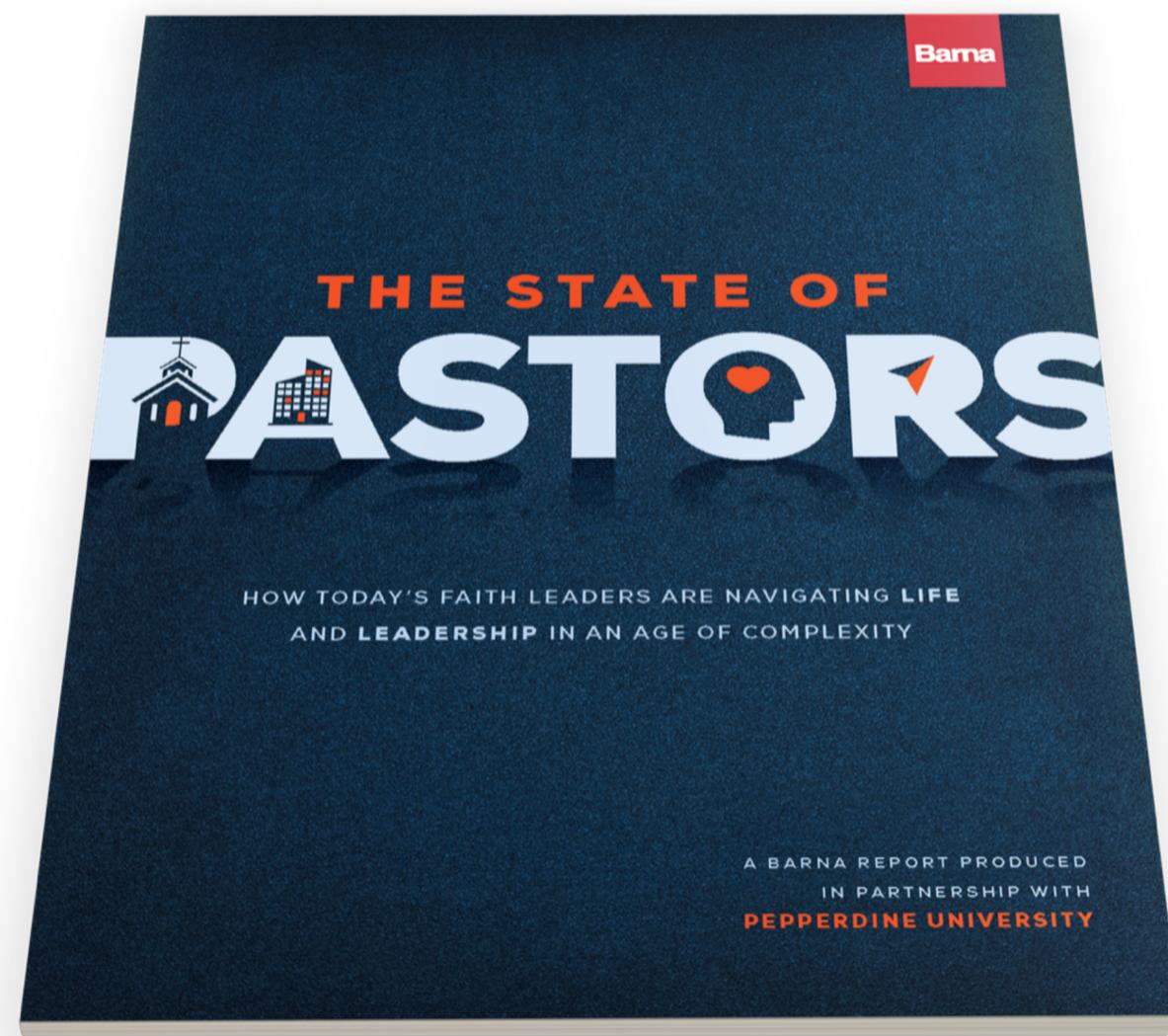


THE STATE OF

PASTORS

— LEADING IN COMPLEXITY —



For more information about this study and to see the complete findings, check out our 2015 report:

The State of Pastors

The full report is available at shop.barna.com or through Barna Access membership.

1 Chronicles 12:32 (NLT)

“... understood the signs of the times and knew the best course to take.”

Isaiah 43:19 (NLT)

“For I am about to do something new. See, I have already begun! Do you not see it? I will make a pathway through the wilderness. I will create rivers in the dry wasteland.”

State of Pastors Study

- Self-leadership
- Church leadership
- Cultural leadership

Resilience is the Antidote to Living and Leading in a Culture of Complexity

- Self: being a resilient person
- Church: developing a resilient team
- Cultural: forming a resilient, countercultural community

Self Leadership

Self Leadership

- Most pastors start early on their path to ministry.
- A sense of calling deepens with time and experience.
- As a cohort of leaders, pastors are getting older.

Self Leadership

- It's not uncommon for spiritual leaders to face doubt.
- Most pastors are faring well, but 1 in 3 is at risk of burnout.
- Nearly half of pastors face some sort of relational risk.

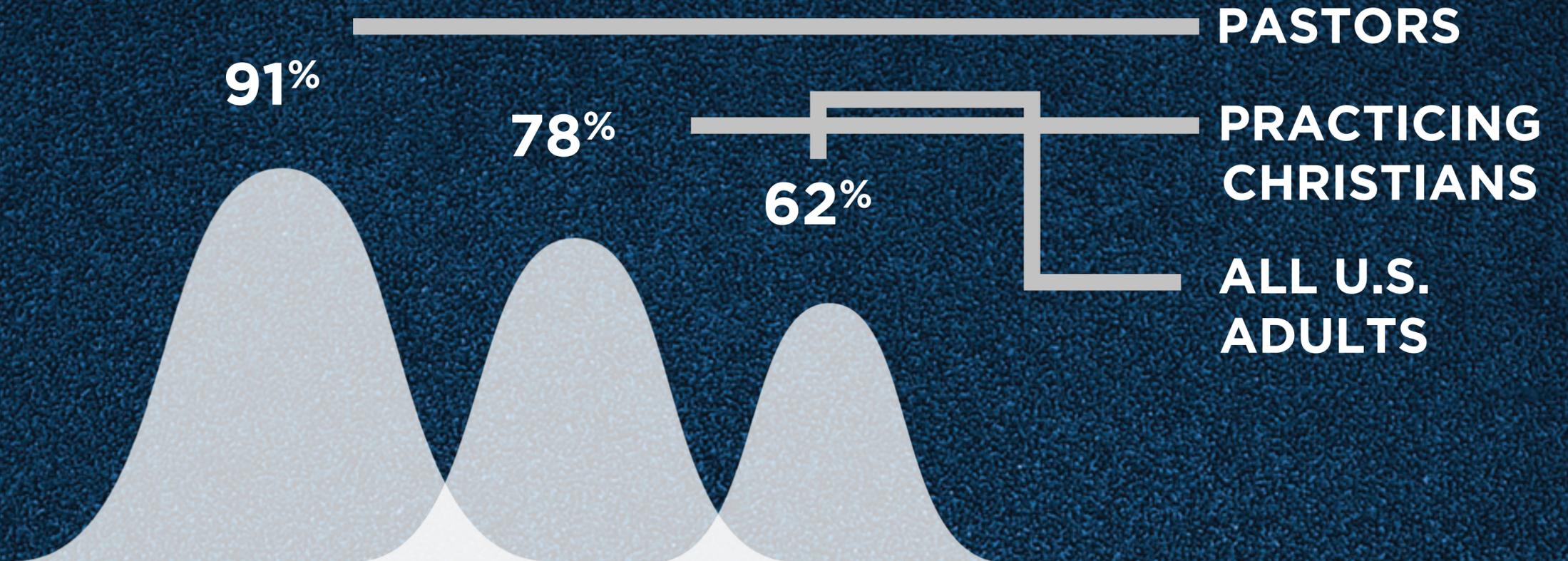
Self Leadership

- Families usually weather the challenges of ministry.
- Pastors are not immune to mental health struggles.
- Even when earning less, pastors thrive in other ways.
- Worship helps pastors stay resilient.

	1992	2017
Median age	44 years	54 years
40 and under	33%	15%
65 and older	6%	17%

Living The Good Life

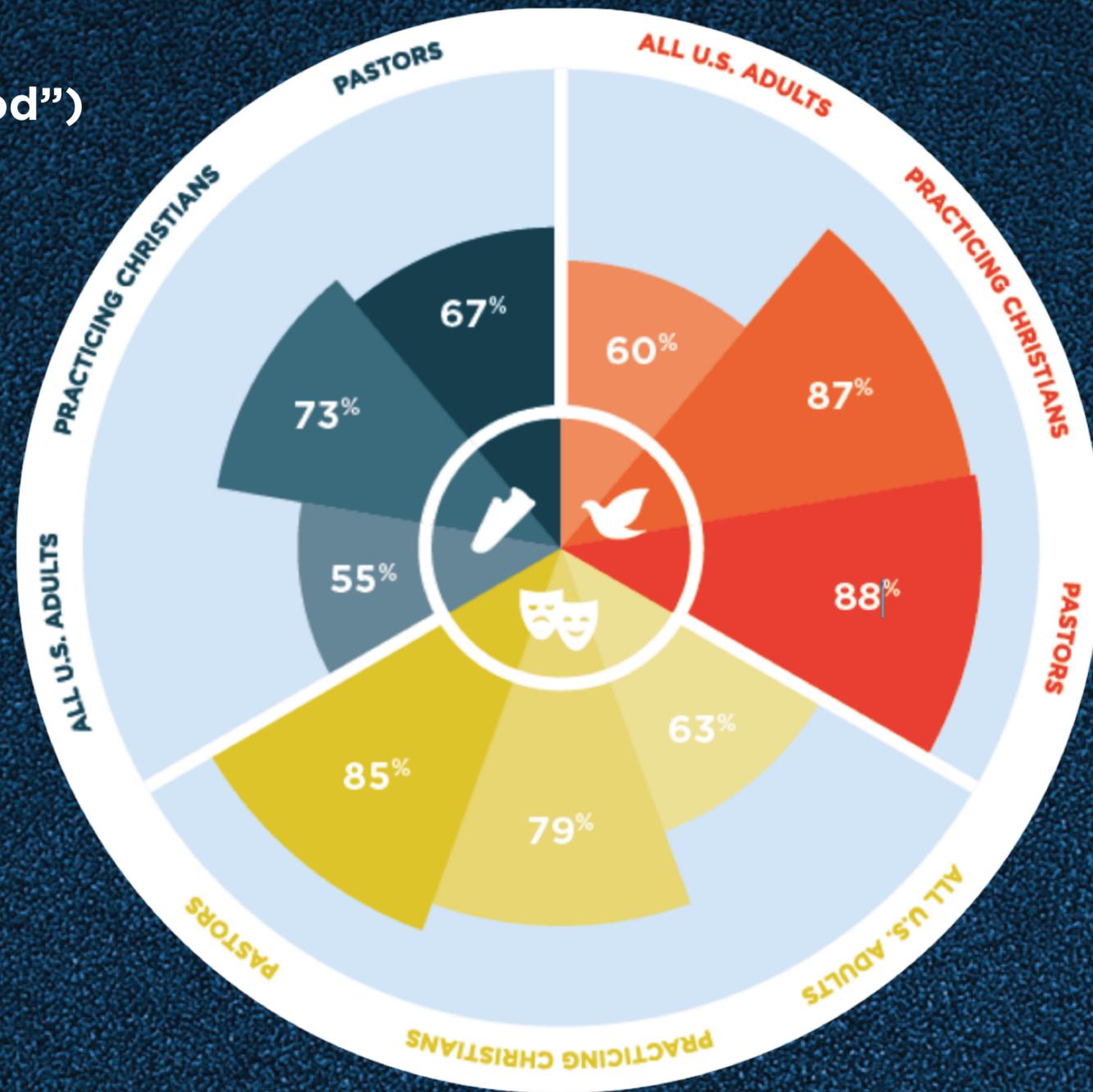
Overall, pastors are satisfied with their quality of life



(% Who Say "Excellent" + "Good")

Physical, Emotional and Spiritual Health

(% Who Say "Excellent" + "Good")



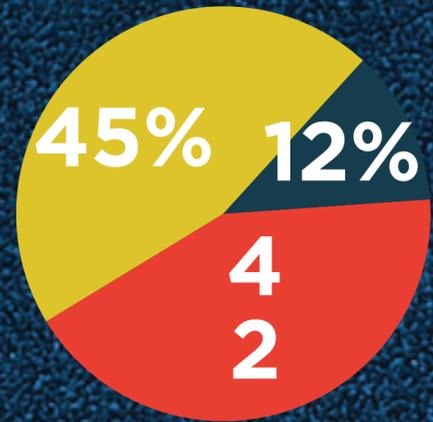
-  Physical
-  Emotional
-  Spiritual

Pastors are More Likely Than the General Population to Feel:

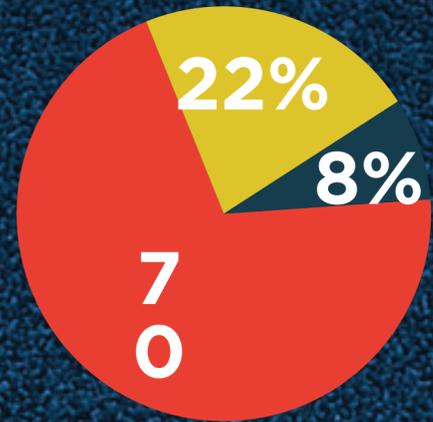
- Frequently
- Sometimes
- Seldom / never

INADEQUACY ABOUT THEIR WORK OR CALLING

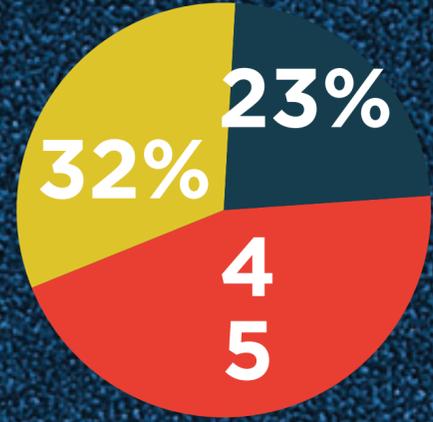
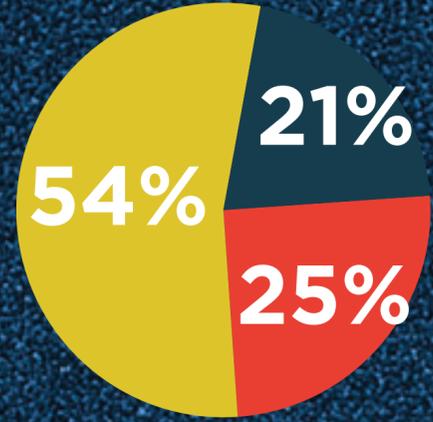
Pastors



All Adults



EMOTIONAL / MENTAL EXHAUSTION



** THIS QUESTION ASKED AMONG EMPLOYED U.S. ADULTS TO COMPARE WORKING PASTORS WITH WORKING AMERICANS.

How We Measured Burnout Risk

(11 Items)

- Less confident in ministry than when they began
- Rate mental or emotional health as average or below average
- Seldom or never feel energized by ministry work
- Frequently feel emotionally or mentally exhausted
- Have suffered from depression sometime during their ministry
- Primary day-to-day tasks do not fit their gifts

How We Measured Relationship Risk

(7 Items)

- Rate their spousal relationship as below average or poor
- Rate their relationship with children as below average or poor
- Rate satisfaction with friendships as below average or poor
- Frequently or sometimes feel lonely or isolated from others
- Seldom or never feel well-supported by people close to them

