

Protestant Churchgoers' Views on Church Participation during COVID-19

A SURVEY OF 1,000 AMERICAN PROTESANT CHURCHGOERS

Lifeway **research**

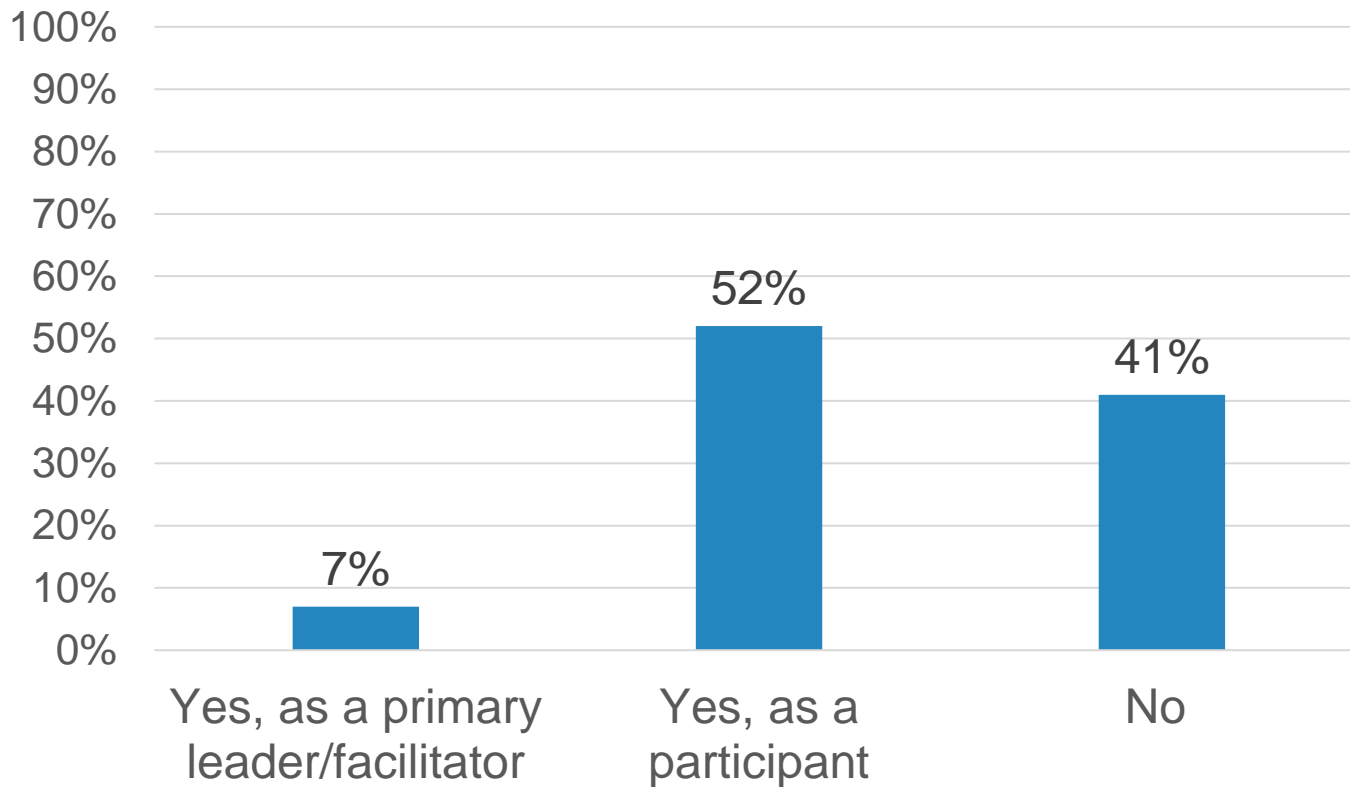
Methodology

- The online survey of 1,000 American Protestant churchgoers was conducted February 5-18, 2021 using a national, pre-recruited panel
- Respondents were screened to include those who identified as Protestant/non-denominational and attended religious services at least once a month in 2019
- Quotas and slight weights were used to balance gender, age, region, ethnicity, and education to more accurately reflect the population
- The completed sample is 1,000 surveys
- The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error from the panel does not exceed $\pm 3.2\%$ This margin of error accounts for the effect of weight
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups
- Comparisons are made to a Lifeway Research survey of Protestant churchgoers September 20-27, 2019 using the same methodology

Definitions

- **Evangelical Beliefs** are defined using the NAE Lifeway Research Evangelical Beliefs Research Definition based on respondent beliefs
- Respondents are asked their level of agreement with four separate statements using a four-point, forced choice scale (strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree). Those who strongly agree with all four statements are categorized as having Evangelical Beliefs
 - The Bible is the highest authority for what I believe
 - It is very important for me personally to encourage non-Christians to trust Jesus Christ as their Savior
 - Jesus Christ's death on the cross is the only sacrifice that could remove the penalty of my sin
 - Only those who trust in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior receive God's free gift of eternal salvation

