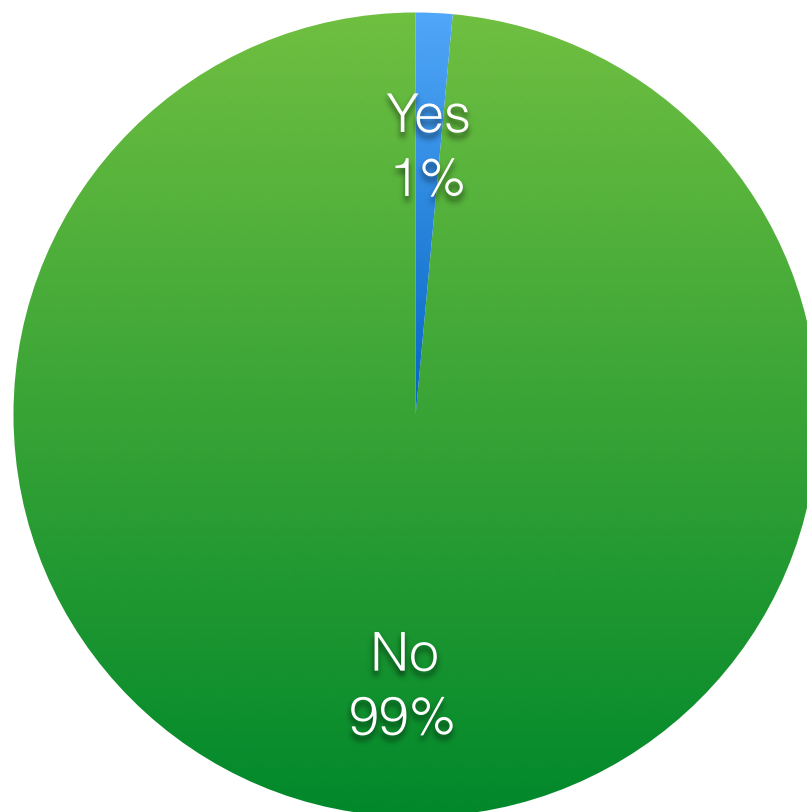
# P3. GENDER



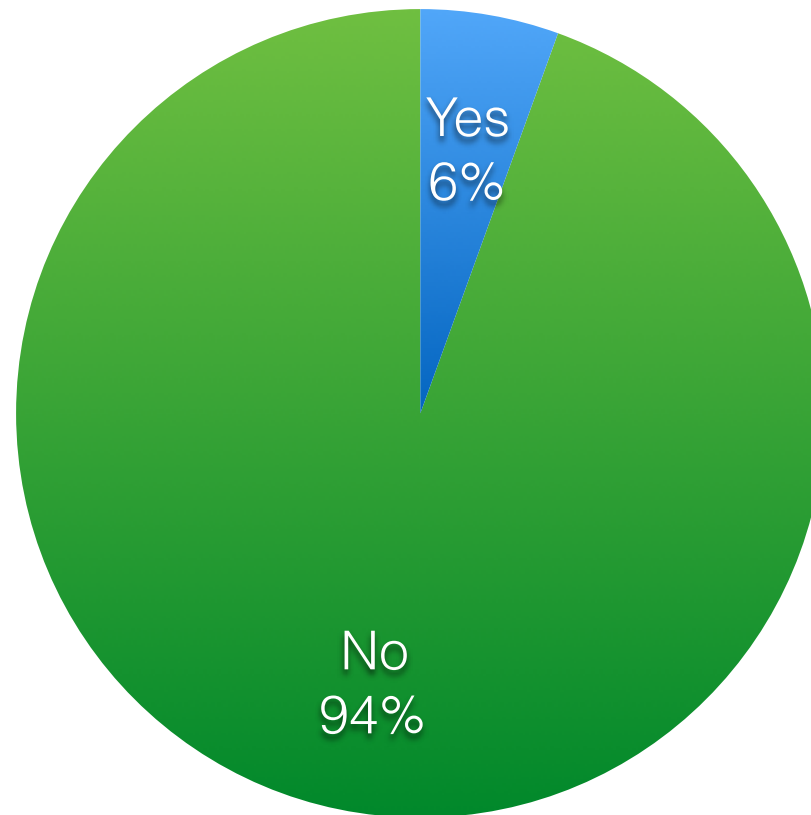
# P4. YEARS OF AGE



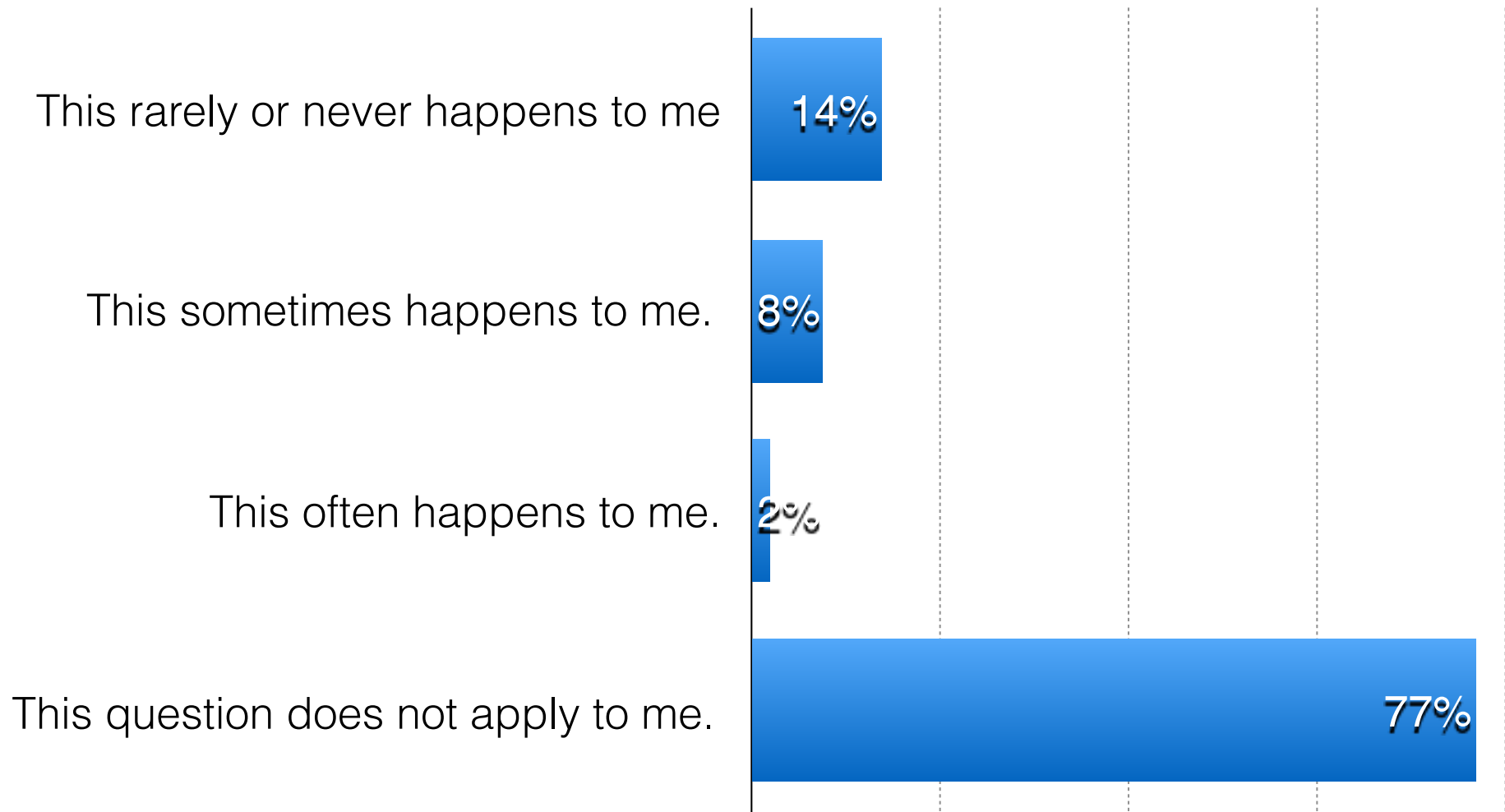
## P5. DO YOU IDENTIFY AS A PERSON WHO IS DEAF?



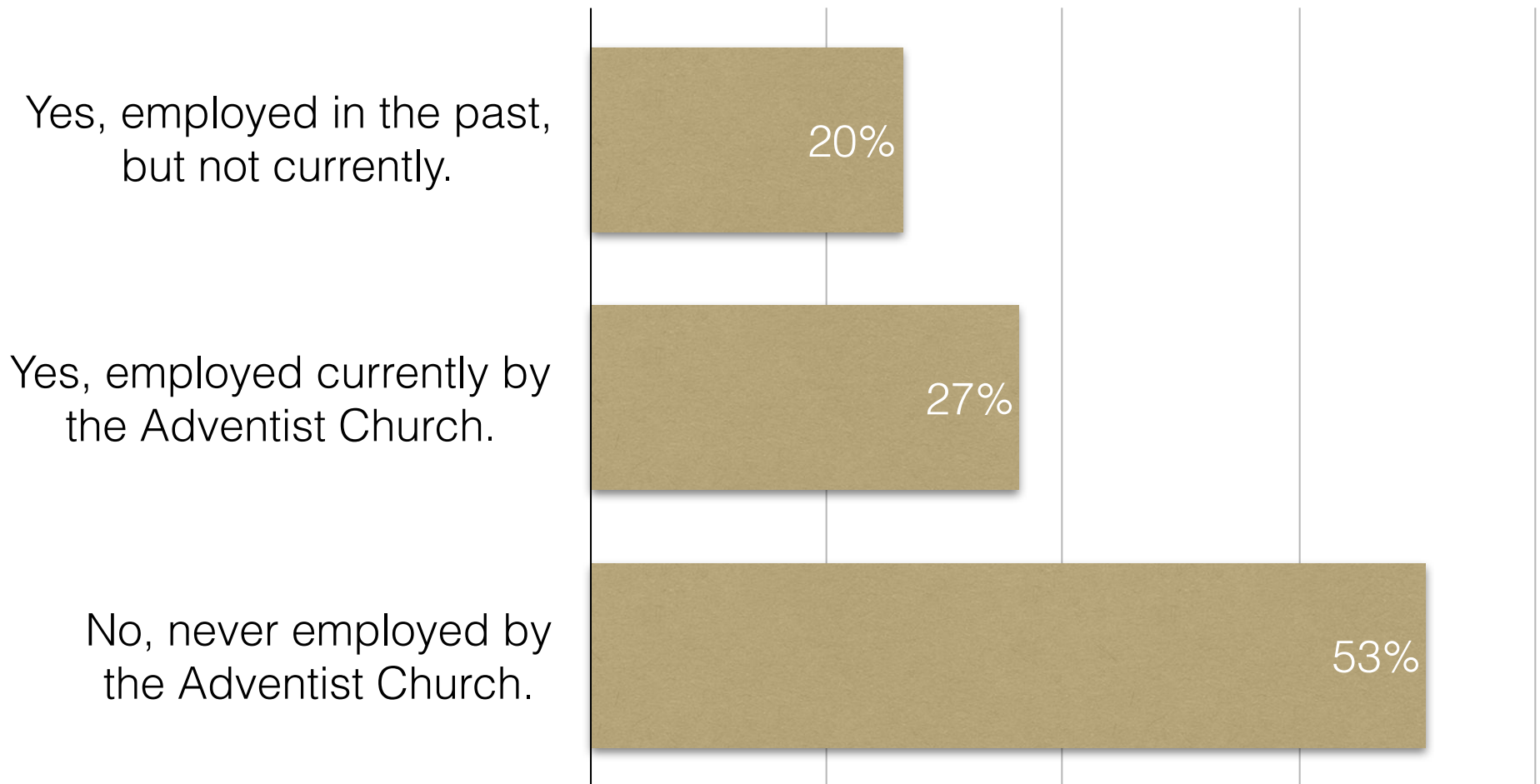
**P6. DO YOU HAVE CHALLENGES IN ANY OF THESE  
AREAS: PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL, MENTAL, COGNITIVE,  
DEVELOPMENTAL, VISUAL, OR HEARING?**



**P7. IF YOU REPORTED CHALLENGES OR  
IMPAIRMENTS HAVE YOU FOUND IT MORE  
DIFFICULT TO PARTICIPATE IN CHURCH ACTIVITIES  
THAN OTHER PEOPLE IN YOUR CHURCH?**

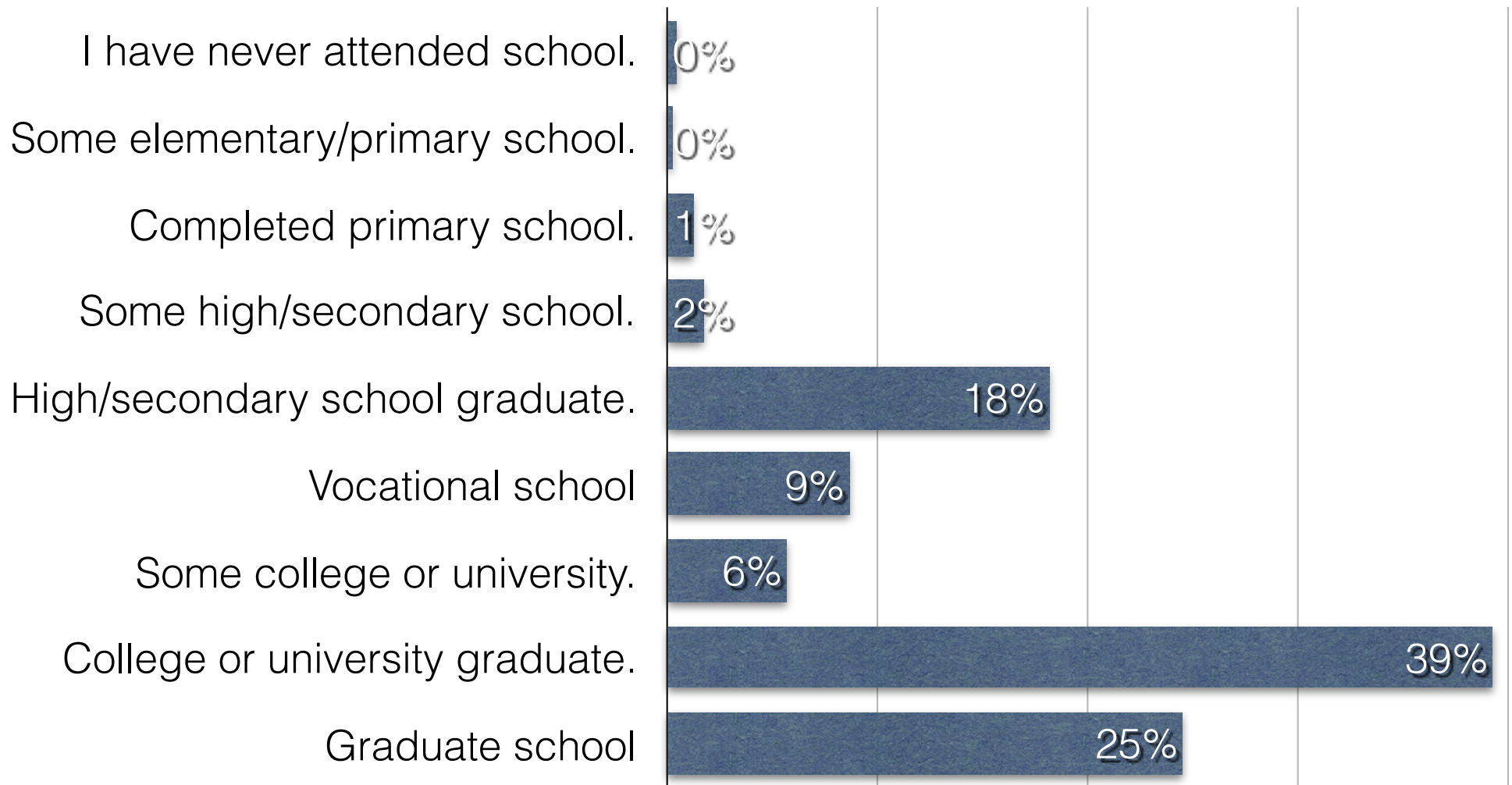


## **P8. ARE YOU CURRENTLY OR HAVE YOU BEEN IN THE PAST EMPLOYED BY THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH?**

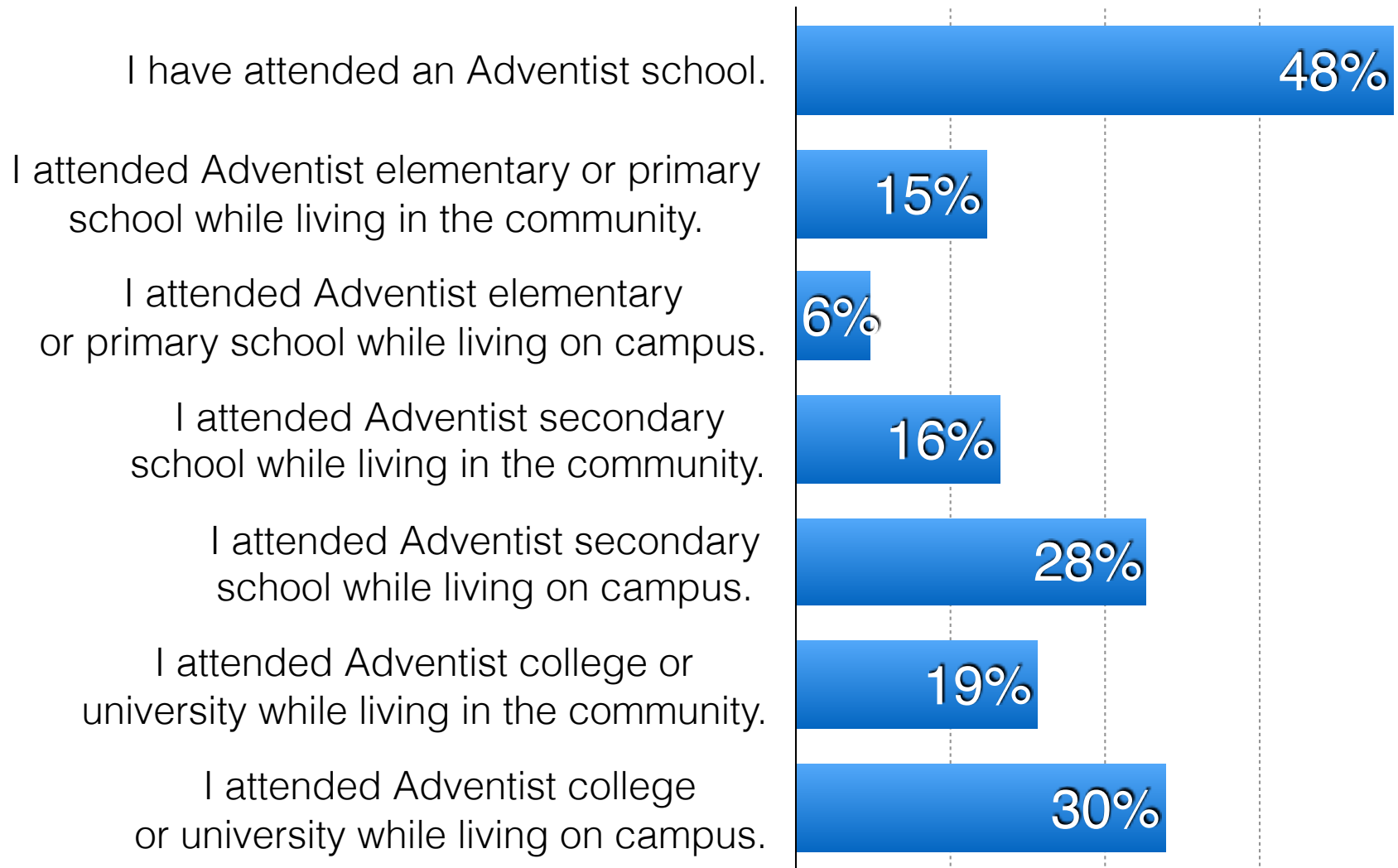




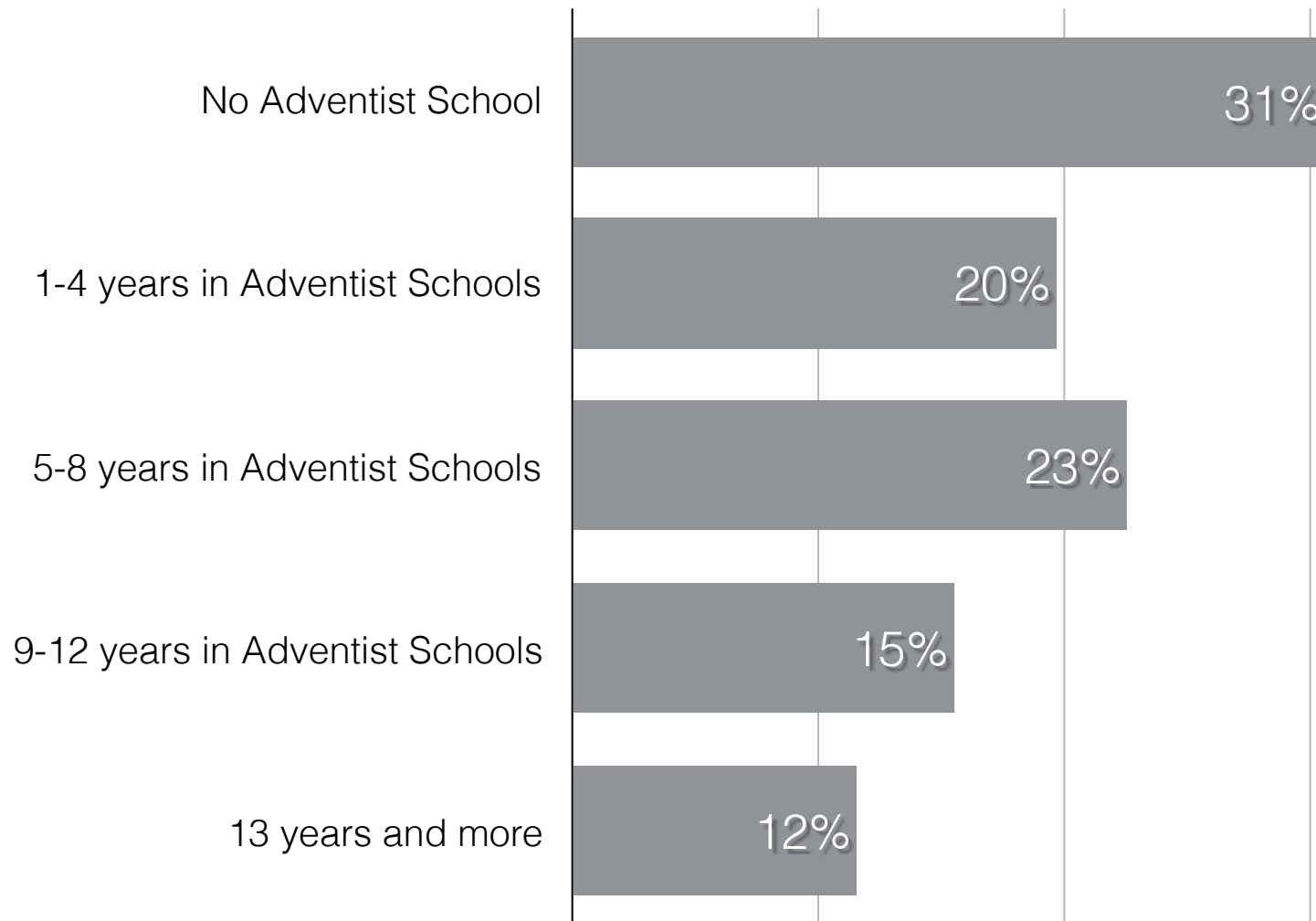
**P9. WHAT IS THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF  
SCHOOL YOU HAVE COMPLETED? (MARK  
ONLY ONE RESPONSE.)**



## P10. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ADVENTIST EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES HAVE YOU HAD?

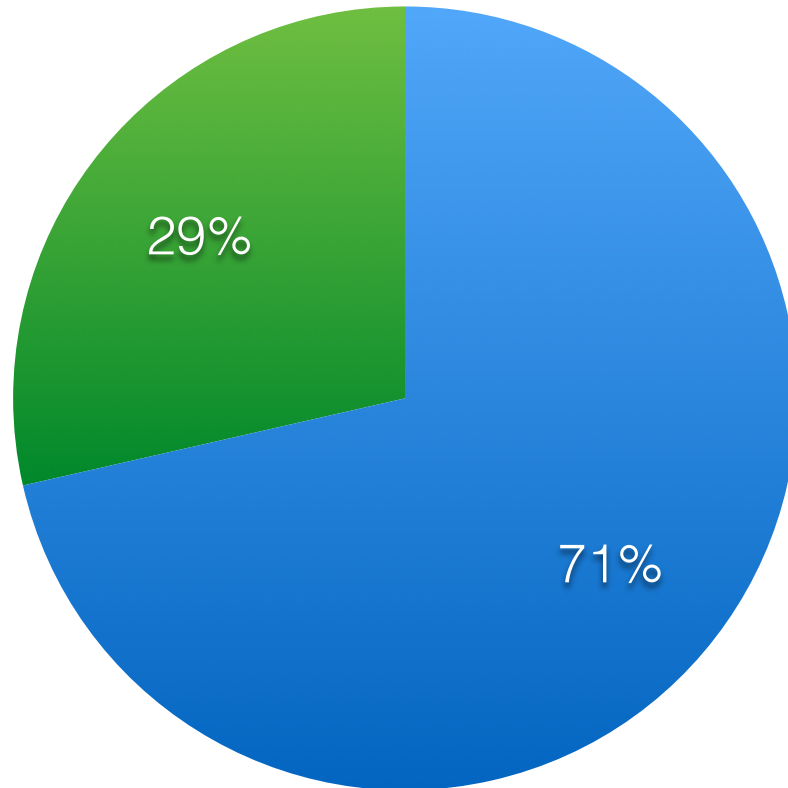


# P11. WHAT IS THE TOTAL NUMBER OF YEARS THAT YOU HAVE SPENT ATTENDING AN ADVENTIST SCHOOL?



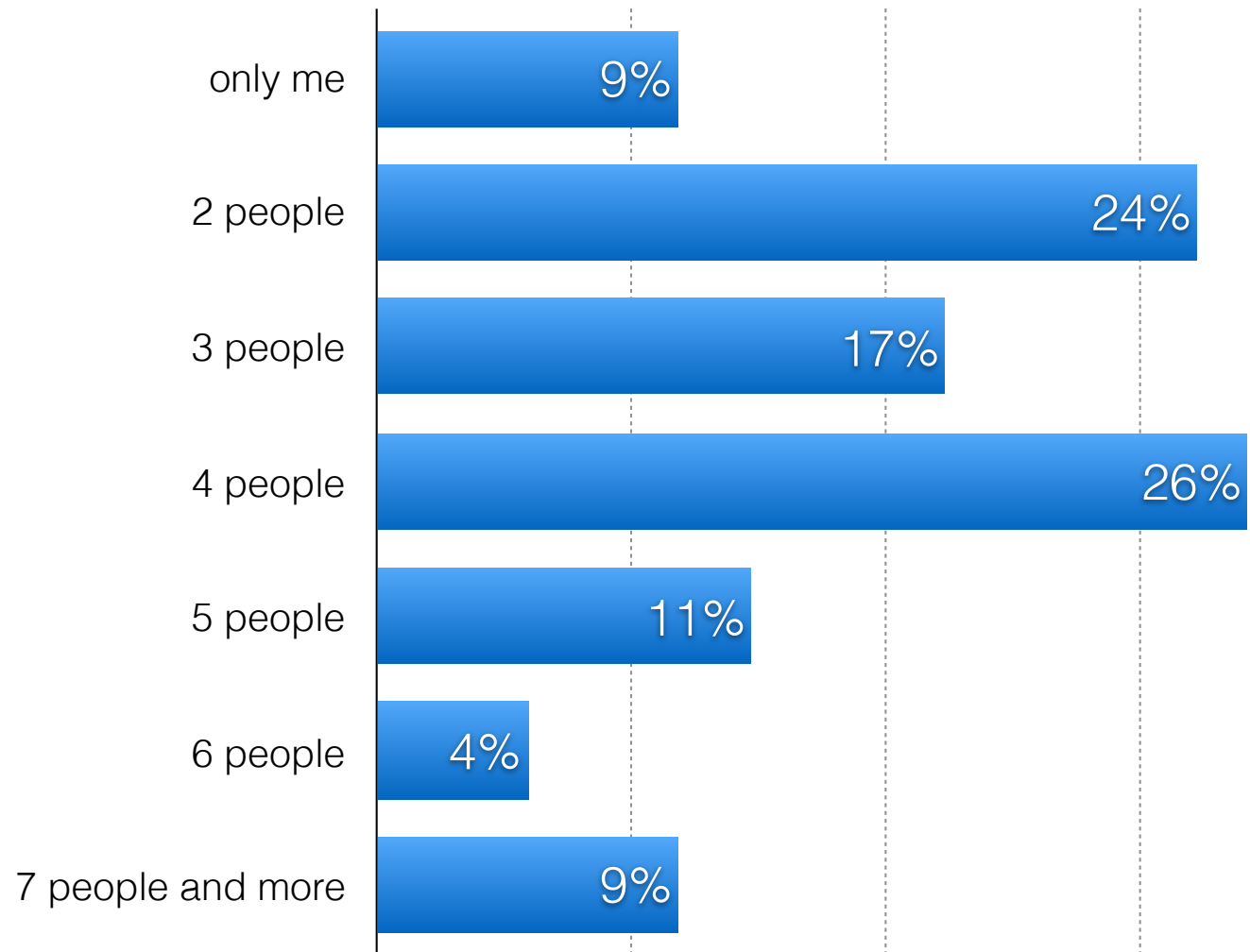
# P12. Are you an immigrant to the country where you currently live?

- No, I am not an immigrant.
- Yes, I immigrated to this country at age 18 or later.