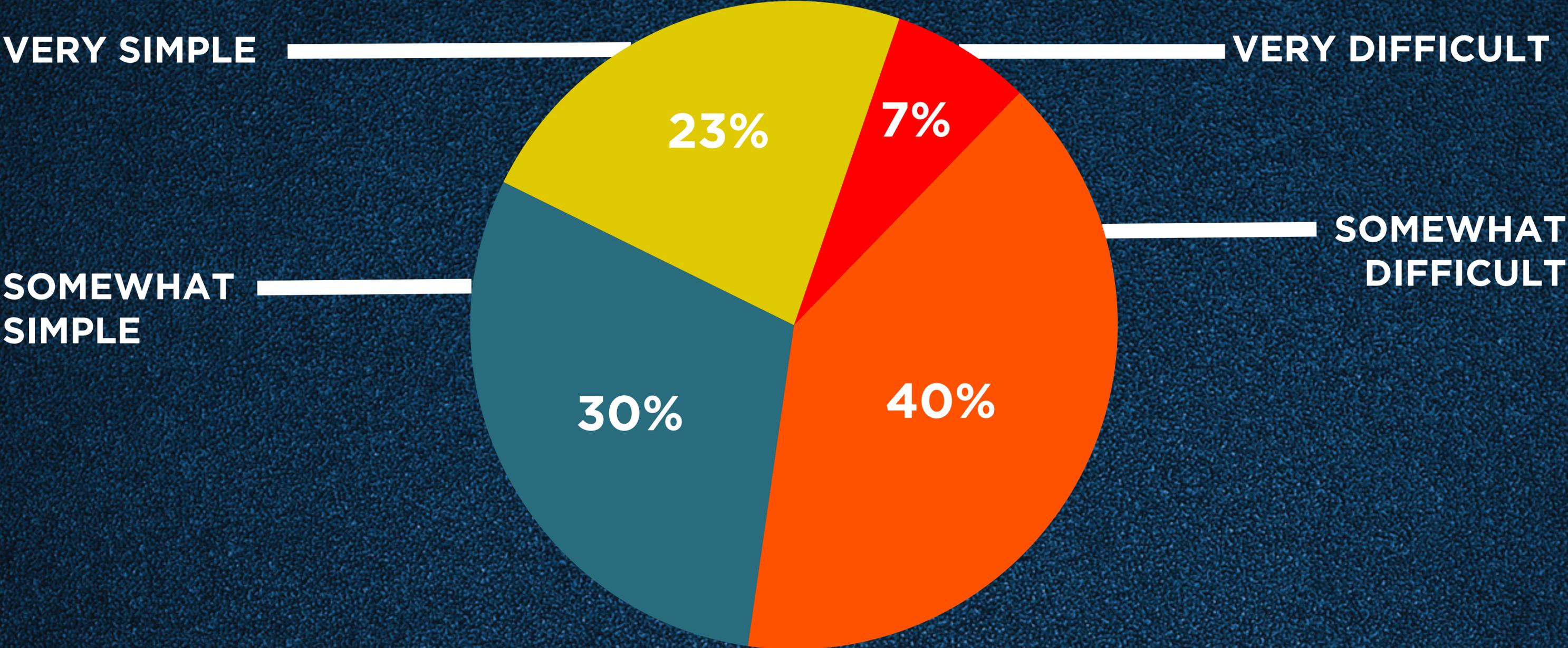
How We Measured Spiritual Risk

(4 Items)

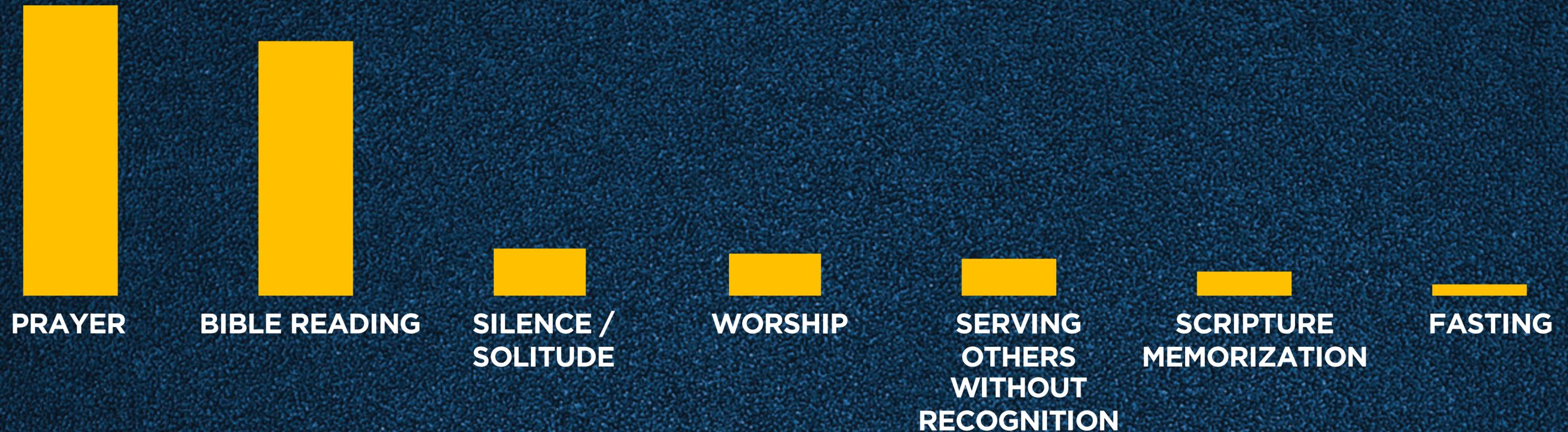
- Rate their spiritual well-being as average, below average or poor
- Very or somewhat difficult to invest in their own spiritual growth
- Infrequently receive spiritual support from peers or a mentor
- Ministry has not deepened their relationship with Jesus

Type of risk	Burnout	Relational	Spiritual
High	11%	27%	5%
Medium	26%	16%	61%
Low	63%	56%	34%

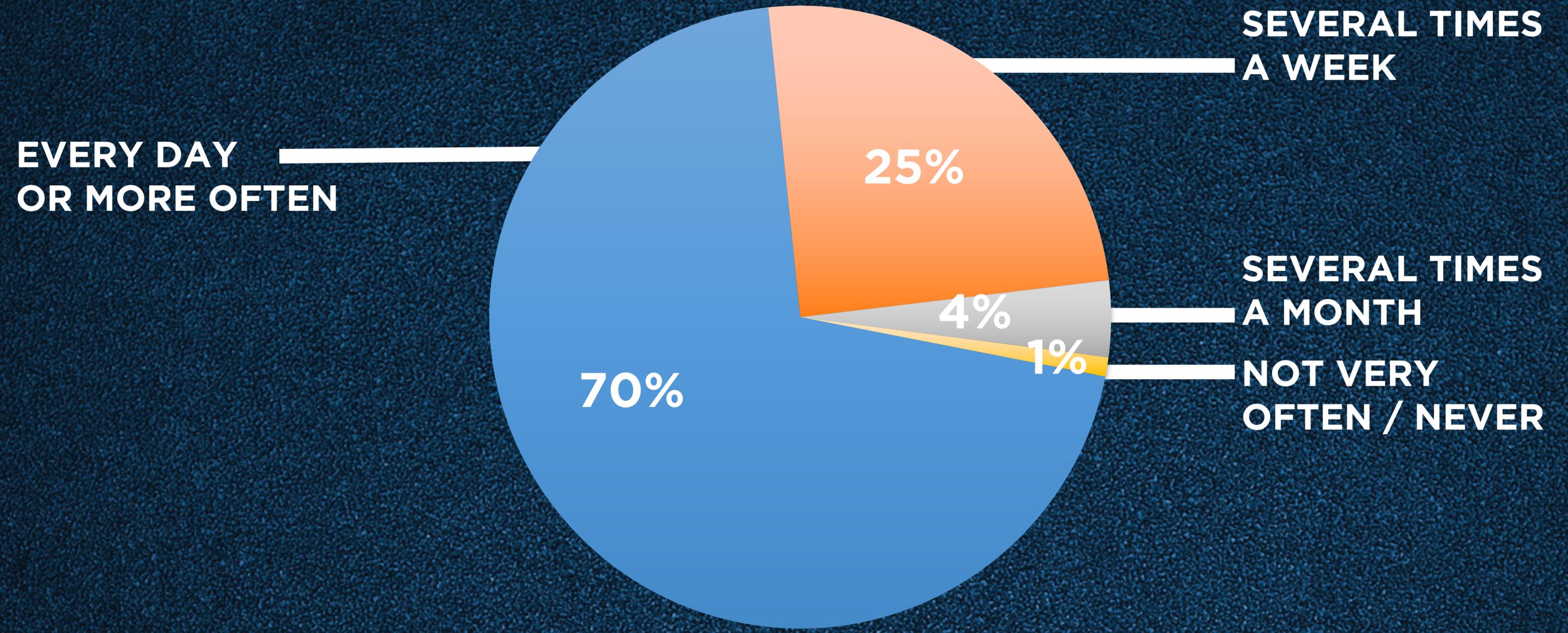
Investing Time in Own Spiritual Development



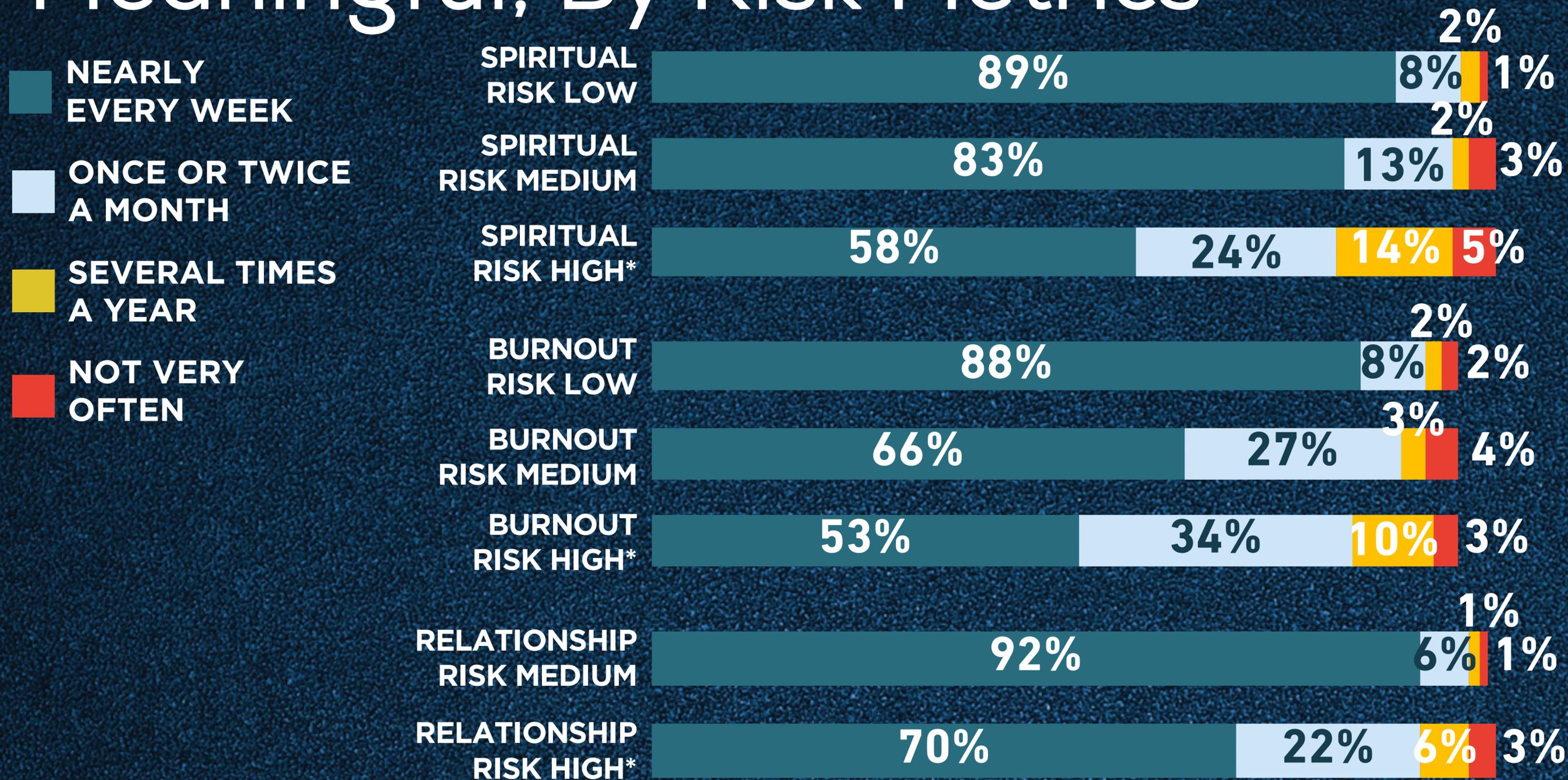
Most Essential Spiritual Practices to Pastors for Their Own Spiritual Development



How Often Do Pastors Engage In Their Primary Spiritual Discipline?



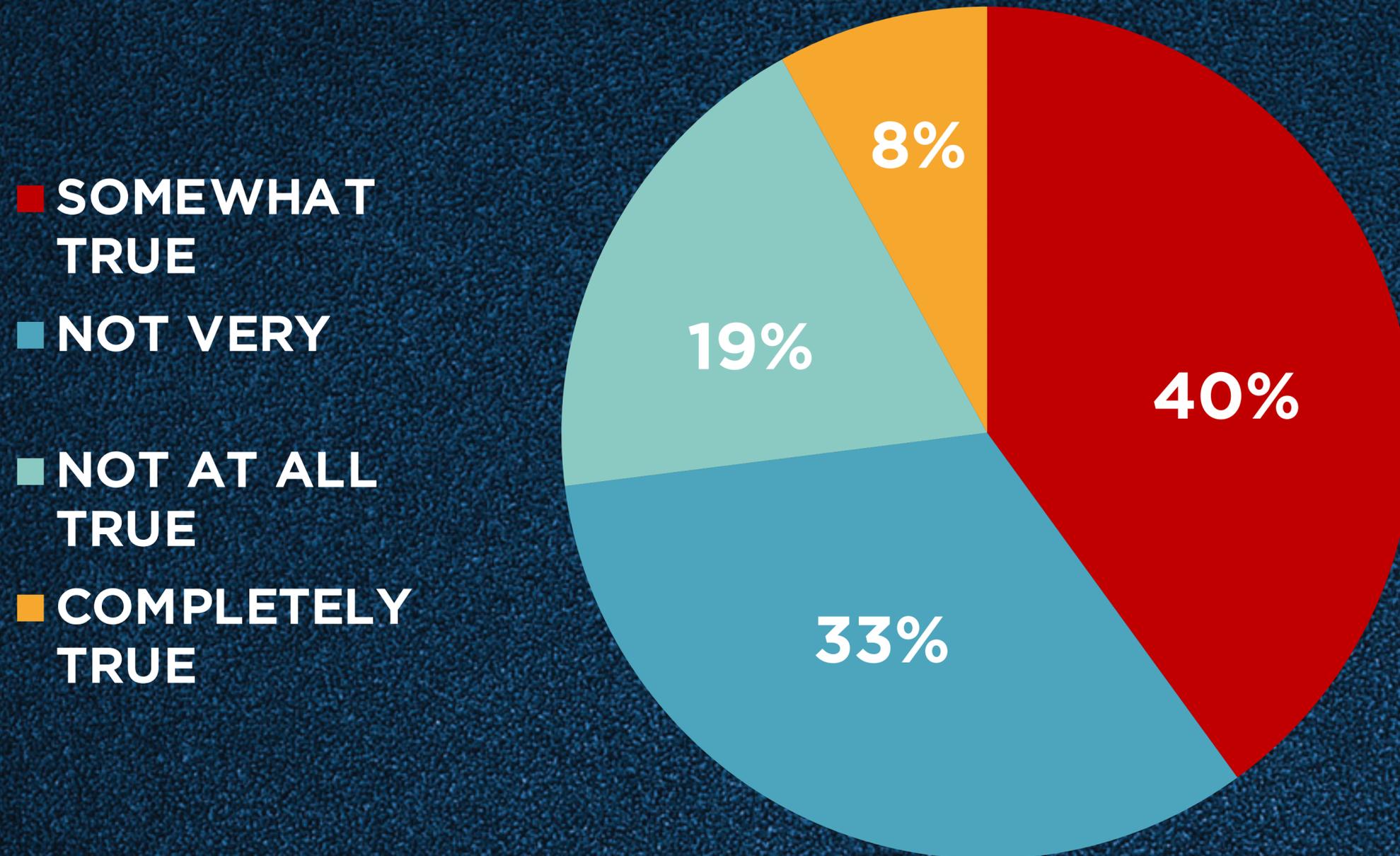
How Often Pastors Find Worship Meaningful, By Risk Metrics



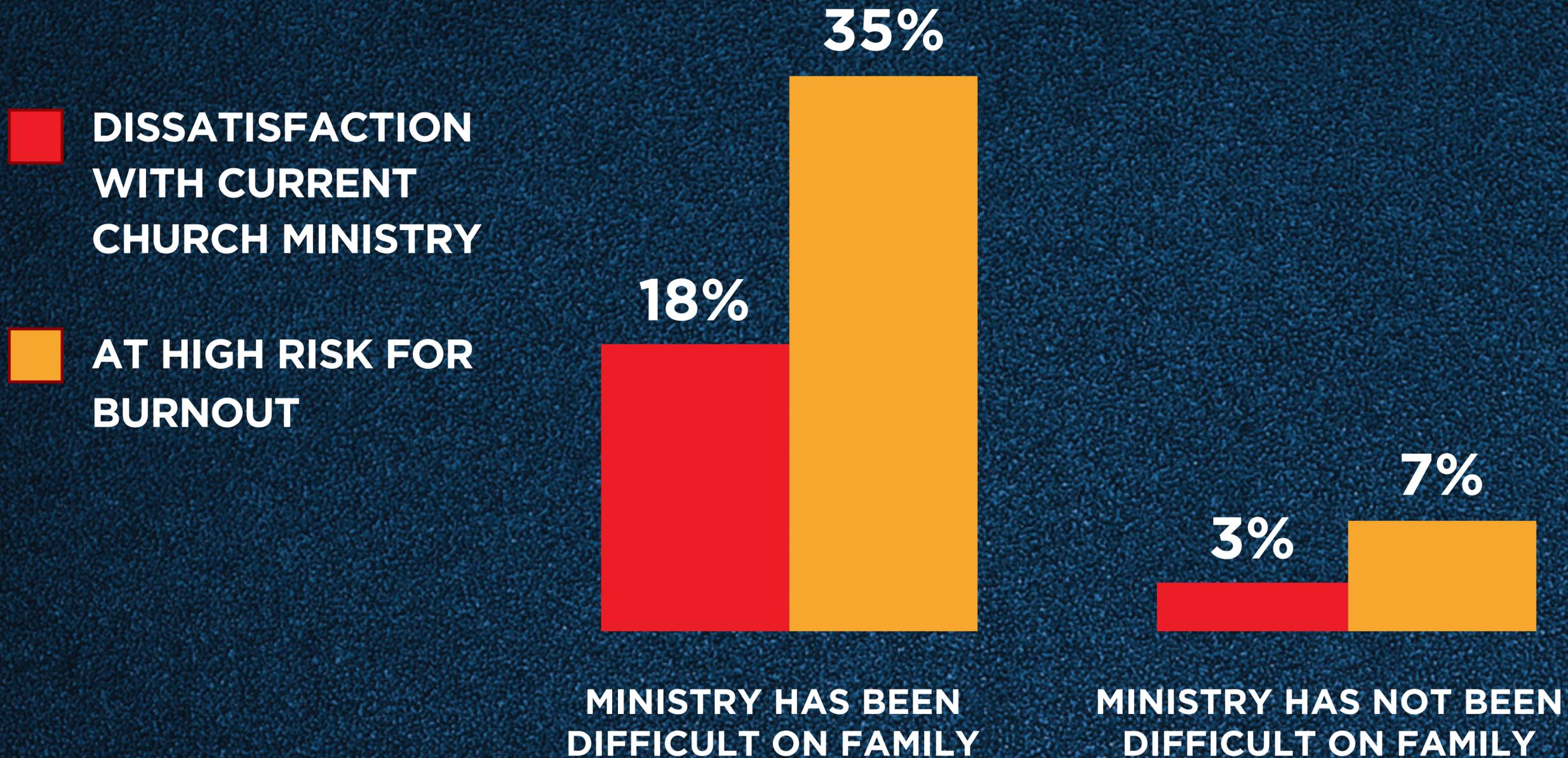
N=524
U.S. PROTESTANT PASTORS

*SMALL SAMPLE SIZES INCLUDED FOR DIRECTIONAL PURPOSES

“My Current Church Ministry Has Been Difficult on My Family.”