In January 2020, 59% participated in a small group as a leader or a participant

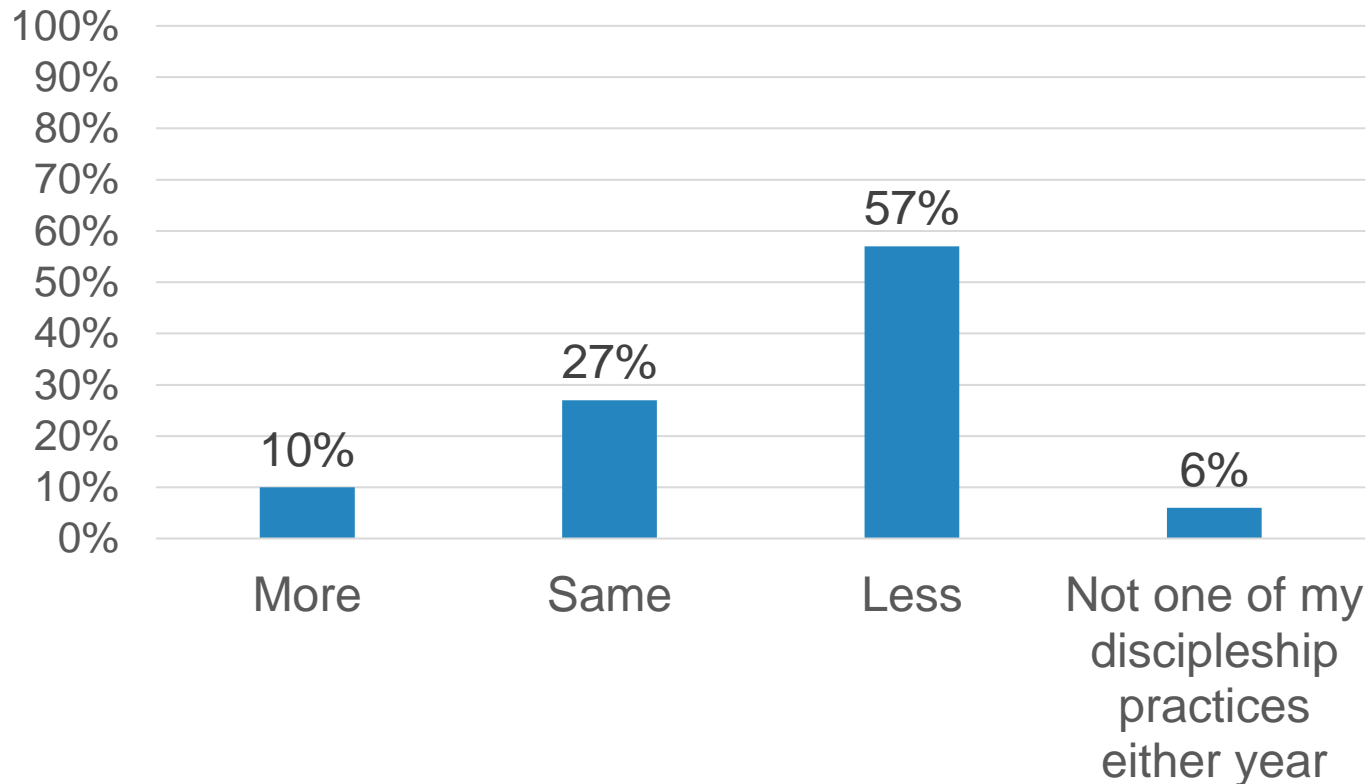


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Q11: "In January 2020 (before COVID-19) did you participate in small classes or groups for adults from church such as Sunday School, Bible study, small groups, Adult Bible Fellowships, etc.?"

Participated in in-person worship services at my own church

Personal discipleship practices: 2020 compared to 2019



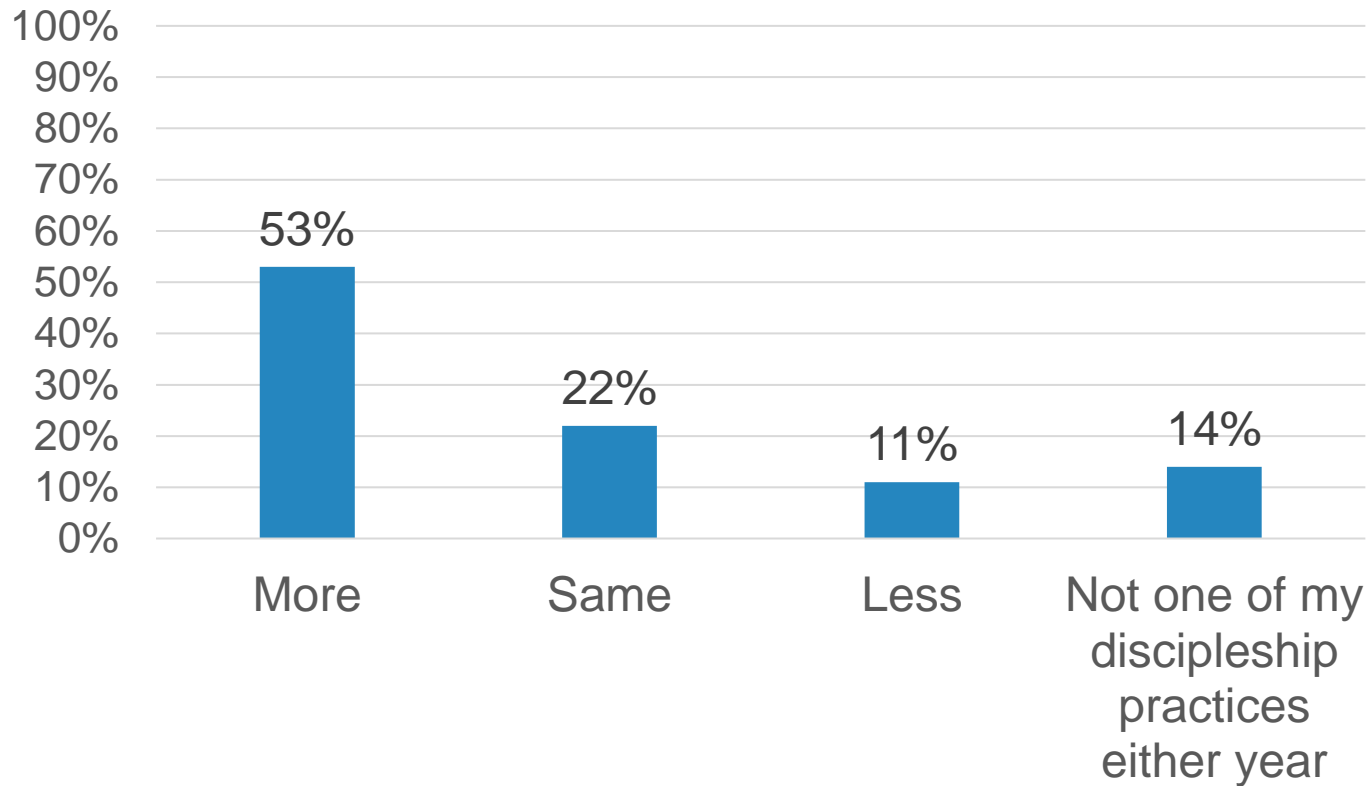
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Q16_1: "How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...