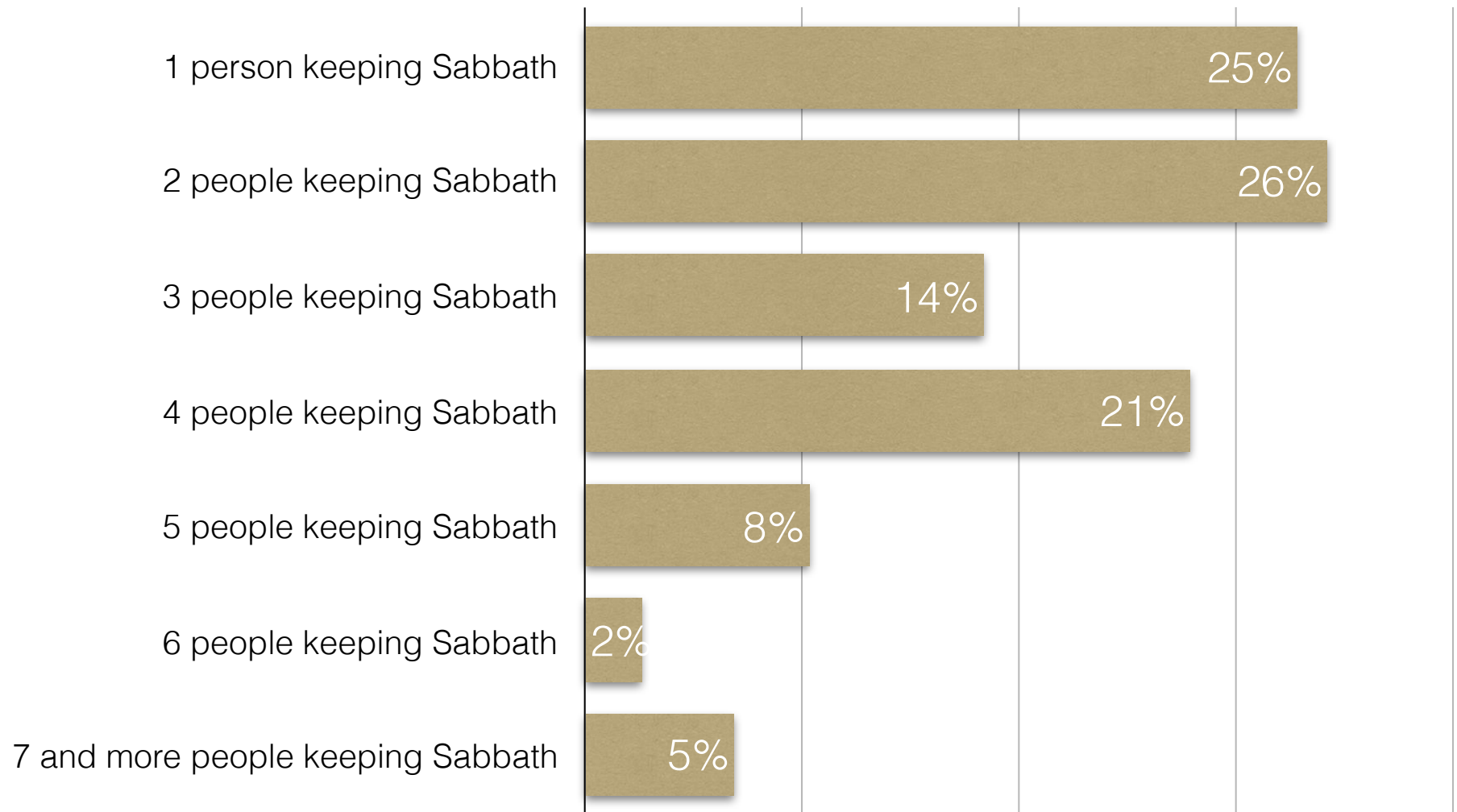


# **HOUSEHOLD AND RELIGIOUS DEMOGRAPHICS**

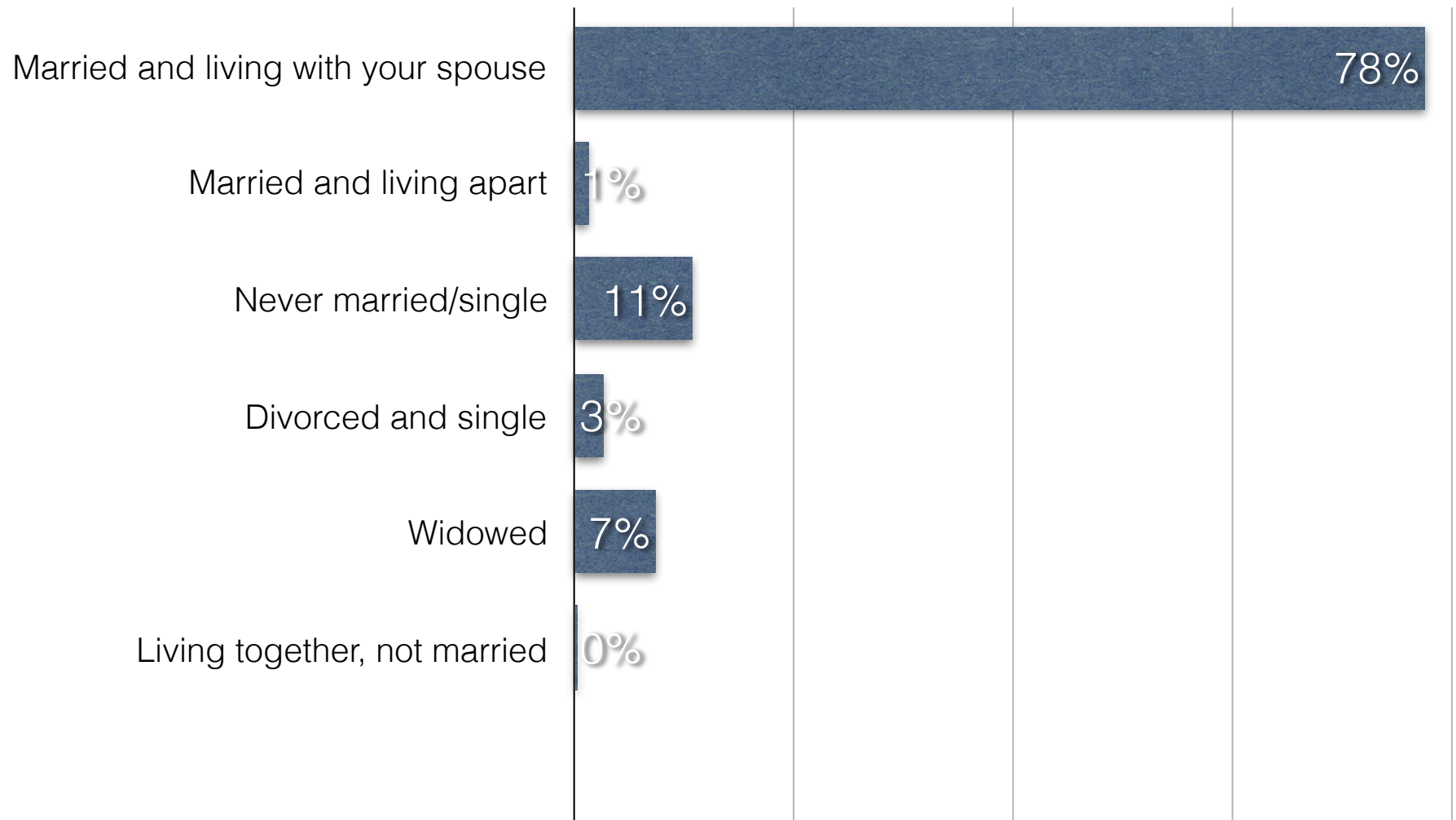
# D1. HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE IN YOUR IMMEDIATE HOUSEHOLD (INCLUDING YOURSELF)?



## D2. HOW MANY PEOPLE IN YOUR IMMEDIATE HOUSEHOLD (INCLUDING YOURSELF) OBSERVE THE SABBATH?



# D3. MARITAL STATUS





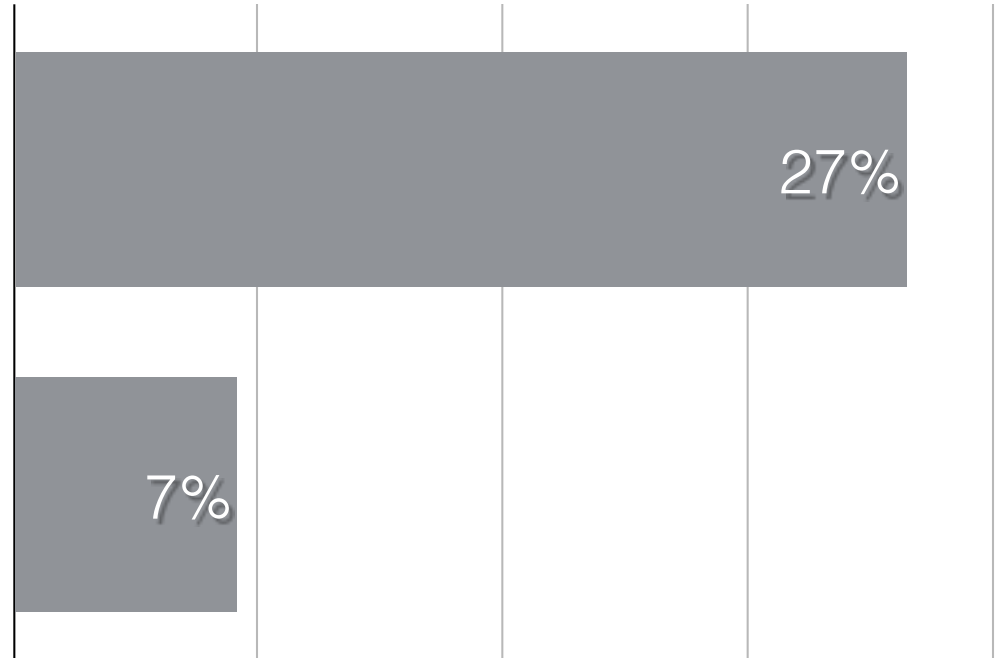
## D4. DO YOU HAVE ANY CHILDREN LIVING AT YOUR HOME?

At least one of my biological children  
is still a child or teenager living at home.

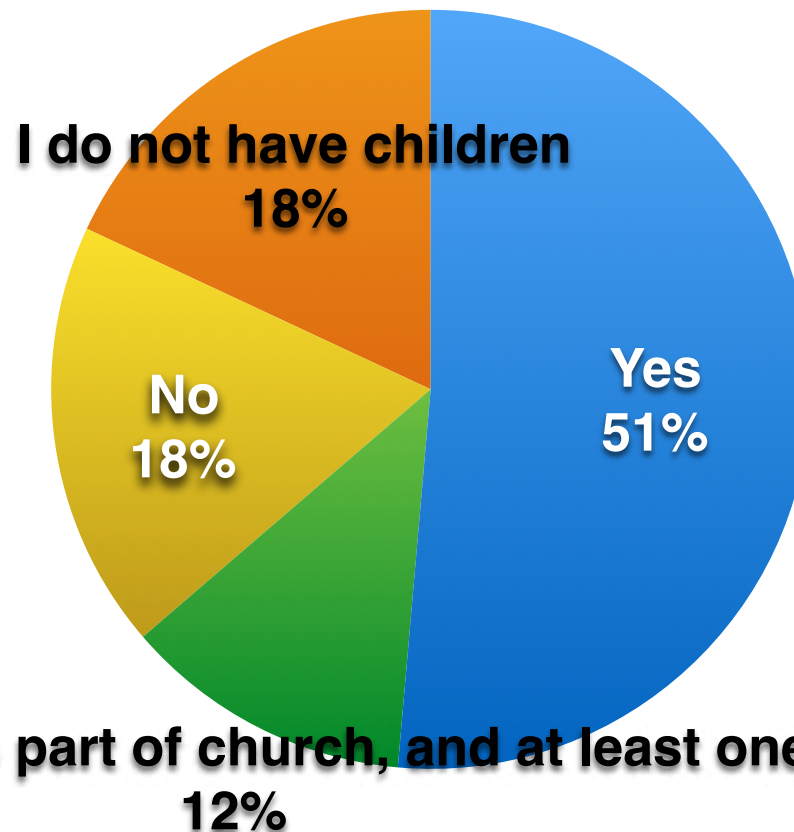
27%

There is at least one child or teenager who  
is not my biological child living in my home.

7%

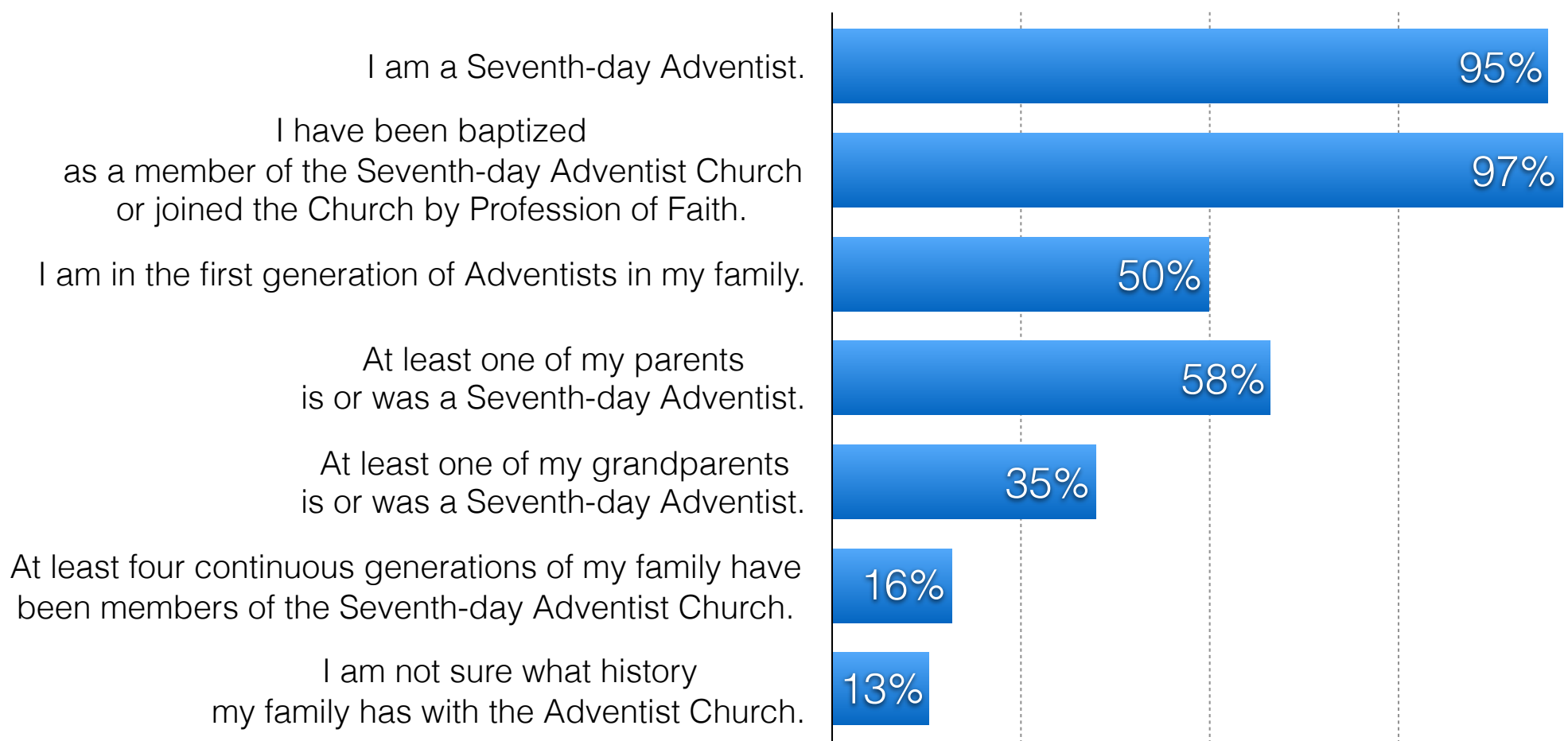


**D5. ARE ALL OF YOUR CHILDREN BEING RAISED  
IN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH OR ARE  
THEY ALL STILL MEMBERS OF THE SEVENTH-DAY  
ADVENTIST CHURCH?**

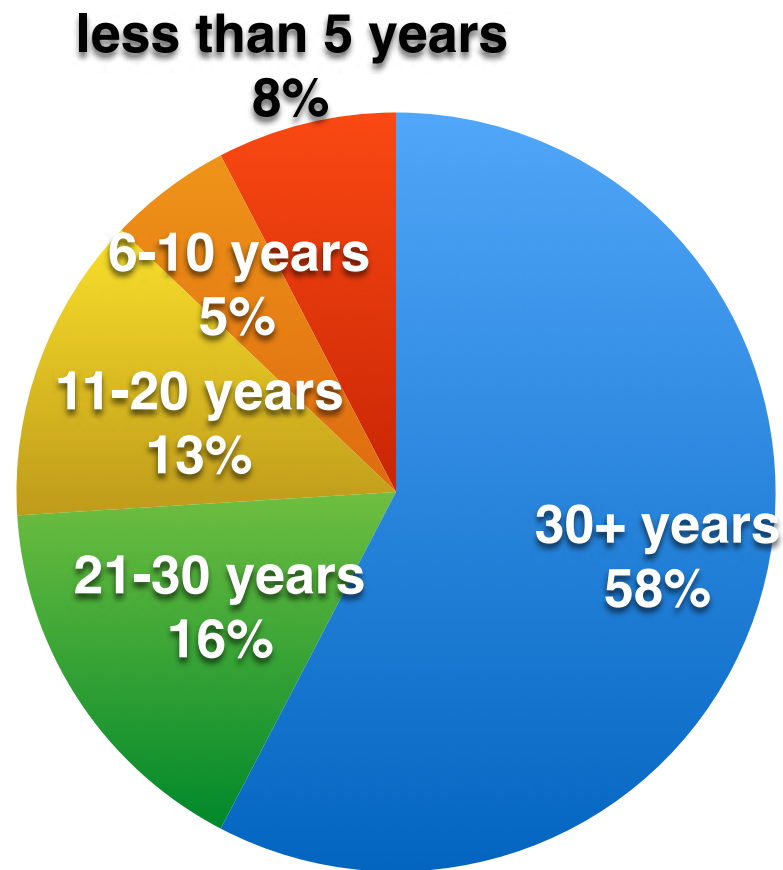


**At least one child who is part of church, and at least one who is not  
12%**

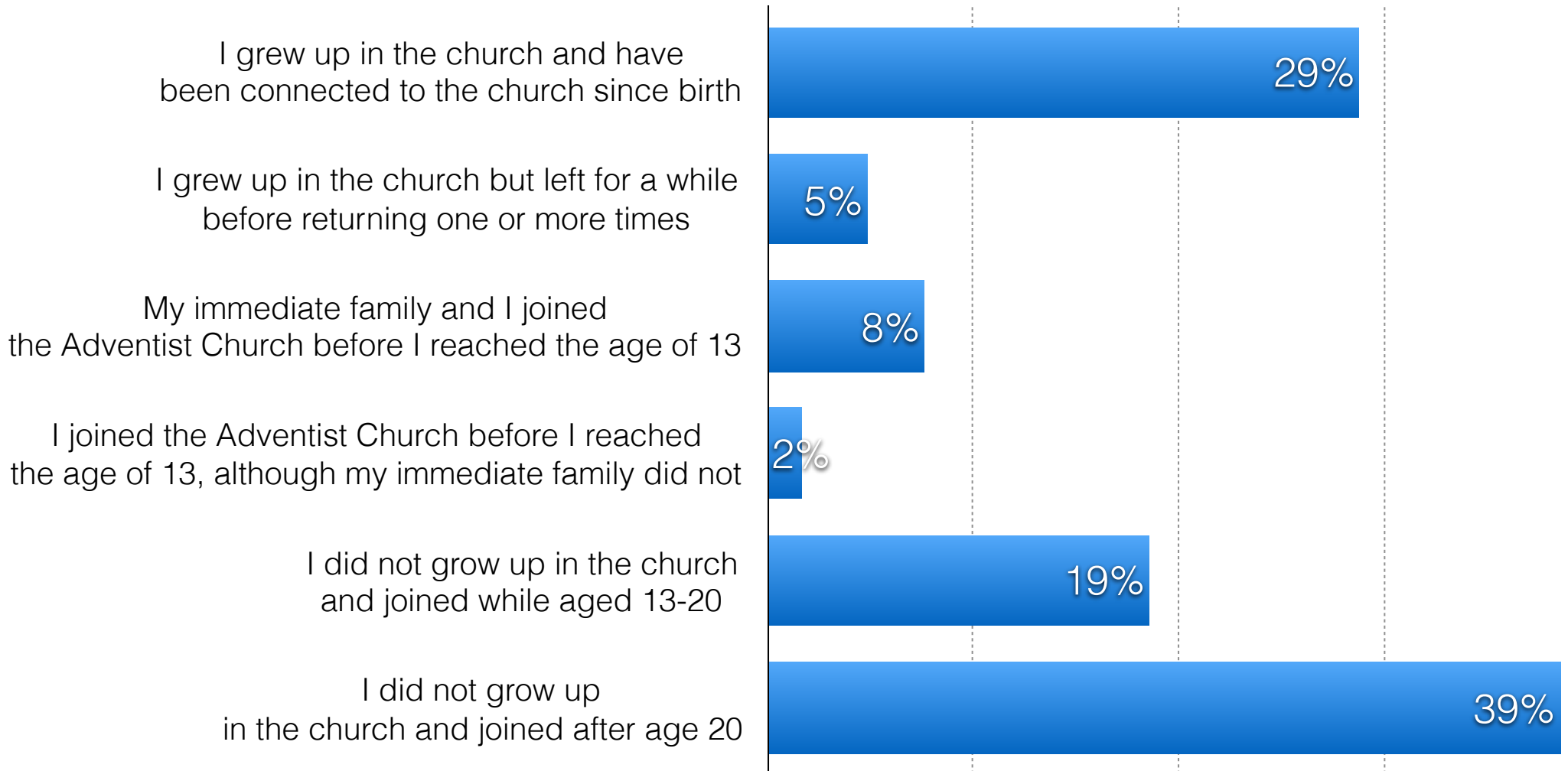
## D6. WHAT HISTORY DO YOU AND YOUR FAMILY HAVE WITH THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH?



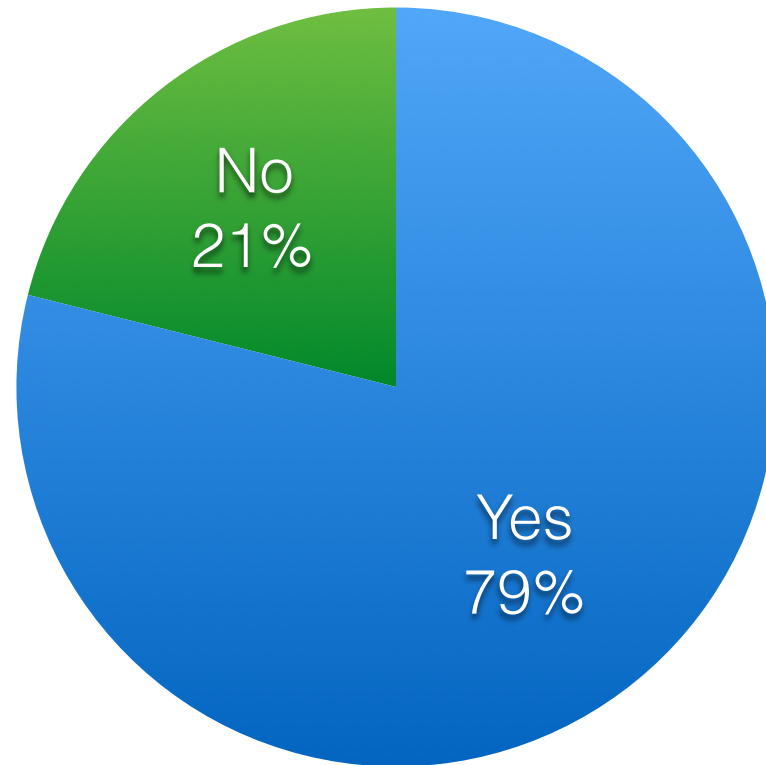
# D7.YEARS OF BEING BAPTIZED.



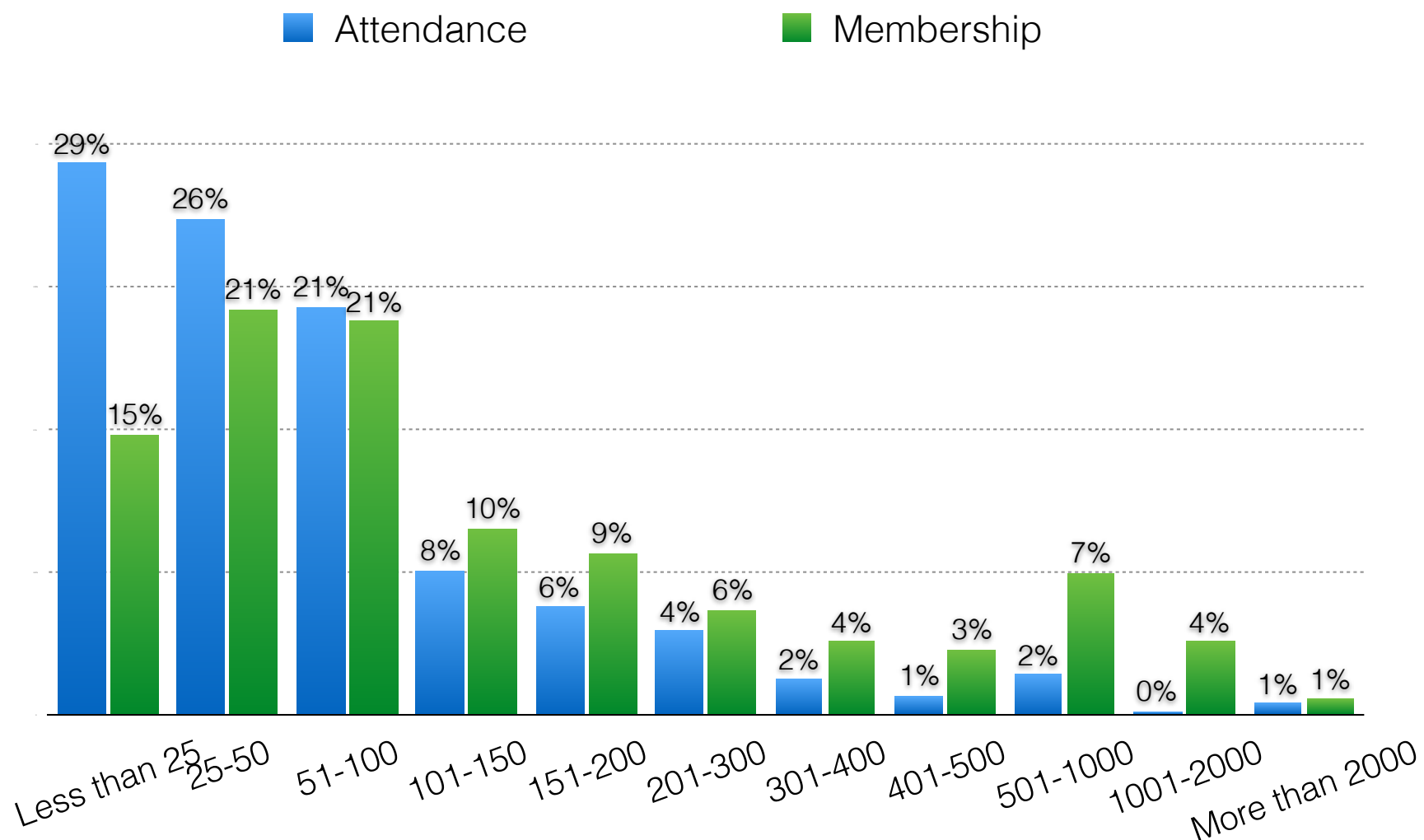
## D8. AT WHAT AGE DID YOU JOIN THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH?



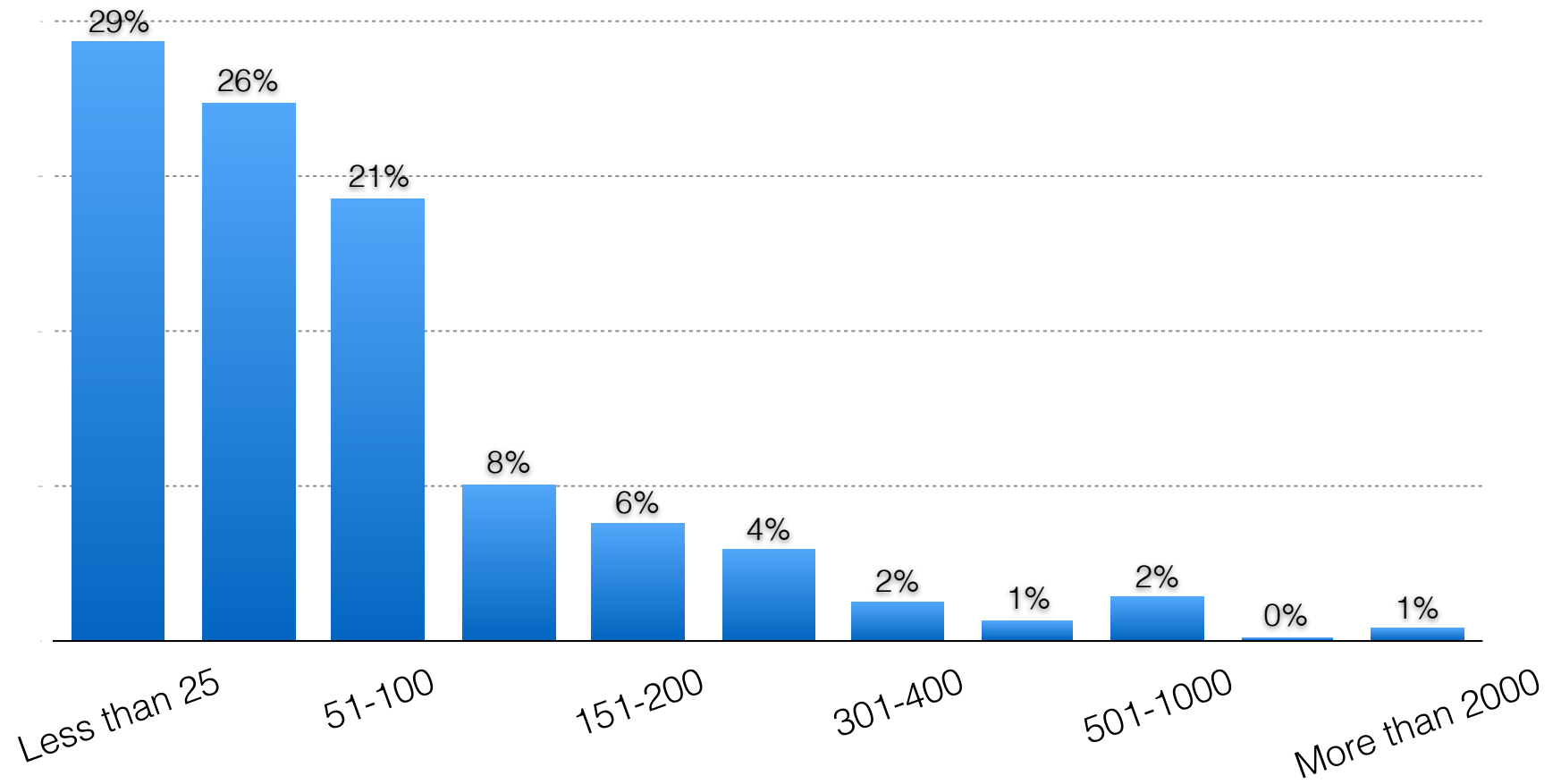
## D9. DO YOU HOLD A CHURCH OFFICE AT YOUR LOCAL CHURCH?