A Ministry's Negative Impact on the Family is Connected with Lower Ministry Satisfaction and Burnout Risk



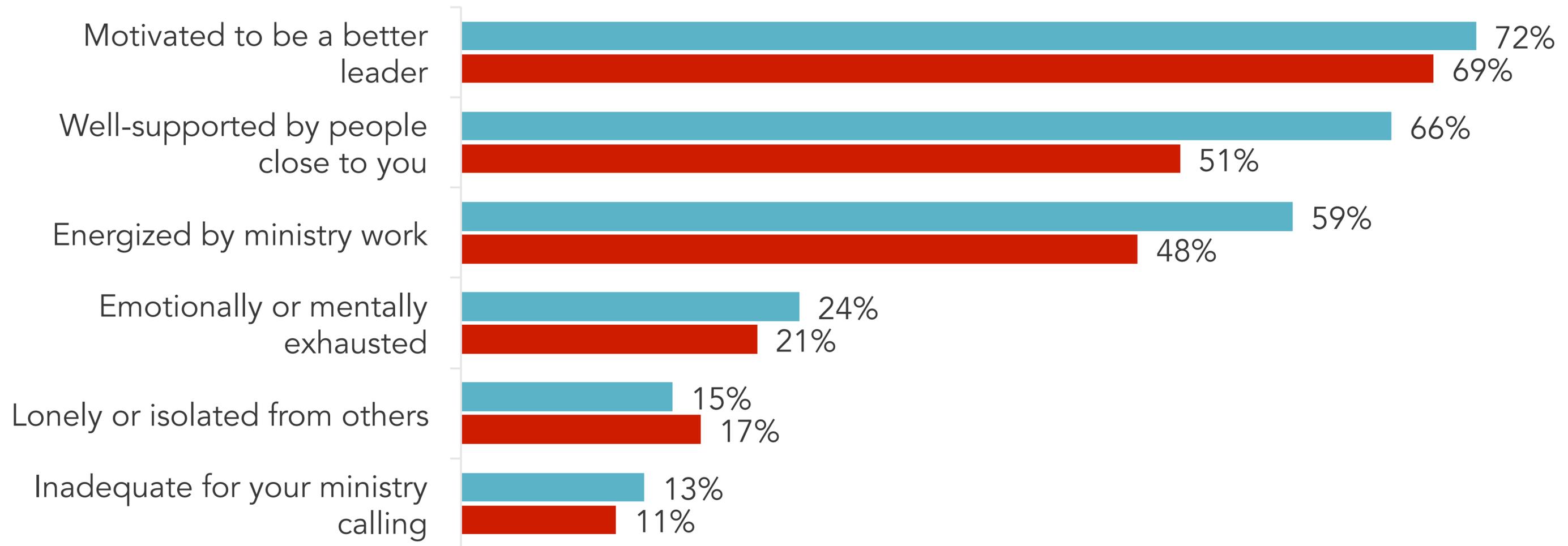
1 in 4

**PASTORS HAVE
EXPERIENCED A
PERIOD DURING THEIR
MINISTRY WHEN THEY
SIGNIFICANTLY
DOUBTED THEIR FAITH**

Pastoral Emotions

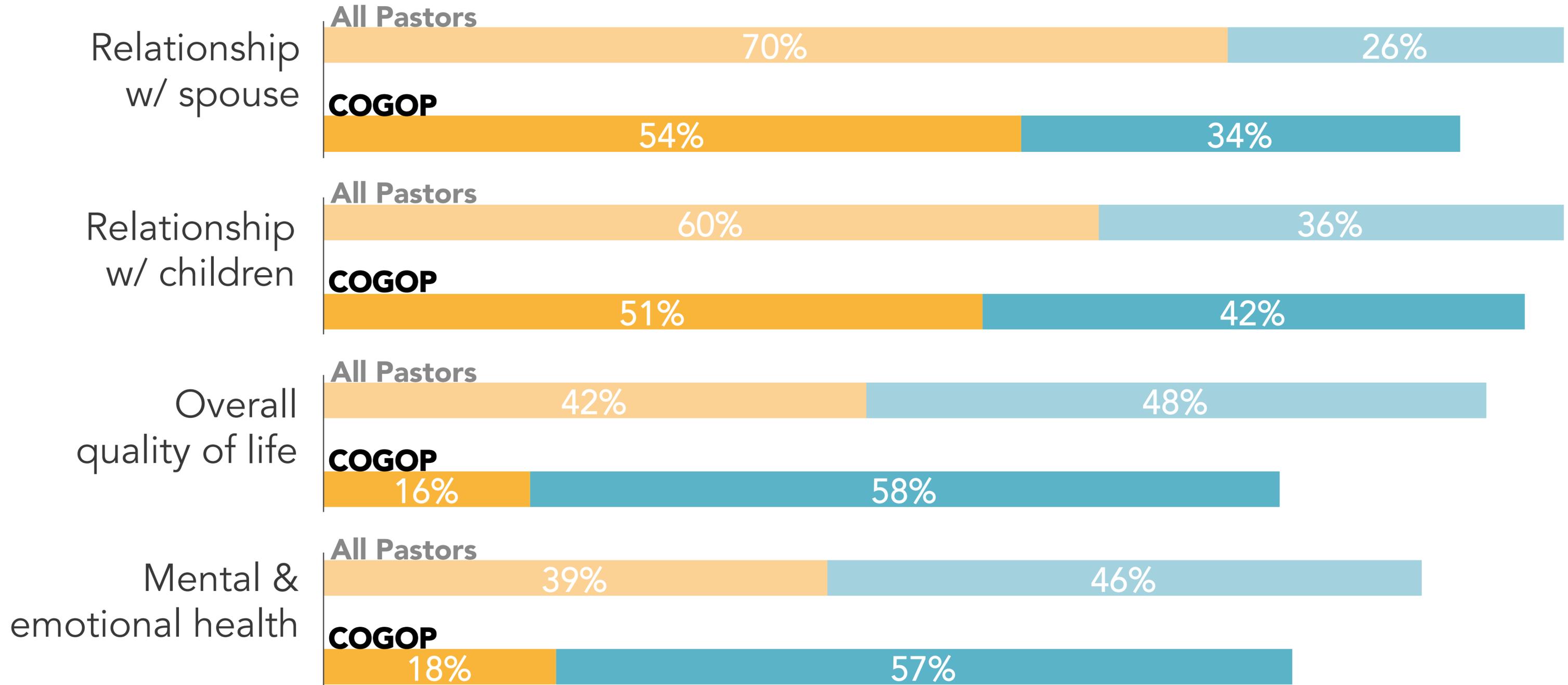
During the Past Three Months,
How Often Have You Felt? % frequently

■ All Pastors ■ COGOP



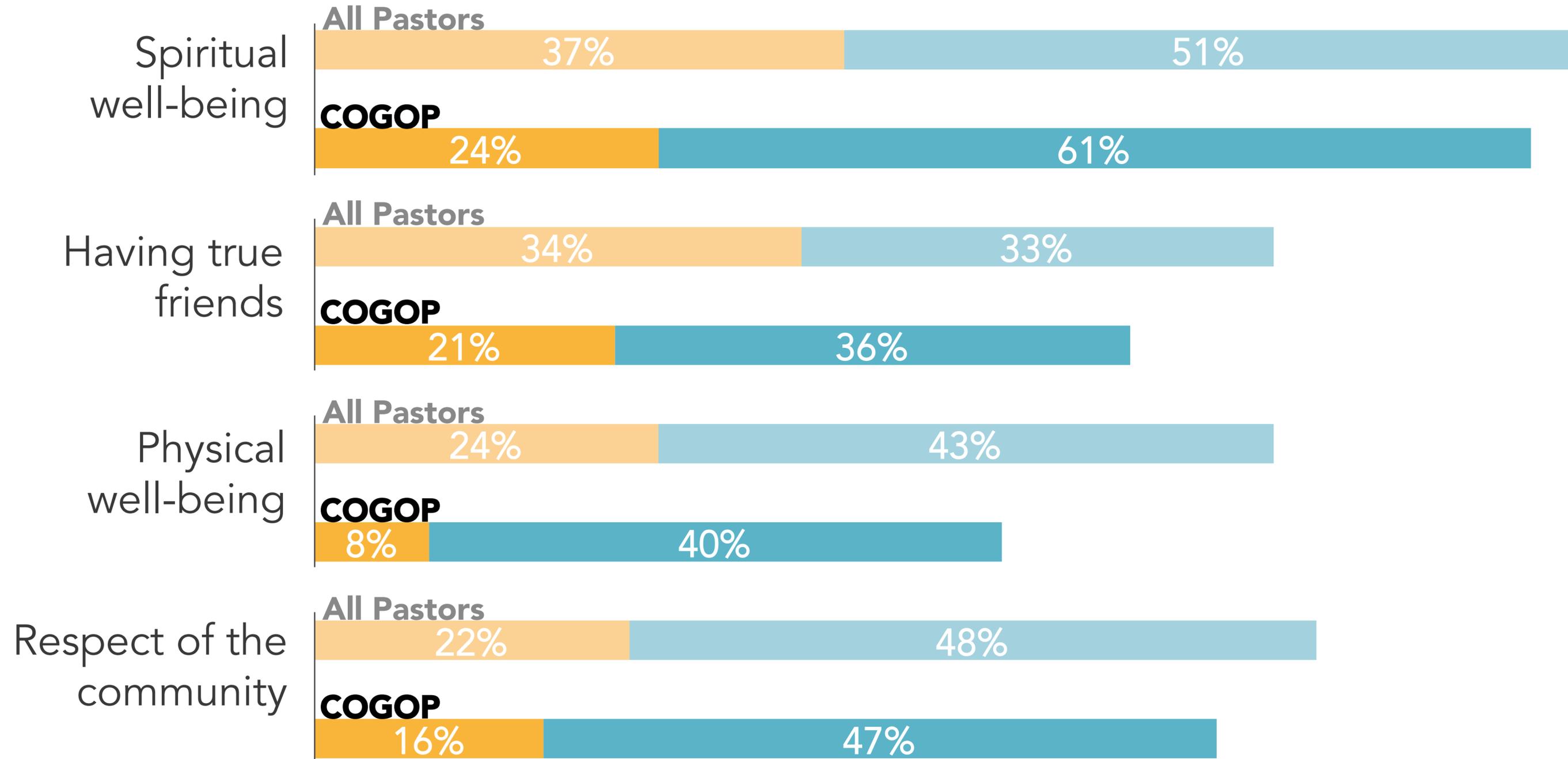
How satisfied are you with...?

■ % excellent ■ % good



How satisfied are you with...?

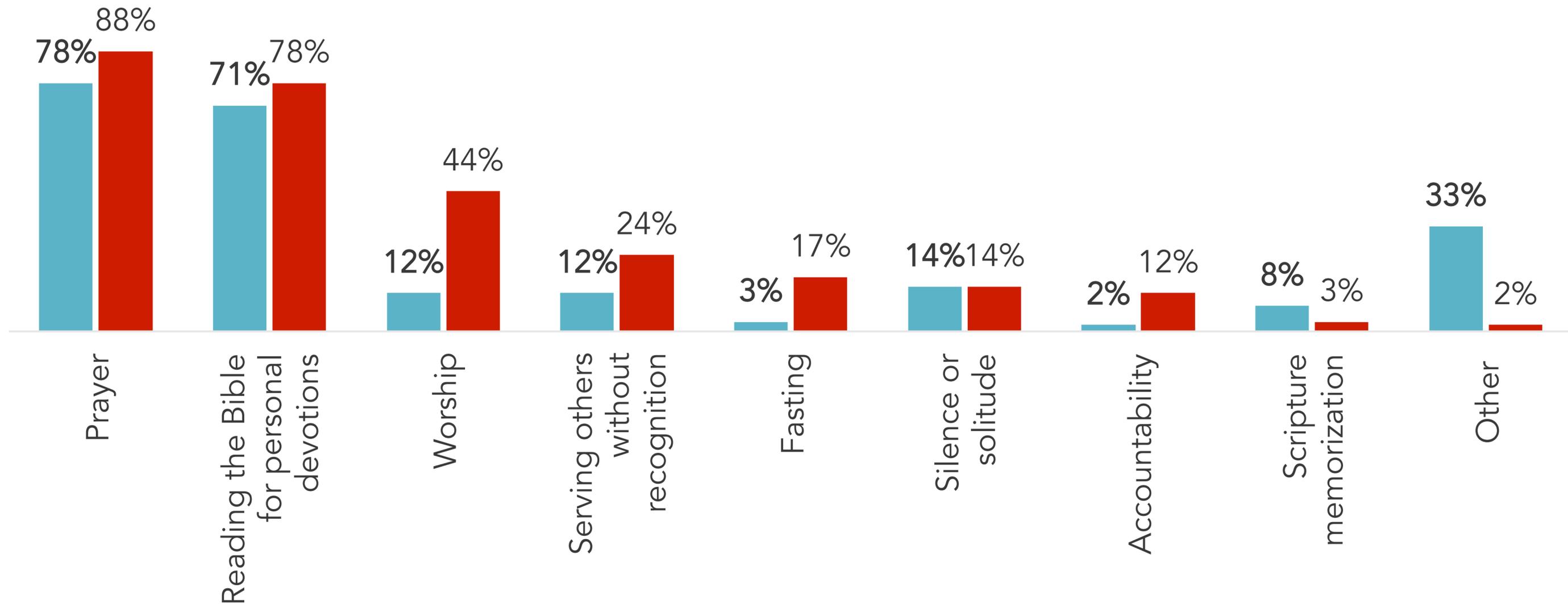
■ % excellent ■ % good



State of Spiritual Health

Spiritual Disciplines Essential to Your Own Spiritual Development

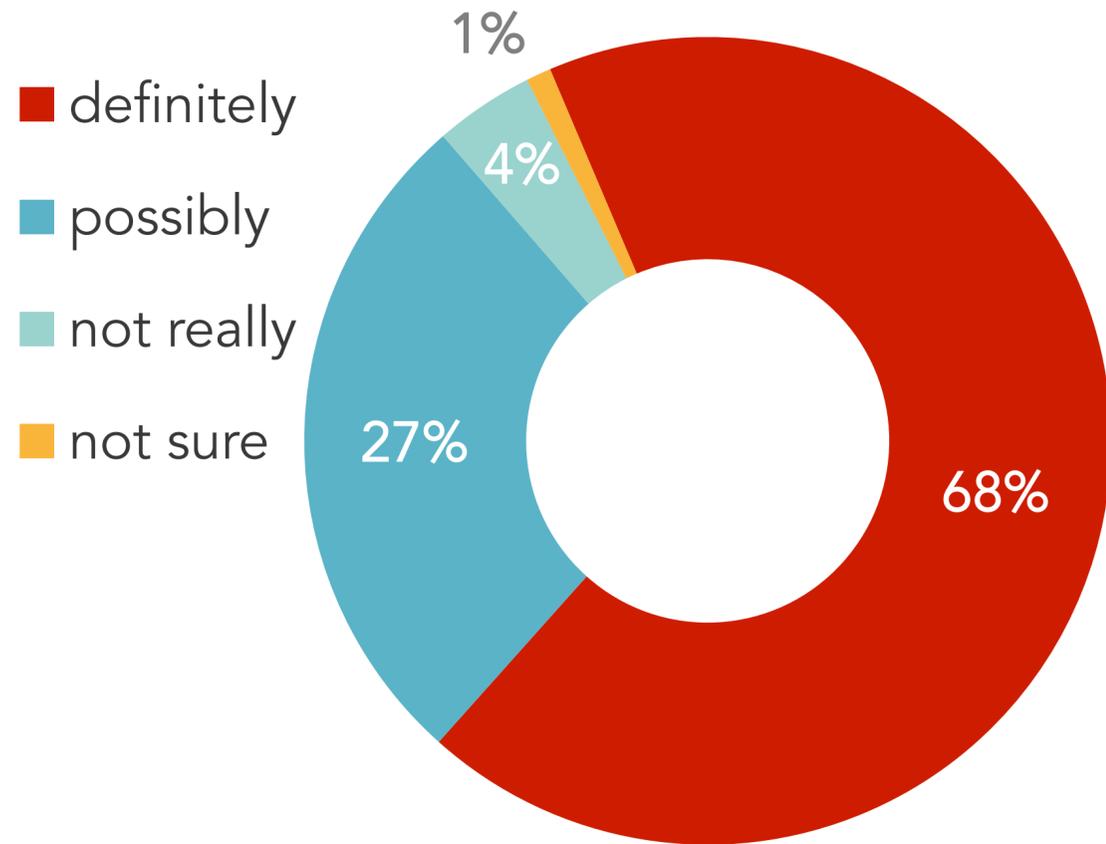
■ All Pastors ■ COGOP



State of Spiritual Health cont.