Participated in in-person worship services at my own church"

Participated in online worship services at my own church

Personal discipleship practices: 2020 compared to 2019



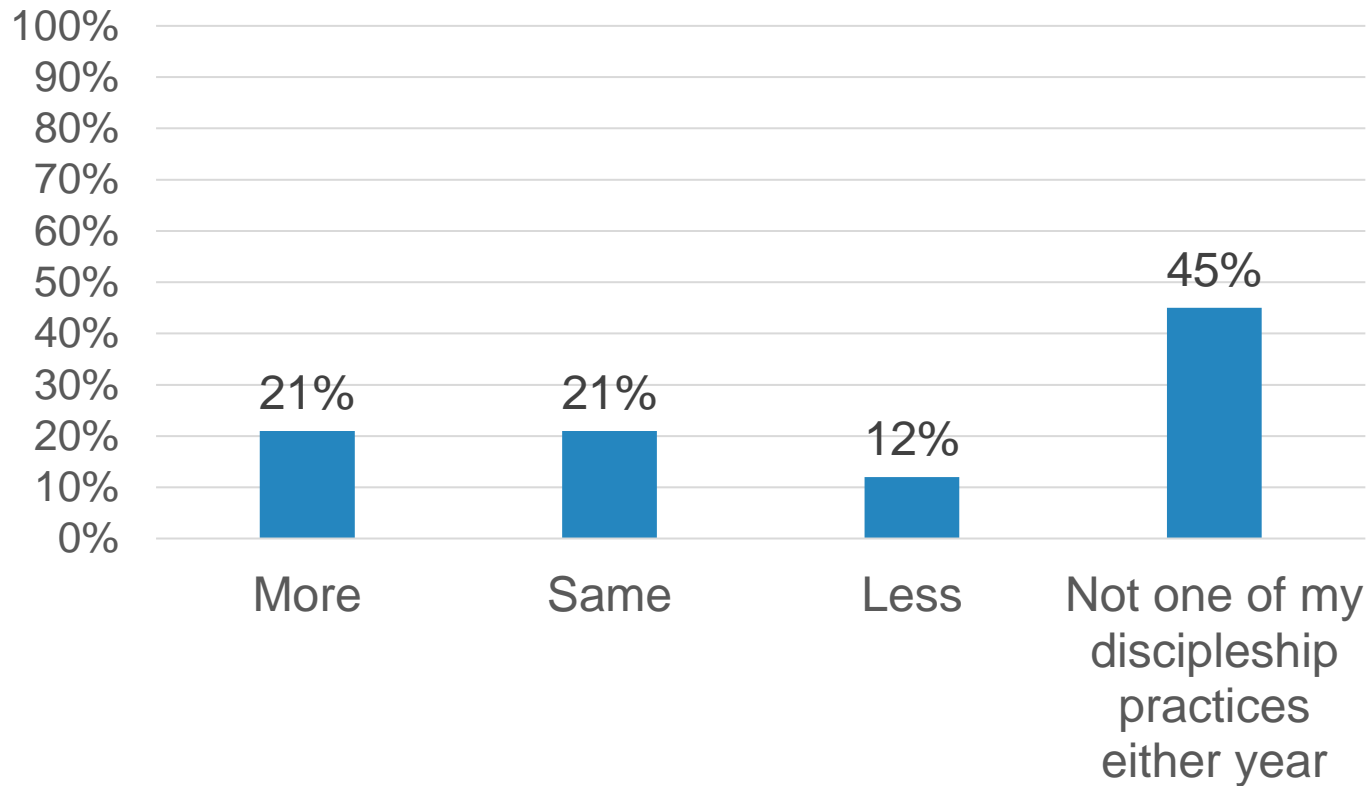
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Q16_2: "How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...

Participated in online worship services at my own church"