# D10 & D11. CHURCH ATTENDANCE AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

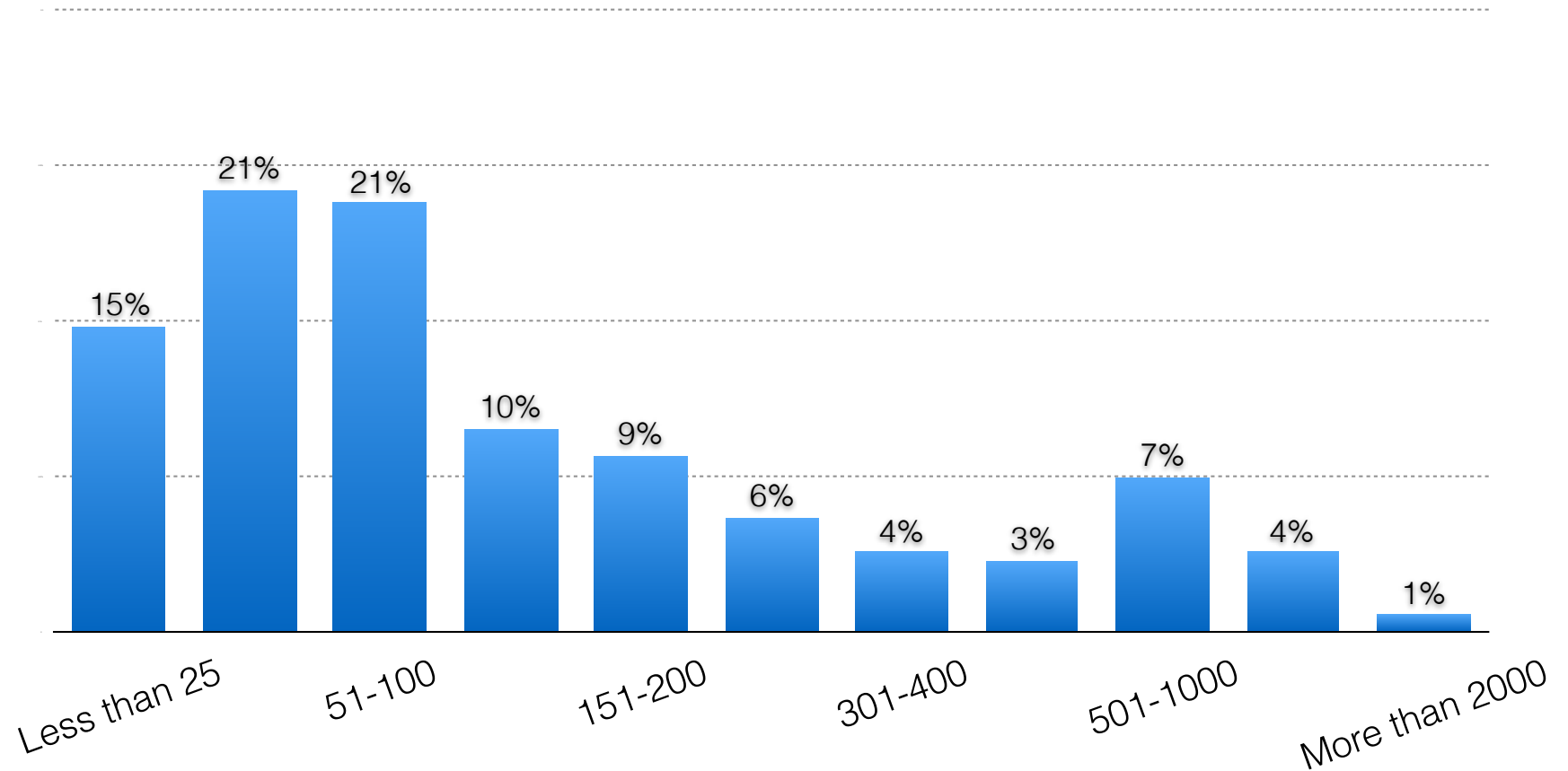


# D10. CHURCH ATTENDANCE

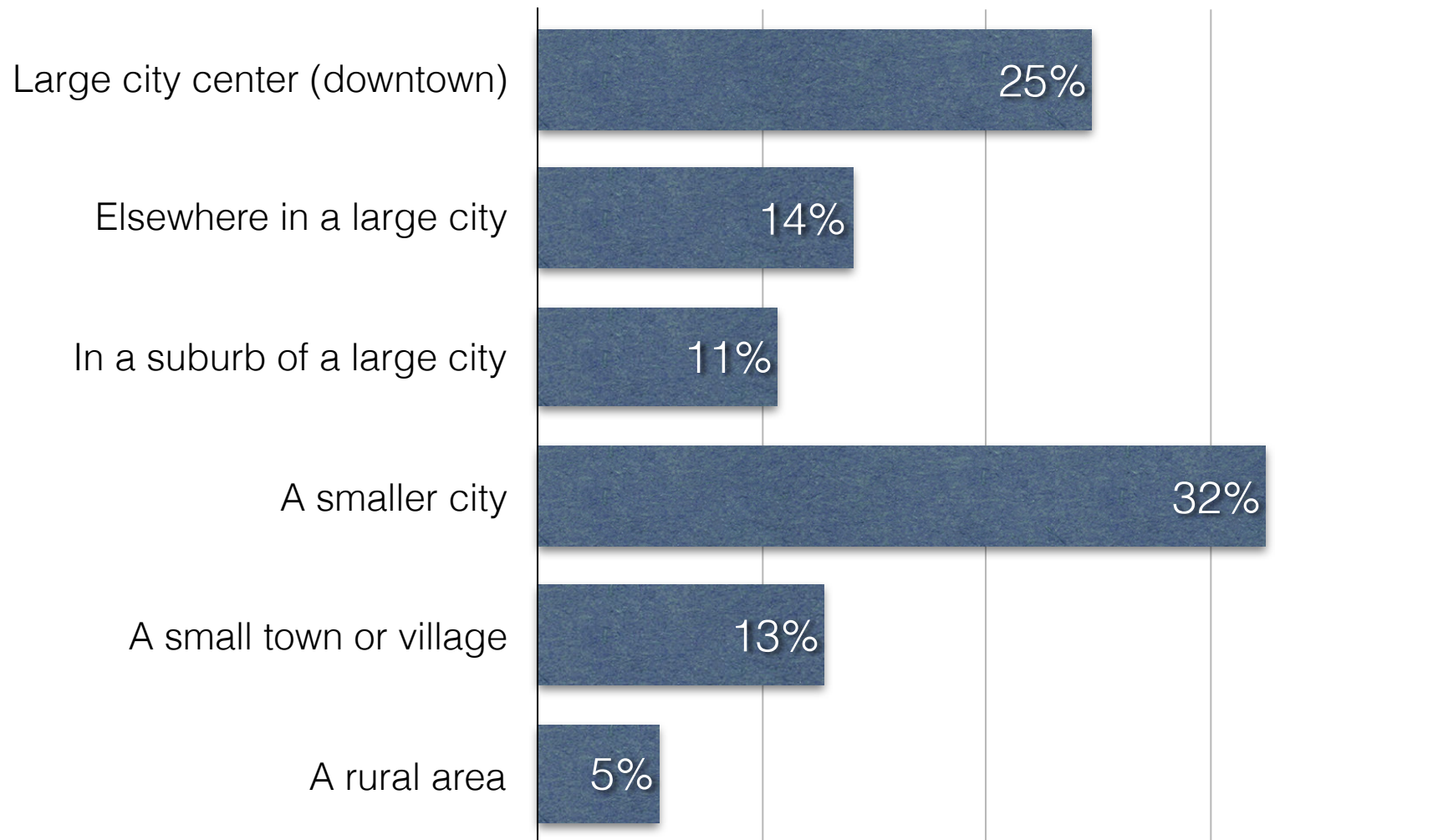




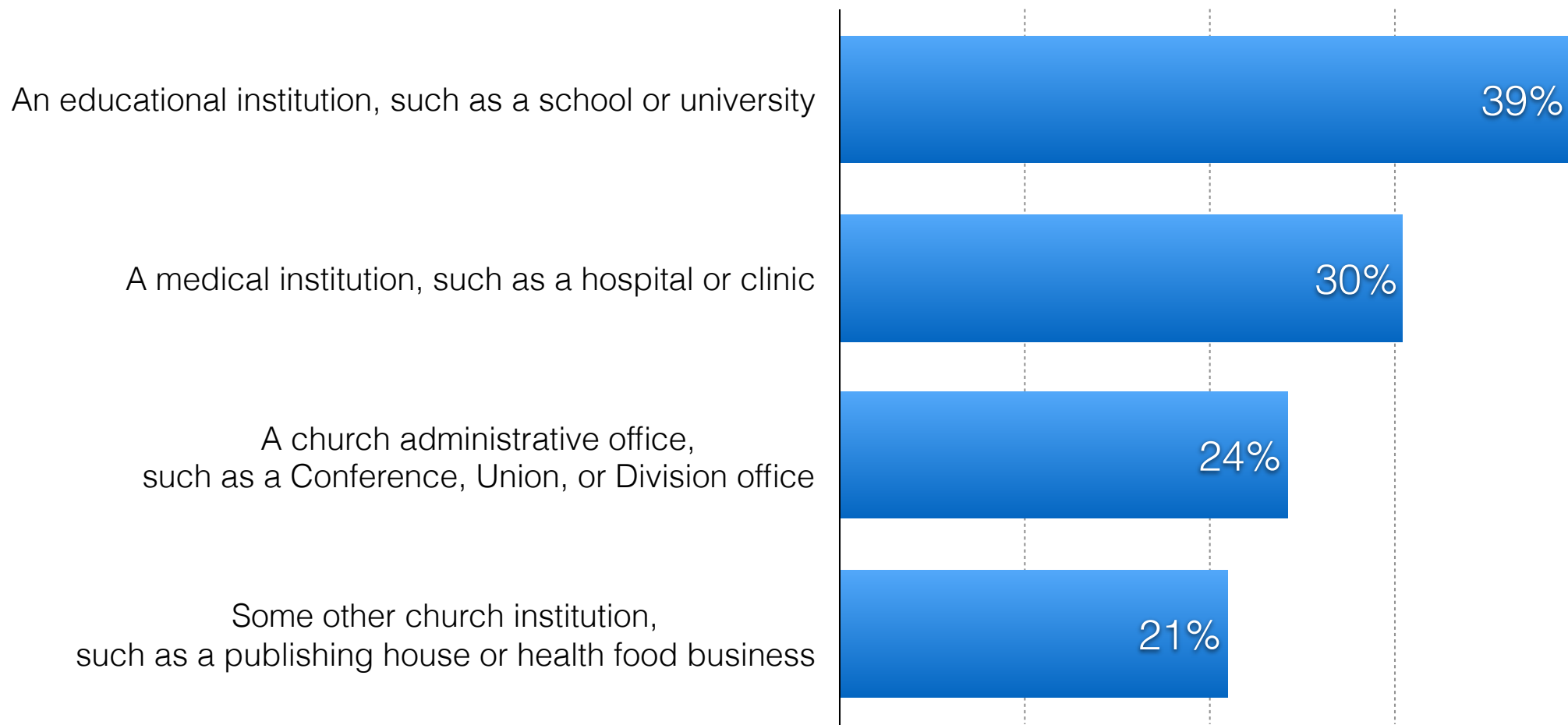
# D11. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP



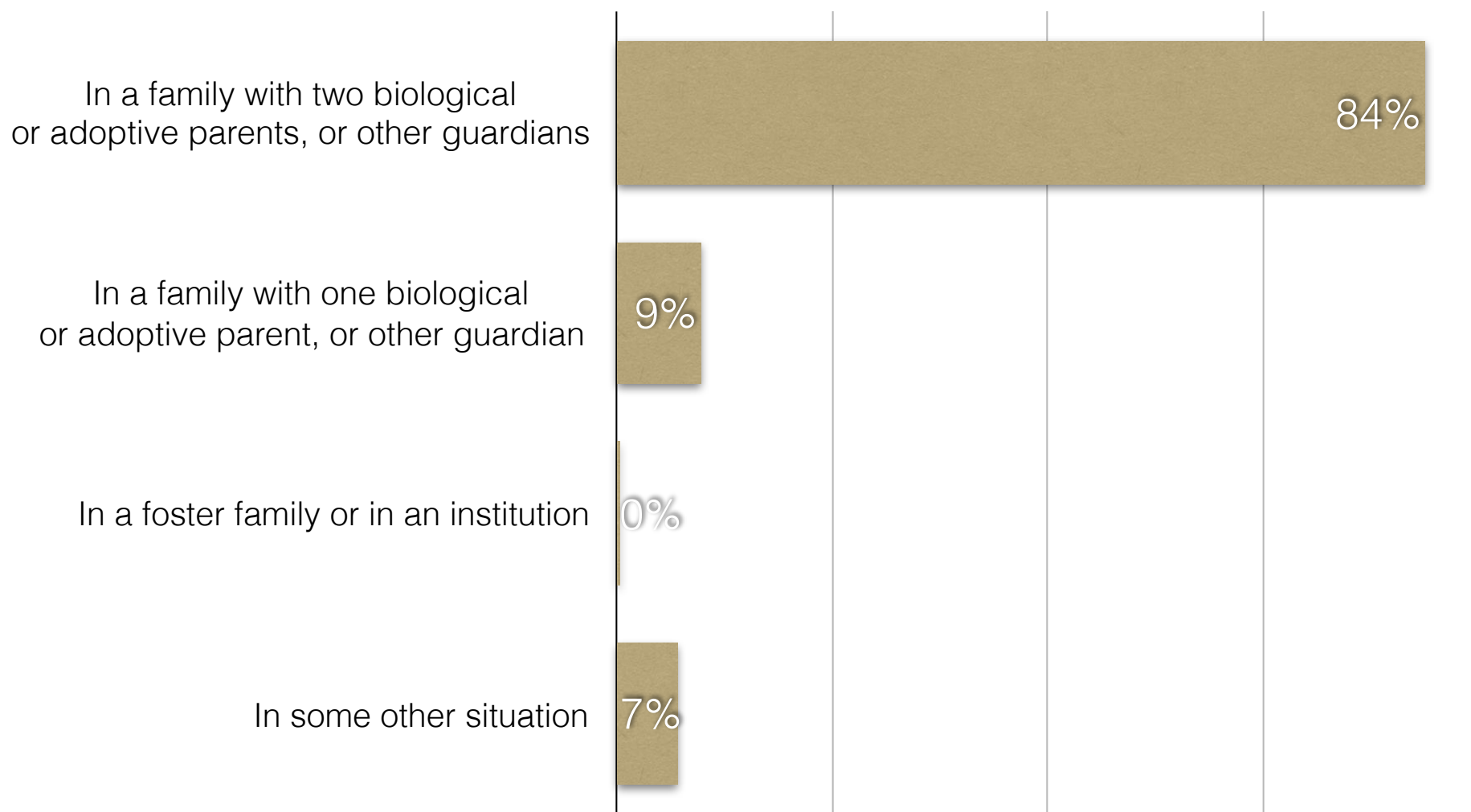
## D12. WHAT IS THE SETTING WHERE THE CHURCH IS LOCATED?



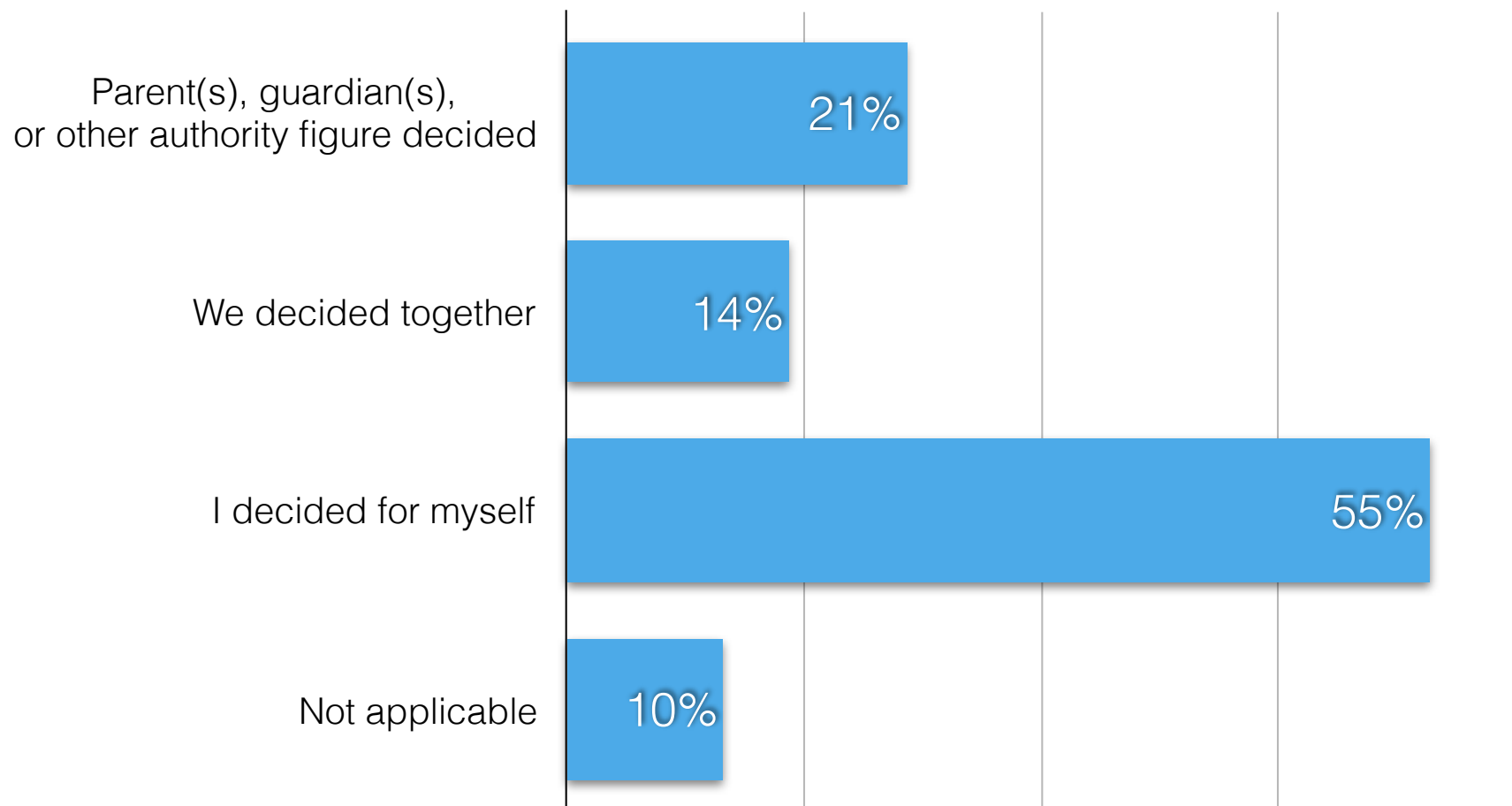
# D13. IS YOUR CHURCH LOCATED NEAR ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ADVENTIST INSTITUTIONS?



# D14. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES THE FAMILY SITUATION IN WHICH YOU GREW UP?



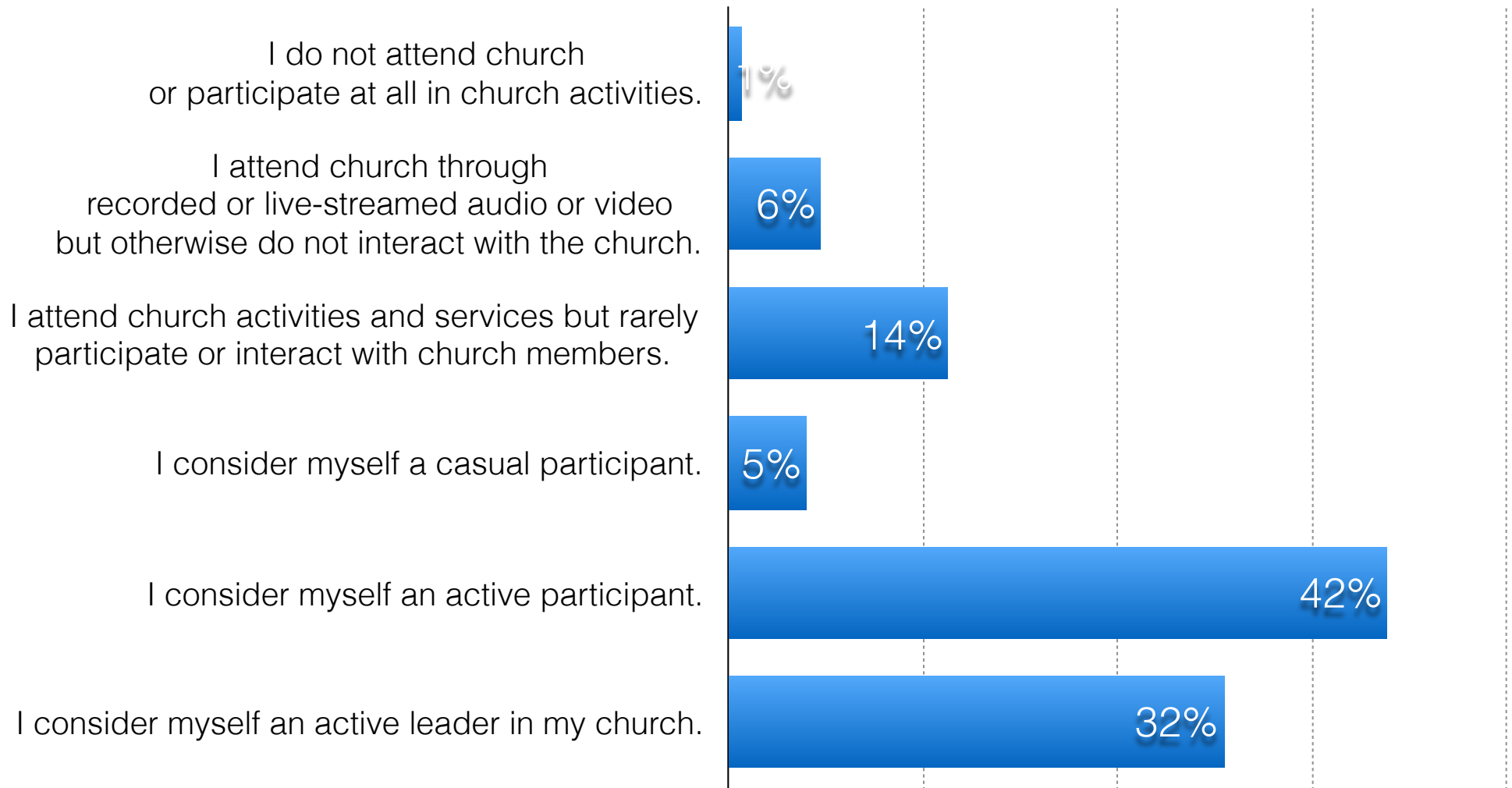
**D15. WHEN YOU WERE A TEENAGER, BEFORE YOU LEFT HOME, HOW WERE DECISIONS USUALLY MADE ABOUT THE MUSIC TO WHICH YOU LISTENED, THE MEDIA (TELEVISION, MOVIES, OR WEBSITES) THAT YOU VIEWED, THE TIME THAT YOU WENT TO BED, OR THE FRIENDS WITH WHOM YOU SPENT TIME.**



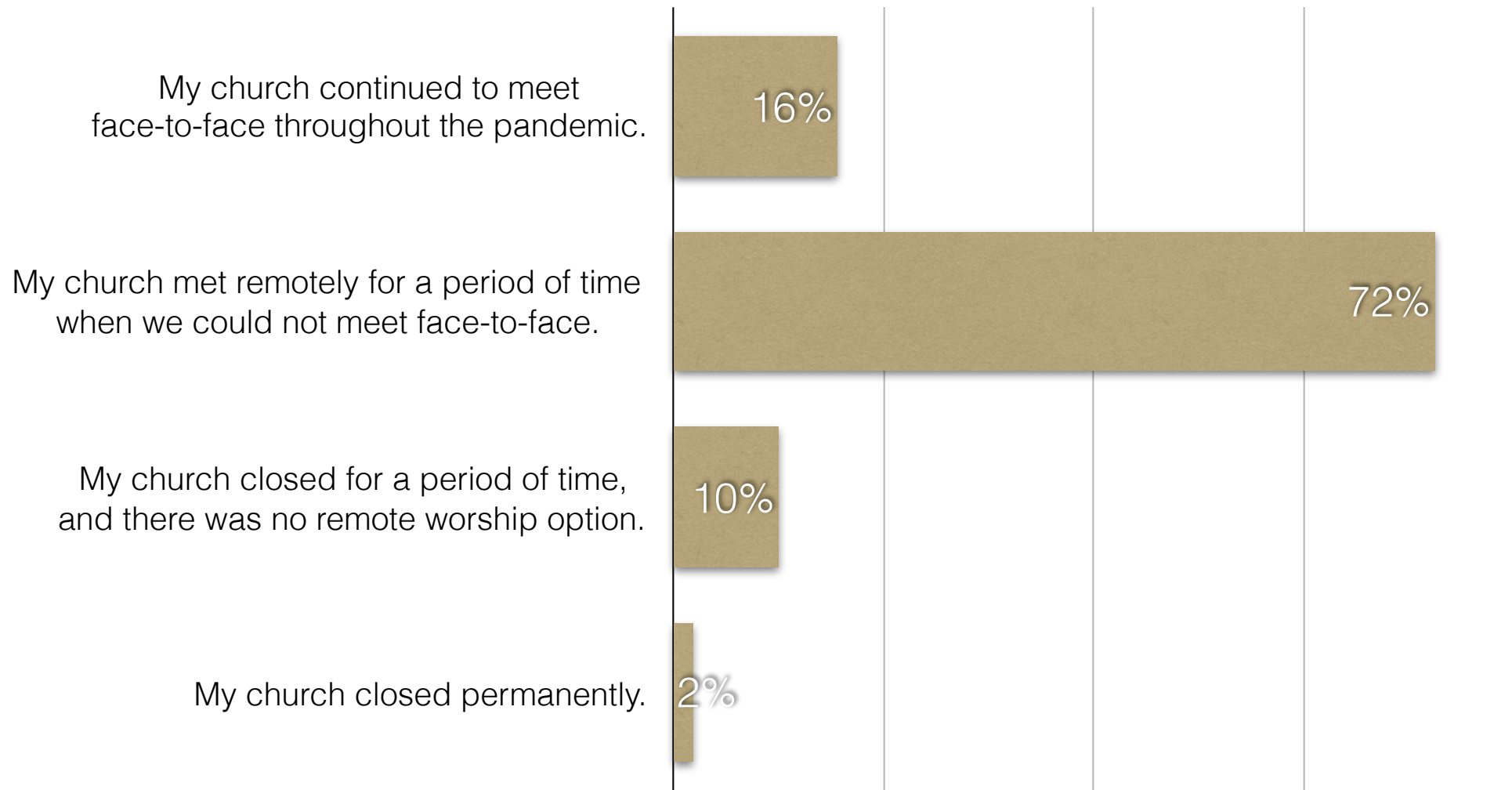
**D16. THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC HAS CHANGED THE WAY THAT SOME PEOPLE PARTICIPATE WITH THEIR CHURCH. THINK BACK TO A TIME JUST BEFORE THE PANDEMIC STARTED IN LATE 2019. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN YOUR LOCAL CHURCH BEFORE THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC?**



# D17. HOW WOULD YOU CURRENTLY DESCRIBE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN YOUR LOCAL CHURCH?

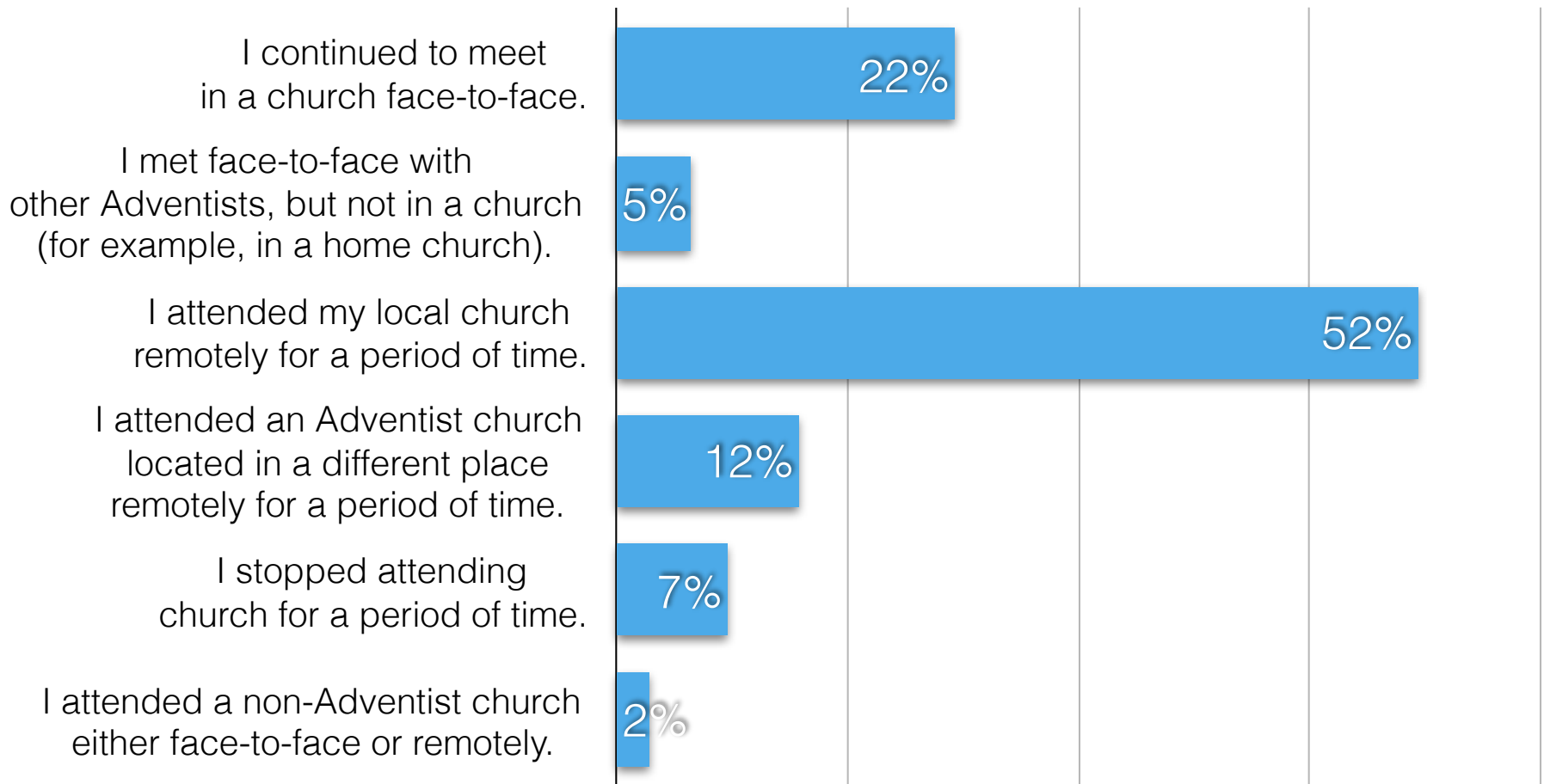


# D18. DURING THE PANDEMIC, WHAT HAPPENED TO WORSHIP SERVICES AT THE CHURCH THAT YOU ATTENDED?

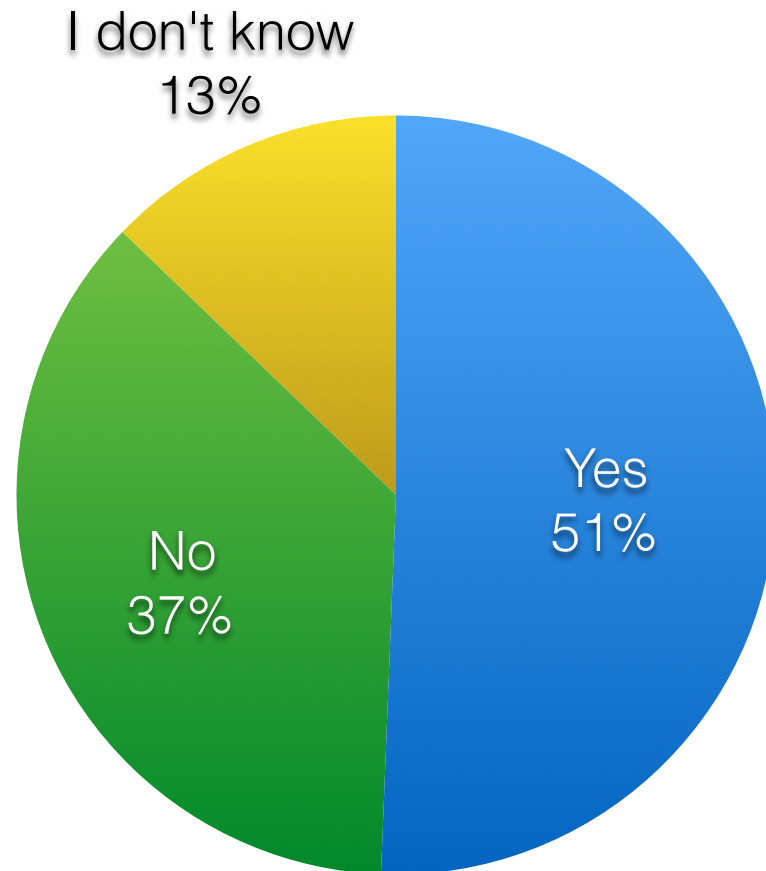




# D19. DURING THE PANDEMIC, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR WORSHIP EXPERIENCE?

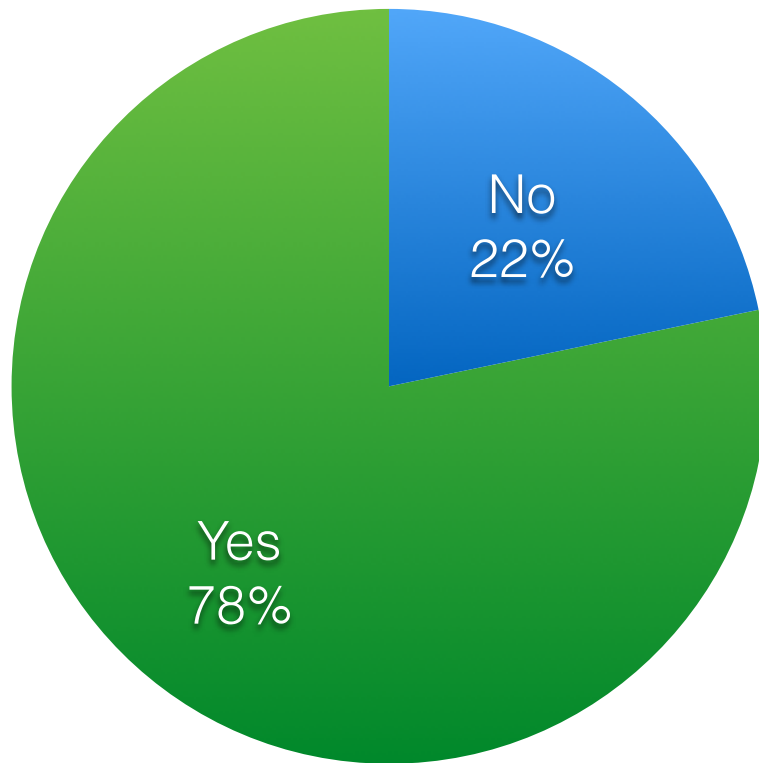


**D20. DID YOUR CHURCH DEVELOP  
ANY NEW MINISTRIES DURING OR AS  
A RESULT OF THE PANDEMIC?**

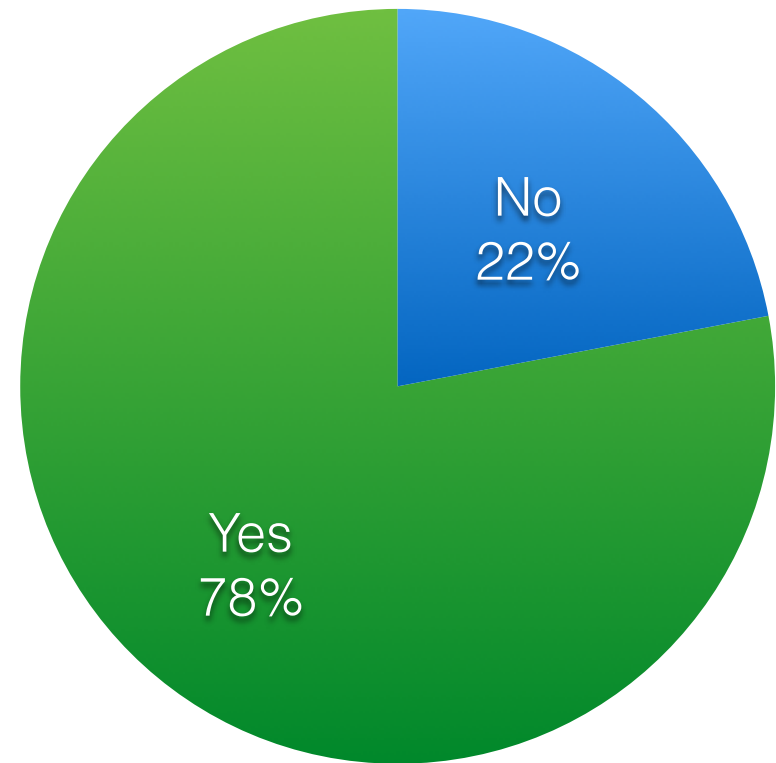


**D21.DURING ANY PERIOD OF TIME IN WHICH YOU WERE UNABLE TO MEET ON-SITE WITH YOUR LOCAL CHURCH DUE TO THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC, WERE YOU PROVIDED WITH ONE OR MORE METHODS (ELECTRONIC OR OTHERWISE) THAT ENABLED YOU TO CONTINUE YOUR USUAL PATTERN OF ...**