Have You Identified Your Spiritual Gift(s)?

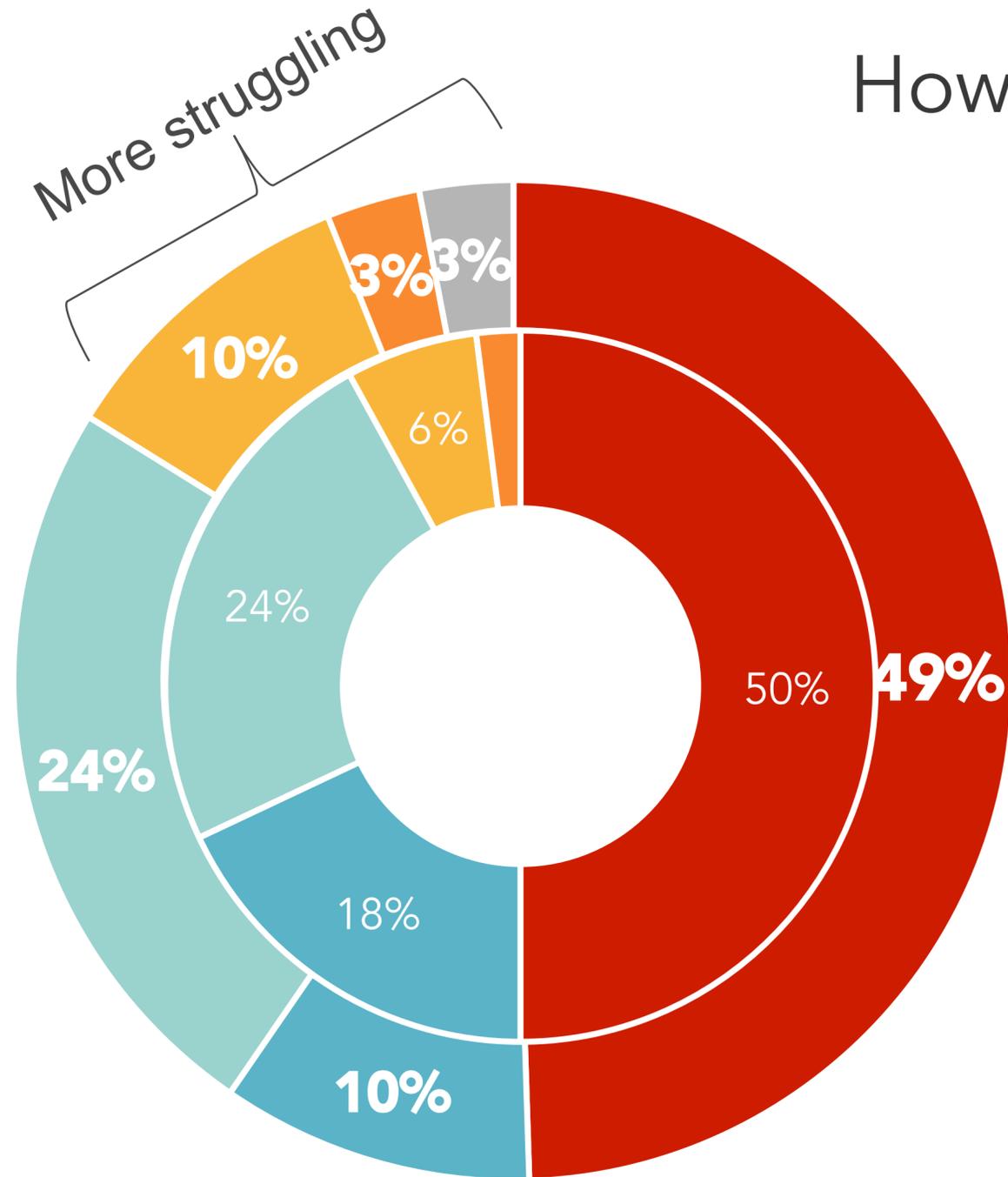
COGOP only



How often do you...		
	All Pastors	COGOP
Personally consider corporate worship with your church a meaningful worship experience <i>(nearly every week)</i>	84%	81%
Engage in spiritual discipline that is most essential to spiritual development <i>(at least once a day)</i>	72%	57%
Receive personal spiritual support, from a network of peers or from a mentor <i>(at least once a month)</i>	69%	34%
Seek opportunities to worship outside of your own church <i>(at least once a month)</i>	21%	10%

State of Pastoral Finances

How Would You Describe Your Financial Condition?



Inner ring: All Pastors

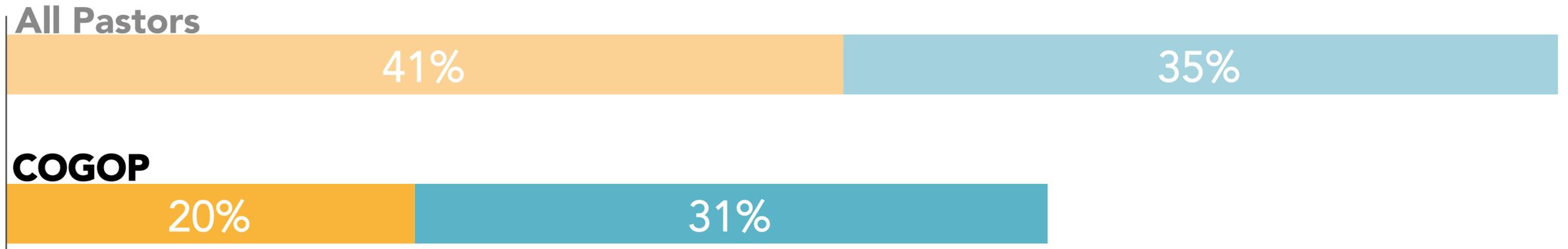
Outer ring: COGOP

- You are able to make ends meet and have some left over
- You have more than you need for yourself and your family
- You are just making ends meet
- You are struggling to keep up with day-to-day expenses
- You require assistance to get by
- Don't know

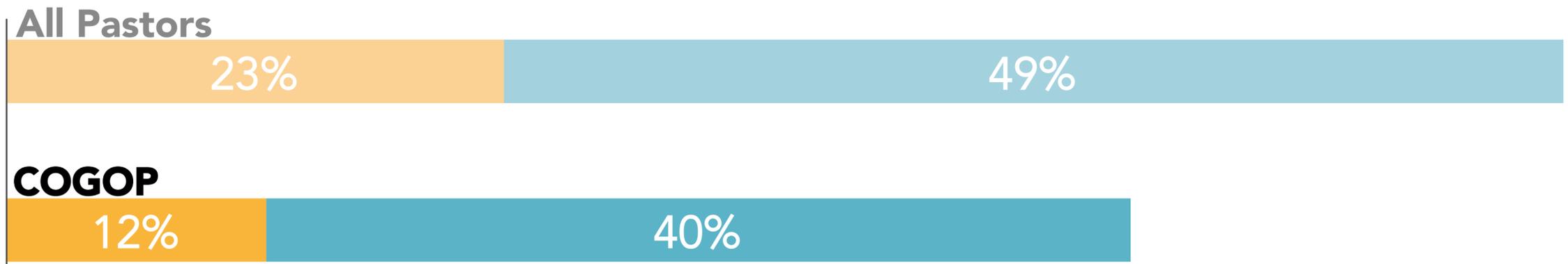
How satisfied are you with...?

■ % completely ■ % somewhat

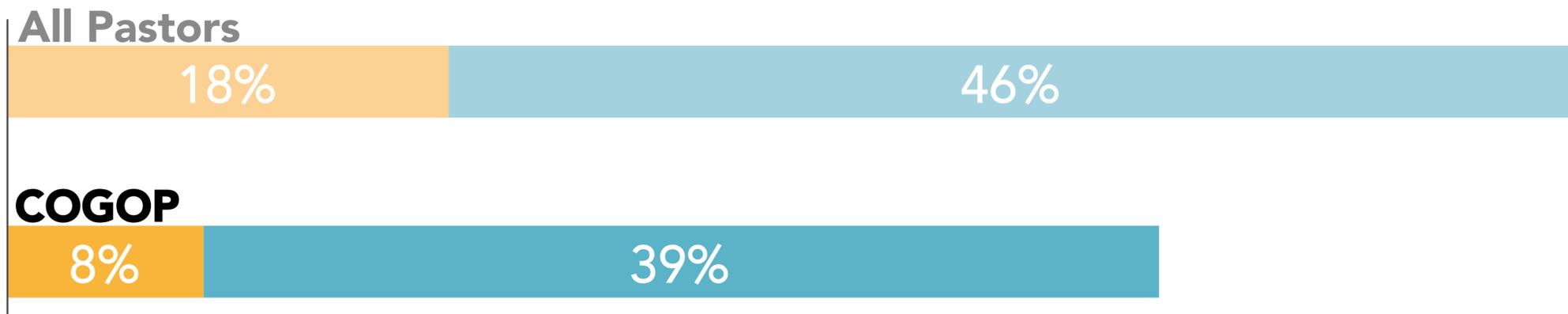
I have a trustworthy, knowledgeable person to turn to for financial advice.



I am confident that I will be financially secure when I retire.



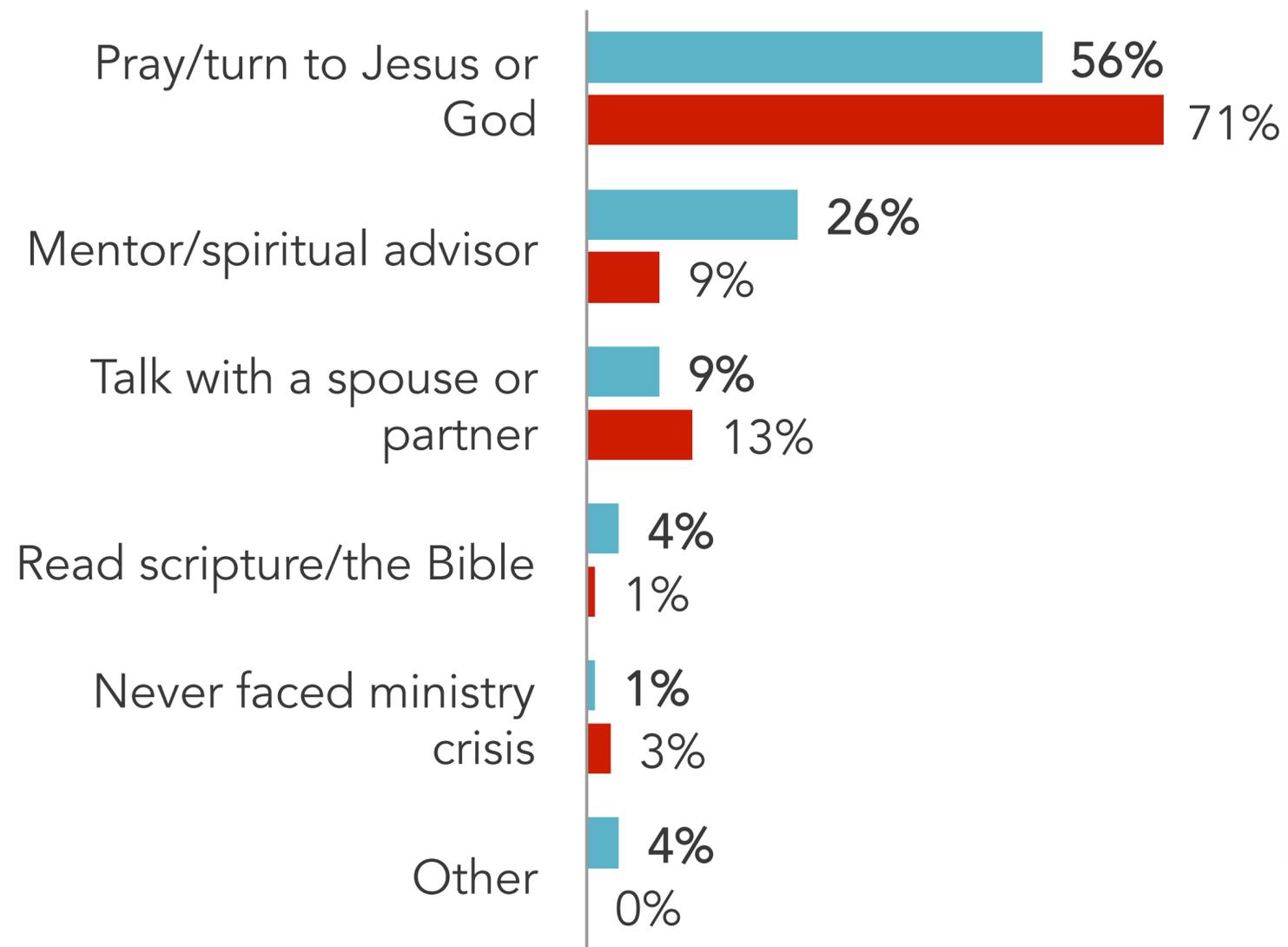
I am financially prepared for unforeseen expenses, such as a health crisis.