Participated in online worship services from another church

Personal discipleship practices: 2020 compared to 2019



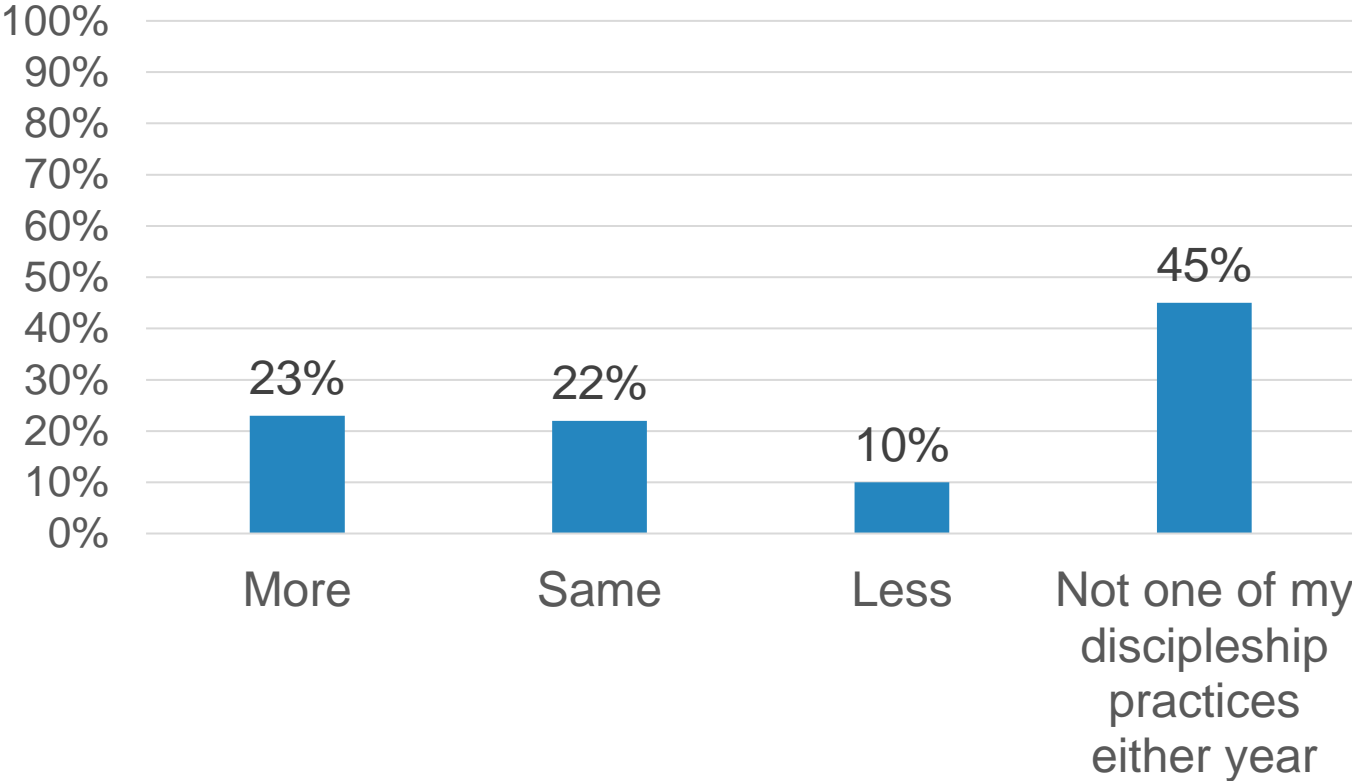
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Q16_3: "How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I..."

Participated in online worship services from another church"

Participated in worship services on television

Personal discipleship practices: 2020 compared to 2019

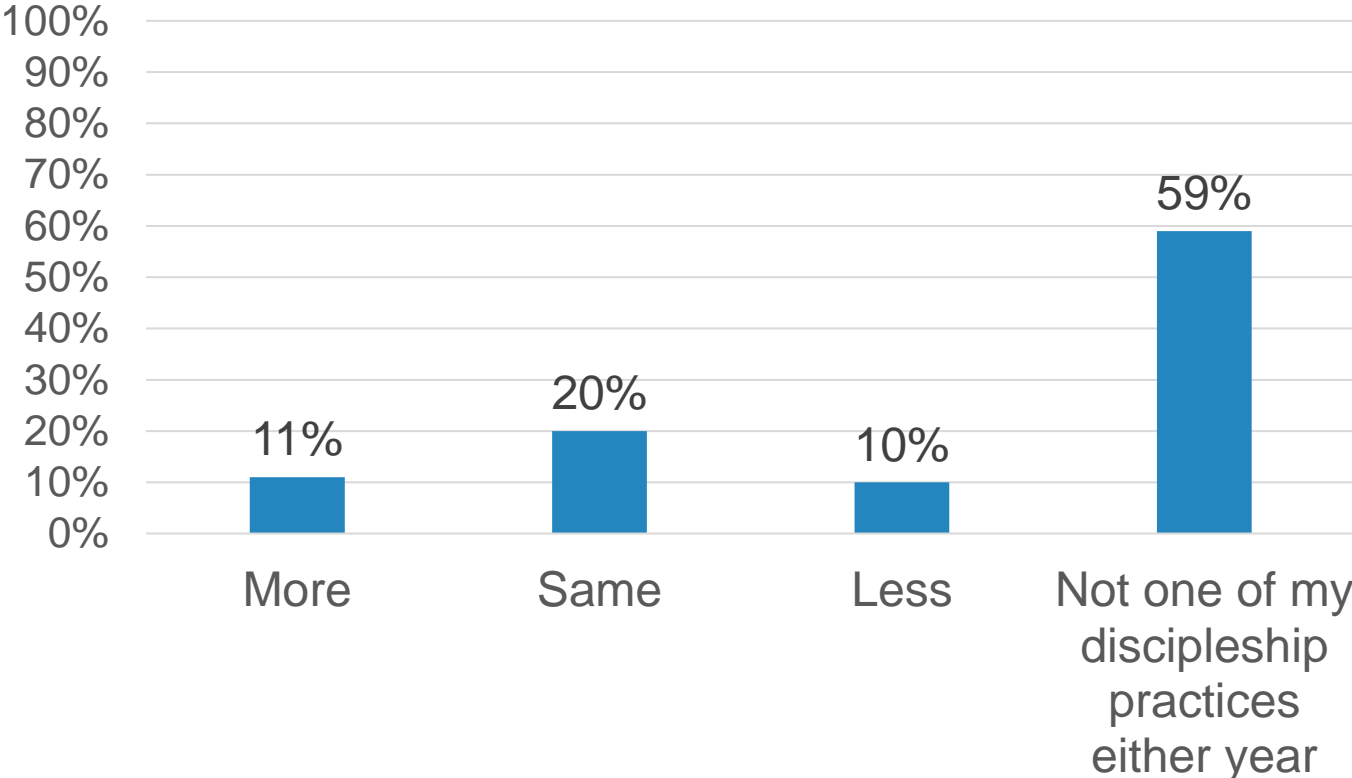


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Q16_4: "How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I... Participated in worship services on television"