**RETURNING TITHE?**

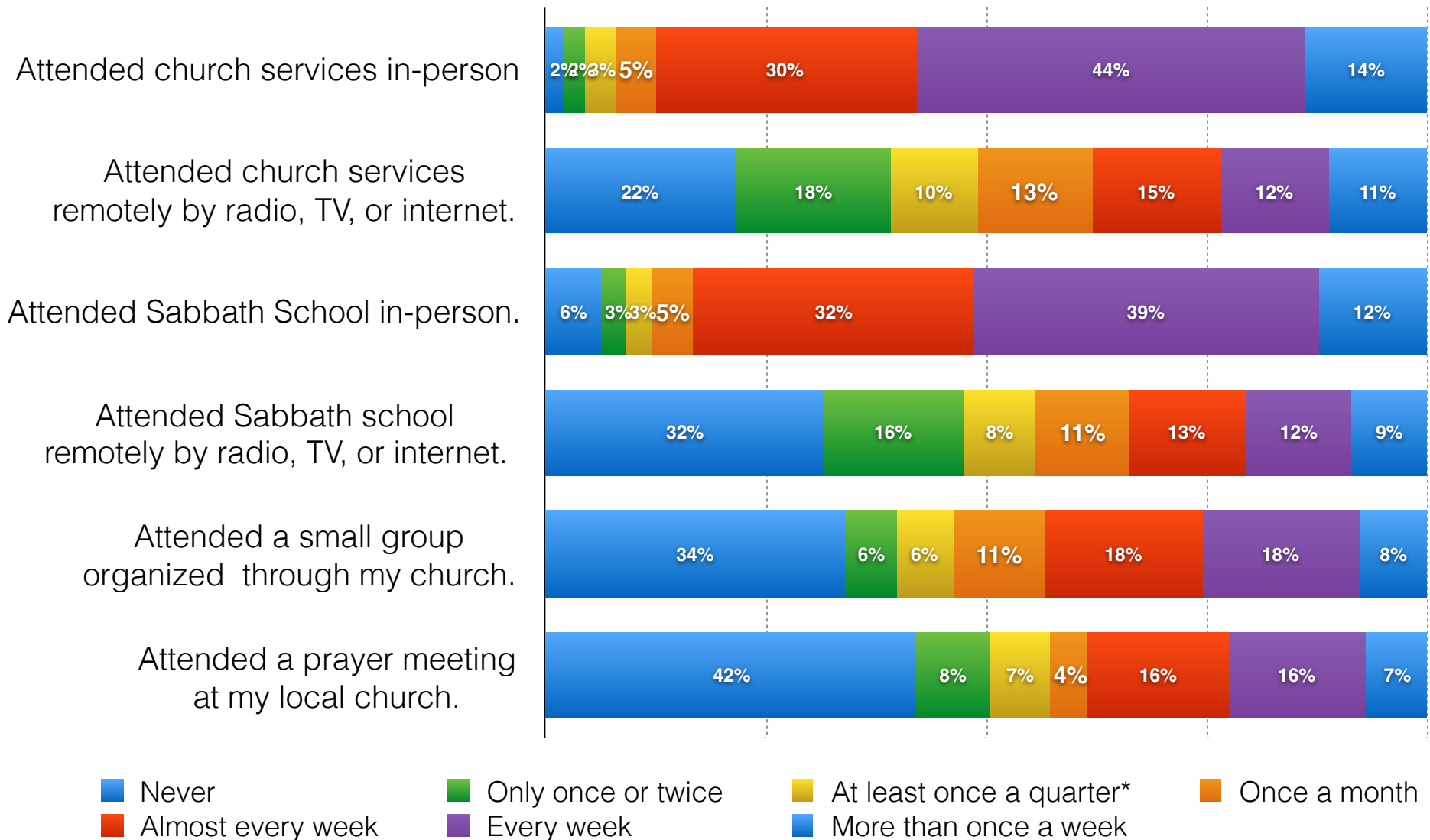


**GIVING OFFERINGS?**

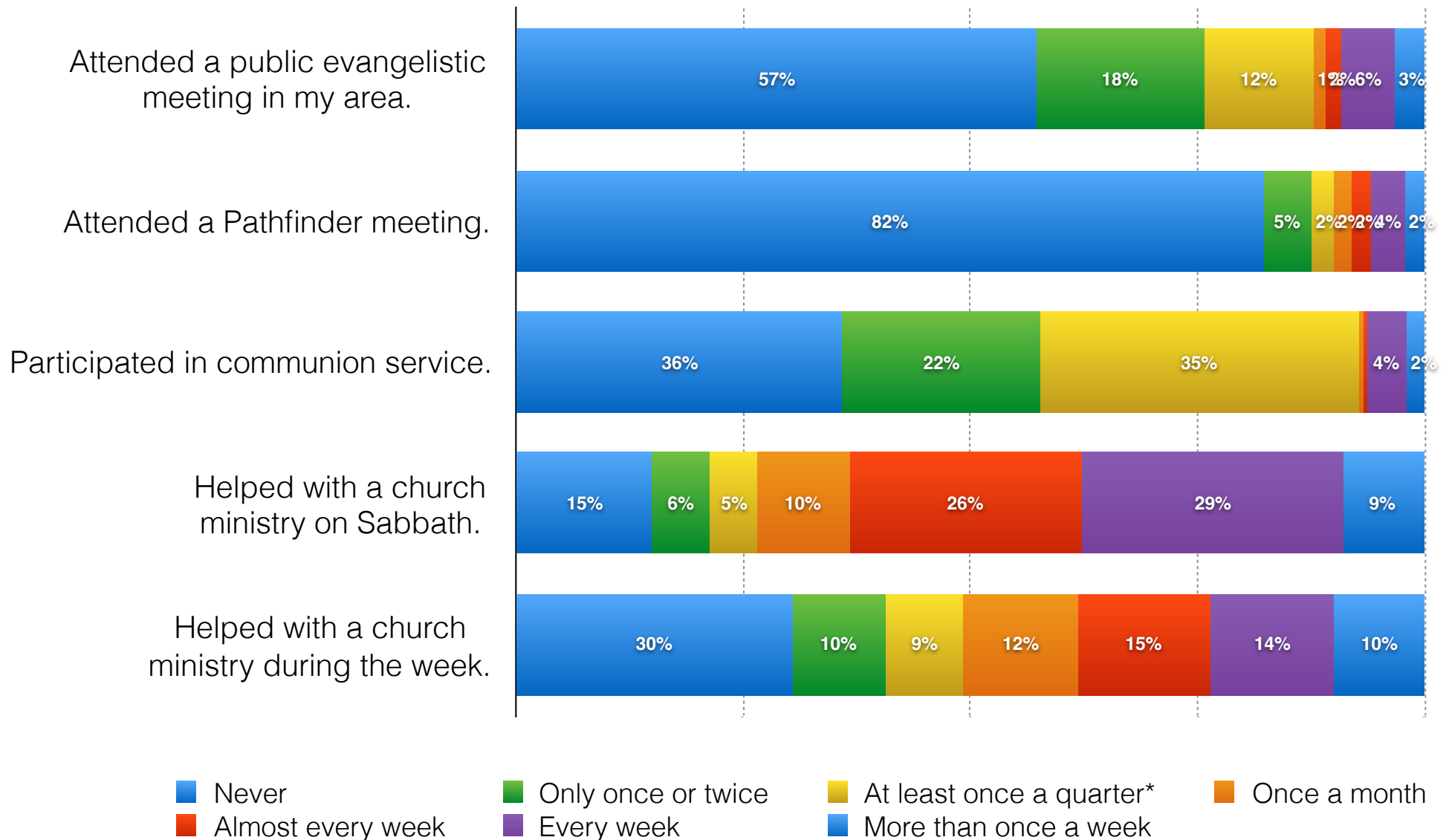


**RELIGIOUS  
BEHAVIORS AND  
ROLES**

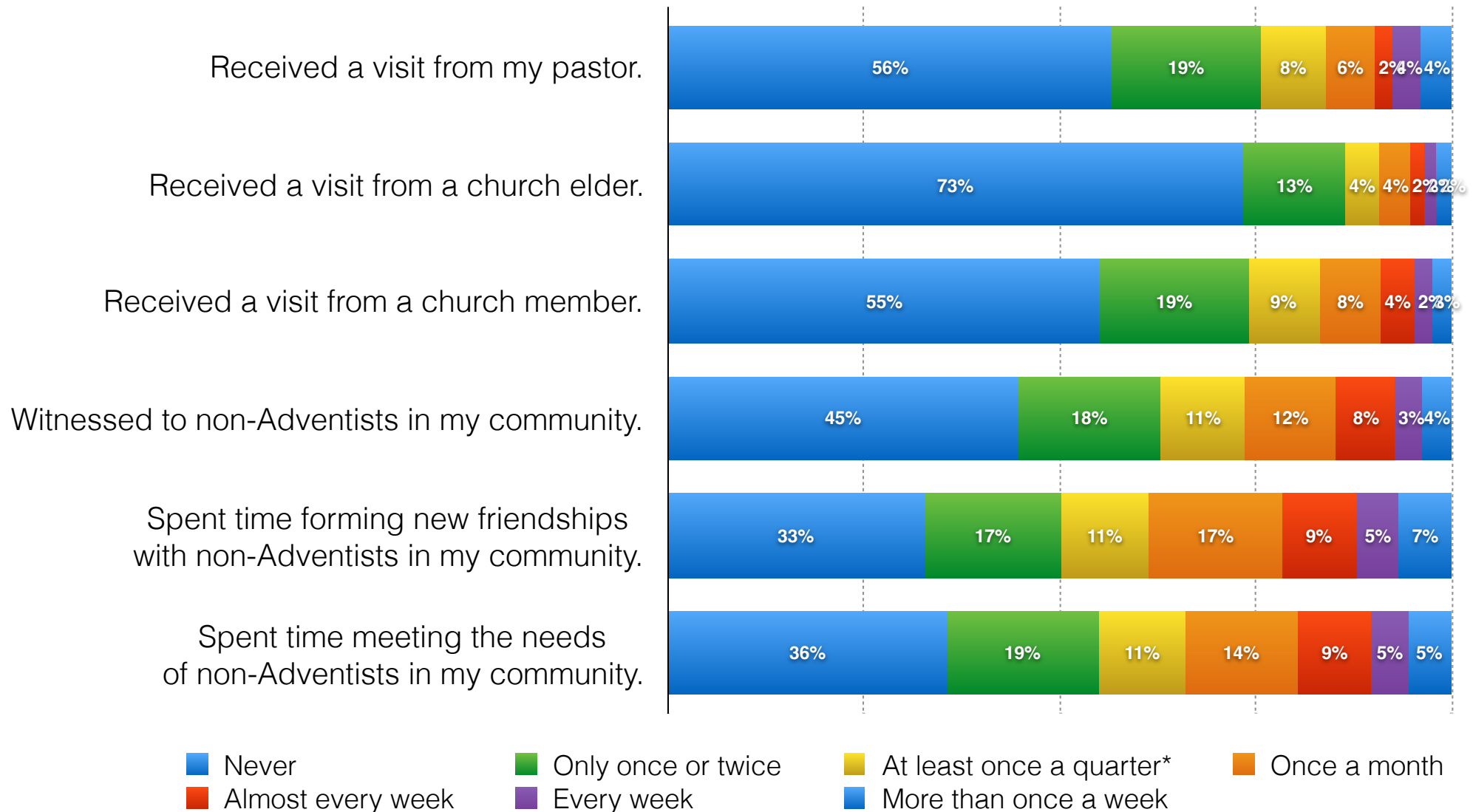
# R1A. HOW OFTEN IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS DID YOU ENGAGE IN THE ACTIVITIES LISTED BELOW?



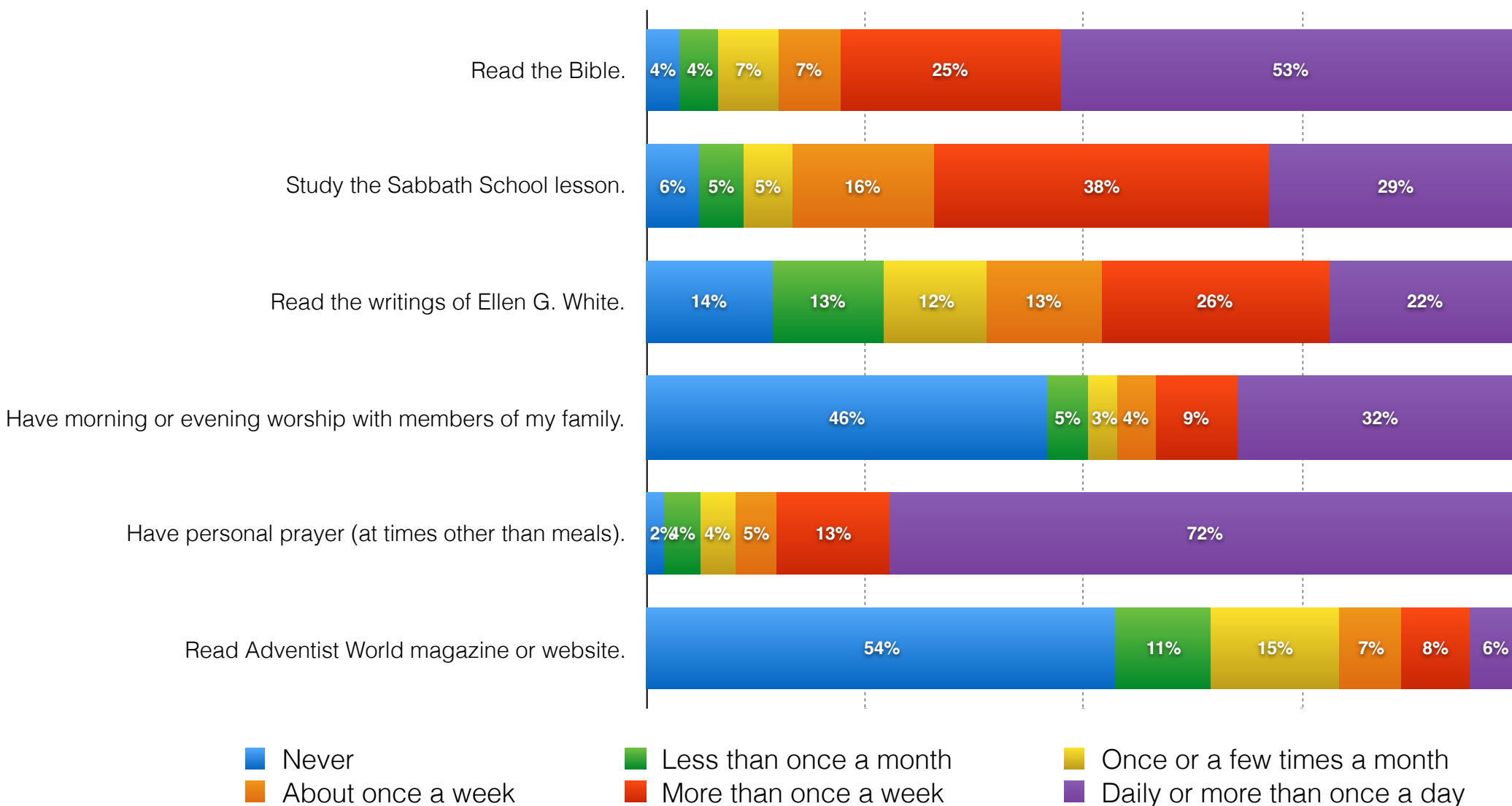
# R1B. HOW OFTEN IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS DID YOU ENGAGE IN THE ACTIVITIES LISTED BELOW?



# R1c. HOW OFTEN IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS DID YOU ENGAGE IN THE ACTIVITIES LISTED BELOW?

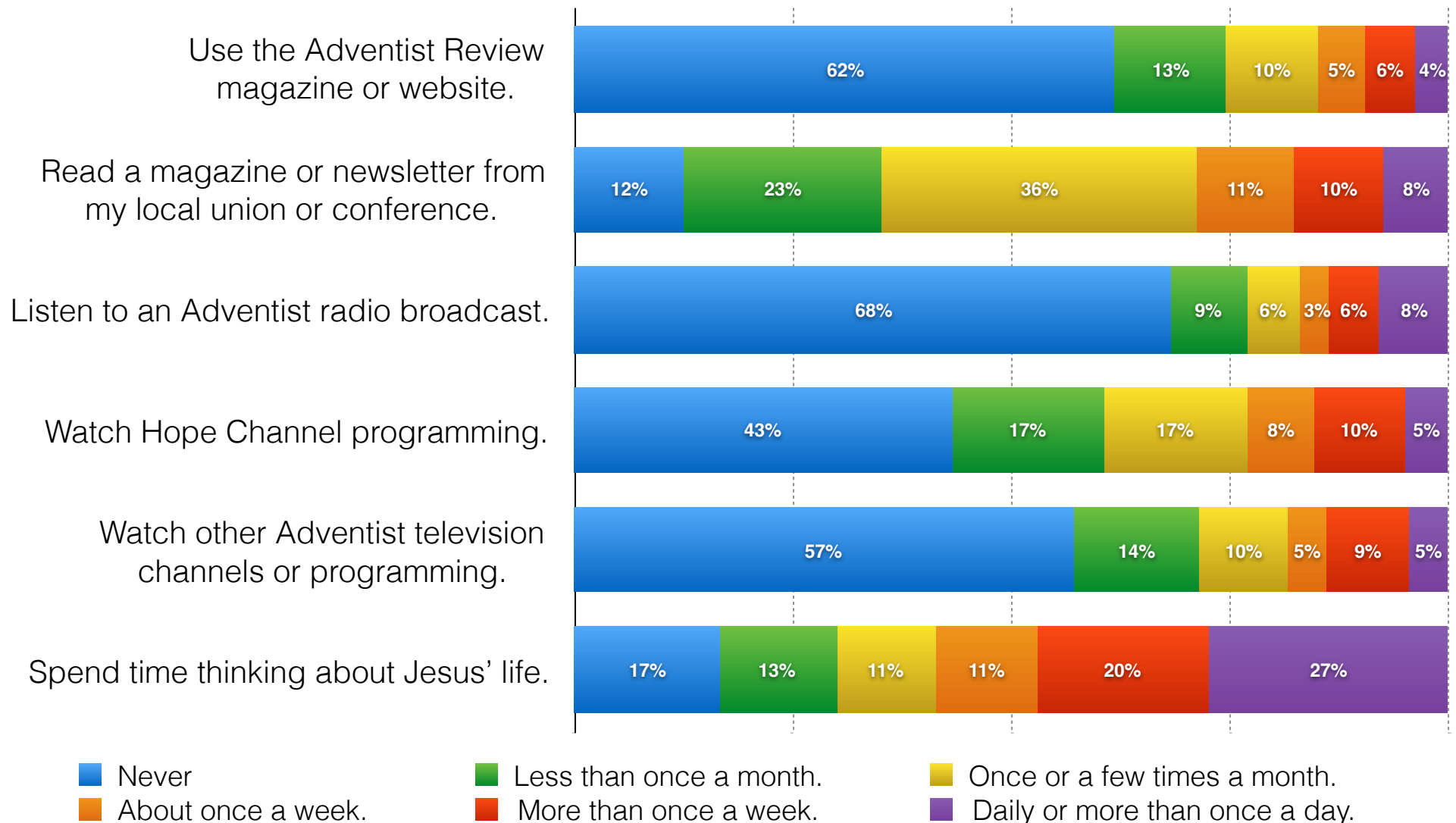


# R2A. HOW OFTEN DO YOU ENGAGE IN THE ACTIVITIES LISTED BELOW?

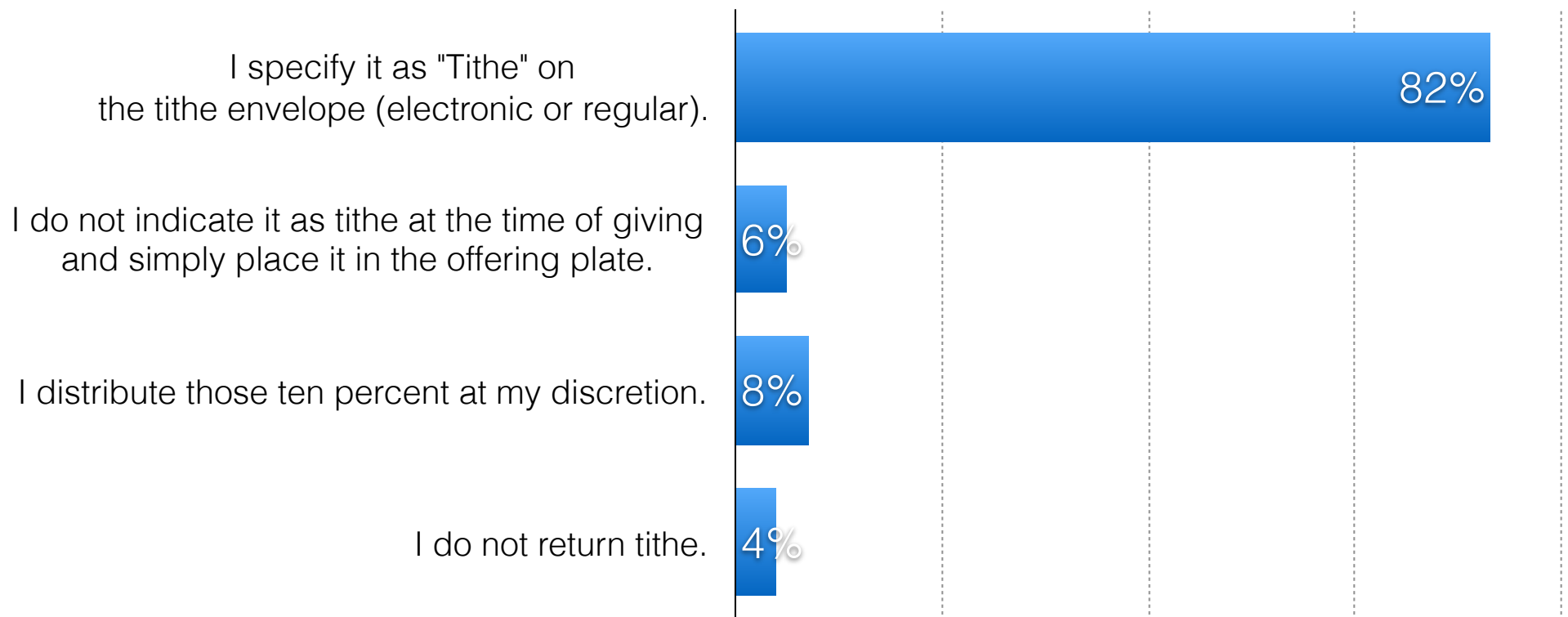




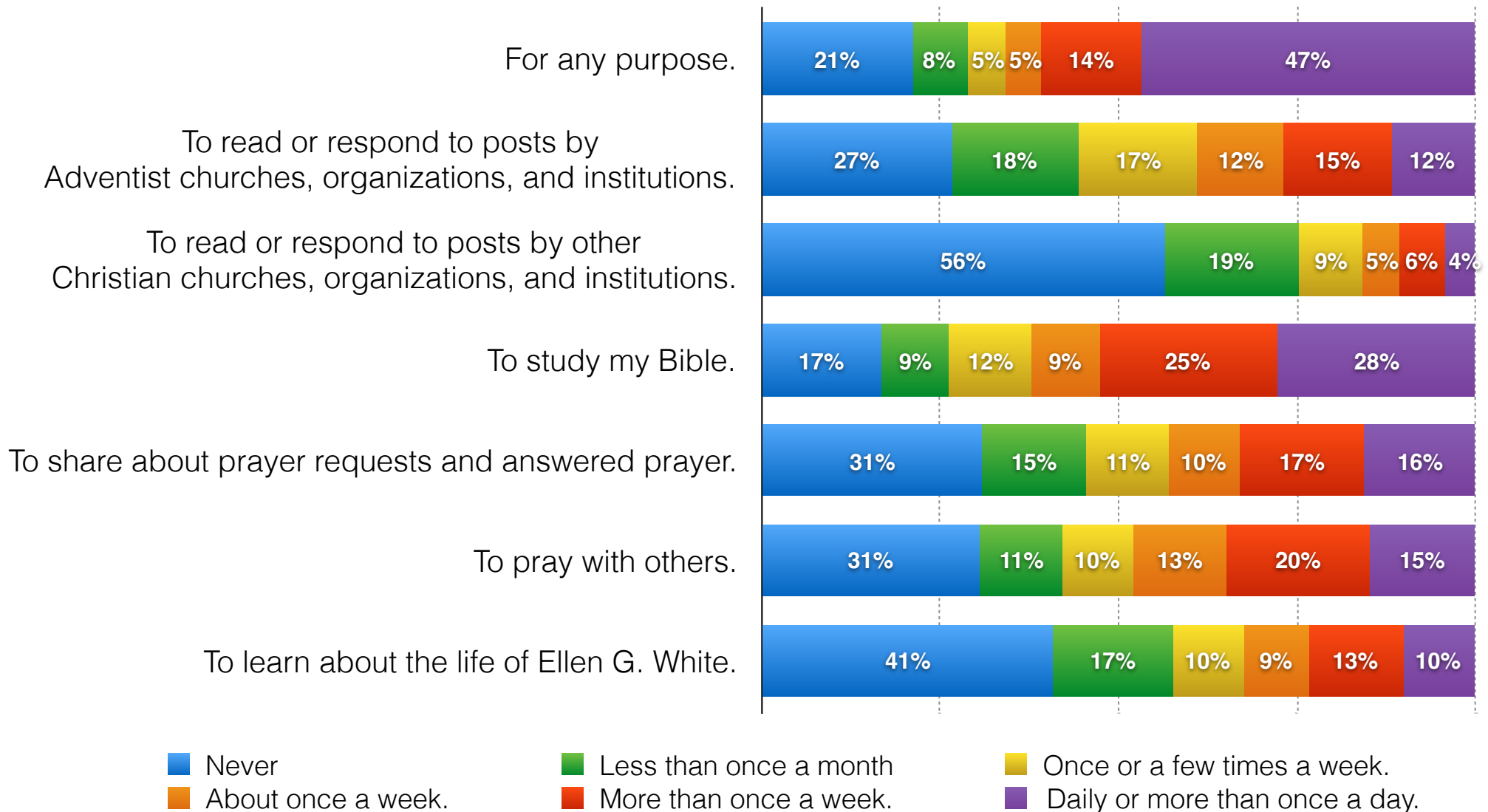
# R2B. HOW OFTEN DO YOU ENGAGE IN THE ACTIVITIES LISTED BELOW?



### **R3. WHEN YOU RETURN TITHE, WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTIONS BEST FITS THE WAY THAT YOU RETURN TITHE?**



# R4A. HOW OFTEN DO YOU ENGAGE IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES LISTED BELOW?



# R4B. HOW OFTEN DO YOU ENGAGE IN THE SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES LISTED BELOW?

To read and connect to the writings of Ellen G. White.

To help advance the mission of  
the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

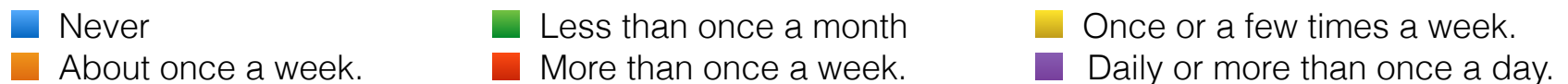
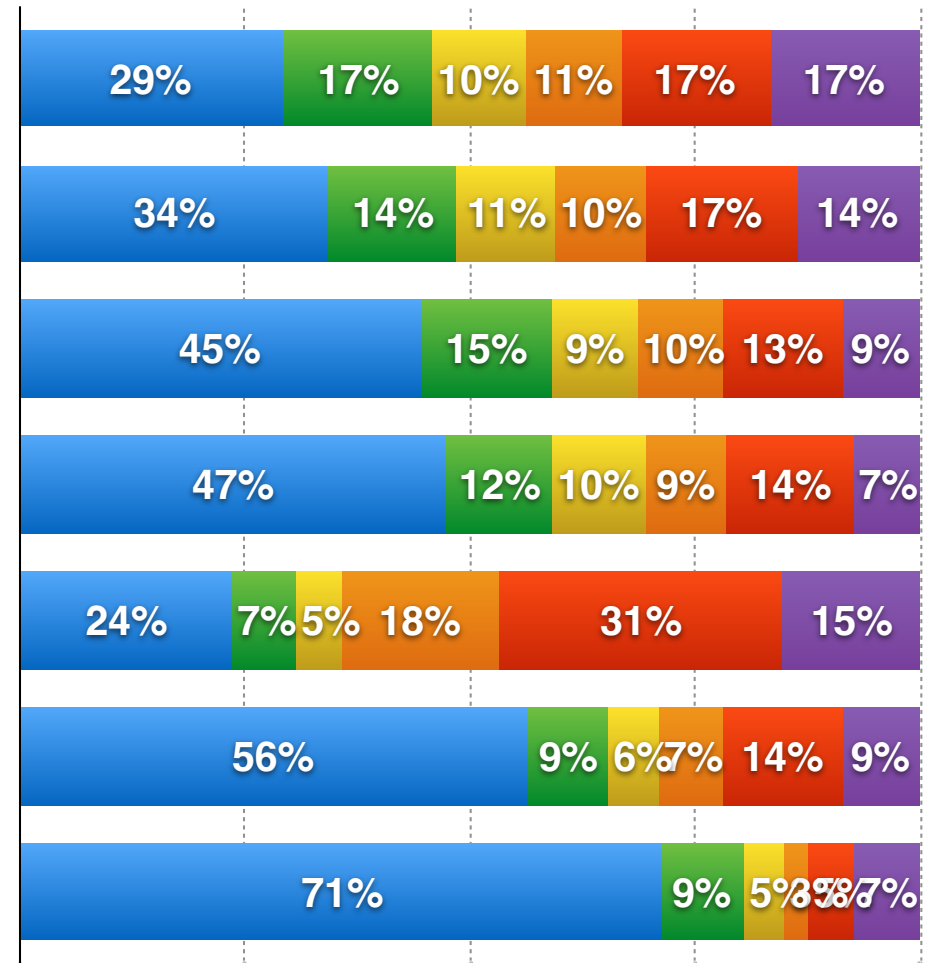
To learn about religious topics that pastors or  
Sabbath School teachers have not talked about.

To share Bible studies with family, friends,  
or other people in my social network.

To attend church.

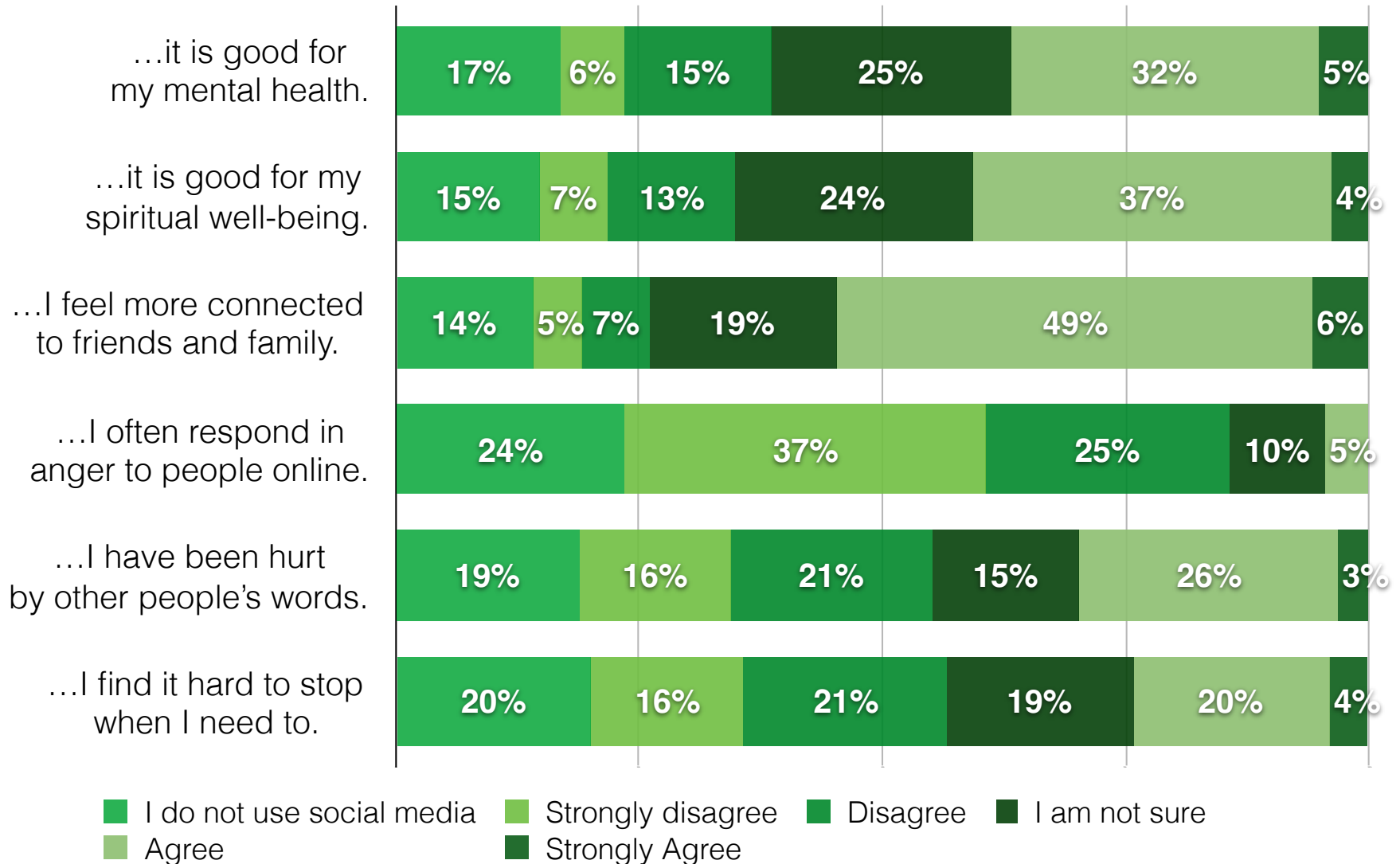
To worship with other believers  
(other than for a church service).

As a distraction from  
other activities that I should be doing.