Resources for Crisis

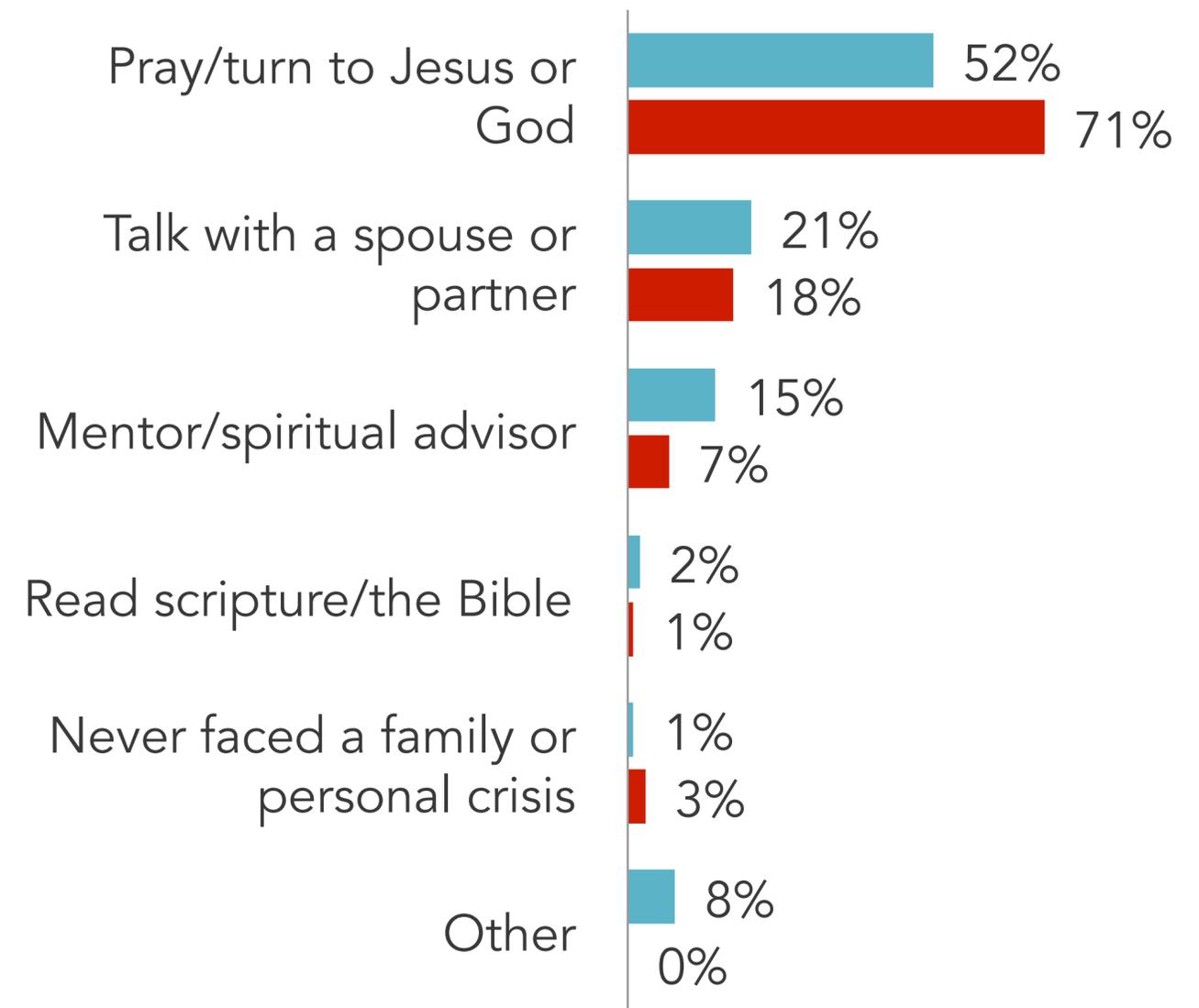
First Response to a Ministry Crisis

■ All Pastors ■ COGOP



First Response to a Personal Crisis

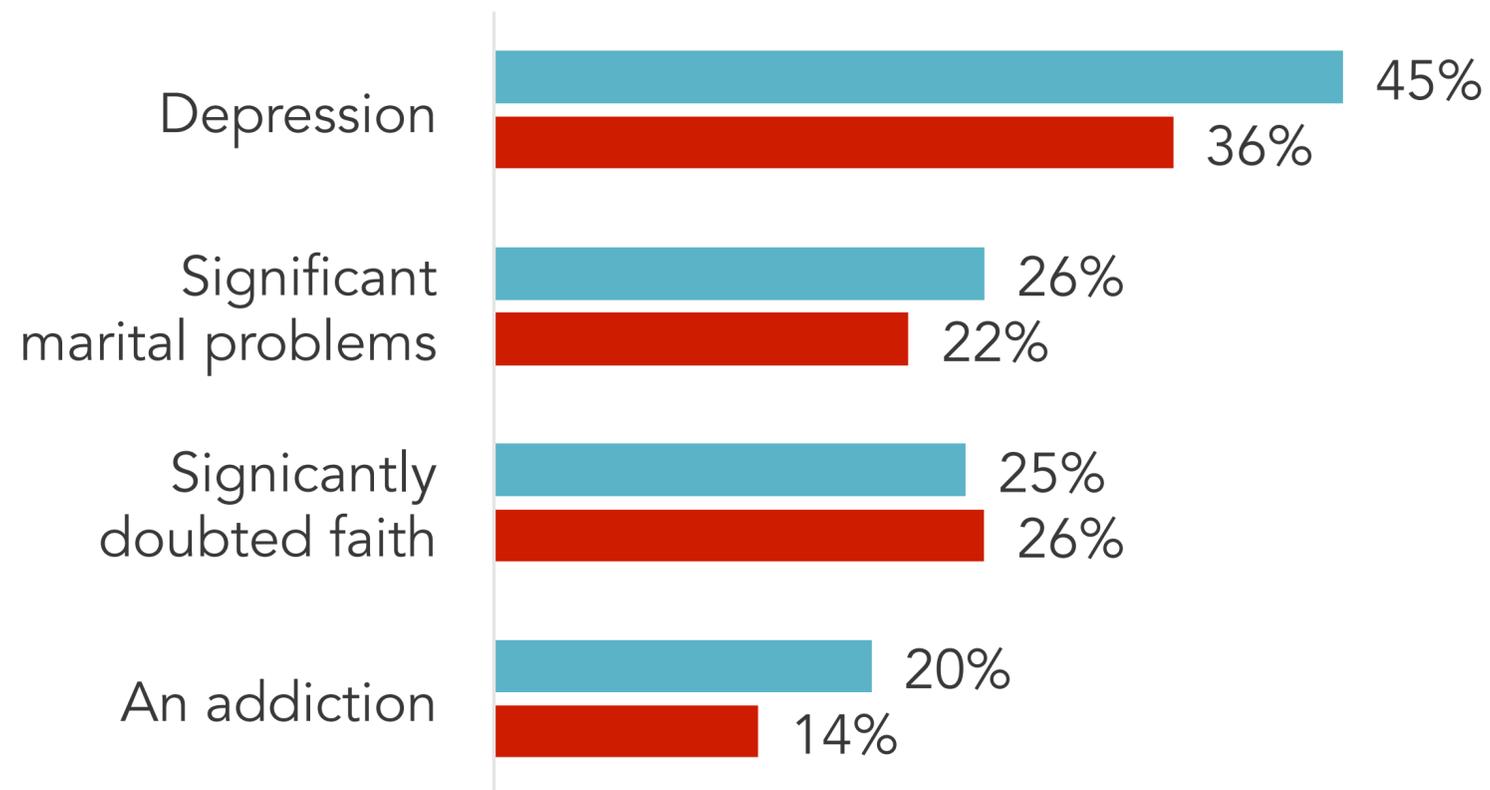
■ All Pastors ■ COGOP



Experience of Crisis and Addiction

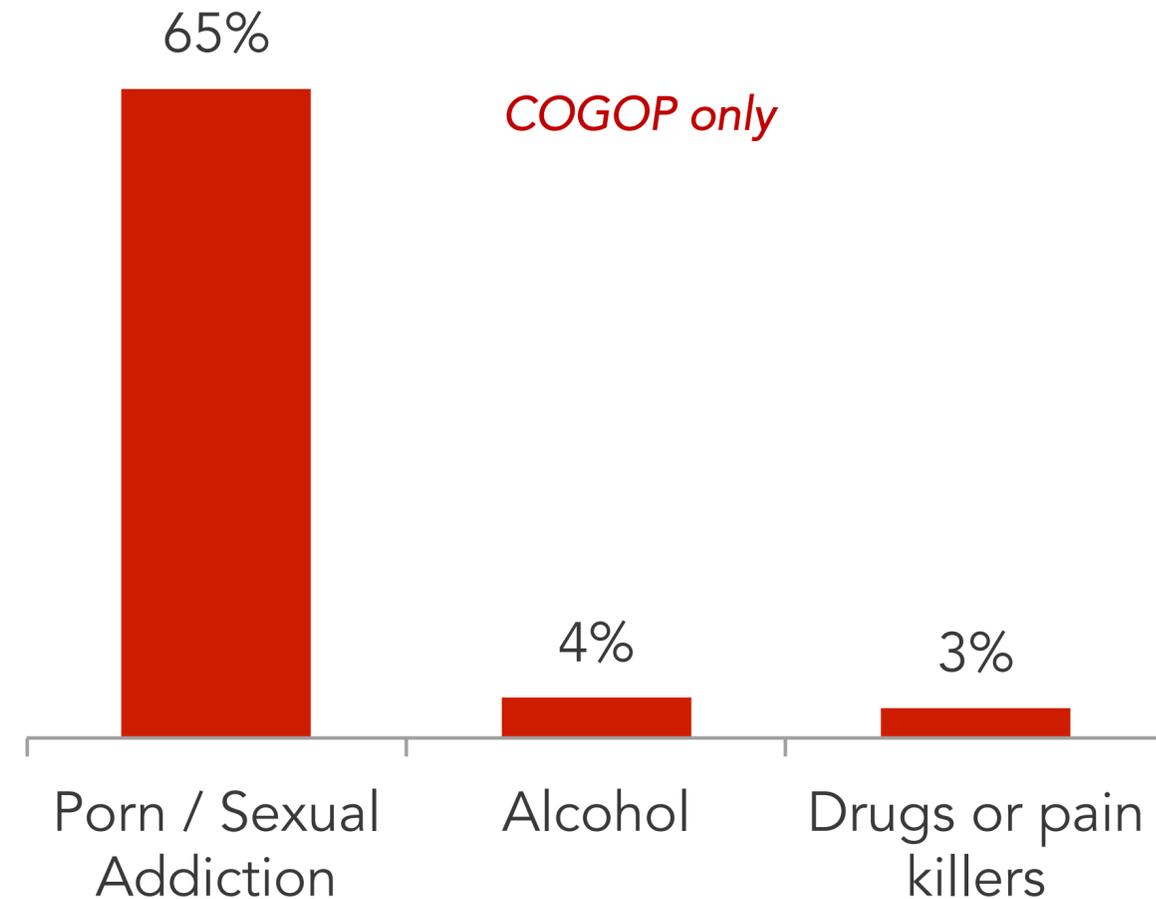
Issues Pastors Have Struggled With During Their Ministry

■ All Pastors ■ COGOP



Addictions

% among those who have struggled with an addiction

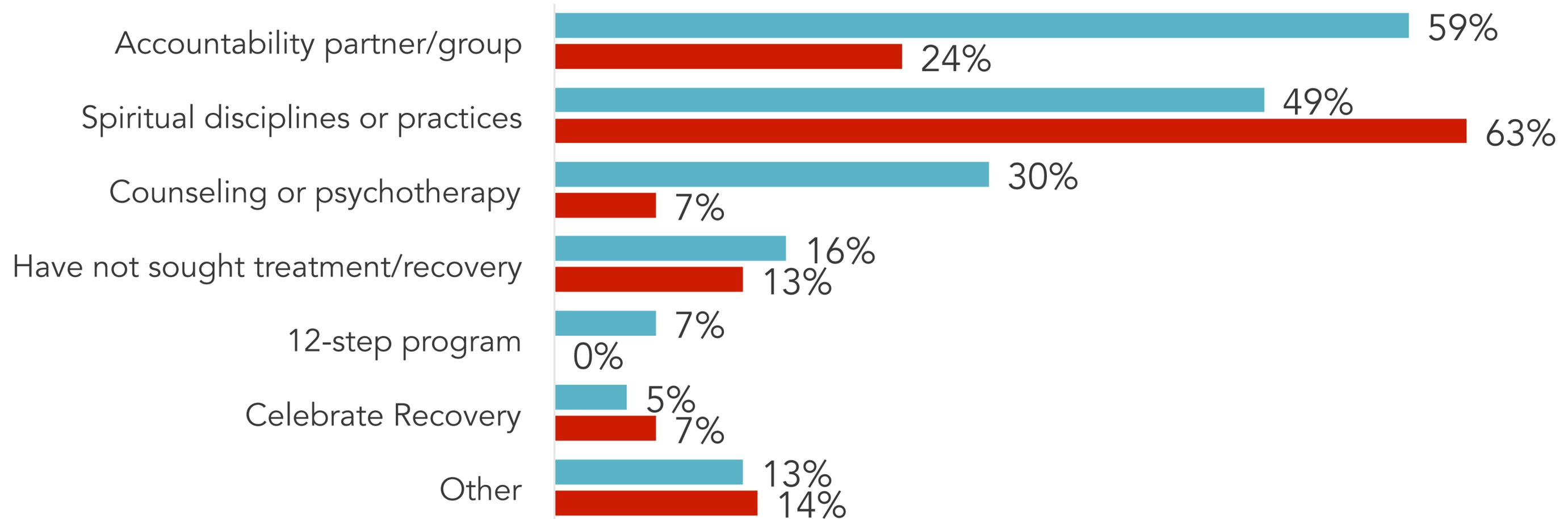


Resources for Addiction

How Have You Sought Help For Your Addiction?

% among those who have struggled with an addiction

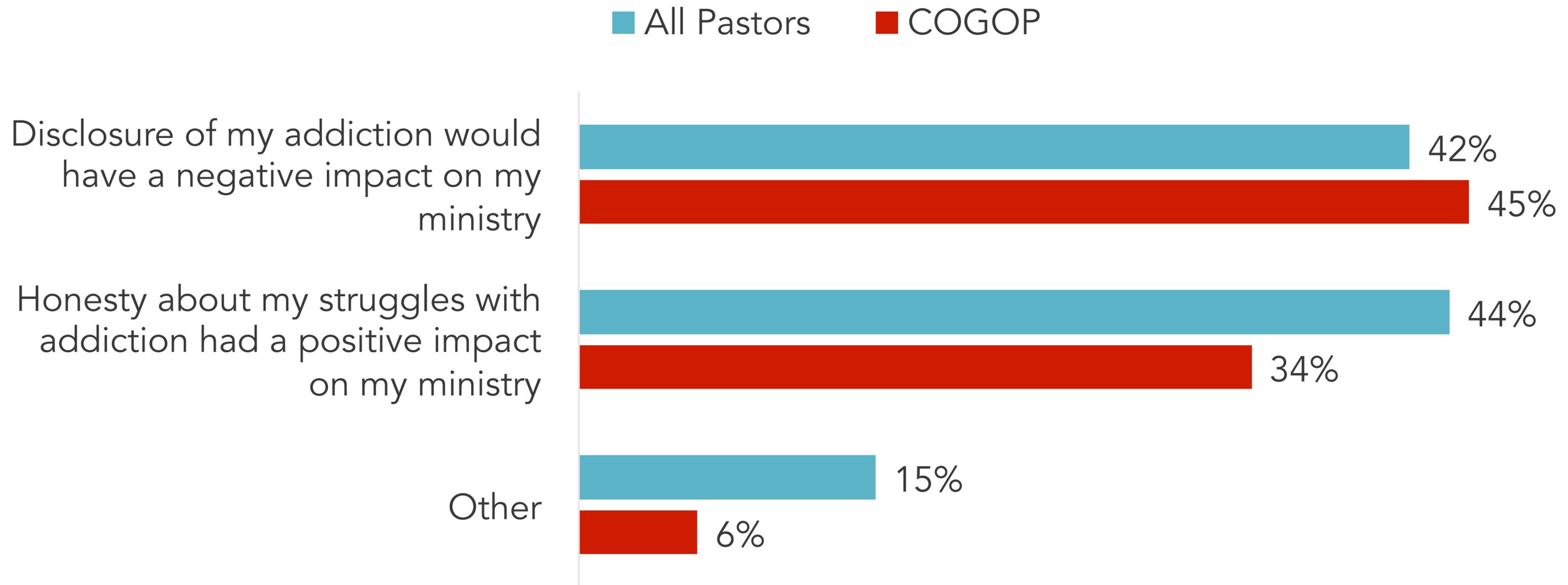
■ All Pastors ■ COGOP



Impact of Addiction

How Has Addiction Impacted Your Ministry?

% among those who have struggled with an addiction



Church Leadership

Church Leadership

- Church leaders are educated and (usually) well-prepared.
- Pastors are out in front, but not alone.
- The neglect of prayer within leader teams is a red flag.
- In-person communication with congregants is valued and valuable.

Church Leadership

- Ministry opportunities for women are increasing, but challenging.
- Pastors love being in the pulpit.
- People problems are the chief source of frustration.

Church leadership

- Denominations are important, but not typically influential.
- Pastors worry about finding future leaders.
- Low-risk leaders feel their primary tasks “fit” their calling.

What Does it Mean to Be a Team?