Participated in worship services on the radio

Personal discipleship practices: 2020 compared to 2019

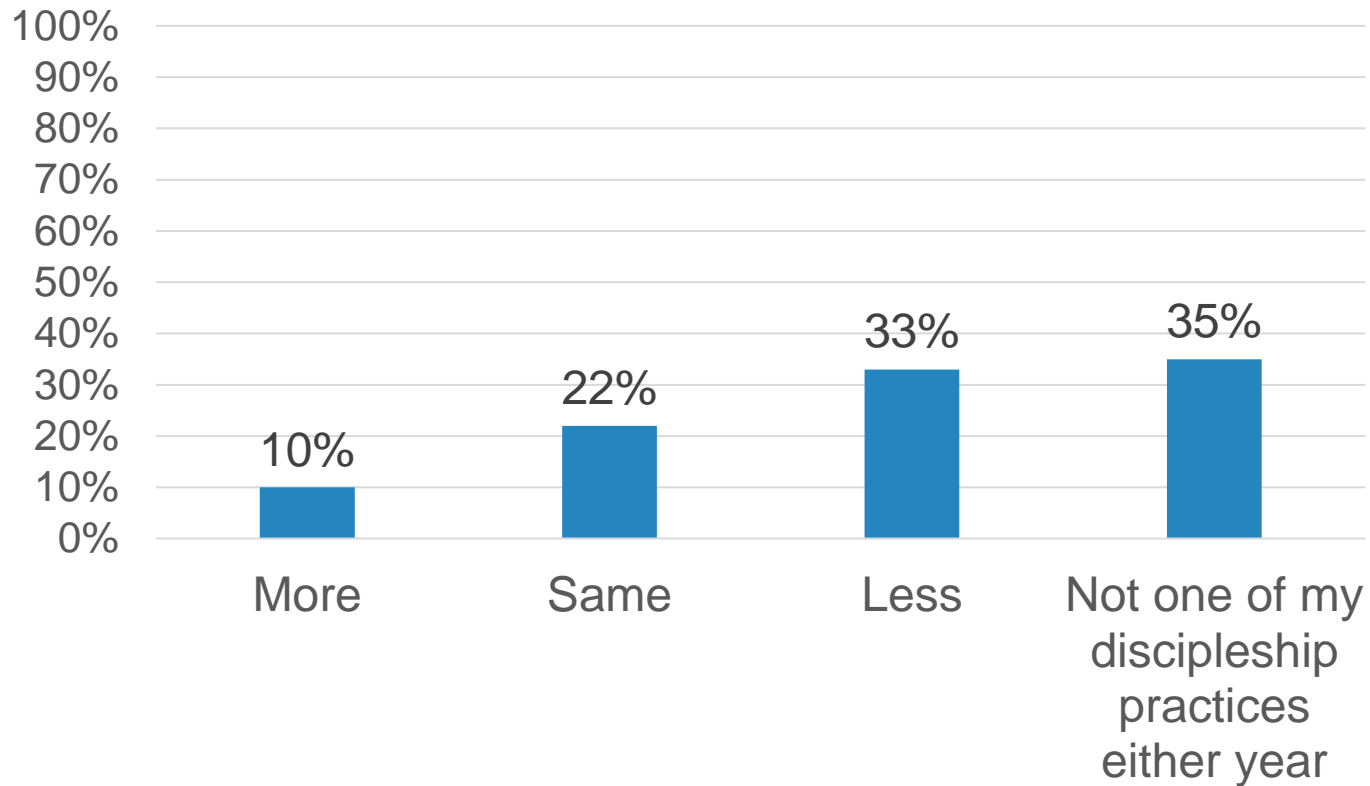


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Q16_5: "How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I... Participated in worship services on the radio"