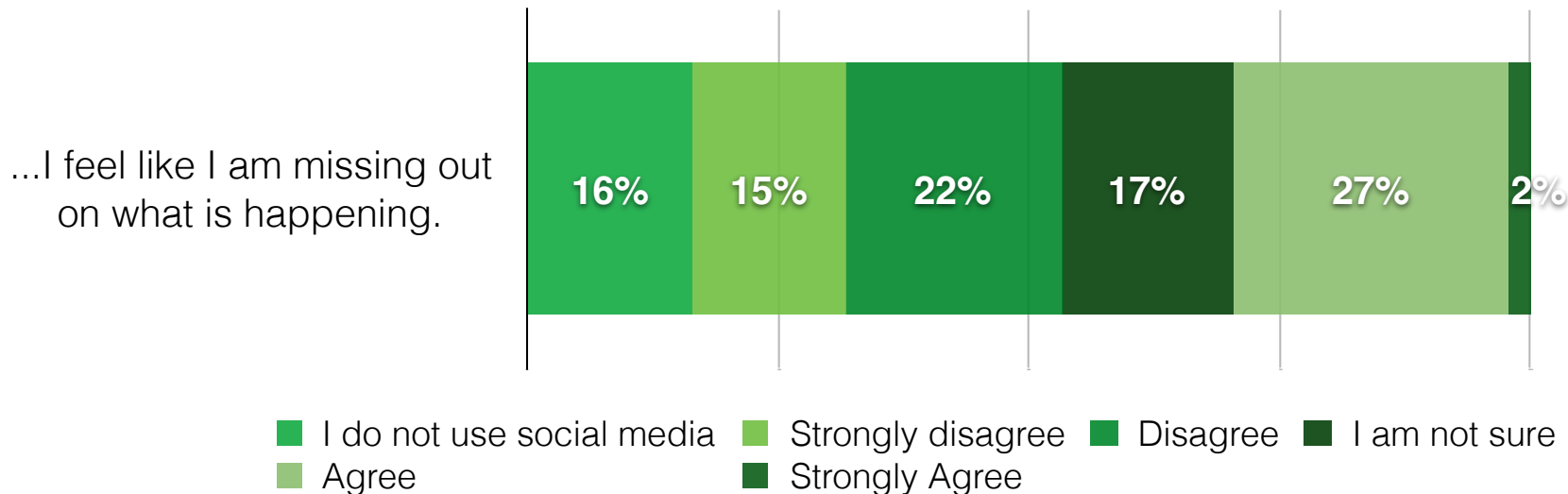


**R5. PLEASE INDICATE HOW MUCH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA USE.**

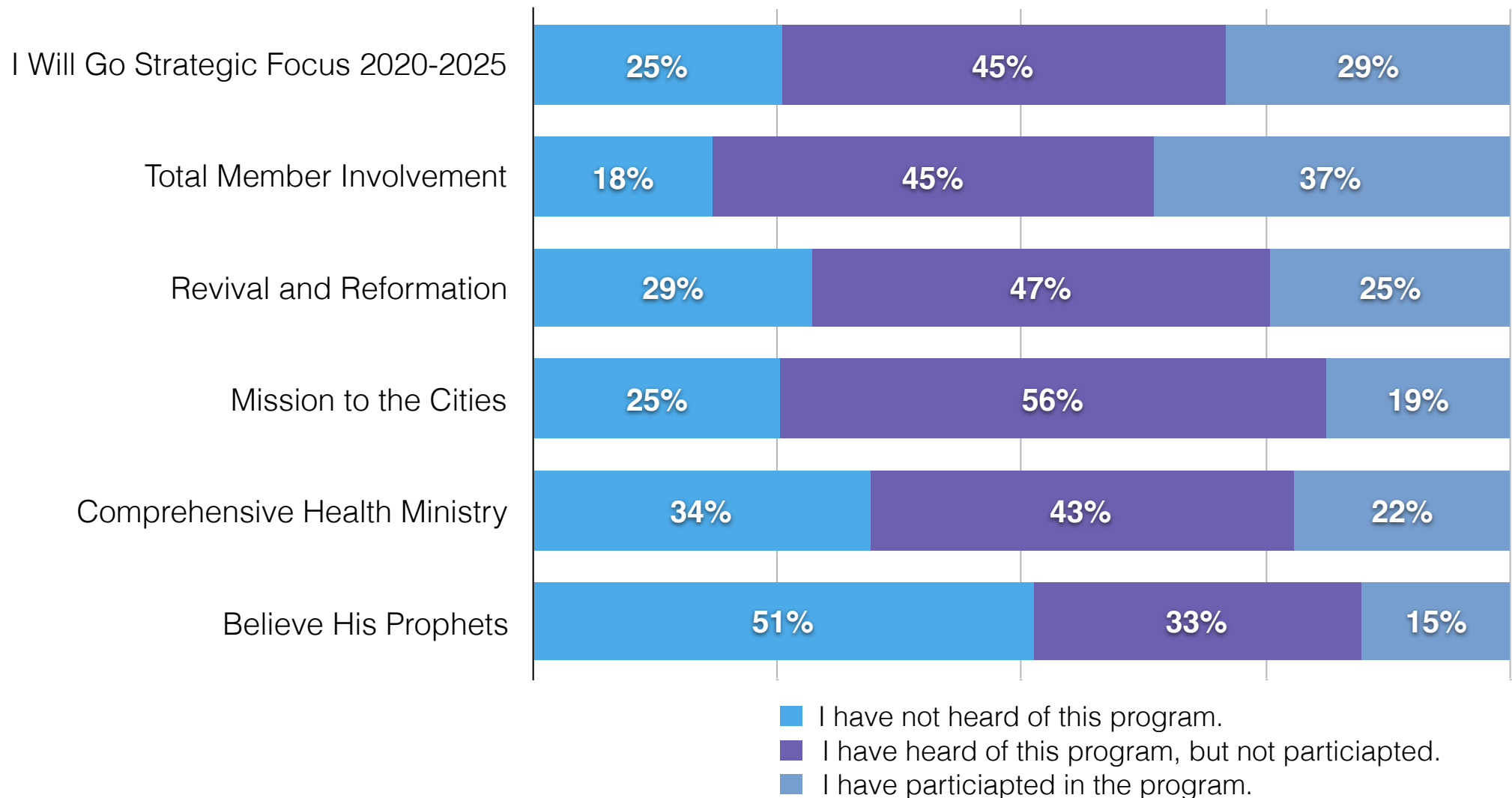
**WHEN I USE SOCIAL MEDIA...**



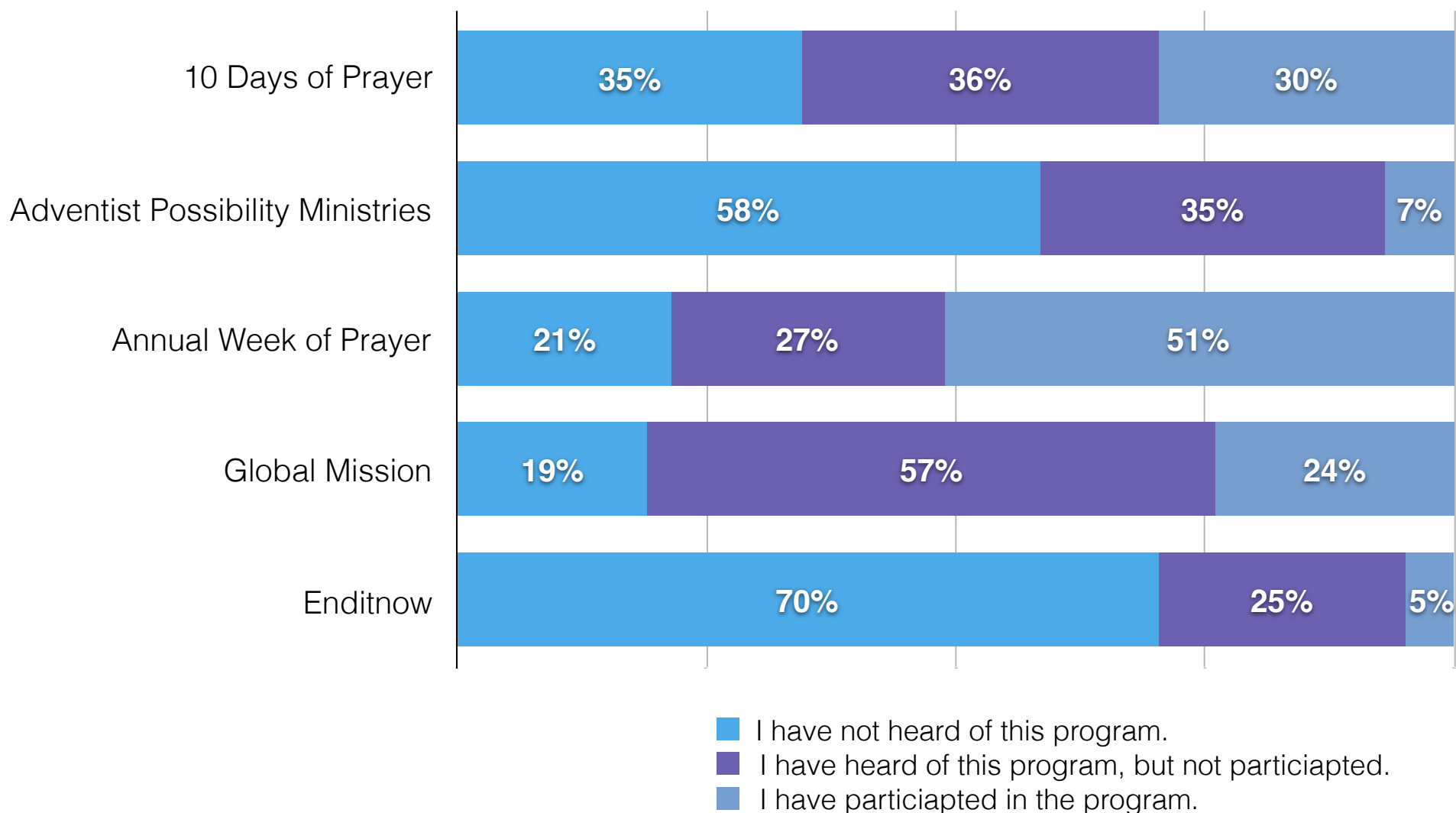
**R5. PLEASE INDICATE HOW MUCH YOU AGREE OR  
DISAGREE WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING  
STATEMENTS ABOUT YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA USE.  
WHEN I CANNOT USE SOCIAL MEDIA...**



# R6A. HOW MANY OF THESE GENERAL CONFERENCE INITIATIVES YOU HAVE HEARD ABOUT OR PARTICIPATED IN?

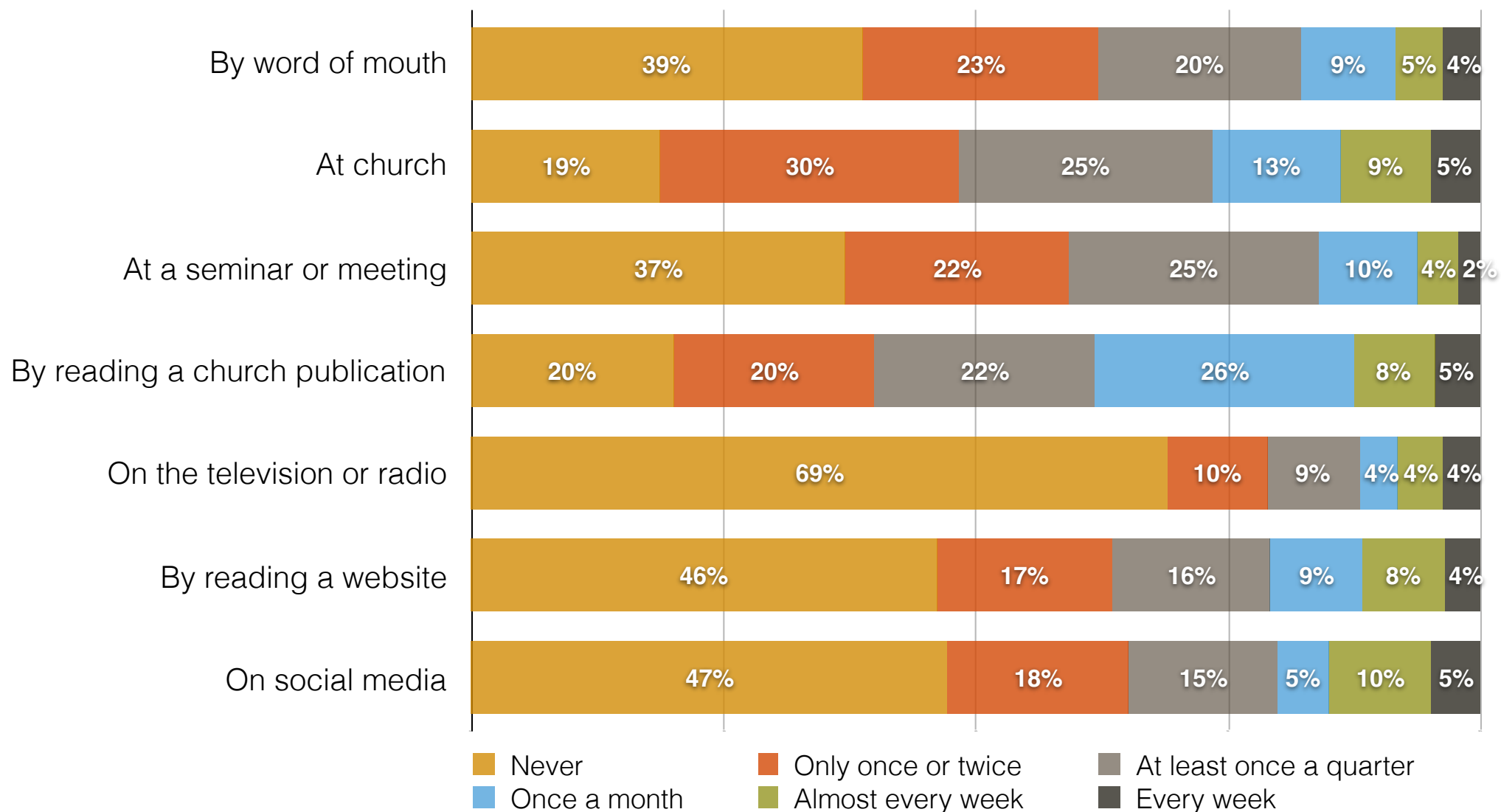


## R6B. HOW MANY OF THESE GENERAL CONFERENCE INITIATIVES YOU HAVE HEARD ABOUT OR PARTICIPATED IN?



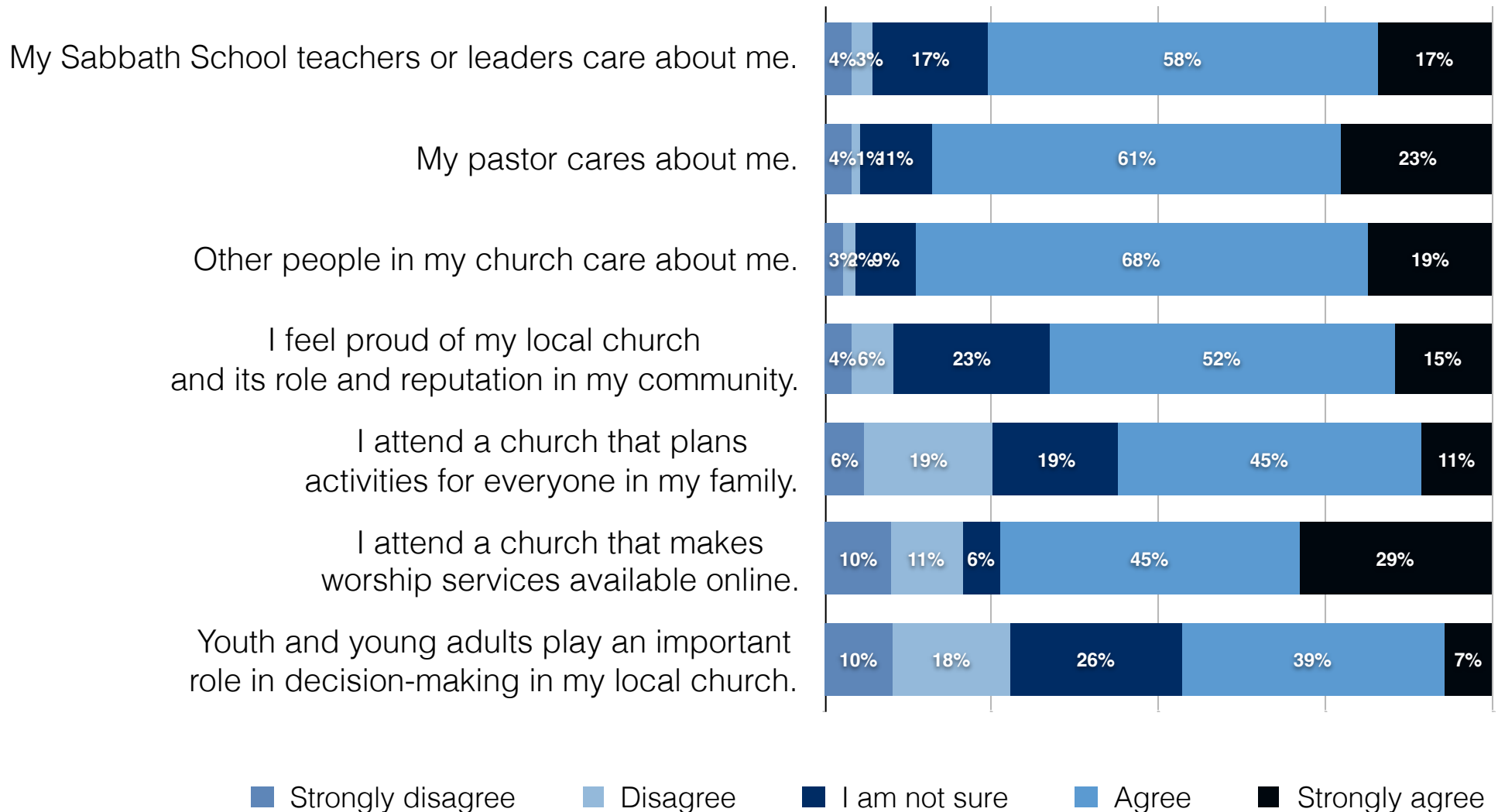


## R7. IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, HOW OFTEN DID YOU HEAR ABOUT ONE OR MORE OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE INITIATIVES LISTED IN THE LAST QUESTION?

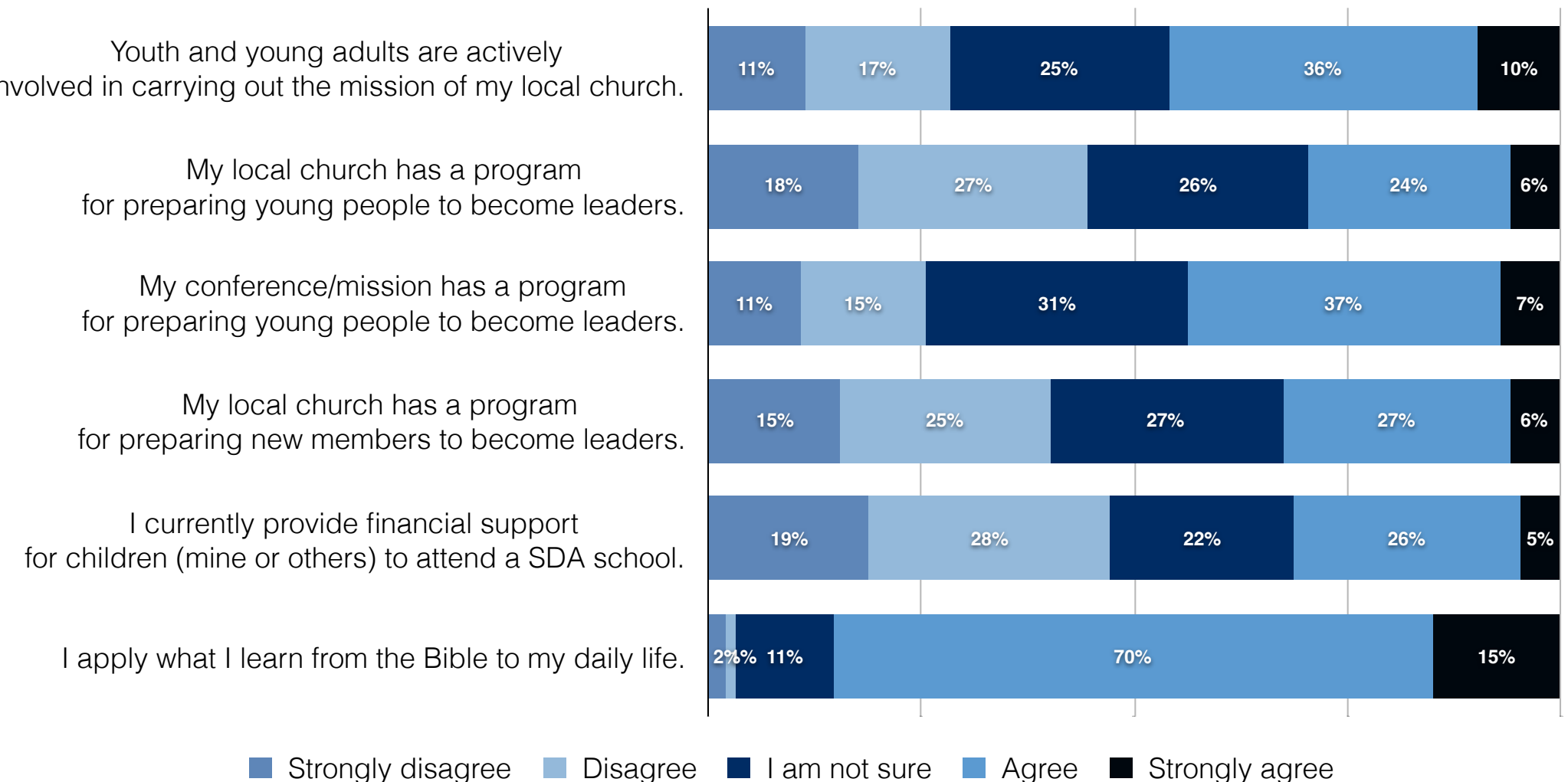


# **RELIGIOUS ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCES**

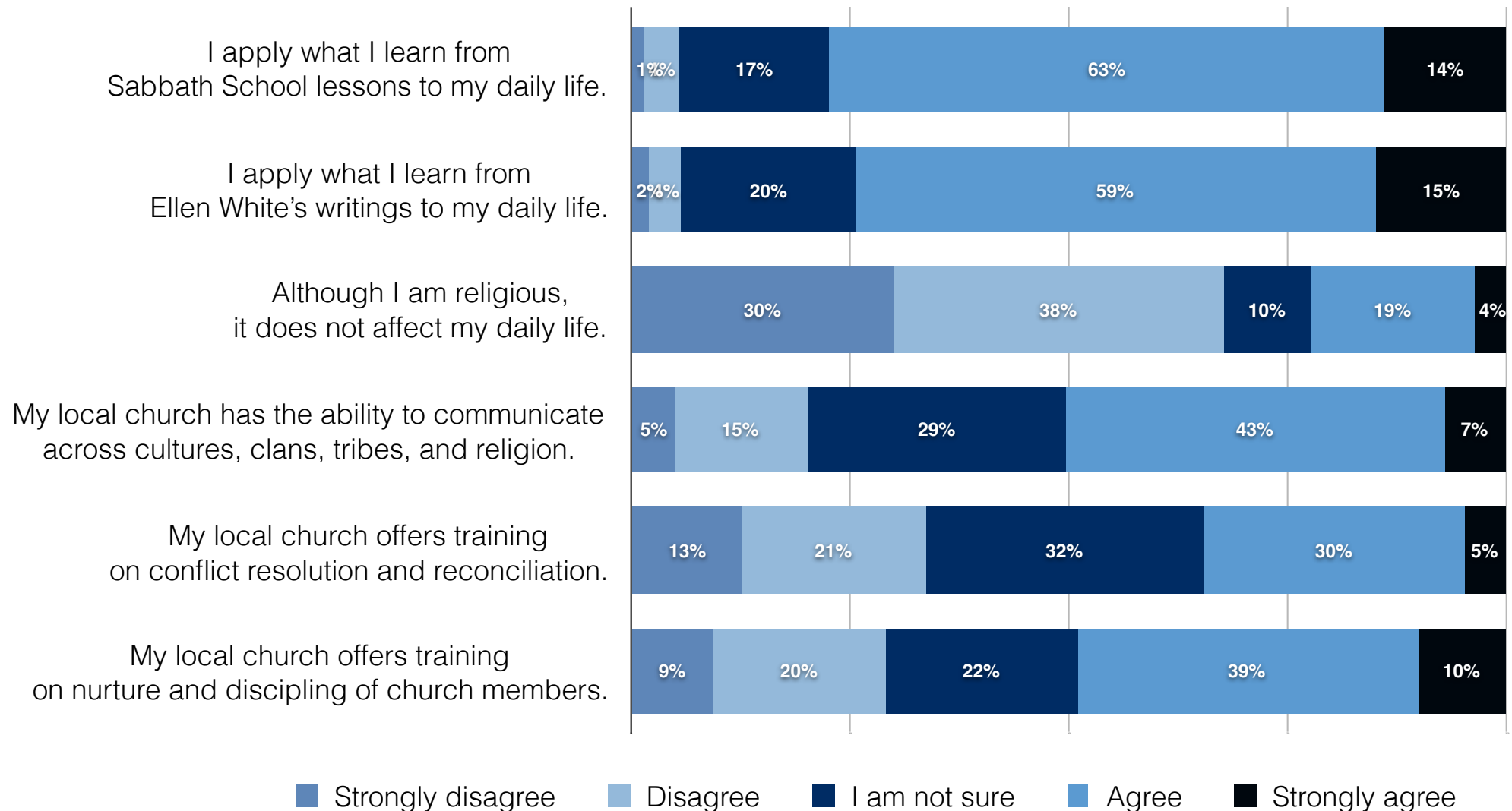
# A1A. PLEASE EXPRESS YOUR AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS



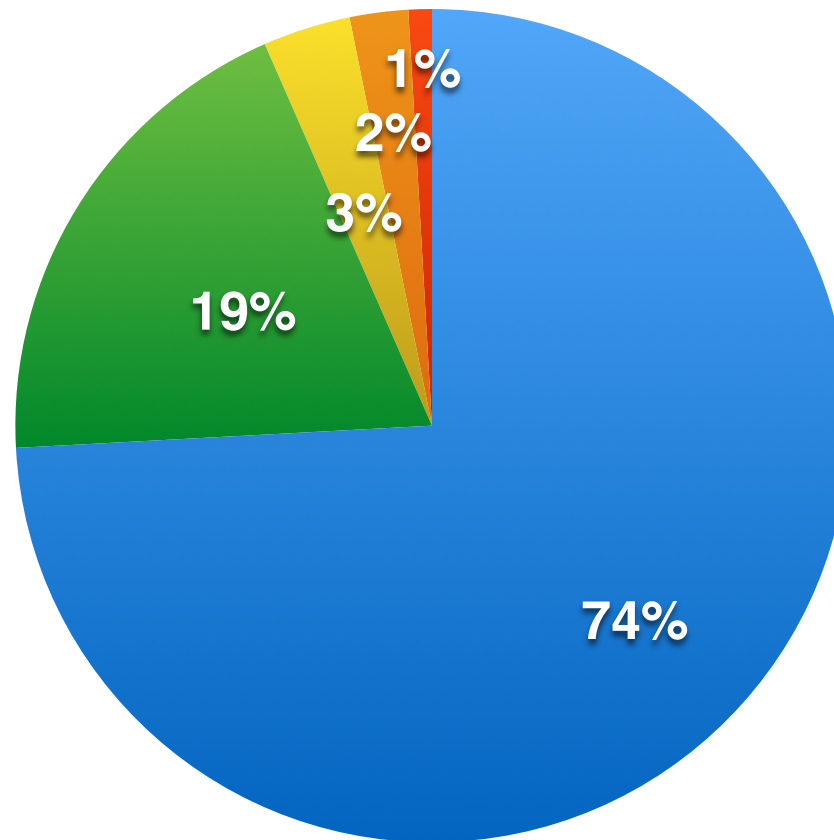
# A1B. PLEASE EXPRESS YOUR AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS



# A1C. PLEASE EXPRESS YOUR AGREEMENT OR DISAGREEMENT WITH EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS

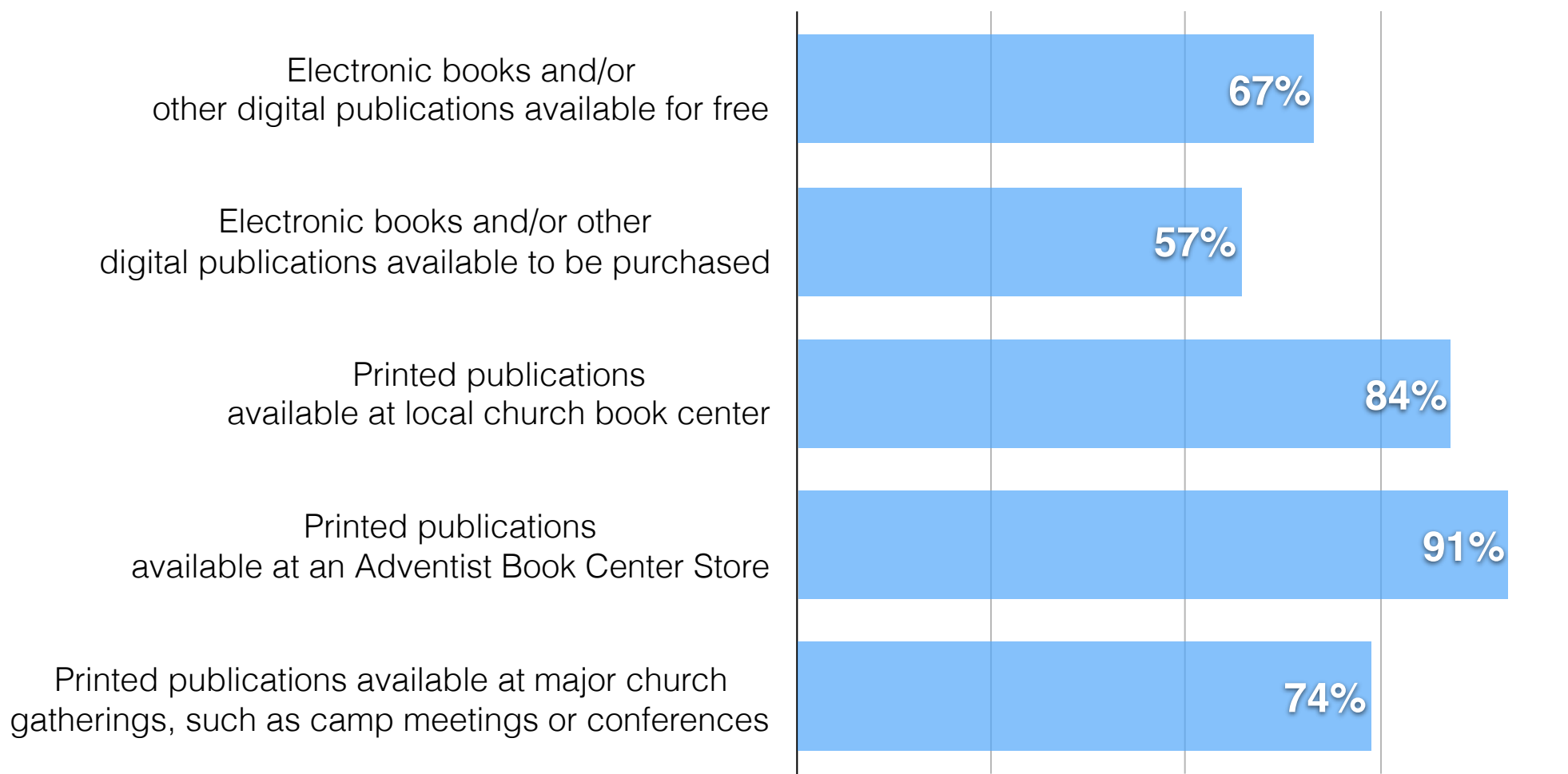


## A2. HAVE YOU BEEN ABLE TO ACCESS THE BOOKS BY ELLEN G. WHITE IN A LANGUAGE THAT YOU UNDERSTAND?

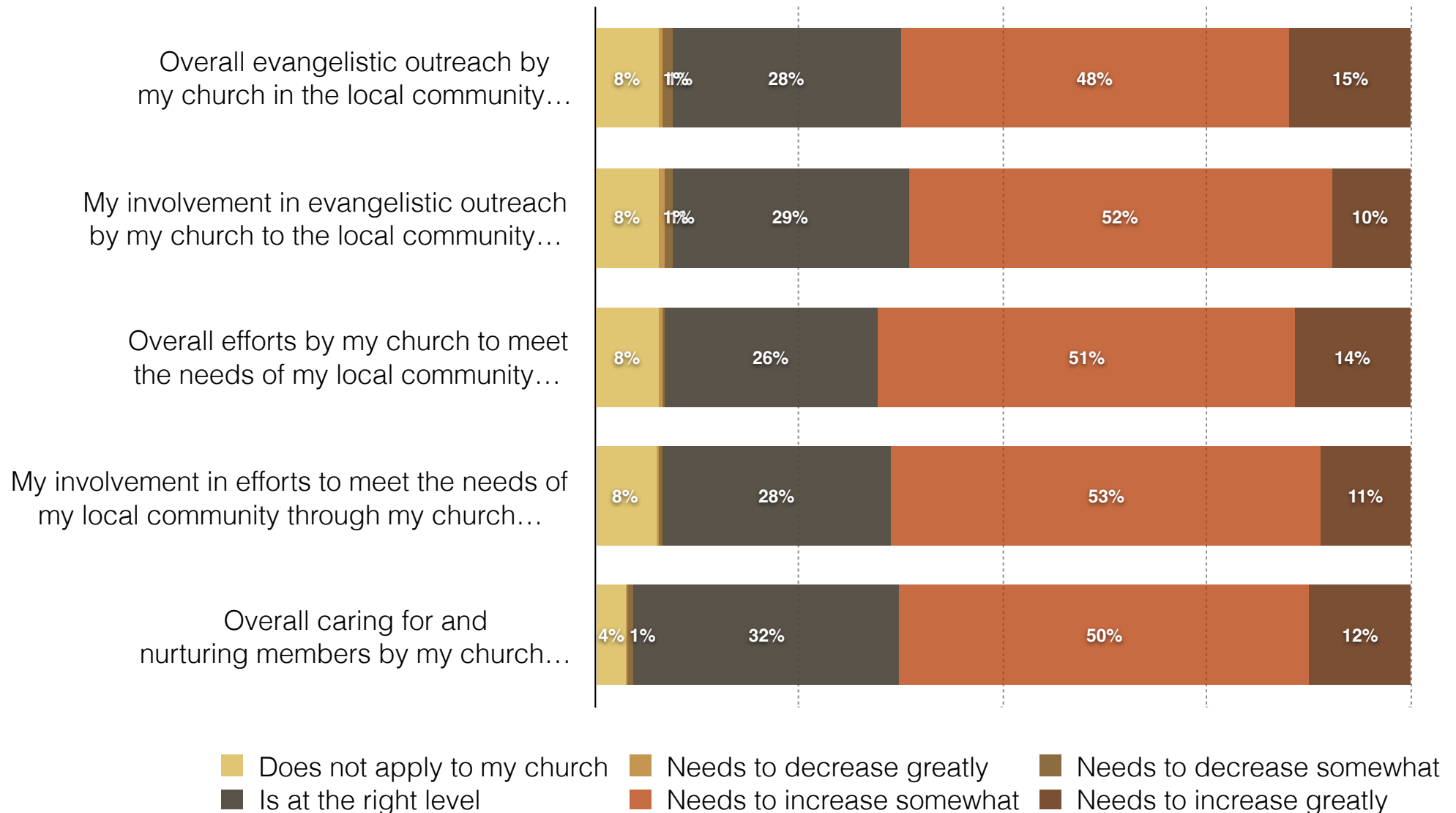


- Yes, always
- Yes for PP, PK, DA, AA, GC and Steps
- Only sometimes
- No, not at all
- I have not tried to access books by E.G.W.