**80% of Pastors Work
With a Board of Elders
or Similar Team**

**1/3 of Pastors Experience
“Frequent Prayer Together”
with Their Elders**



Positive Pastor-Elder Dynamics



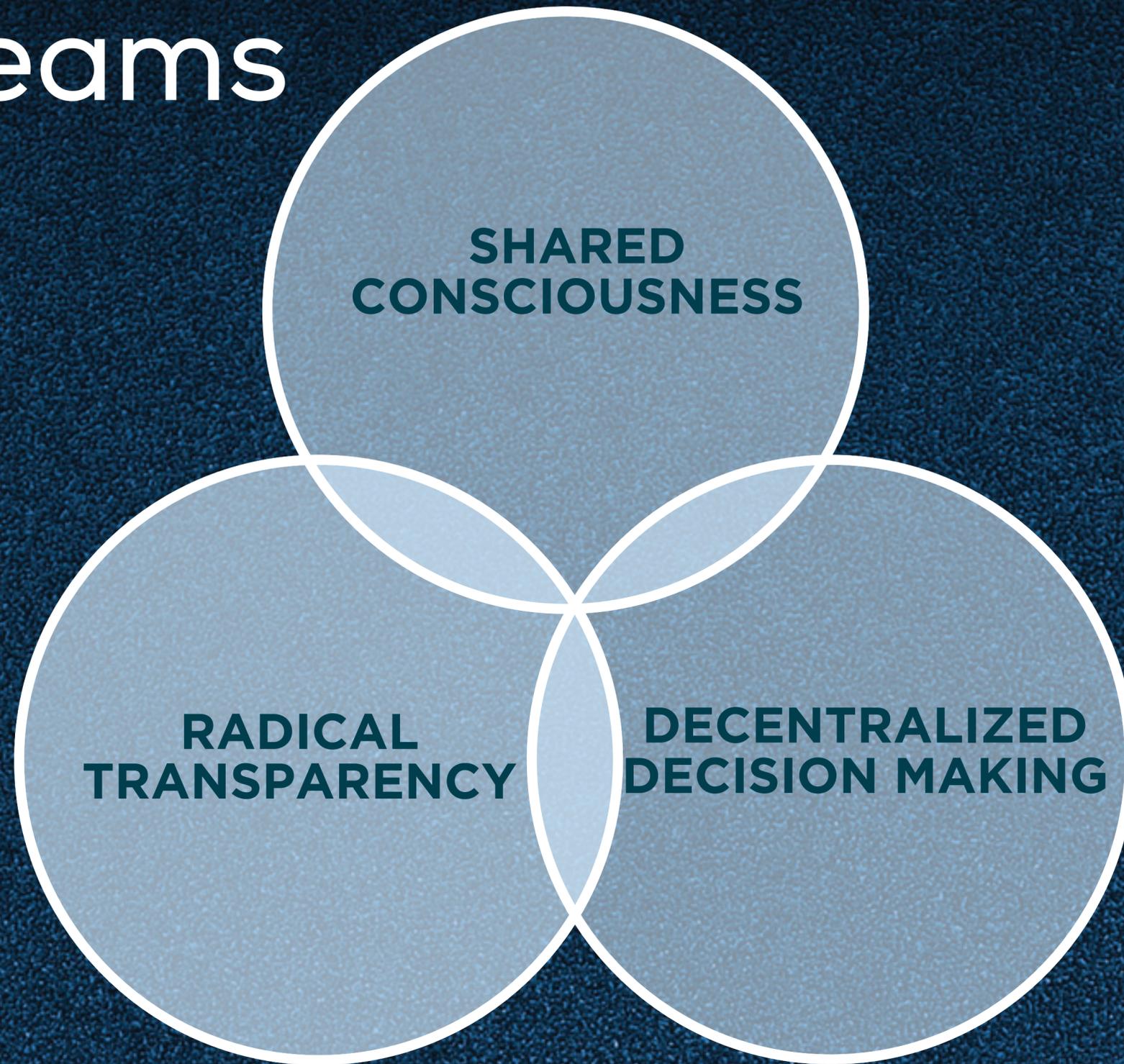
**67%: Elder Board
“Hugely Supportive”
of them**

**60%: Experience
“Healthy Accountability”**

**57% have “Clear and Shared
Vision and Values”**

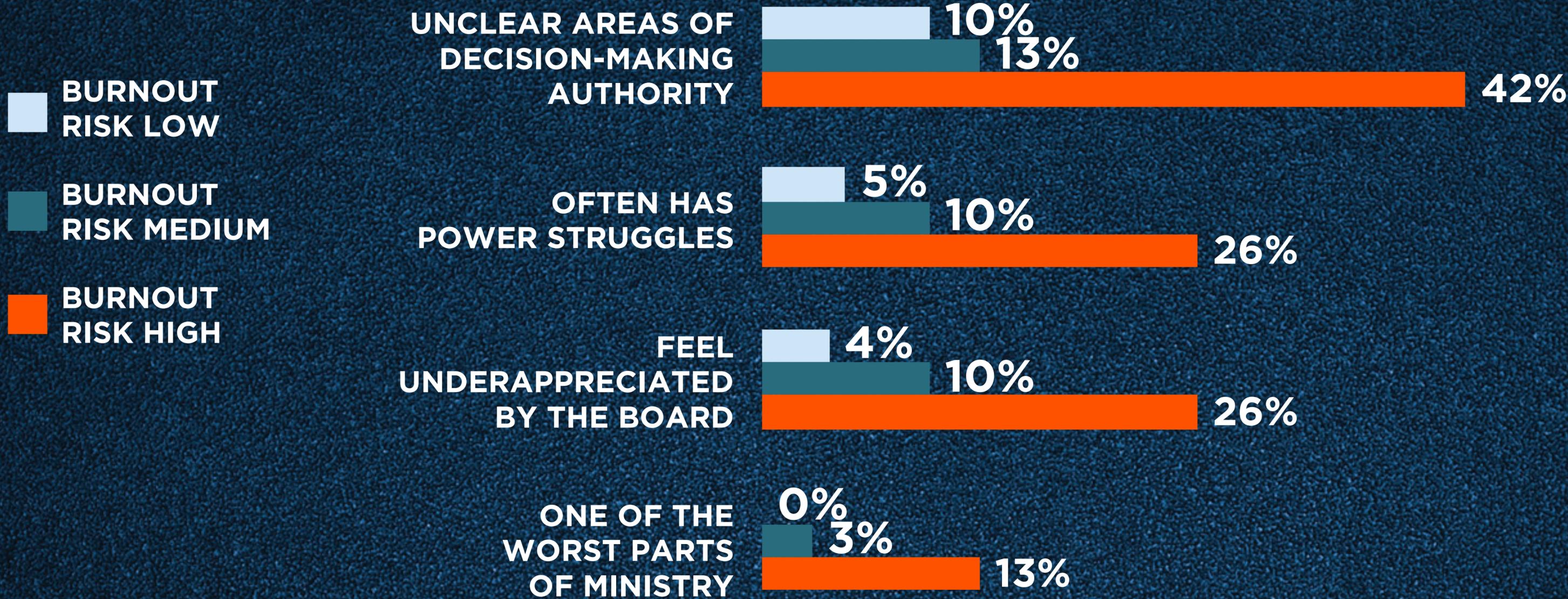


Resilient Teams



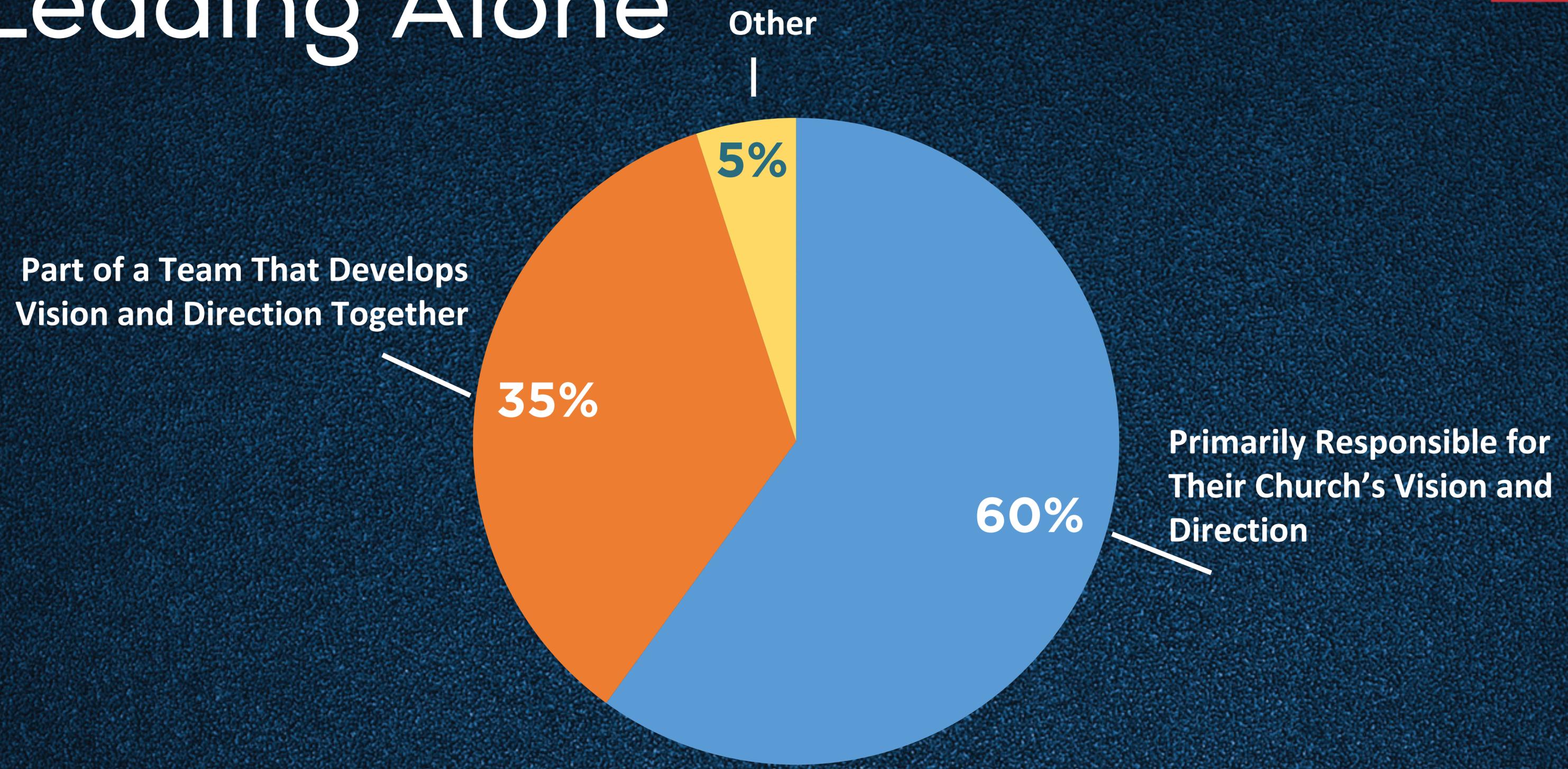
General Stanley McChrystal, Team Of Teams

Pastors at Risk of Burnout are Facing Team Challenges



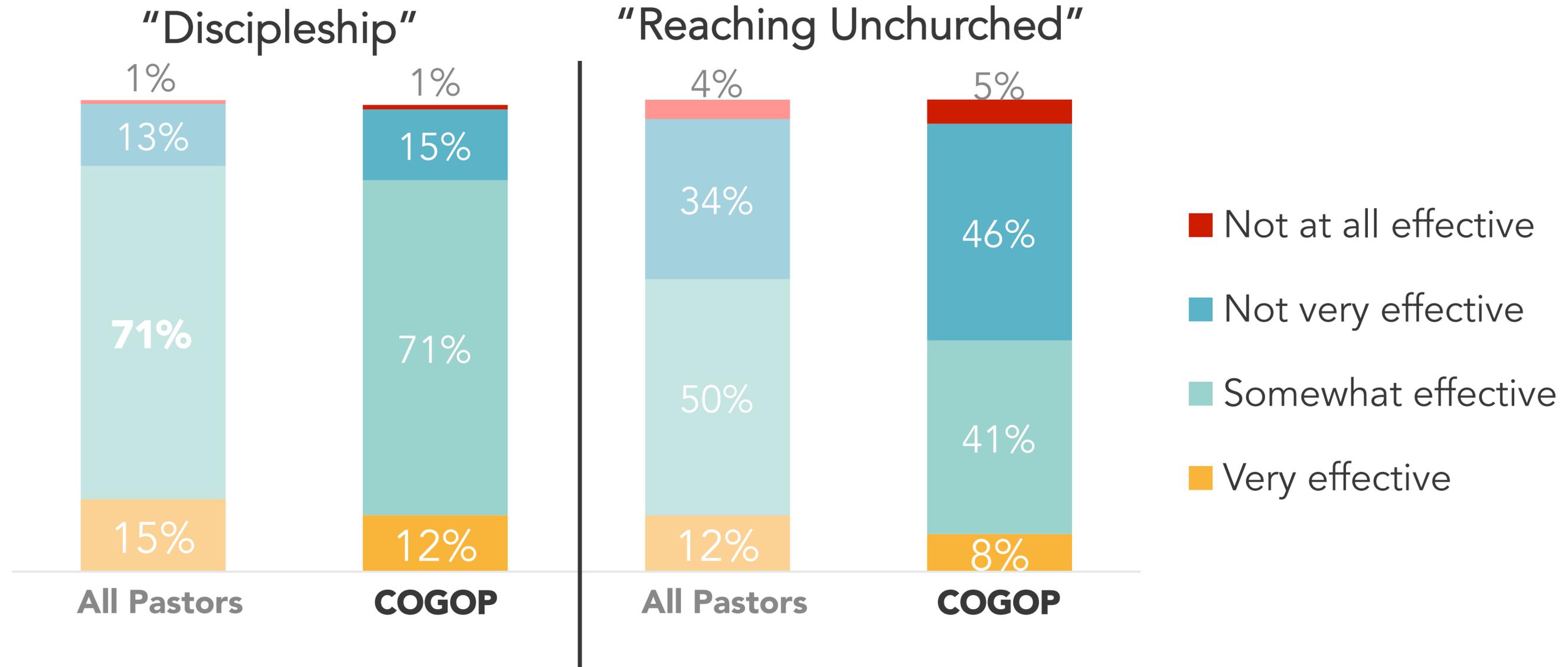
N=297 U.S. PROTESTANT PASTORS

Leading Alone



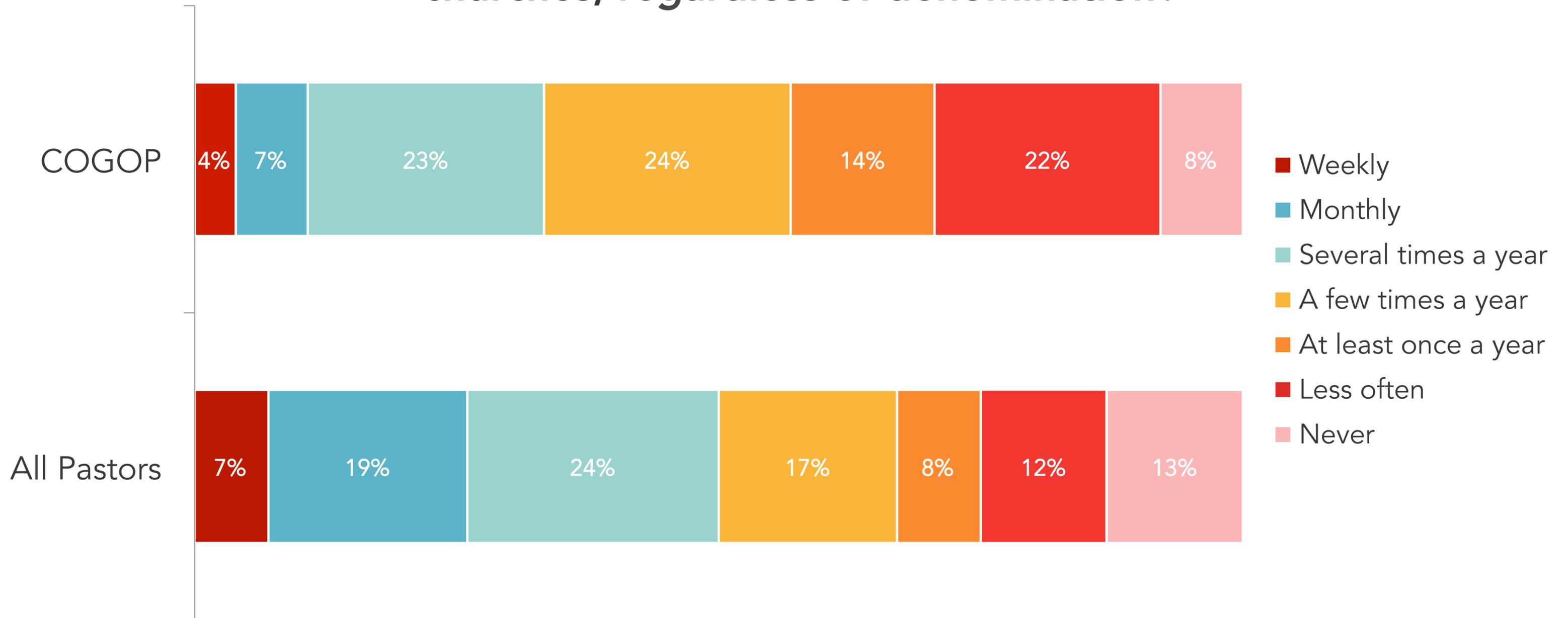
State of Discipleship and Evangelism

How Effective Pastors Believe the Church is at...