Participated in an in-person Bible study with other adults

Personal discipleship practices: 2020 compared to 2019



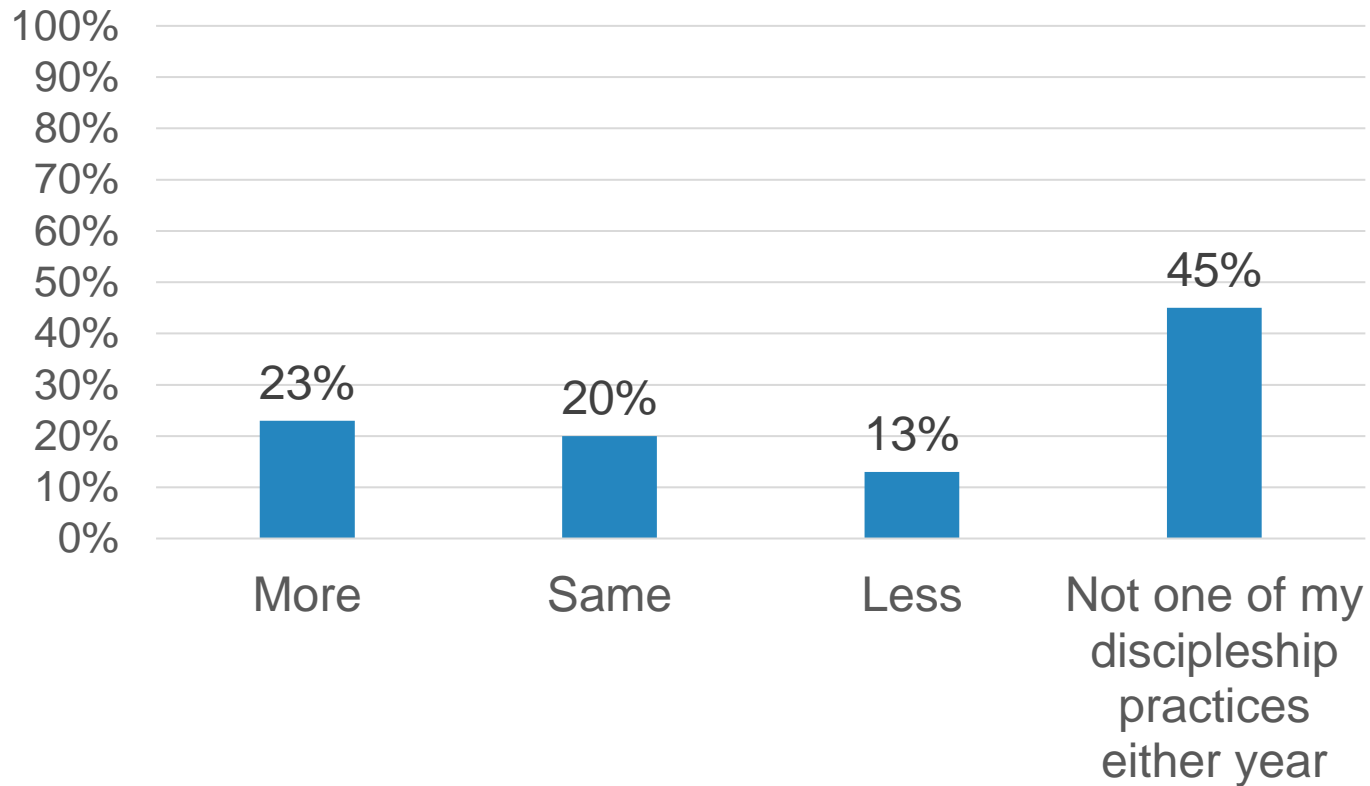
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Q17_1: "How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...

Participated in an in-person Bible study with other adults"

Participated in an online Bible study with other adults

Personal discipleship practices: 2020 compared to 2019



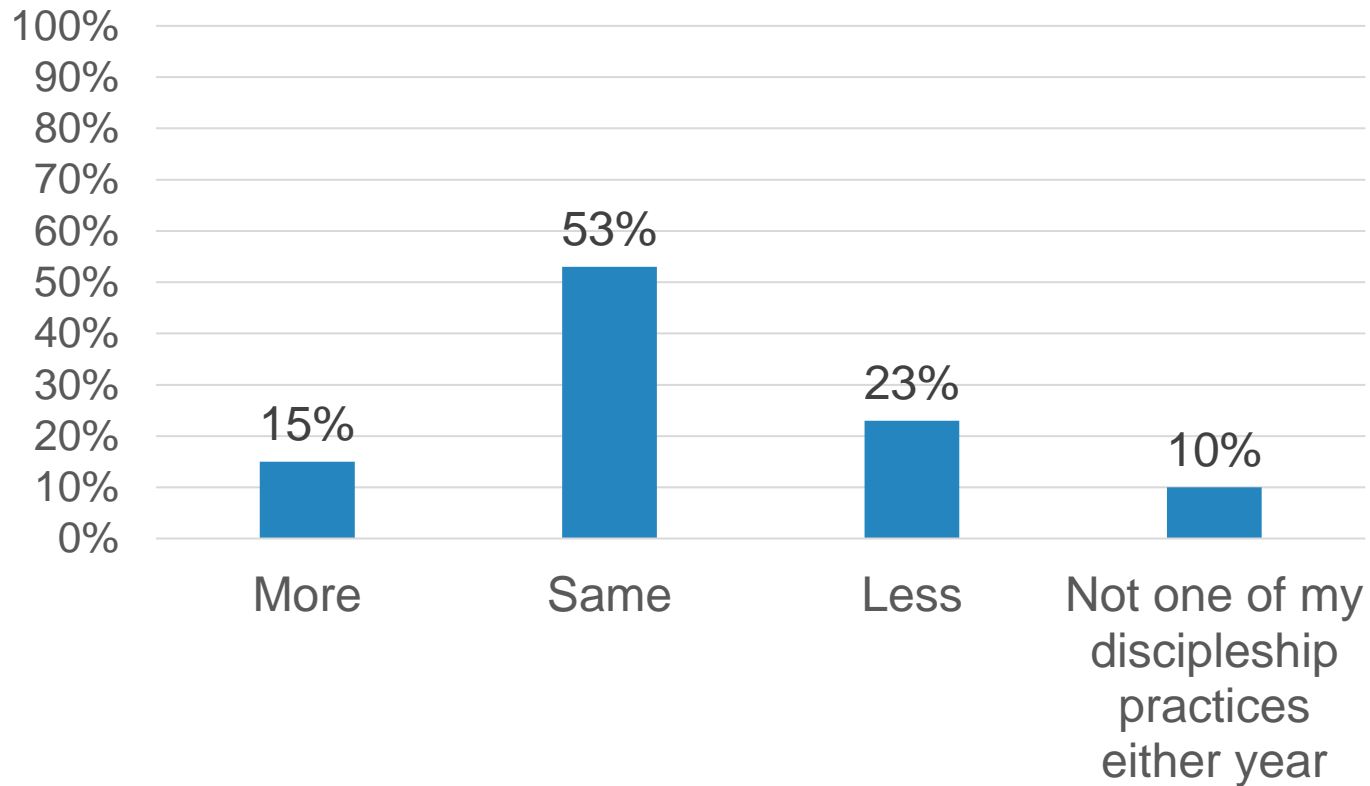
Lifeway research

Q17_2: "How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I..."