### A3. DO YOU HAVE ACCESS TO ADVENTIST PUBLICATIONS IN YOUR LANGUAGE THROUGH THE FOLLOWING SOURCES?

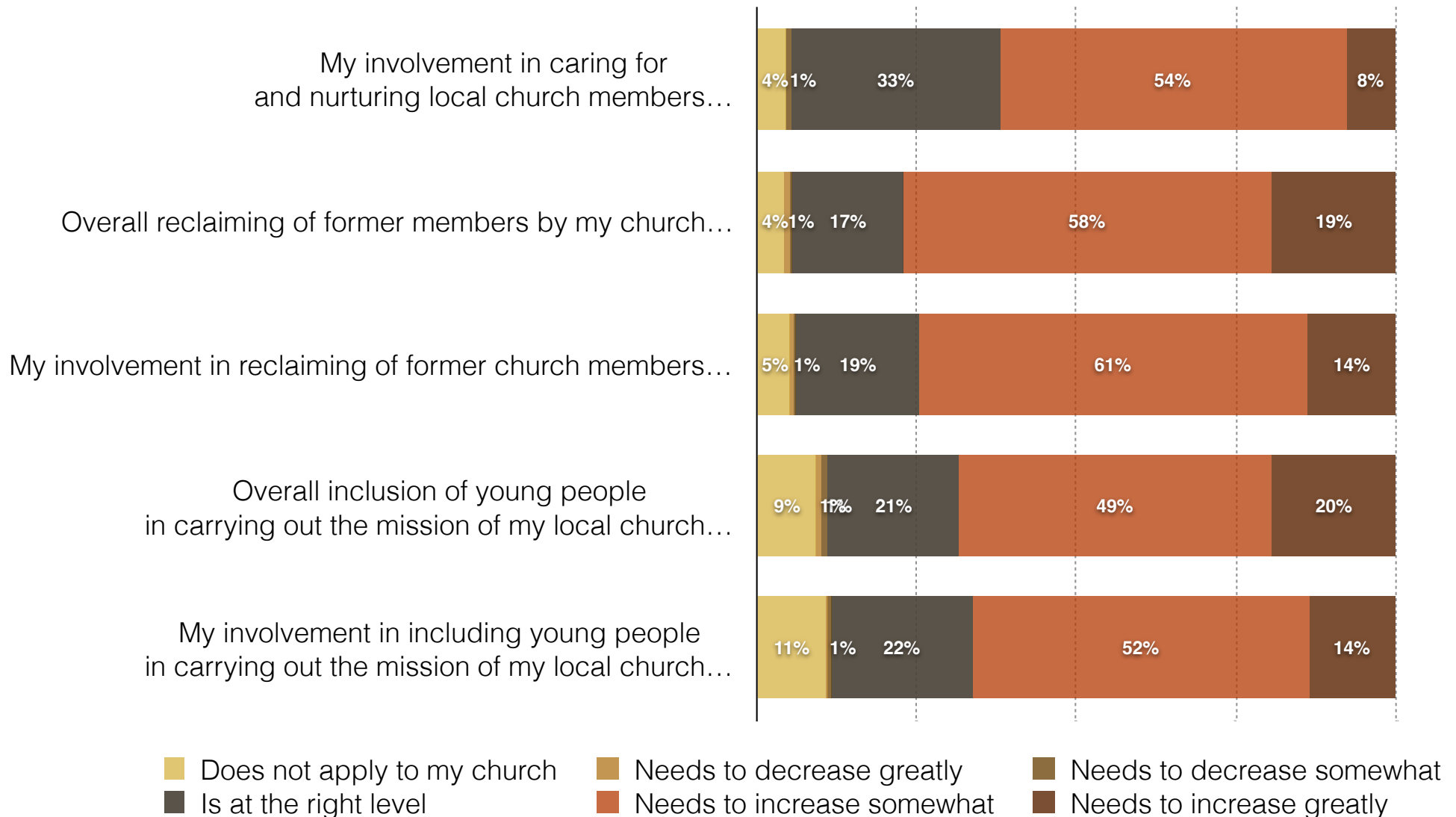


# A4A. PLEASE INDICATE WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT WHETHER THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CHURCH AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT NEED TO CHANGE OR STAY THE SAME.

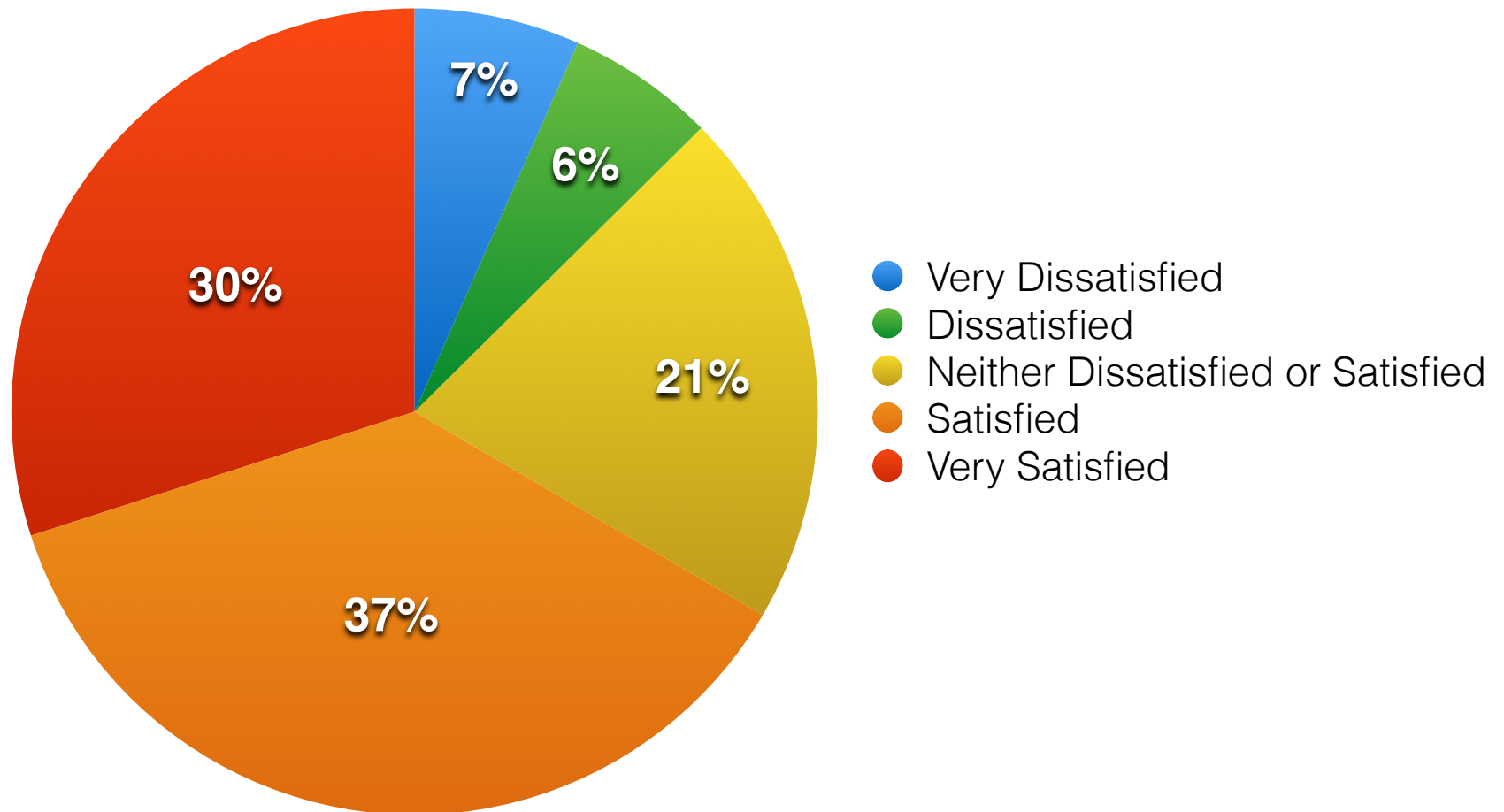




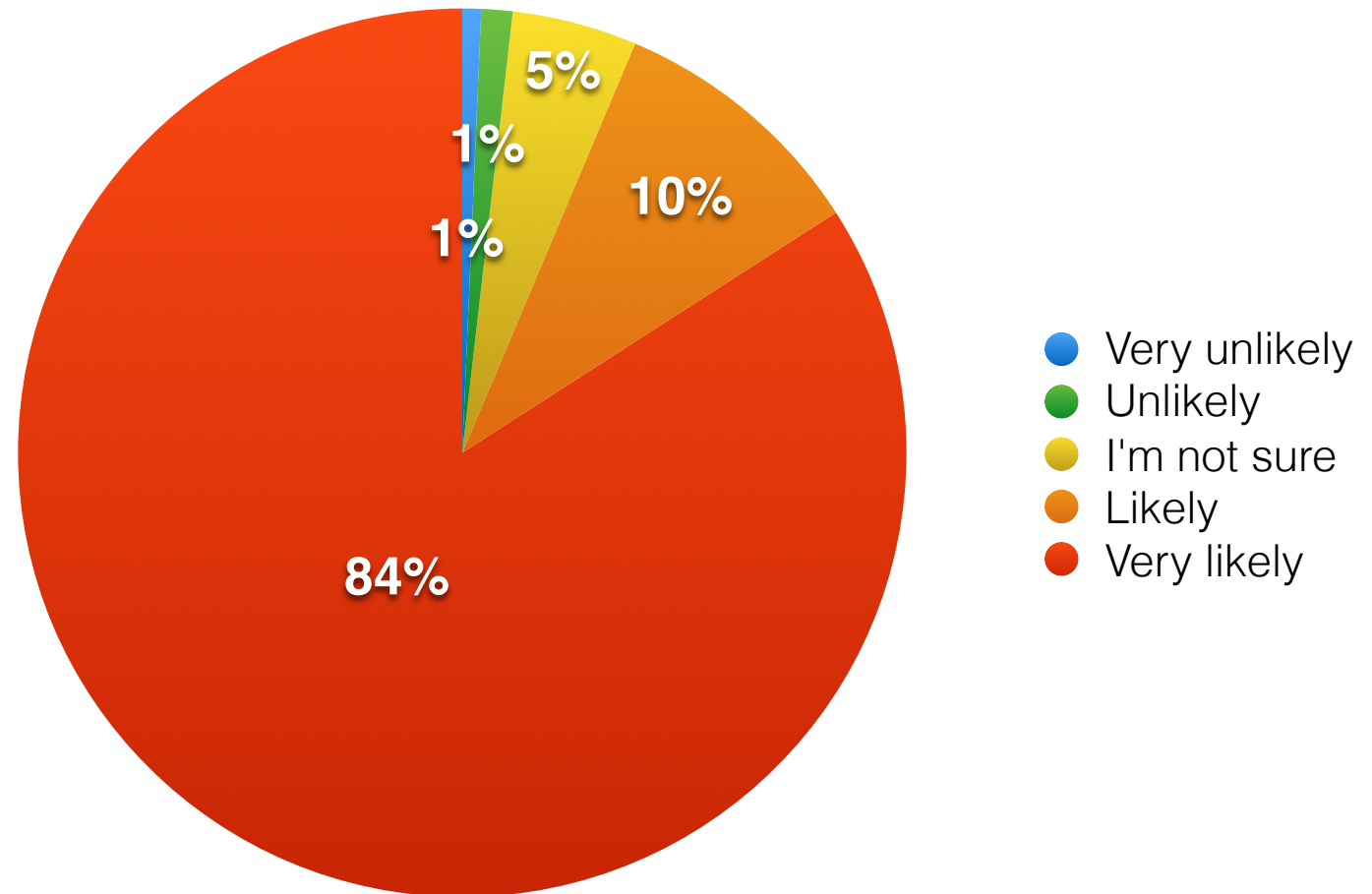
## A4B. PLEASE INDICATE WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT WHETHER THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CHURCH AND YOUR INVOLVEMENT NEED TO CHANGE OR STAY THE SAME.



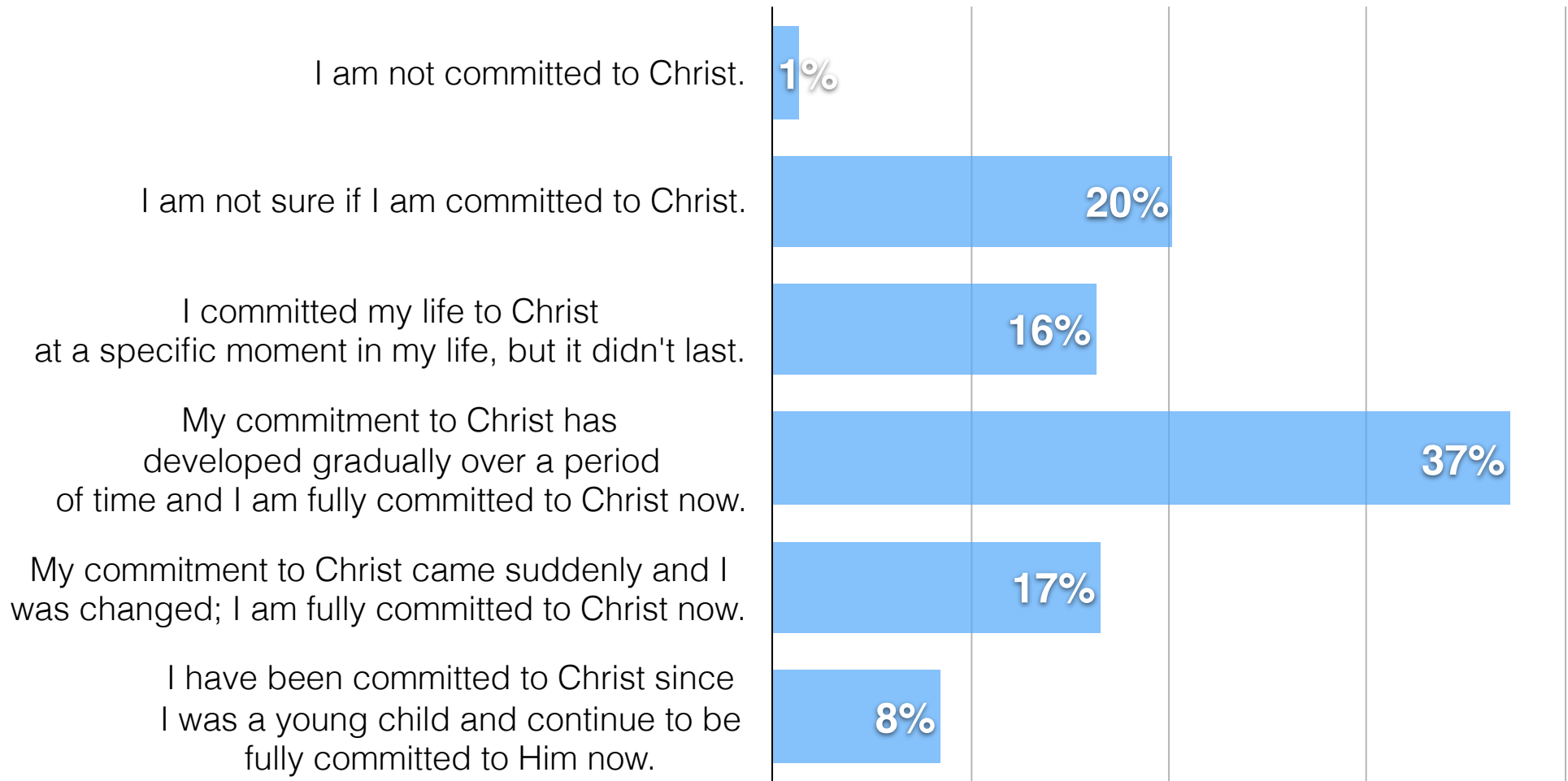
## A5. HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR LOCAL CHURCH?



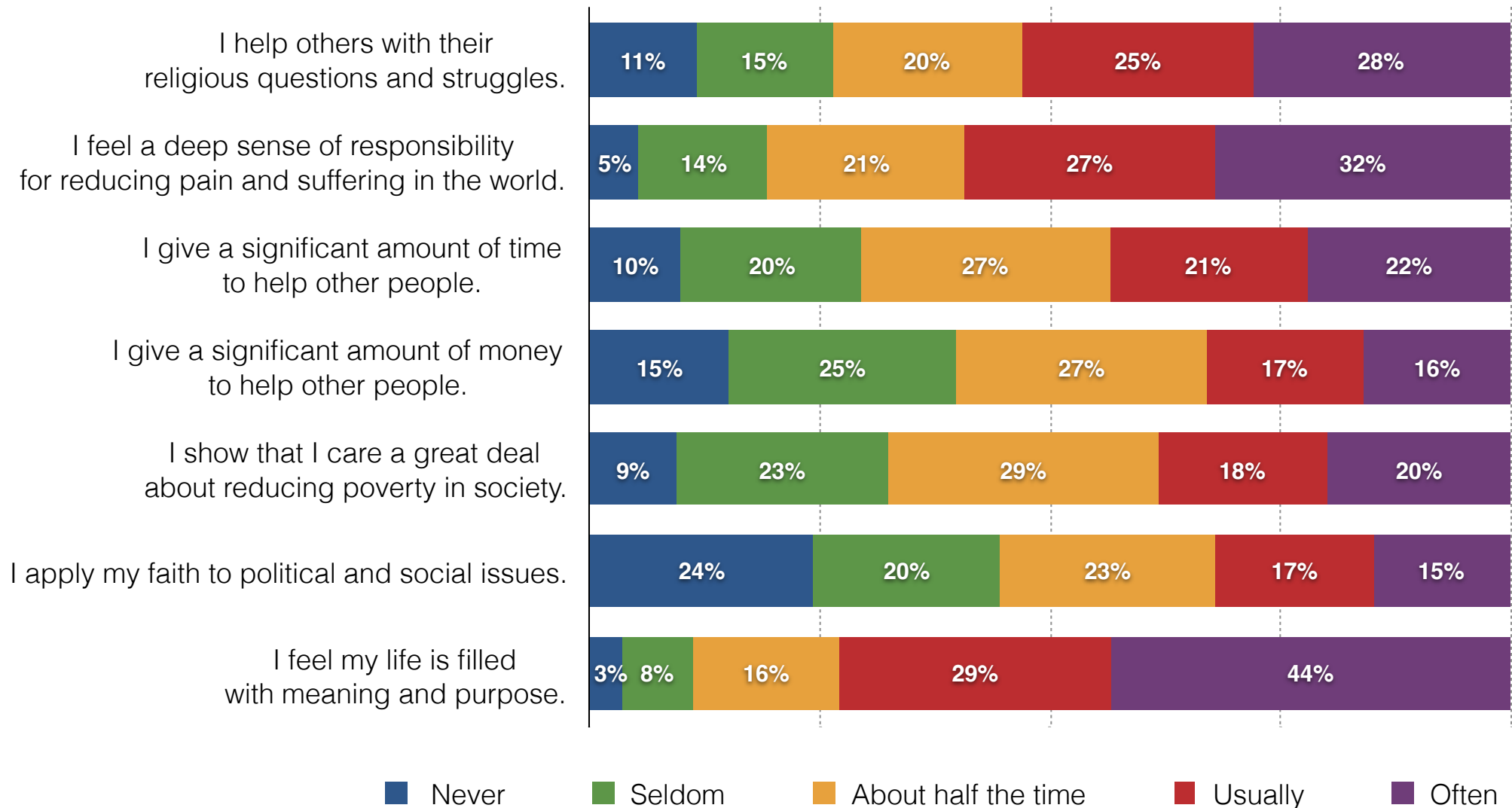
**A6. HOW LIKELY IS IT THAT YOU WILL BE  
ATTENDING A SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST  
CHURCH FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE?**



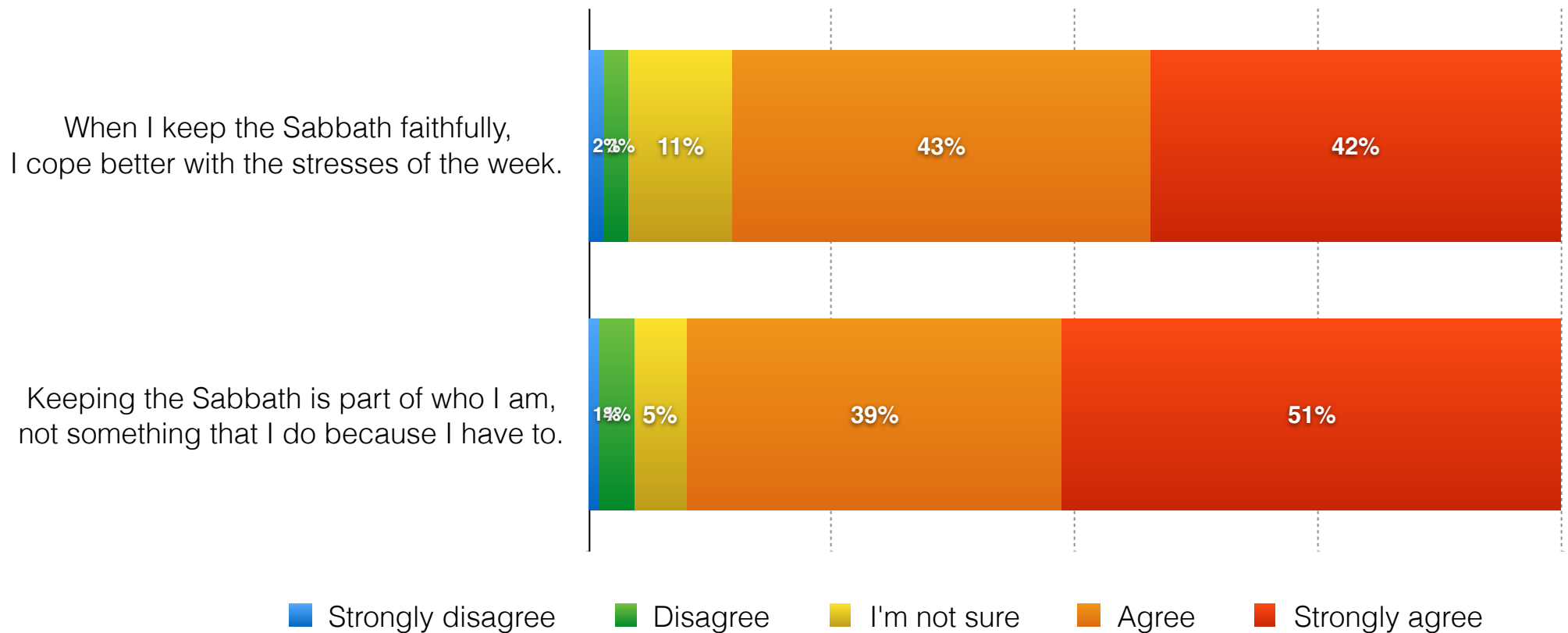
# A7 - WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BEST DESCRIBES YOUR COMMITMENT TO JESUS CHRIST?



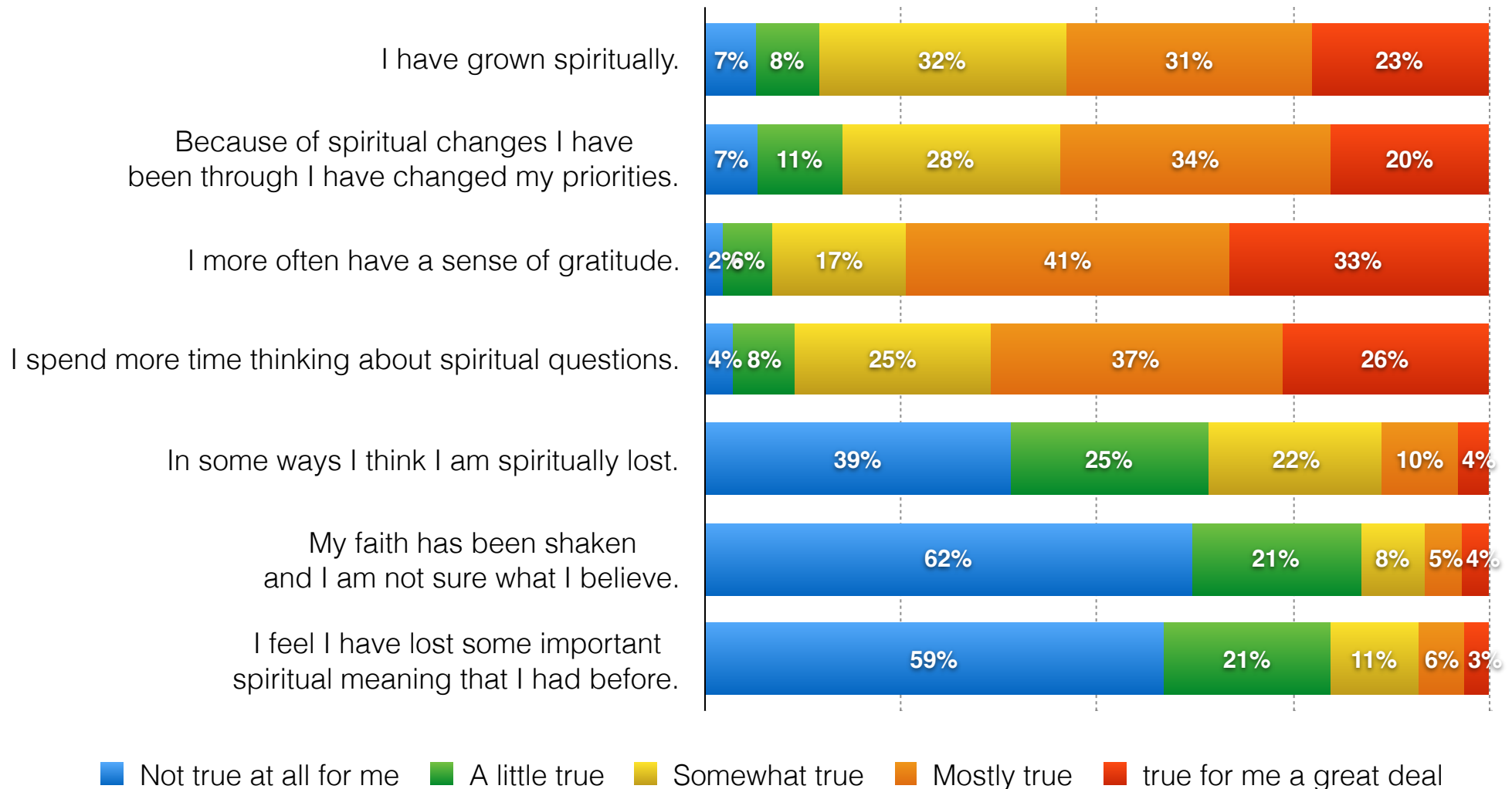
# A8. HOW OFTEN IS EACH OF THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS TRUE FOR YOU PERSONALLY?



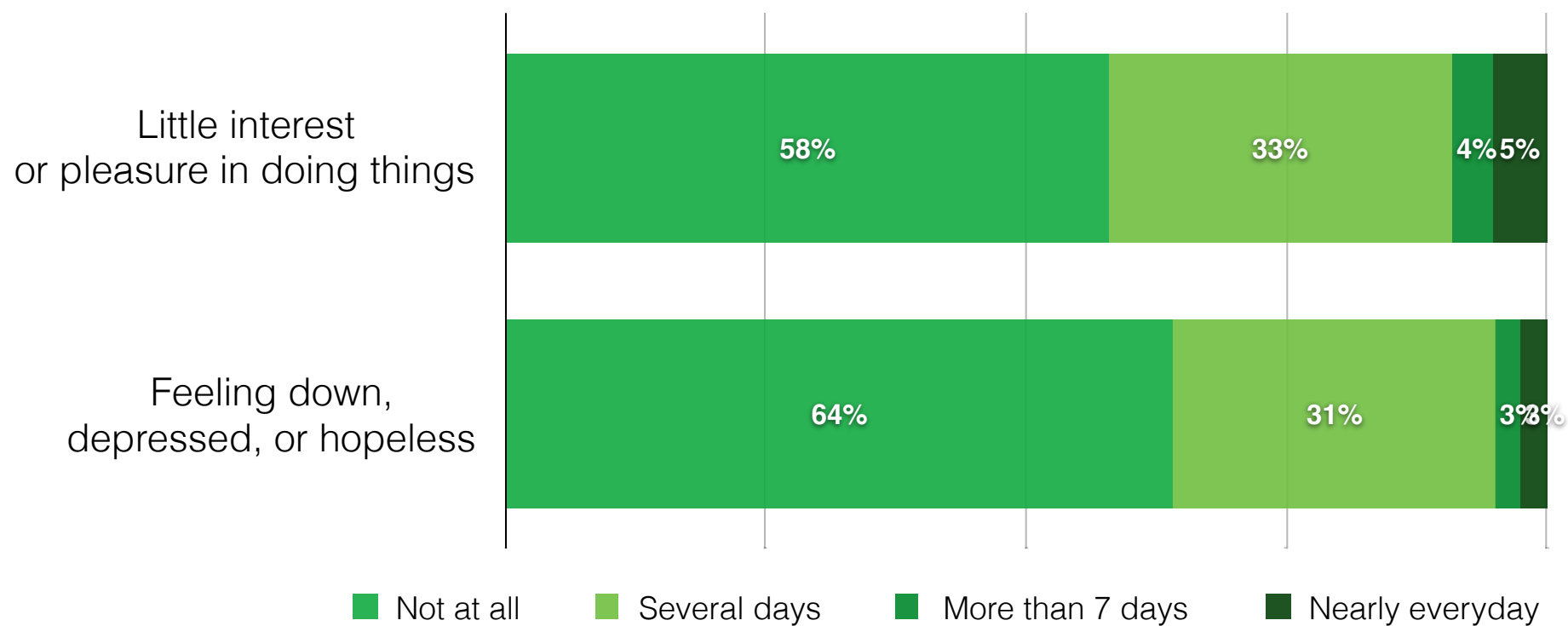
**A9. SABBATH-KEEPING IS PART OF SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH LIFE. BELOW ARE A NUMBER OF STATEMENTS ABOUT YOUR SABBATH-KEEPING EXPERIENCE. PLEASE INDICATE HOW MUCH YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH EACH STATEMENT.**



# A10. PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ARE TRUE FOR YOU OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS.