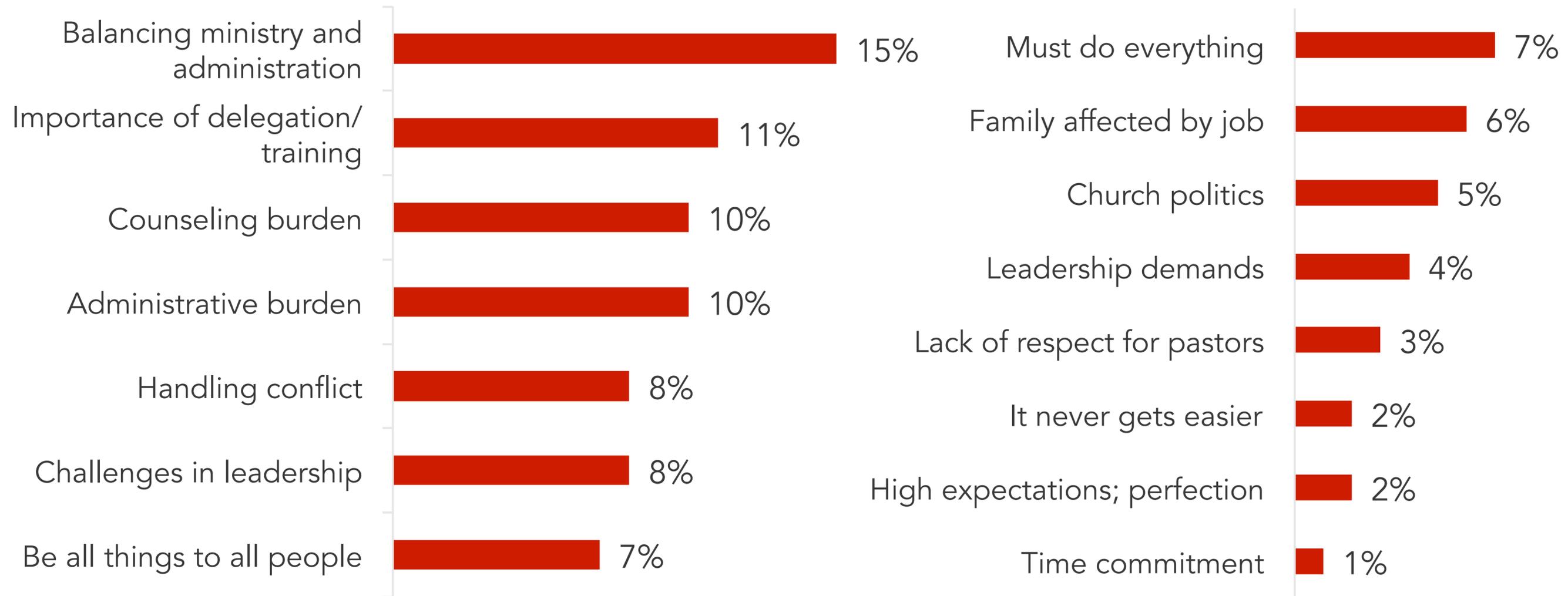
Partnerships with other Churches

How often do you partner with other local churches, regardless of denomination?



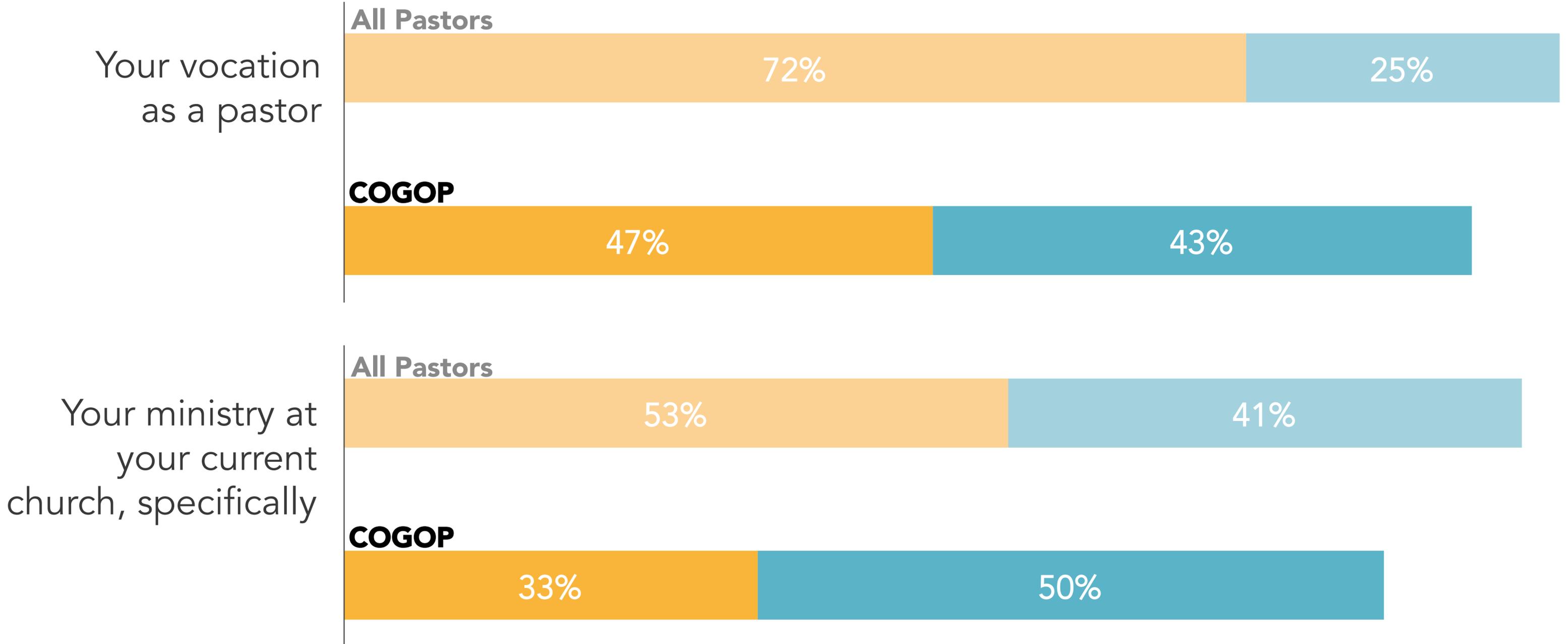
Ministry Preparation

What Areas of Ministry Do You Wish You Had Been More Prepared For? *COGOP only*



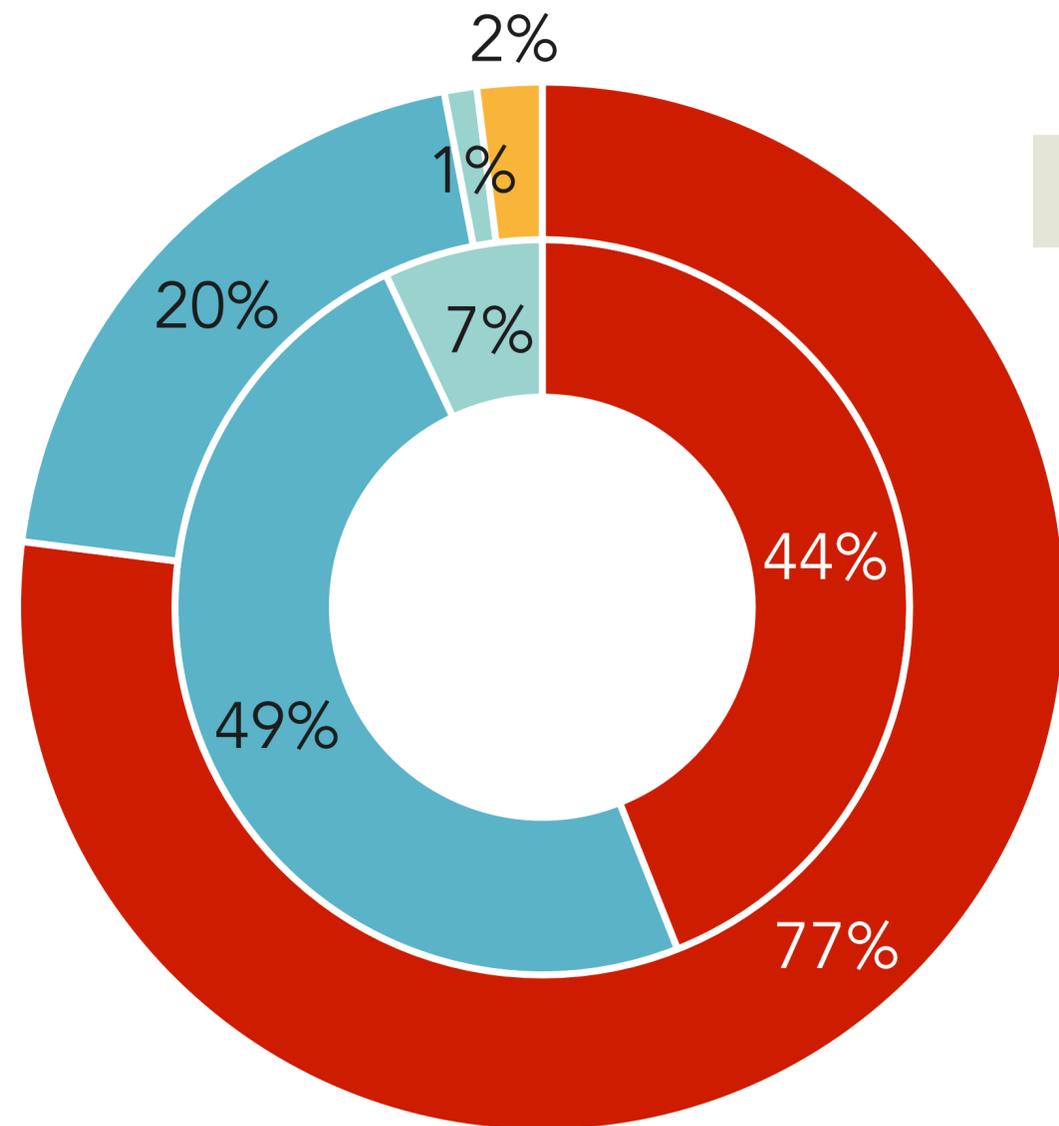
Vocation Satisfaction

■ % very satisfied ■ % somewhat satisfied



Pastor's Responsibility on Vision & Direction

How Much Responsibility Do You Have When It Comes to Setting The Vision And Direction of the Church?



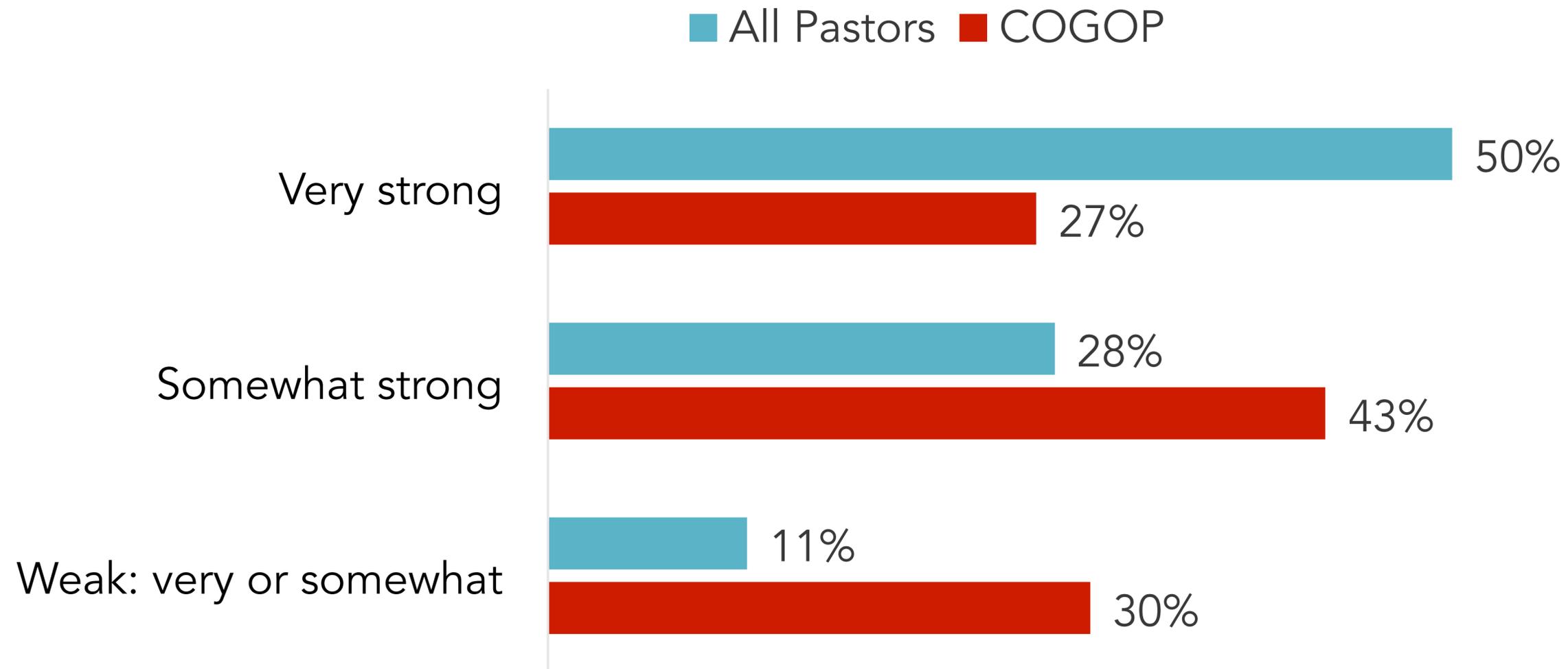
Inside ring: All Pastors Outer ring: COGOP

- I have the primary responsibility for vision and direction.
- I am part of a team that develops vision and direction.
- The board or another governing body is in charge of vision and direction.
- Other/don't know

State of Denominational Relationship

Strength of Relationship With Denomination

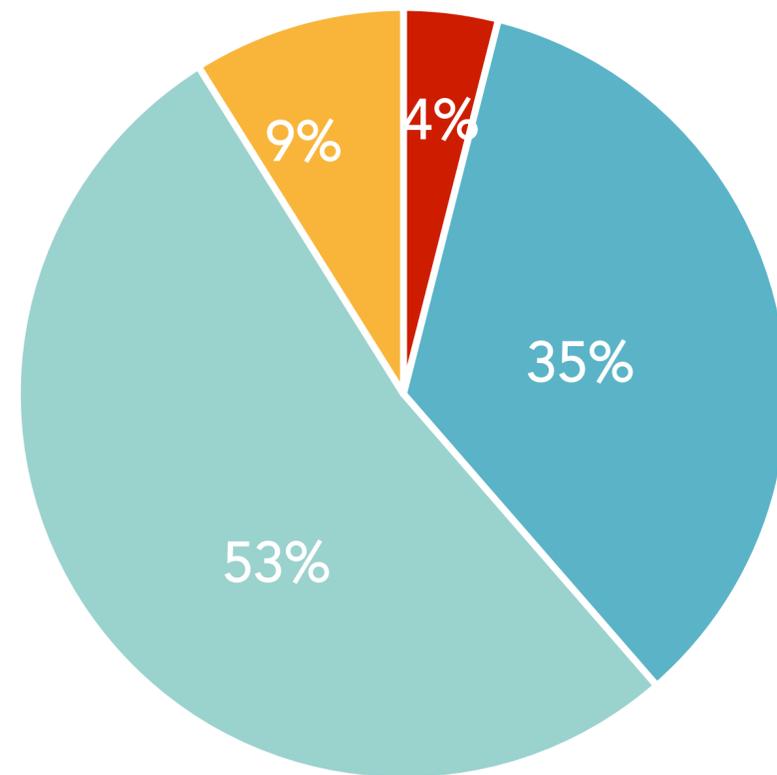
% among those who affiliated with a denomination



Denominational Structure & Support

Denomination Preferences
 (Centralization vs. Localization of Administration)
COGOP only

- Centralization (more denominational)
- Localization (more at the church level)
- A mix (some central; some at the church level)
- Don't know