Participated in an online Bible study with other adults"

Gave a percentage of my income to my church

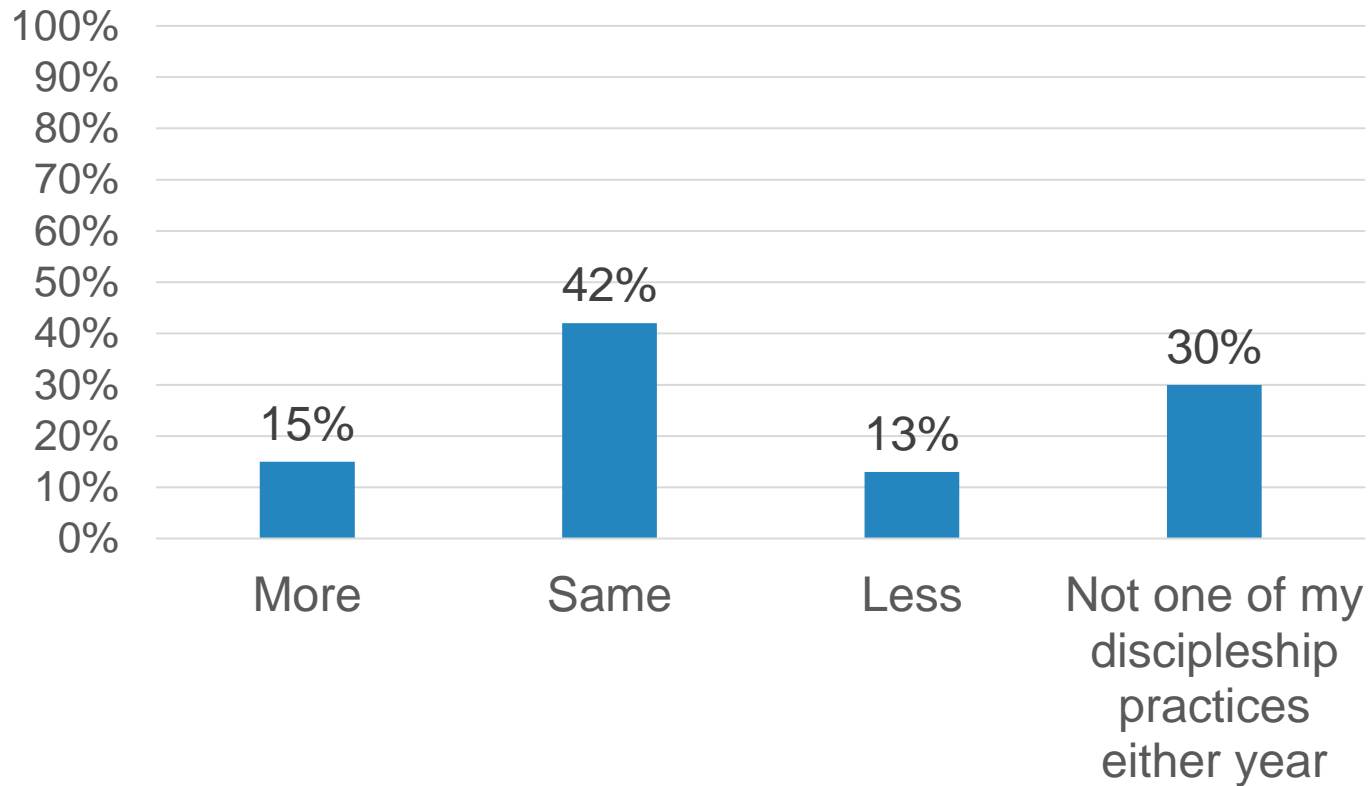
Personal discipleship practices: 2020 compared to 2019



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Read books on Christian living