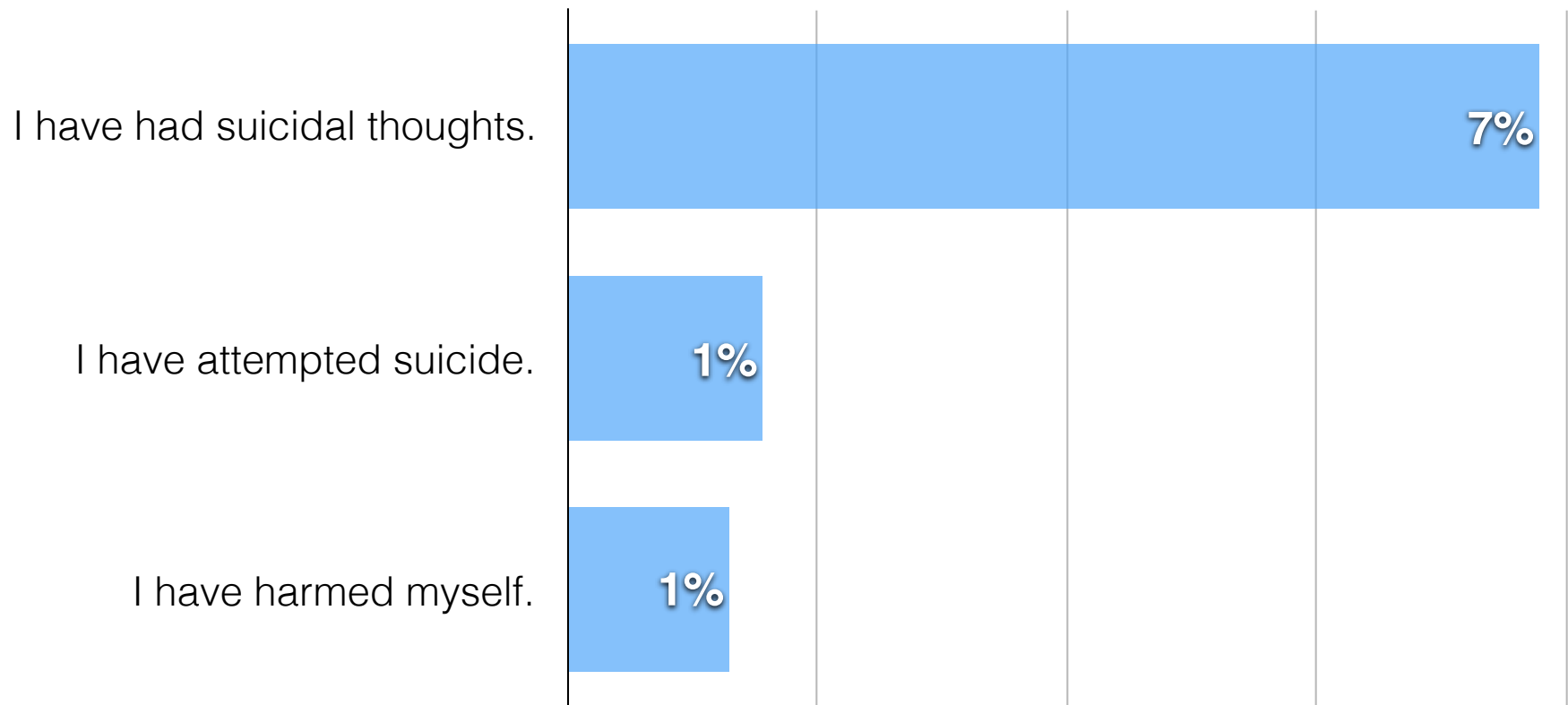


# A11. OVER THE LAST 2 WEEKS, HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU BEEN BOTHERED BY ANY OF THE FOLLOWING PROBLEMS?



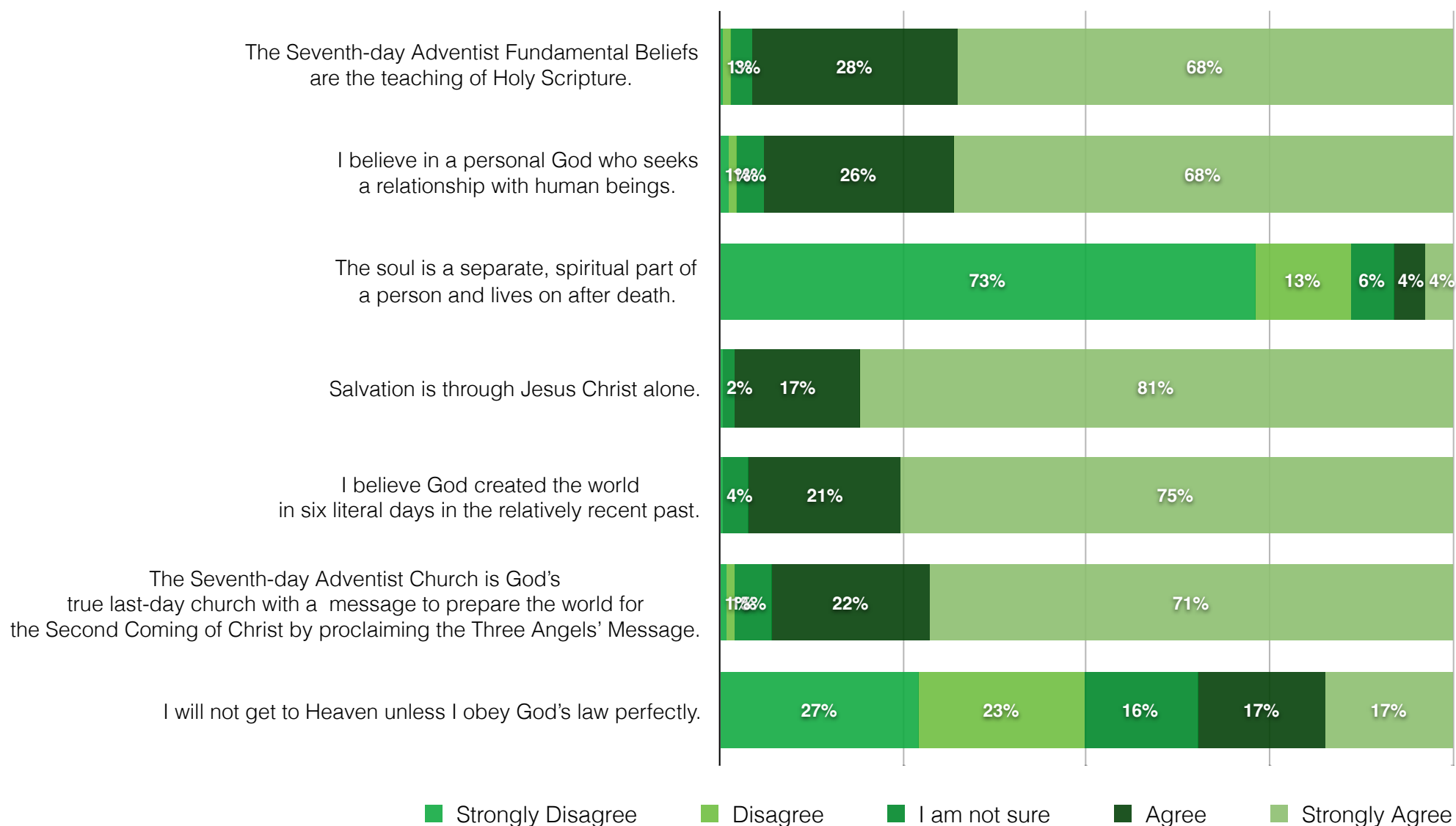


## A12. PLEASE INDICATE WHETHER YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED THE FOLLOWING DURING THE PAST 12 MONTHS.

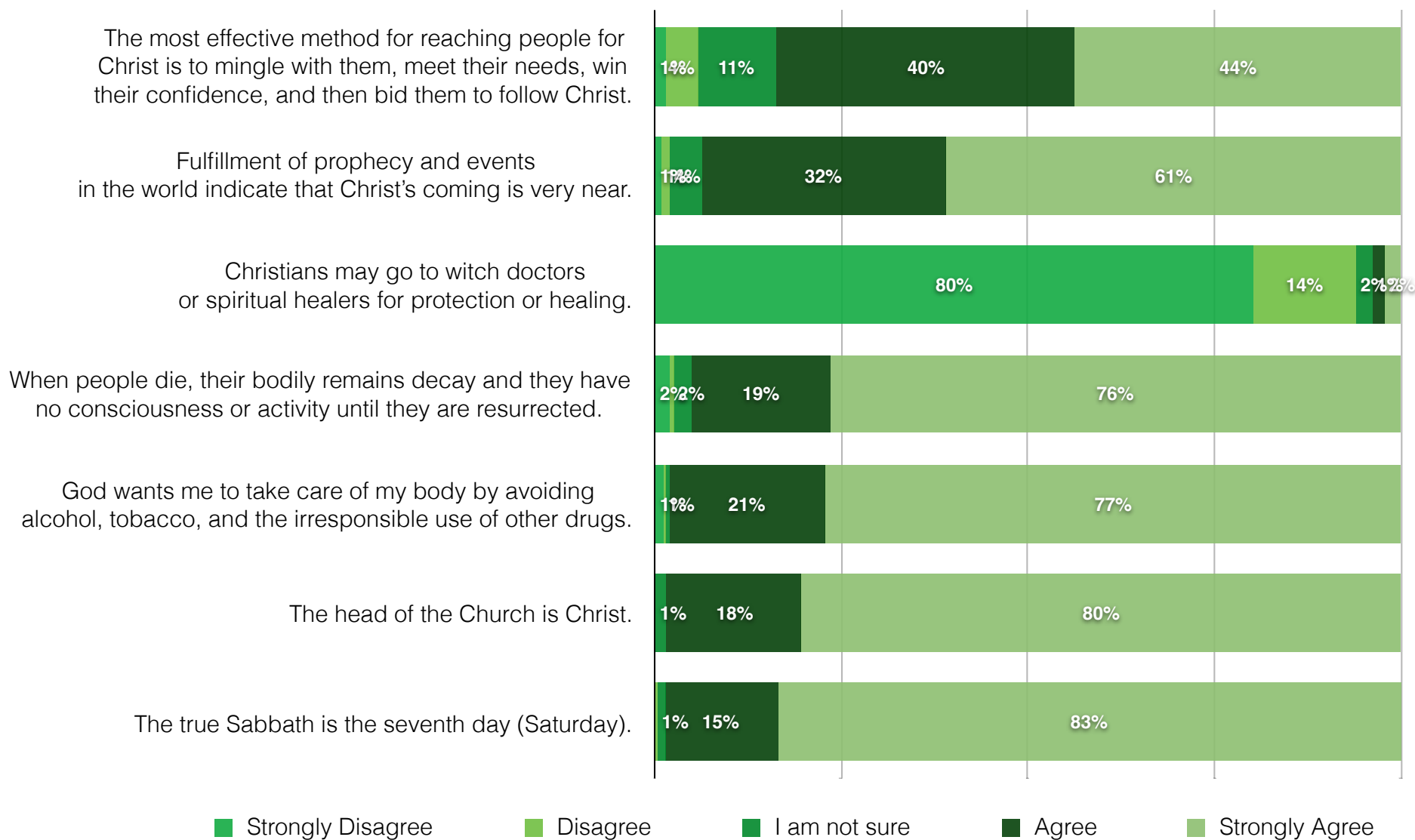


**BELIEFS**

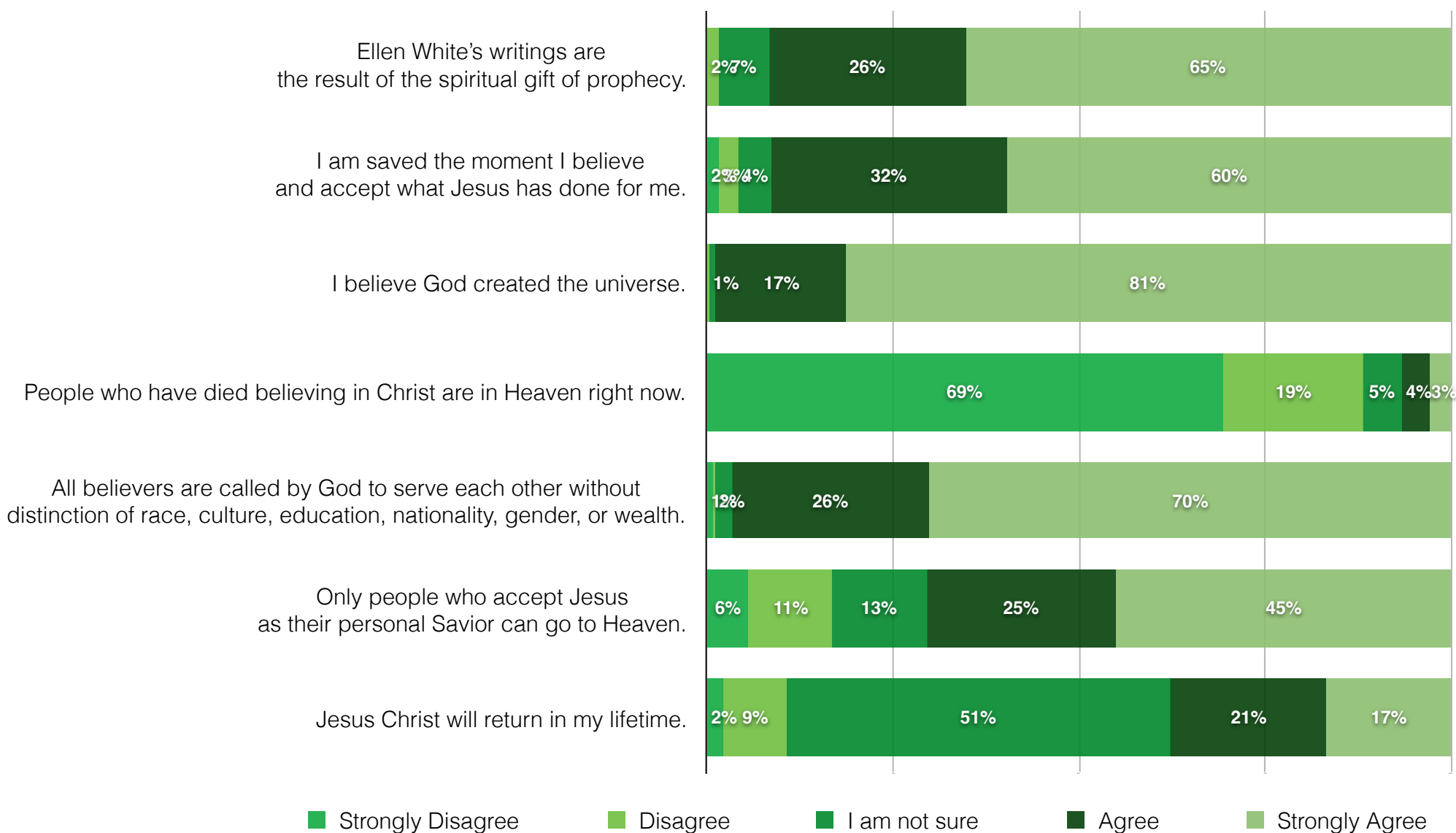
# B1A. PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE STATEMENTS THAT FOLLOW.



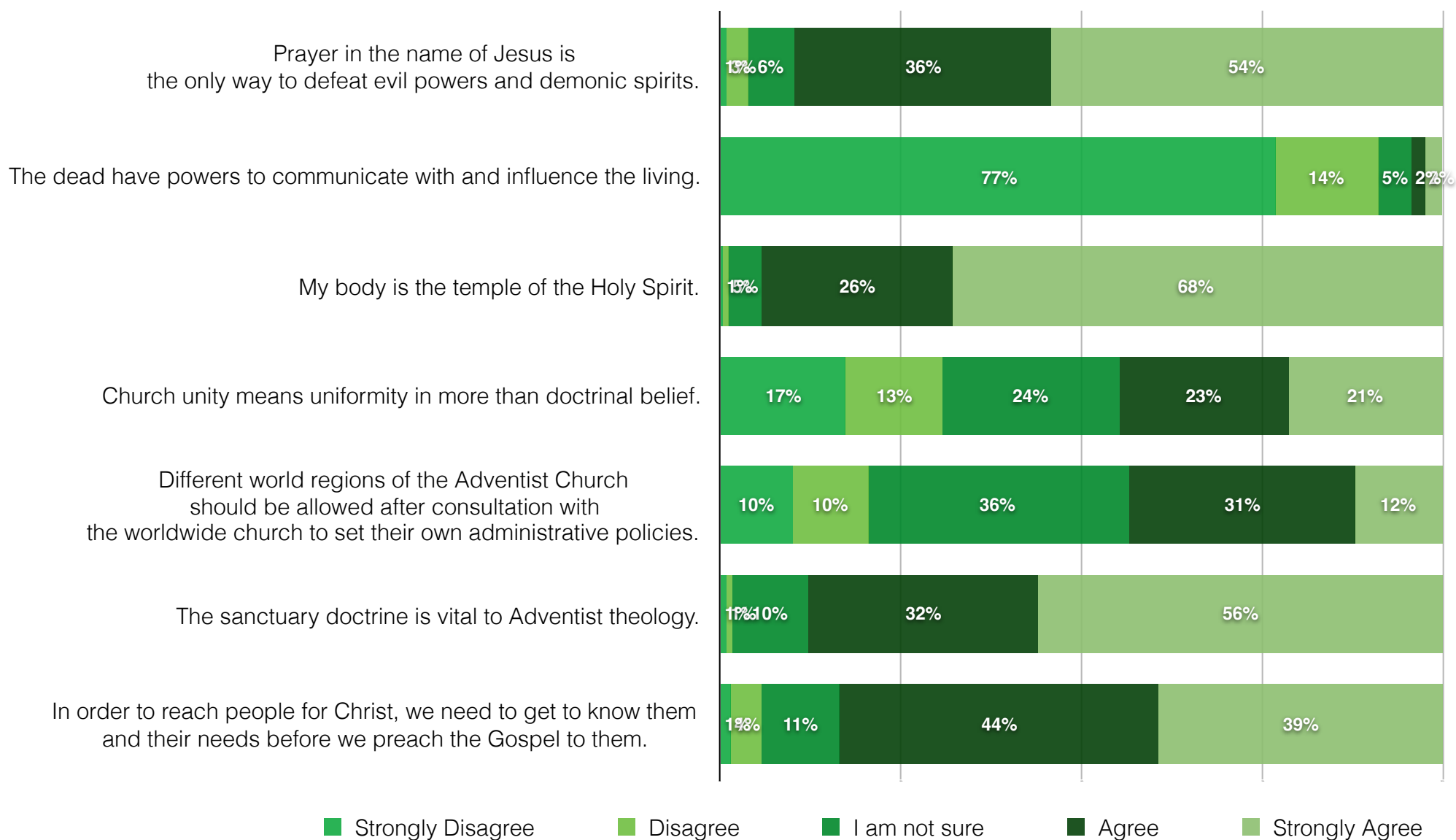
## B1B. PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE STATEMENTS THAT FOLLOW.



## B1C. PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE STATEMENTS THAT FOLLOW.



## B1D. PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE STATEMENTS THAT FOLLOW.

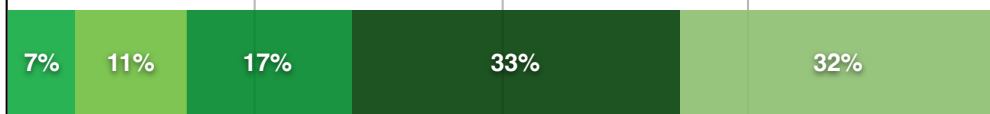


## B1E. PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE STATEMENTS THAT FOLLOW.

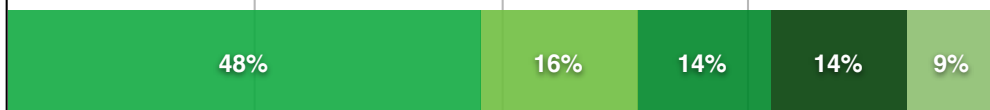
The Seventh-day Adventist Fundamental Beliefs as a whole reflect the loving and gracious character of God.



Because Jesus was able to live without sinning, it is possible for believers to grow in Christian maturity so that in the final days of Earth's history we will reach a state of sinless perfection.



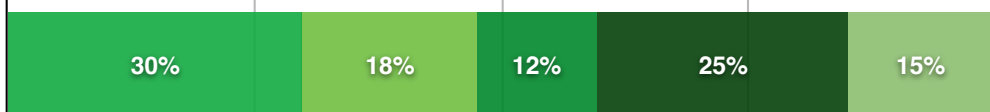
The Holy Spirit is God's power in the world, not a Person.



People who have rejected Christ are burning in Hell right now.



In order to receive God's grace, I must first live by His rules.



The more that I follow Adventist health and lifestyle standards, the more likely I will be saved.



I am loved by God even when I sin.



Strongly Disagree

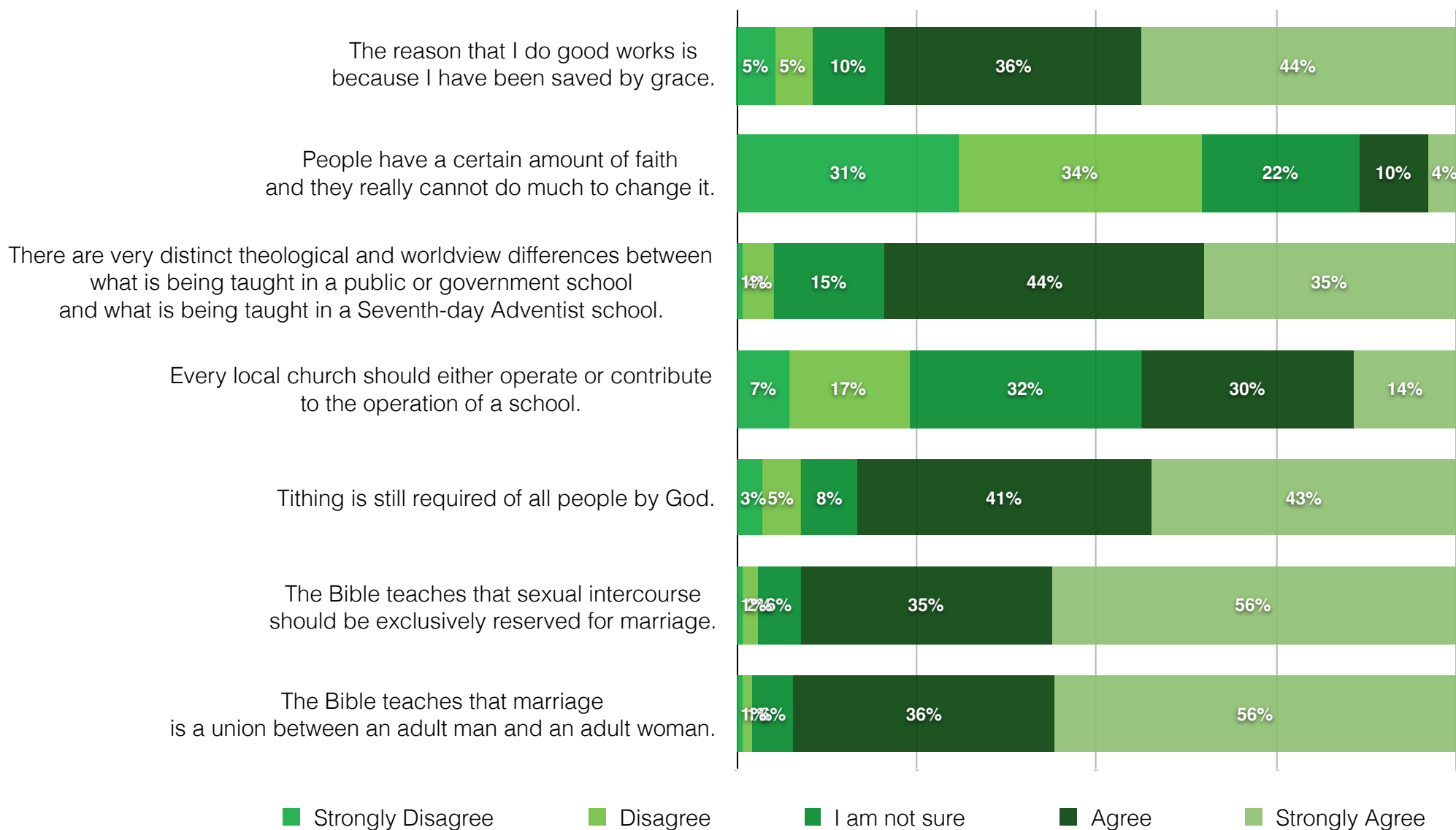
Disagree

I am not sure

Agree

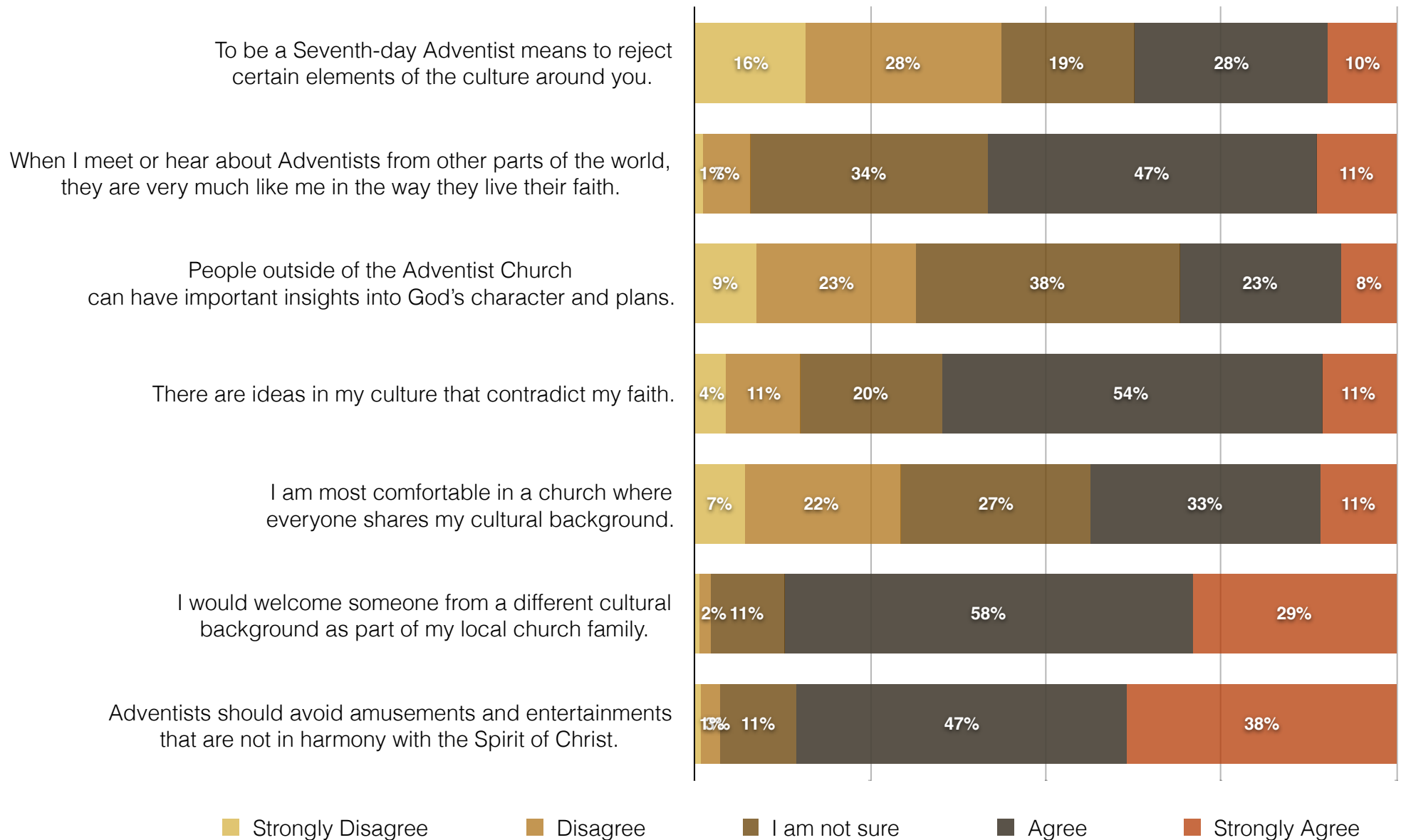
Strongly Agree

## B1F. PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE STATEMENTS THAT FOLLOW.

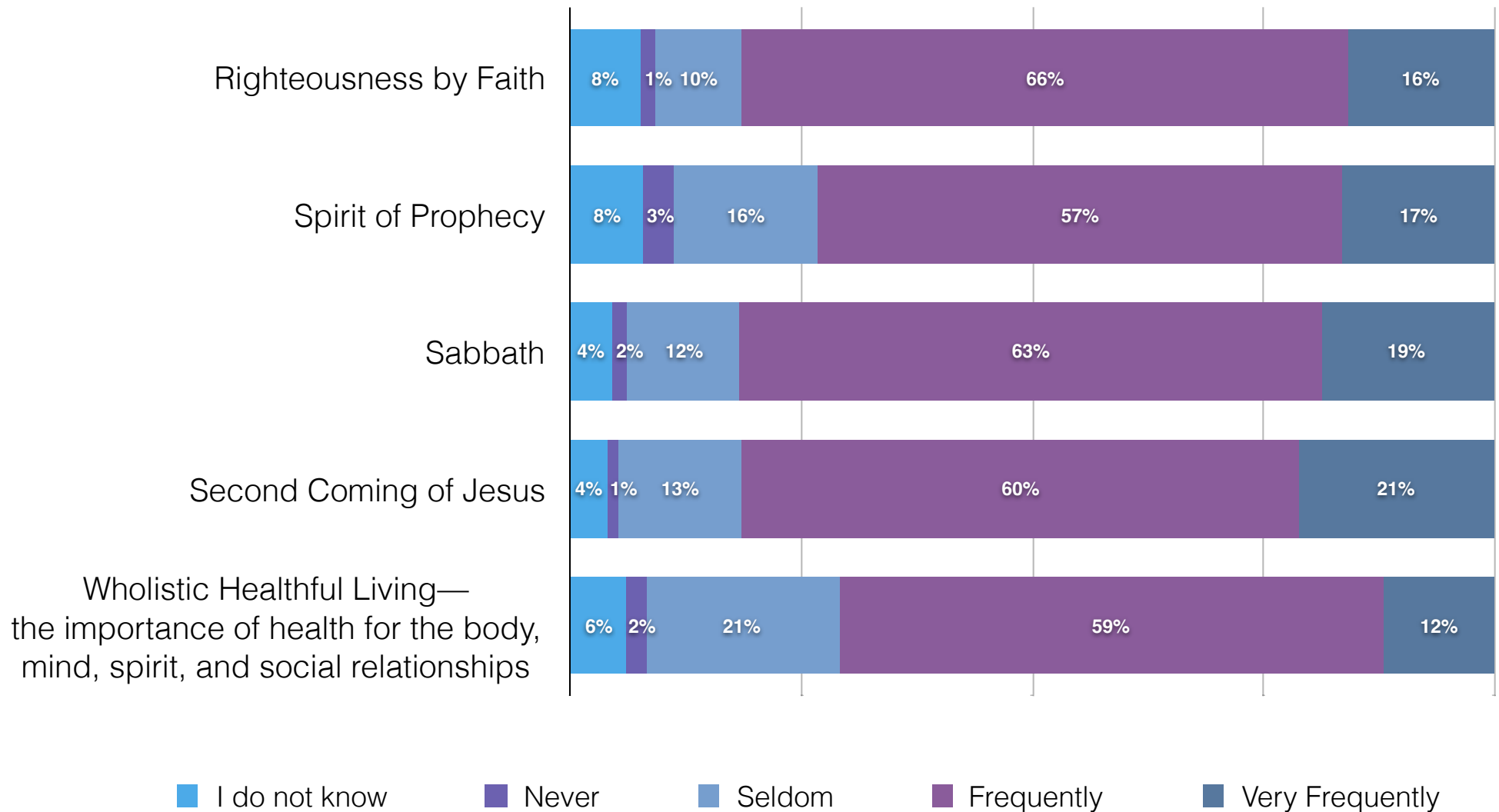




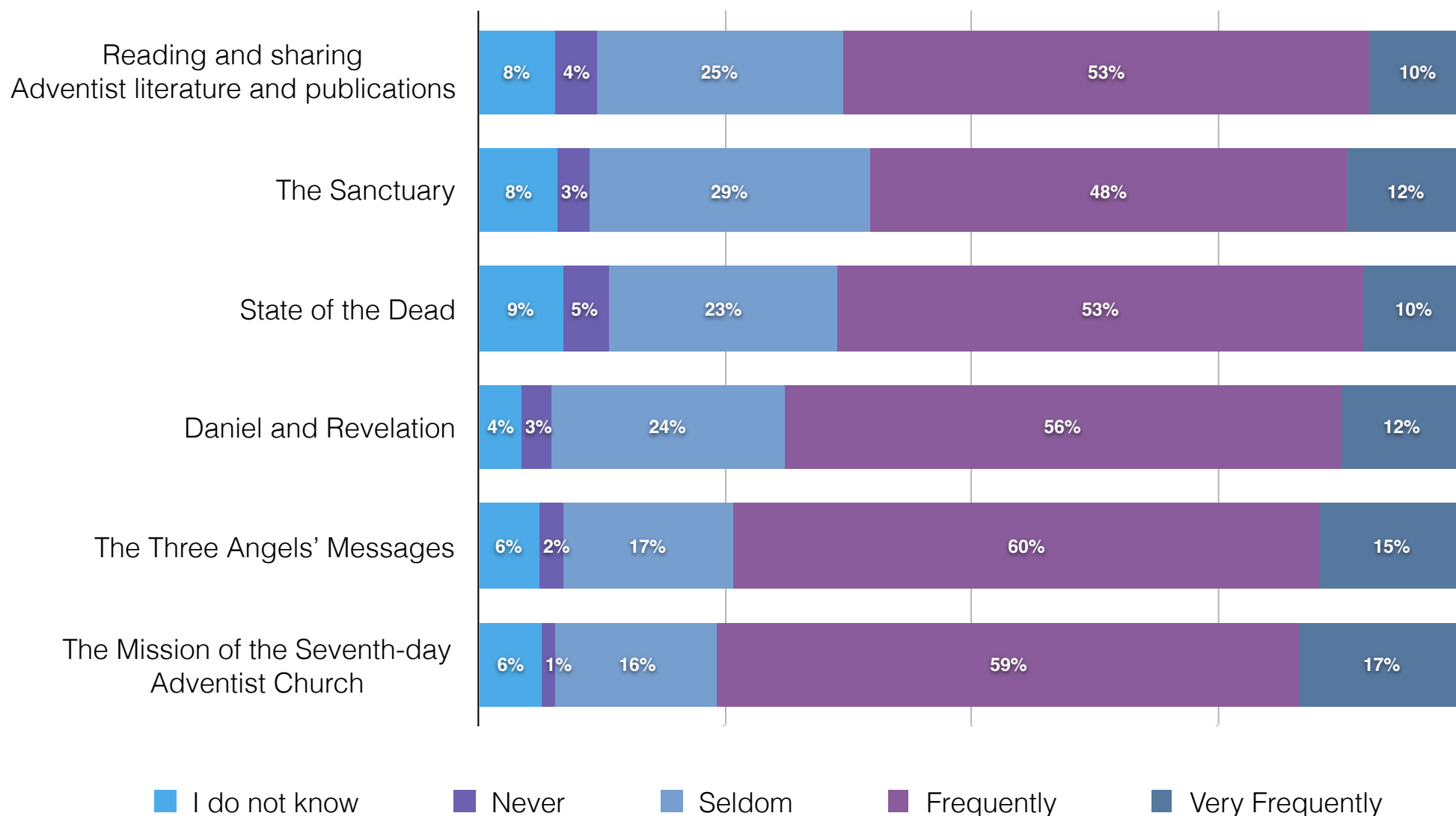
## B2. PLEASE INDICATE THE EXTENT TO WHICH YOU AGREE WITH EACH OF THE BELIEFS LISTED.