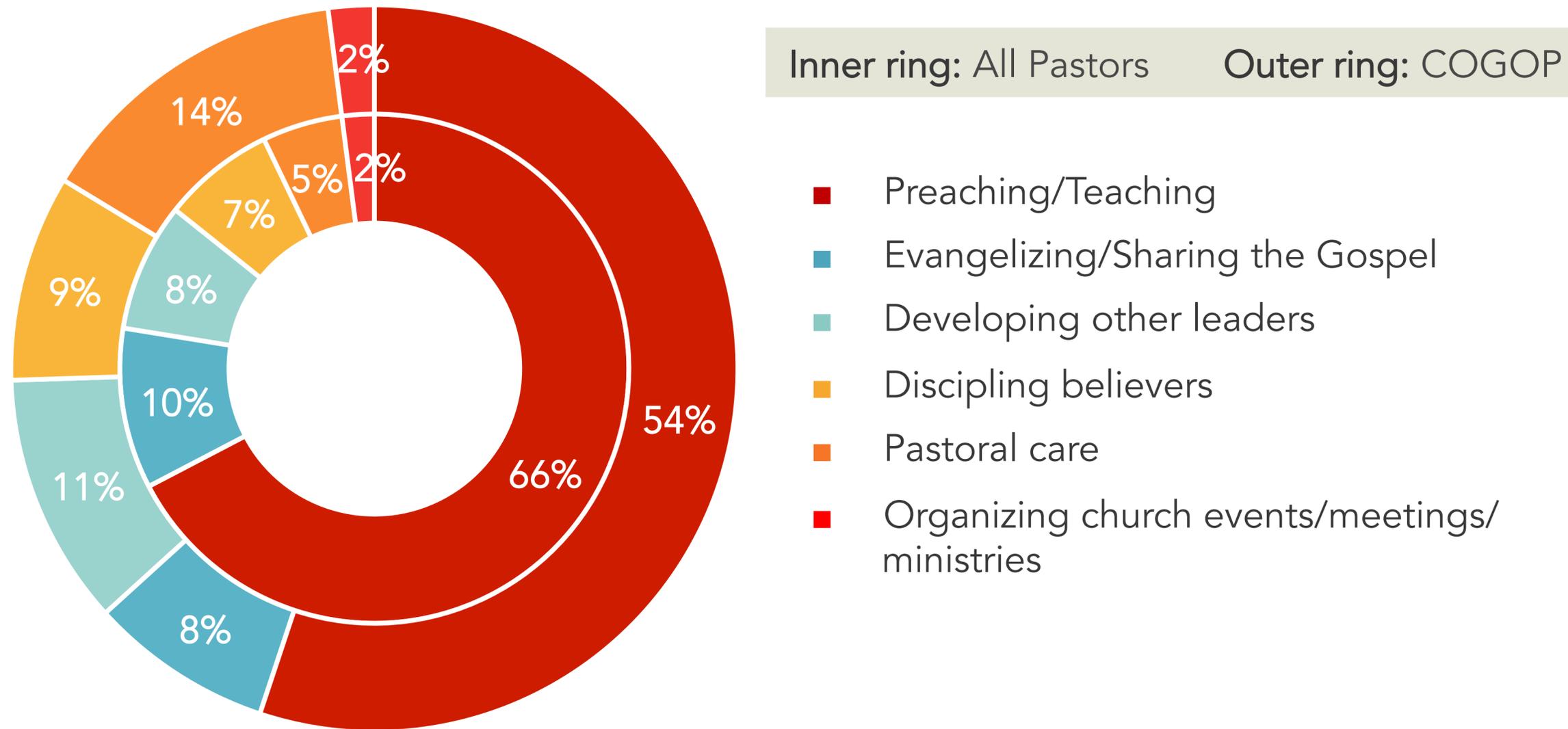
How Might the Denominational Office Best Support You?
COGOP only

- With more advice or guidance as needed
- With more resources or materials
- Other

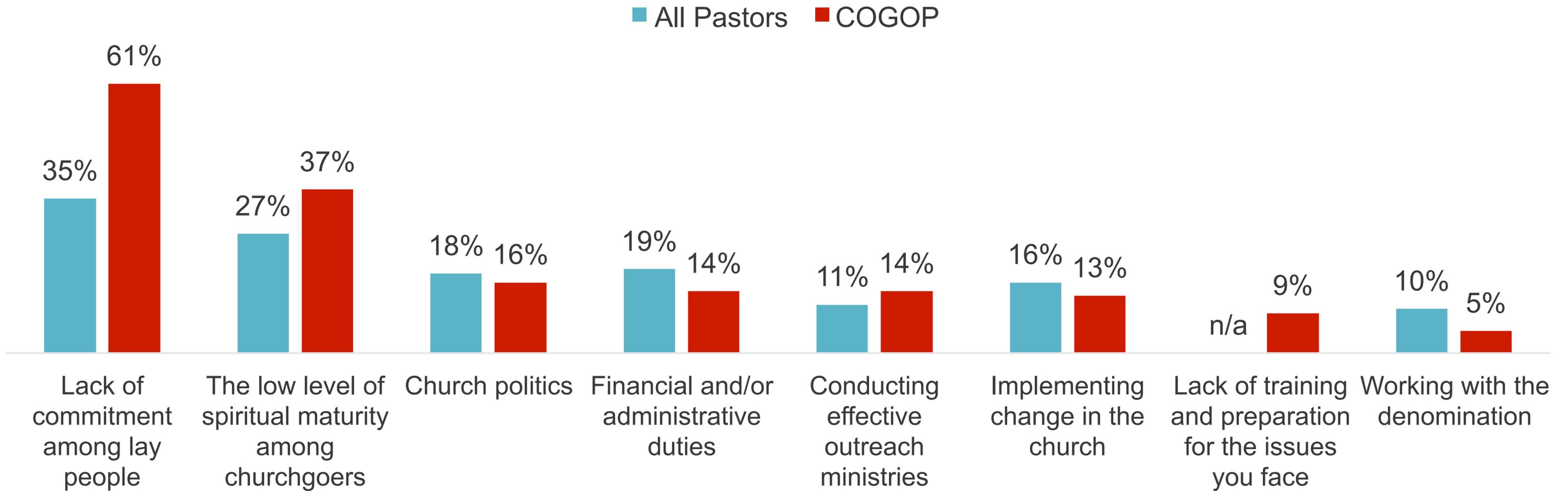


Aspects of Pastoring

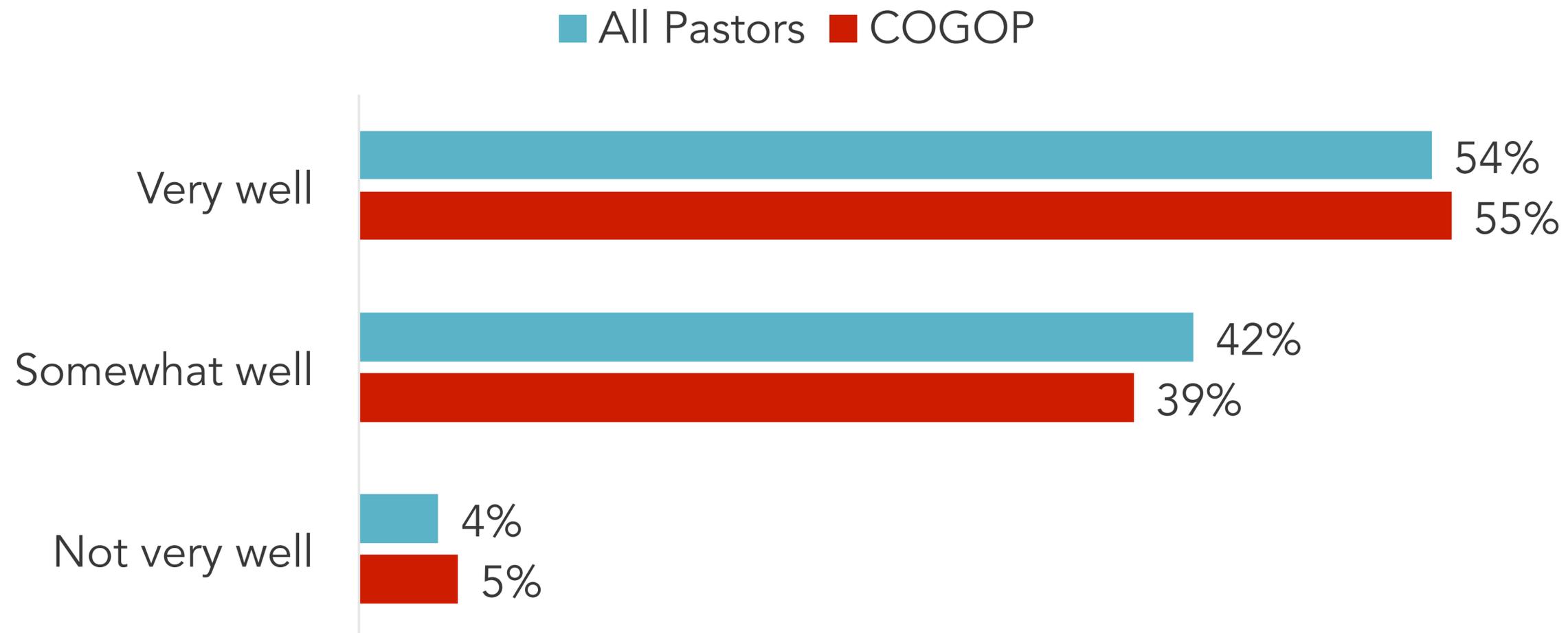
Of the Following Aspects of Serving as a Pastor, Which One Do You Most Enjoy?



Tasks which cause the most frustration



How Well Do Your Primary Tasks Fit Into Your Sense of Calling And Giftedness?



Cultural Leadership

Cultural Leadership

- U.S. adults are ambivalent about “pastors” but like their pastor.
- People don’t think pastors have much influence.
- Pastors perceive the culture’s growing indifference.
- Most people believe pastors are beneficial for their community.

Cultural Leadership

- U.S. adults aren't sure pastors are a credible source of wisdom.
- Pastors and U.S. adults agree on the top traits of good pastors.
- Nearly all pastors say churches play an important role in racial reconciliation.

Cultural Leadership

- A majority of pastors believes religious freedom is weakening.
- People believe churches can meet their community's need.
- Most pastors don't feel prepared to teach cultural engagement.

Changing Expectations of Church

- Increasingly unfamiliar with churchgoing
- Demographics are shifting away from traditional families
- Declining levels of commitment to regular church attendance
- Increasingly distracting environment

Never Churched

1993 – 1 in 8 adults

2017 – 1 in 4 adults

Opportunities

- 66% of Adults Believe Pastors Benefit Their Communities
- People Generally Like “Pastors They Know Personally”

Challenges

- Only 1 in 5 Adults (19%) Say Pastors are “Very Influential” in Their Community
- Only 1 in 5 (21%) Say Pastors are “Very Credible” When it Comes to Important Issues of Our Day

Irrelevant = indifference to faith and
faith leaders

Extreme = constrain and limit faith and
faith leaders

% of Adults Who Believe Pastors are Very Reliable

- How People Live According To God's Will – 36%
- God's Will For Human Beings And The World – 35%
- How Relationships Work And How To Make Them Better – 26%
- Living Out Convictions Privately And Publicly – 23%
- How Christianity Informs Political And Justice Systems – 17%

About the Project Partners

BARNA GROUP is a research firm dedicated to providing actionable insights on faith and culture, with a particular focus on the Christian church.

www.Barna.com

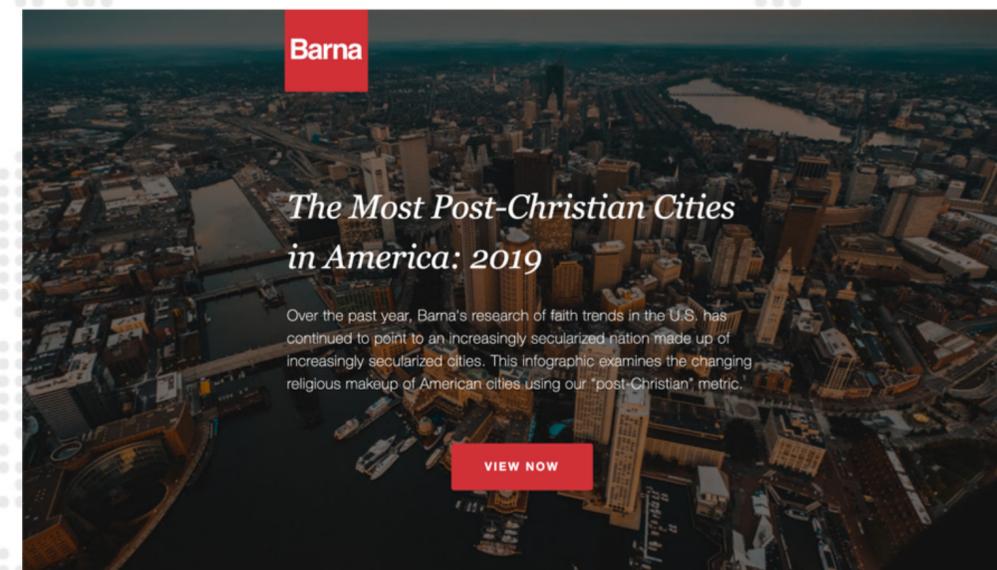
PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY is an independent Christian university
Located 30 miles west of Los Angeles in scenic Malibu, CA.
Pepperdine is committed to the highest standards of academic excellence and Christian values, where students are strengthened for lives of purpose, service and leadership.

www.Pepperdine.edu

Get free Barna research to your inbox!

Text **BARNA** to **444999**

Barna



Barna

The Most Post-Christian Cities in America: 2019

Over the past year, Barna's research of faith trends in the U.S. has continued to point to an increasingly secularized nation made up of increasingly secularized cities. This infographic examines the changing religious makeup of American cities using our "post-Christian" metric.

[VIEW NOW](#)

Learn where your city ranks and get an in-depth look at individual metrics from *FaithView*, our new subscription-based online database of city, state and national spiritual profiles.

[VIEW NOW](#)

FaithView

This new, interactive, customizable database offers clear and relevant insights into the spiritual climate, faith trends and practices in your city or region. Combine and compare from 200+ data points to get the wisdom you need to lead your ministry or workplace with confidence.



Subscribe Now



Millennial Non-Christians Show Greater Spiritual Curiosity Than Older Adults

[Read More](#)



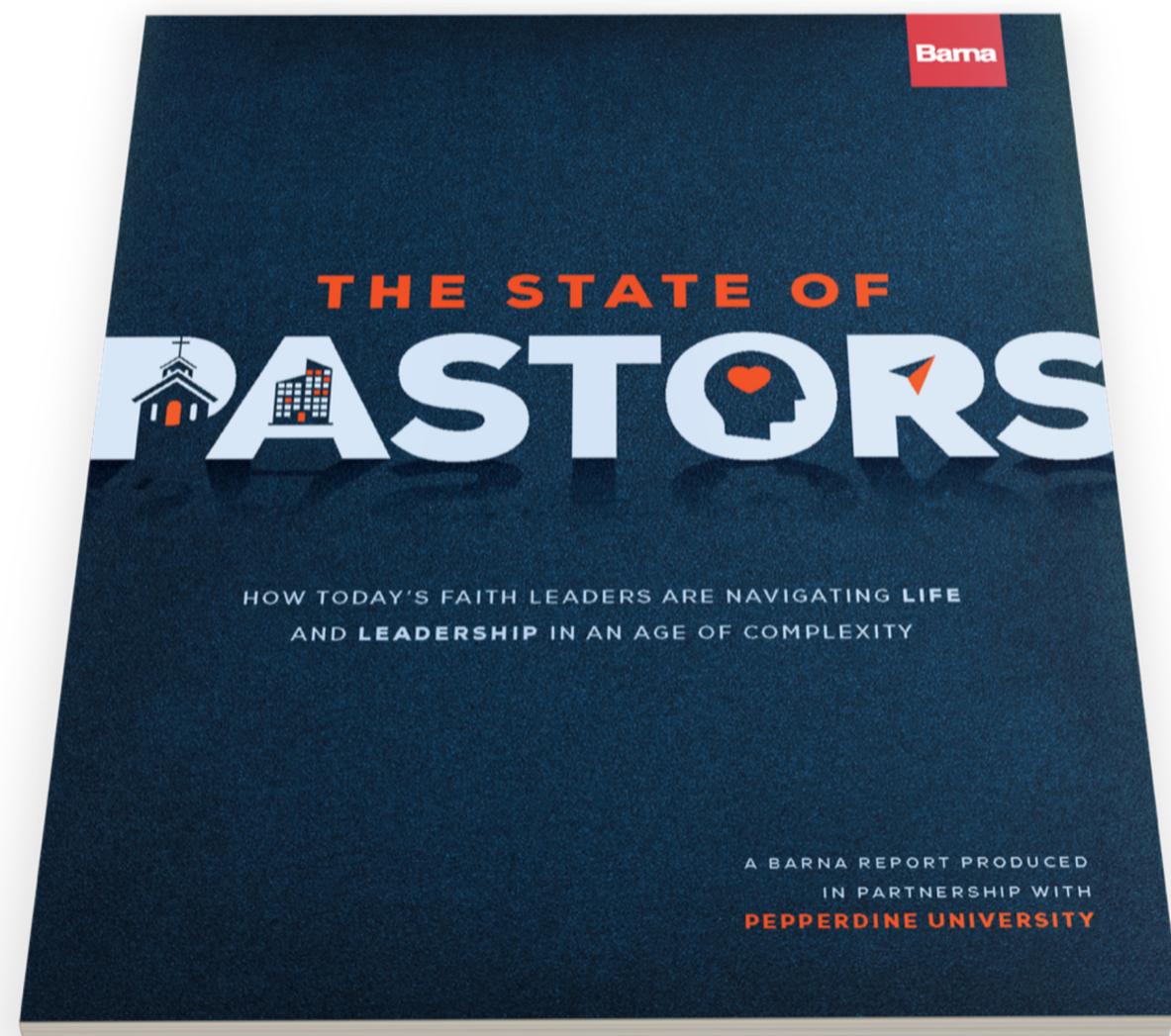
Millennials Bring Ambition and Optimism to Their Work

[Read More](#)

The Mercy Journey

A critical element is missing in how we relate to one another today: mercy. In embarking on *The Mercy Journey*, the presence of Christians and the work of





For more information about this study and to see the complete findings, check out our 2015 report:

The State of Pastors

The full report is available at shop.barna.com or through Barna Access membership.