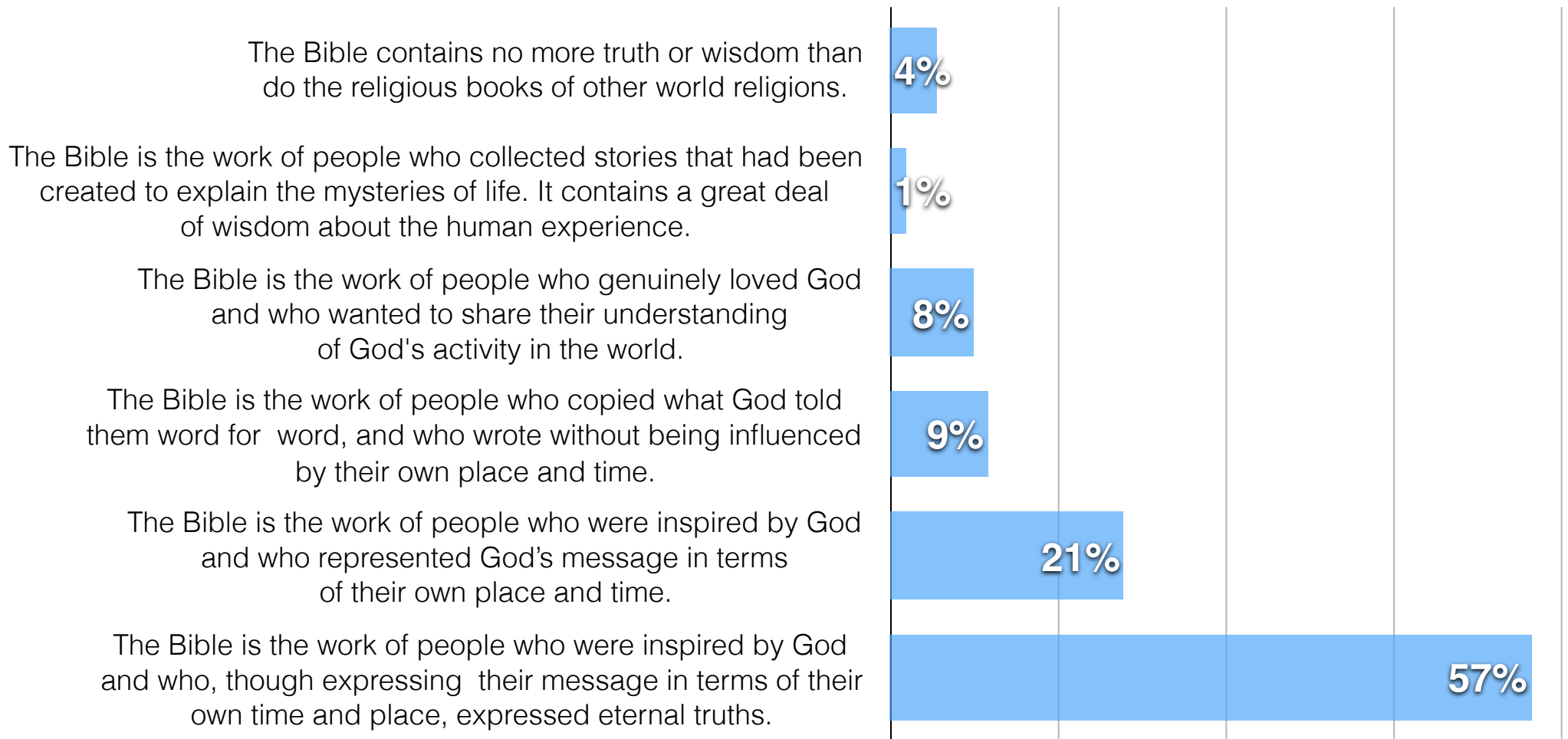
# B3A. HOW OFTEN DOES THE SABBATH SPEAKER IN YOUR CHURCH PREACH ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS?



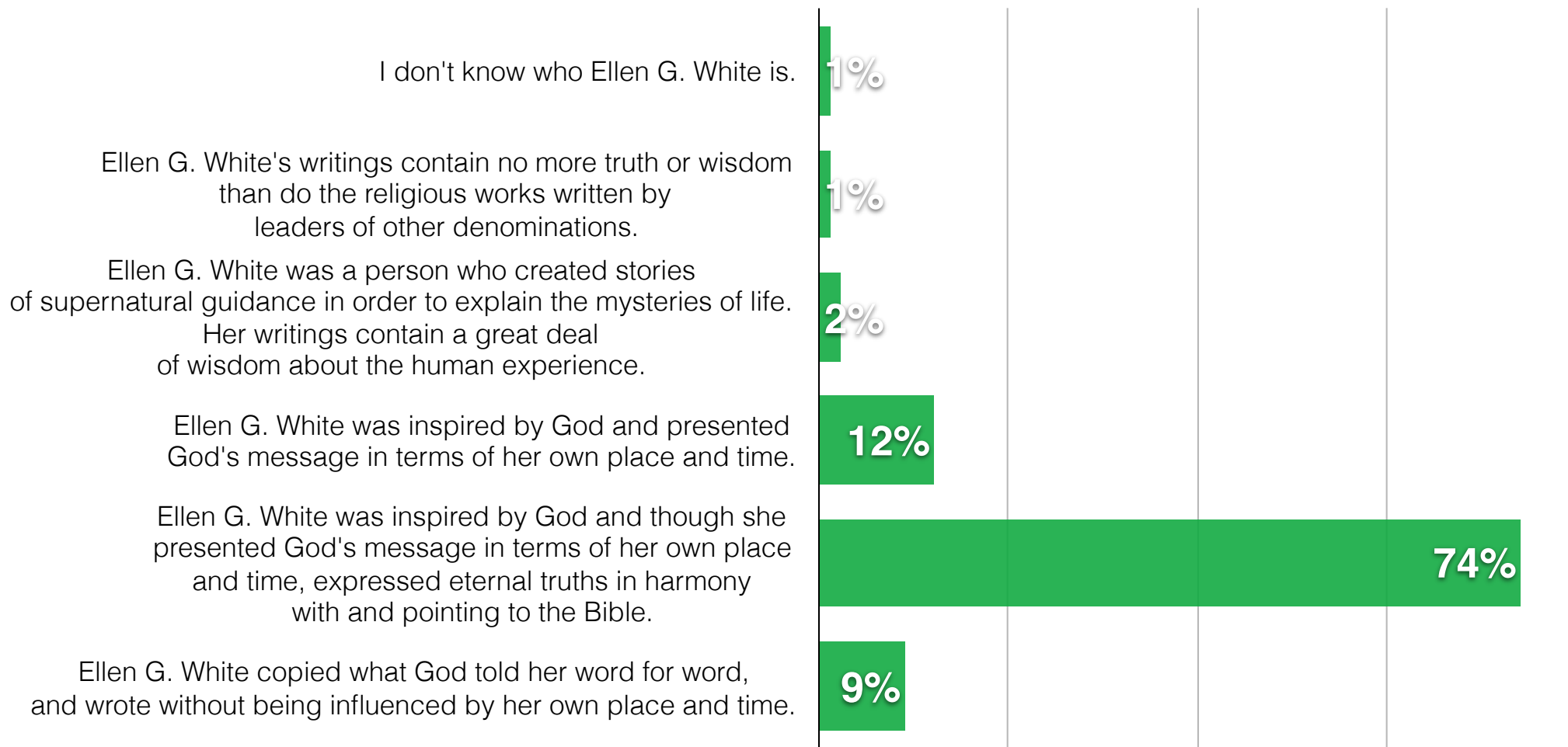
# B3B. HOW OFTEN DOES THE SABBATH SPEAKER IN YOUR CHURCH PREACH ON THE FOLLOWING TOPICS?



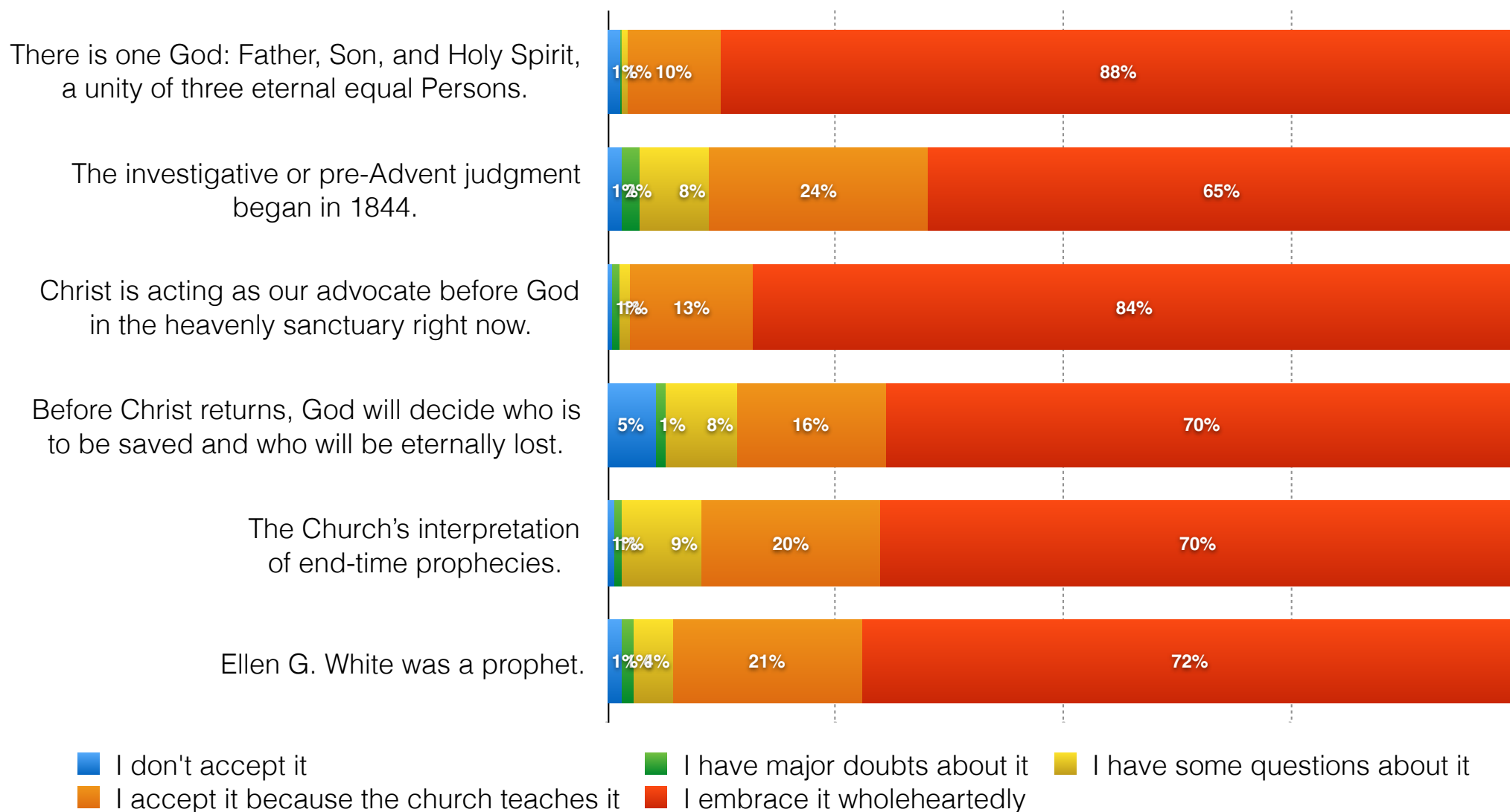
**B4. READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS  
CAREFULLY: THEN MARK ONLY ONE STATEMENT  
THAT IS CLOSEST TO YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF  
WHAT THE BIBLE IS.**



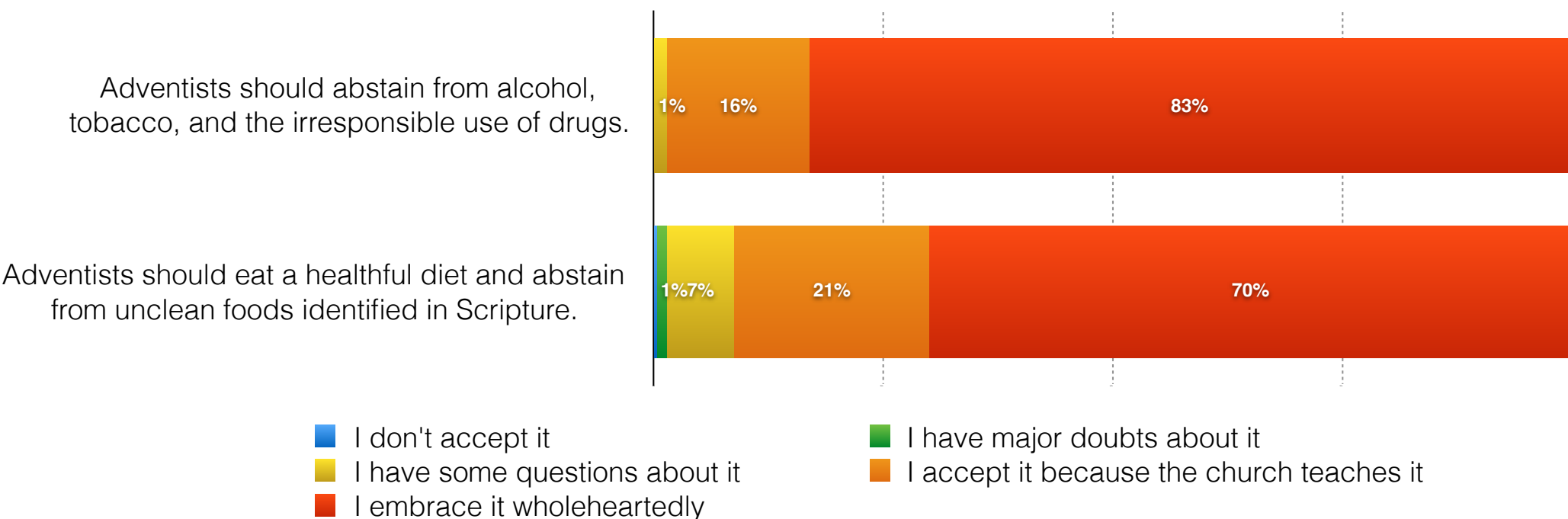
**B5. READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS  
CAREFULLY; THEN MARK ONLY ONE STATEMENT  
THAT IS CLOSEST TO YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF  
THE WRITINGS OF ELLEN G. WHITE.**



# B6A. TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUAL TEACHINGS OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH?



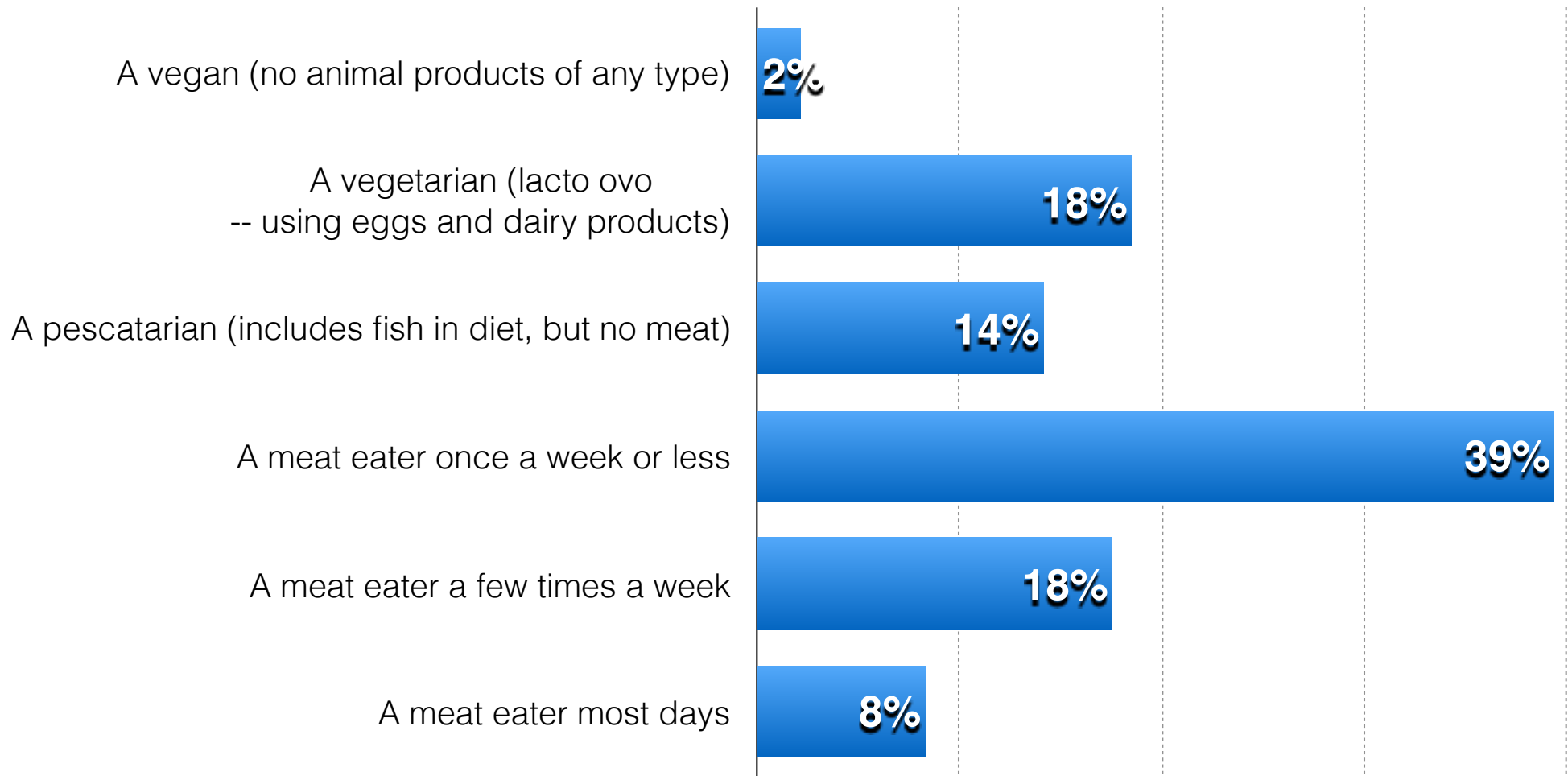
## B6B. TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU ACCEPT THE FOLLOWING INDIVIDUAL TEACHINGS OF THE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH?



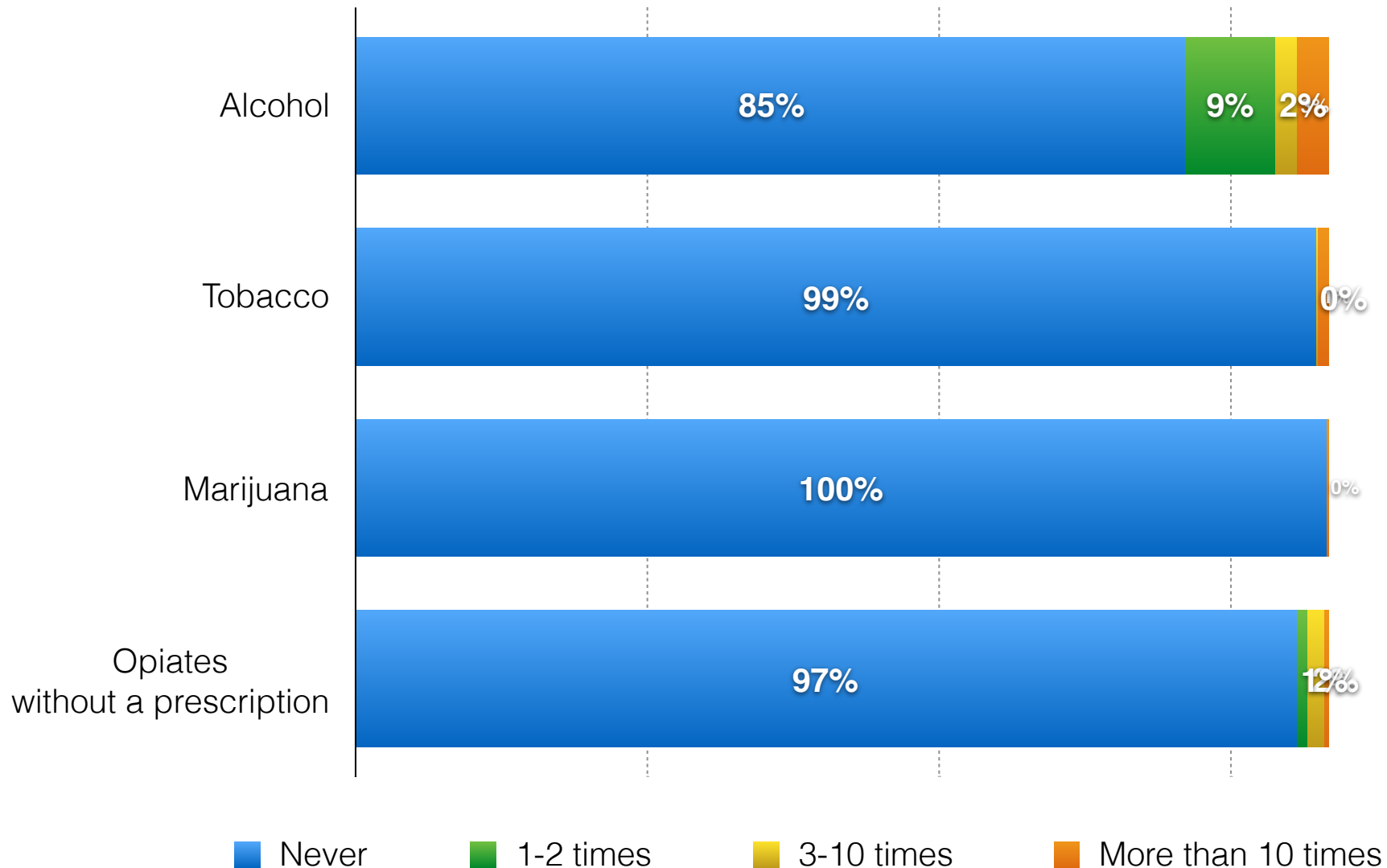
**HEALTH**



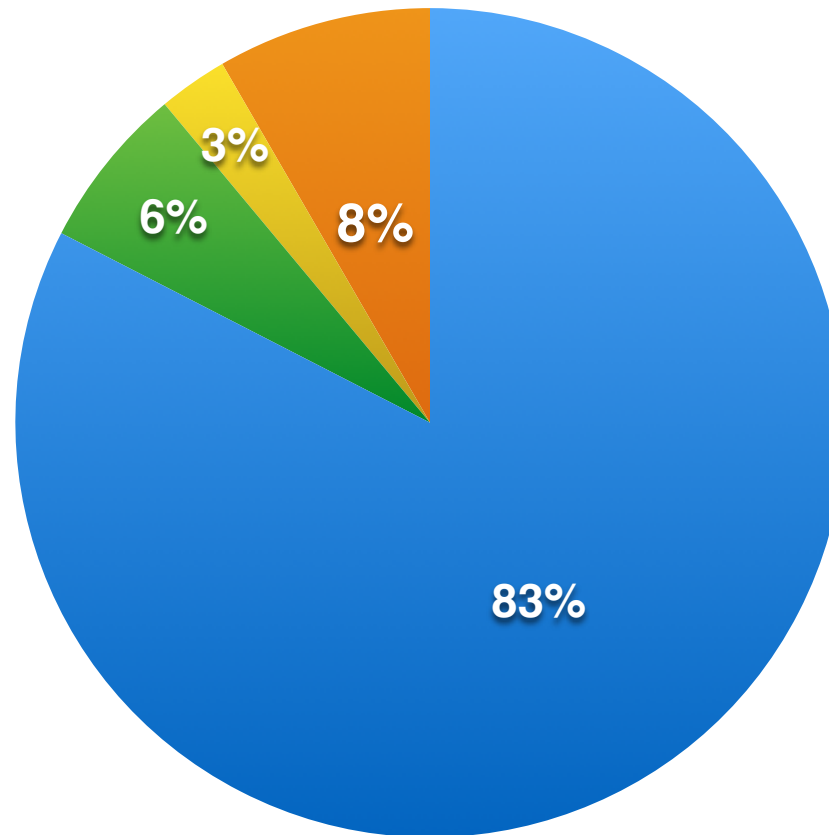
# H1. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOURSELF AS (CHECK JUST ONE):



## H2. HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU USED WITHIN THE LAST 12 MONTHS

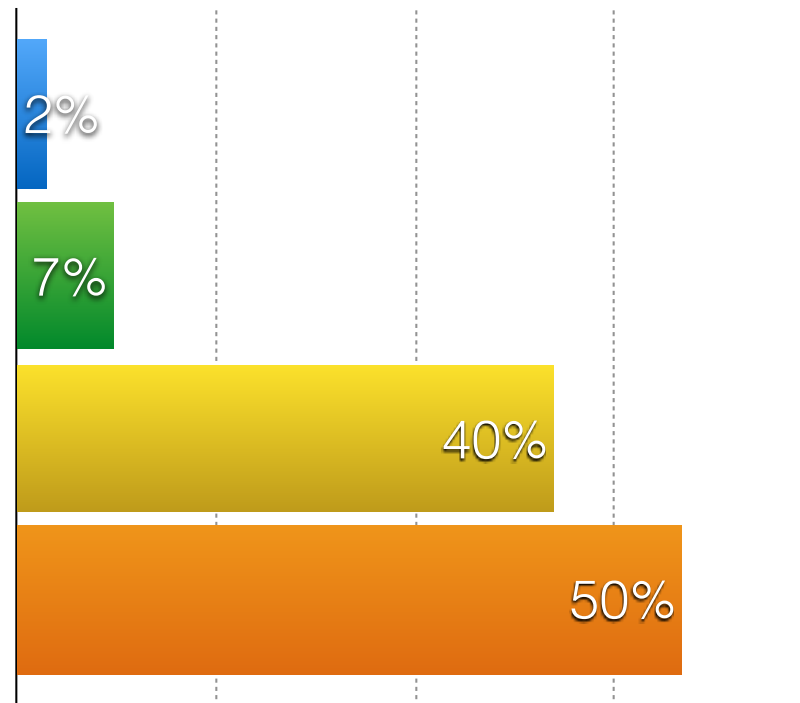


**H3. READ THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS CAREFULLY;  
THEN MARK ONLY ONE STATEMENT THAT IS CLOSEST TO  
YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ON  
ALCOHOL USE.**



- Overall, there is no safe level of alcohol use
- Alcohol, in moderation (1-2 drinks a day), does not do much harm.
- Alcohol, in moderation (1-2 drinks a day), promotes health and is safe to use.
- I am not sure.

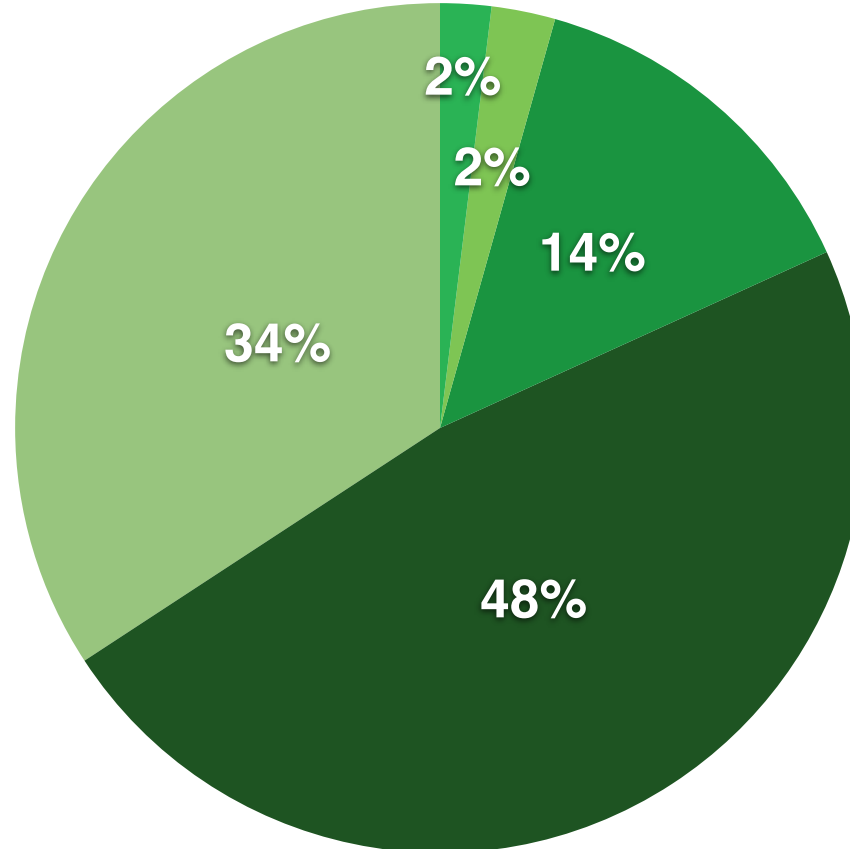
## H4 - HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE ADVENTIST HEALTH MESSAGE?



- I do not know what the Adventist Health Message is.
- I know just a little about the Adventist Health Message.
- I am somewhat familiar with the Adventist Health Message.
- I am very familiar with the Adventist Health Message.

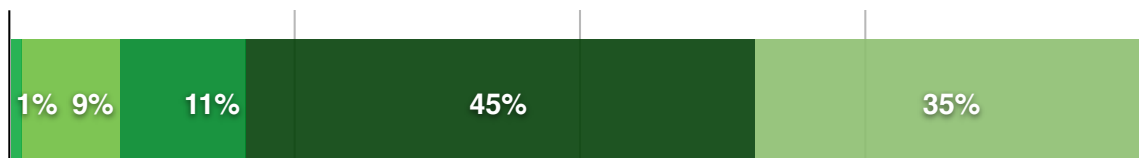
## H5. DO YOU FOLLOW THE ADVENTIST HEALTH MESSAGE?

● Never   ● Rarely   ● Occasionally   ● A Moderate Amount   ● A Great Deal



## H6. THE FINAL SET OF STATEMENTS WILL HELP US UNDERSTAND WHAT CHURCH MEMBERS BELIEVE ABOUT THE ADVENTIST HEALTH MESSAGE.

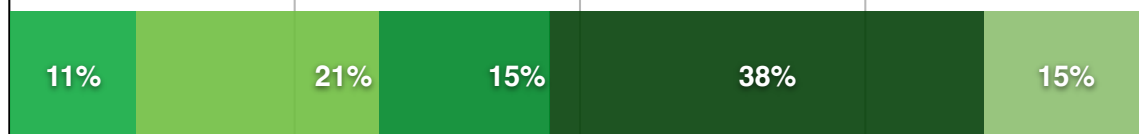
The Health Message is a core part of Seventh-day Adventist belief that cannot be questioned.



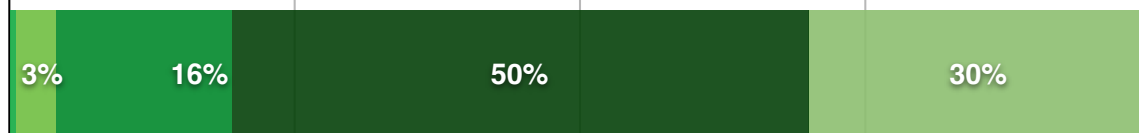
Following the Health Message increases the probability that a person will live longer.



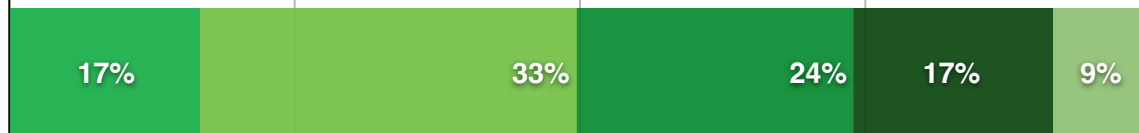
I can choose which parts of the Health Message to follow and which to ignore.



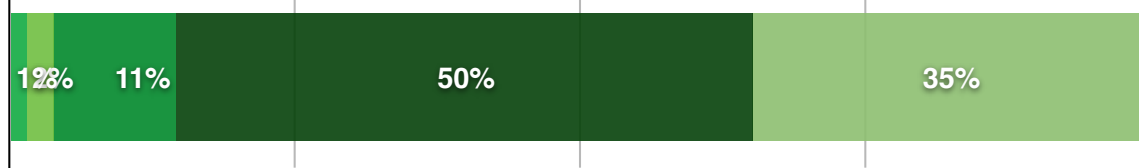
The Health Message has largely been supported by scientific discoveries.



Following the health message ensures my salvation.



The Adventist Health Message emphasizes physical health (e.g. diet, exercise), mental health, emotional well-being, social support, and relationships as a part of spiritual growth.



■ Strongly Disagree
 ■ Disagree
 ■ I am not sure
 ■ Agree
 ■ Strongly Agree