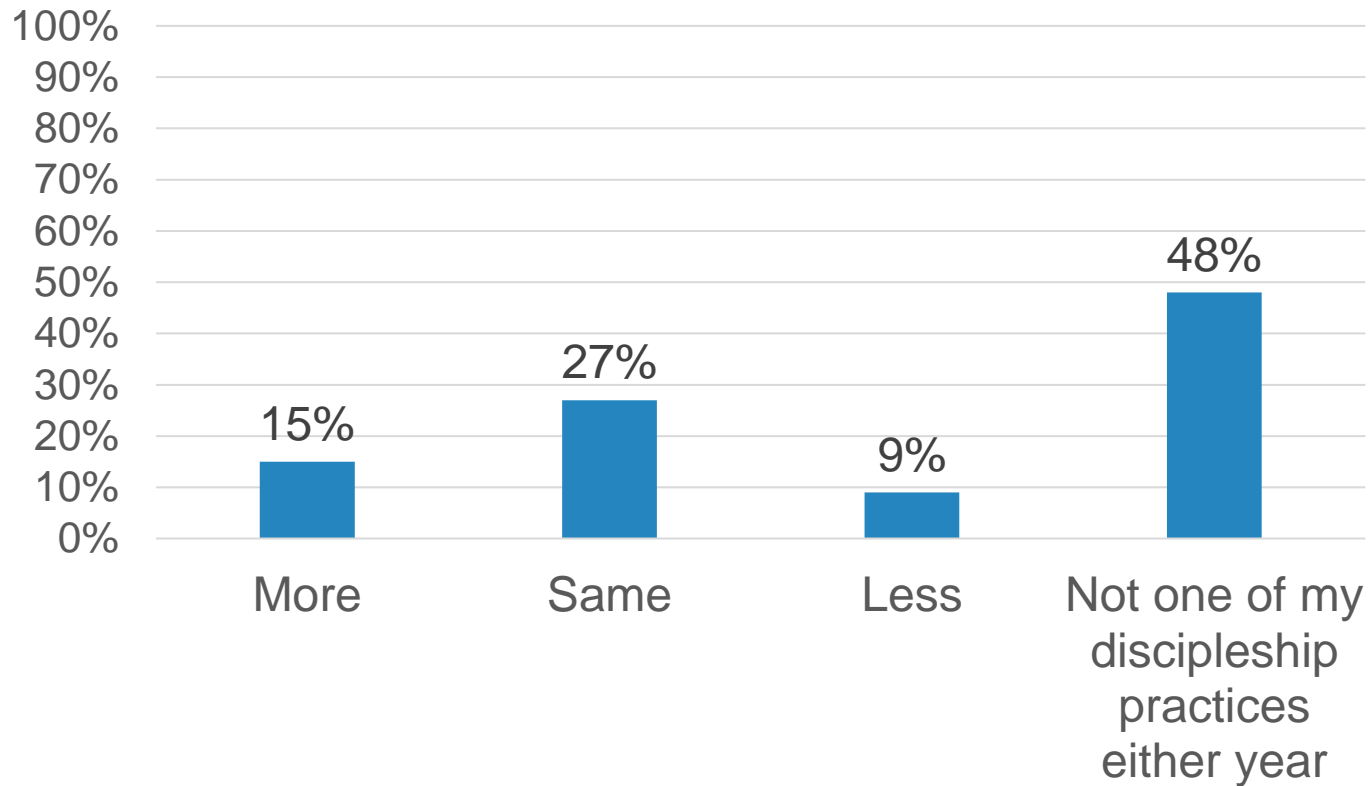
Personal discipleship practices: 2020 compared to 2019



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Listened to Christian podcasts

Personal discipleship practices: 2020 compared to 2019

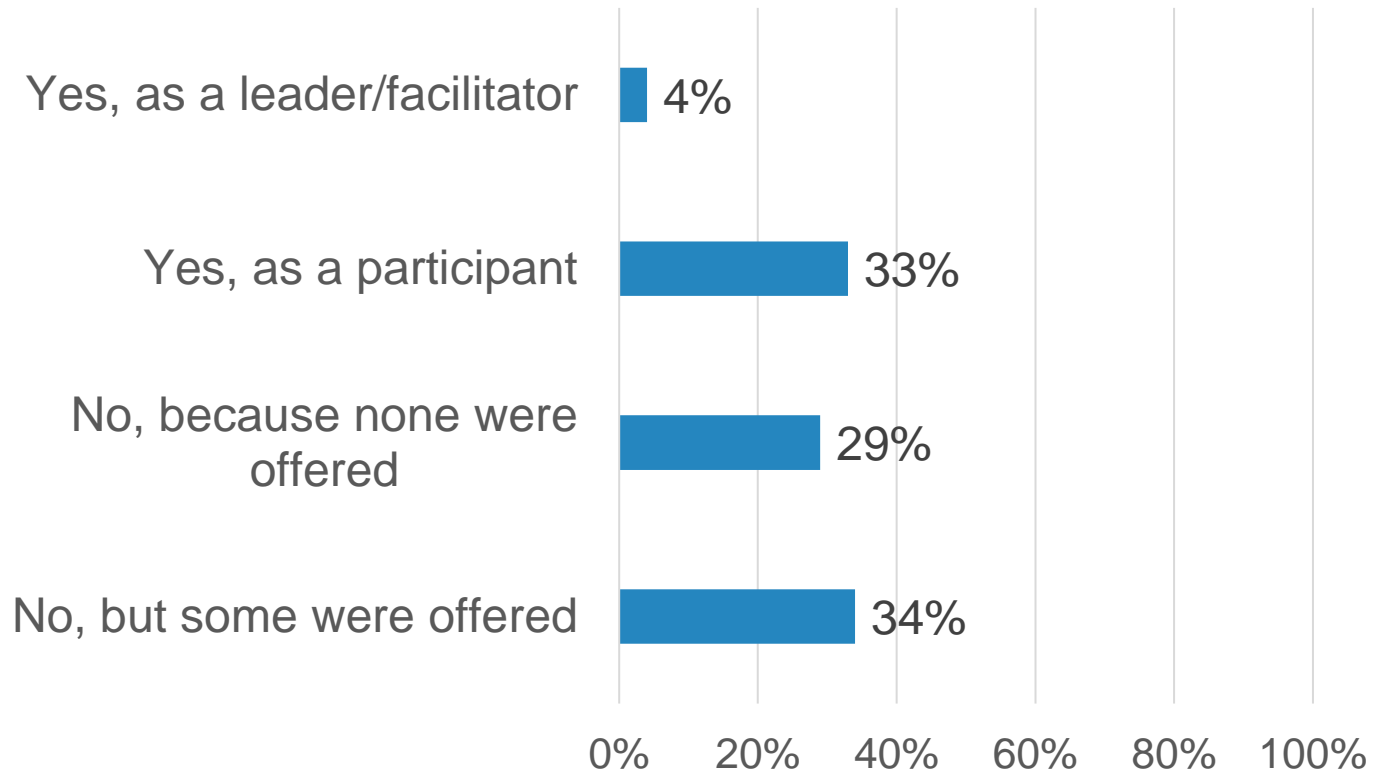


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Q17_5: "How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I..."

Listened to Christian podcasts"

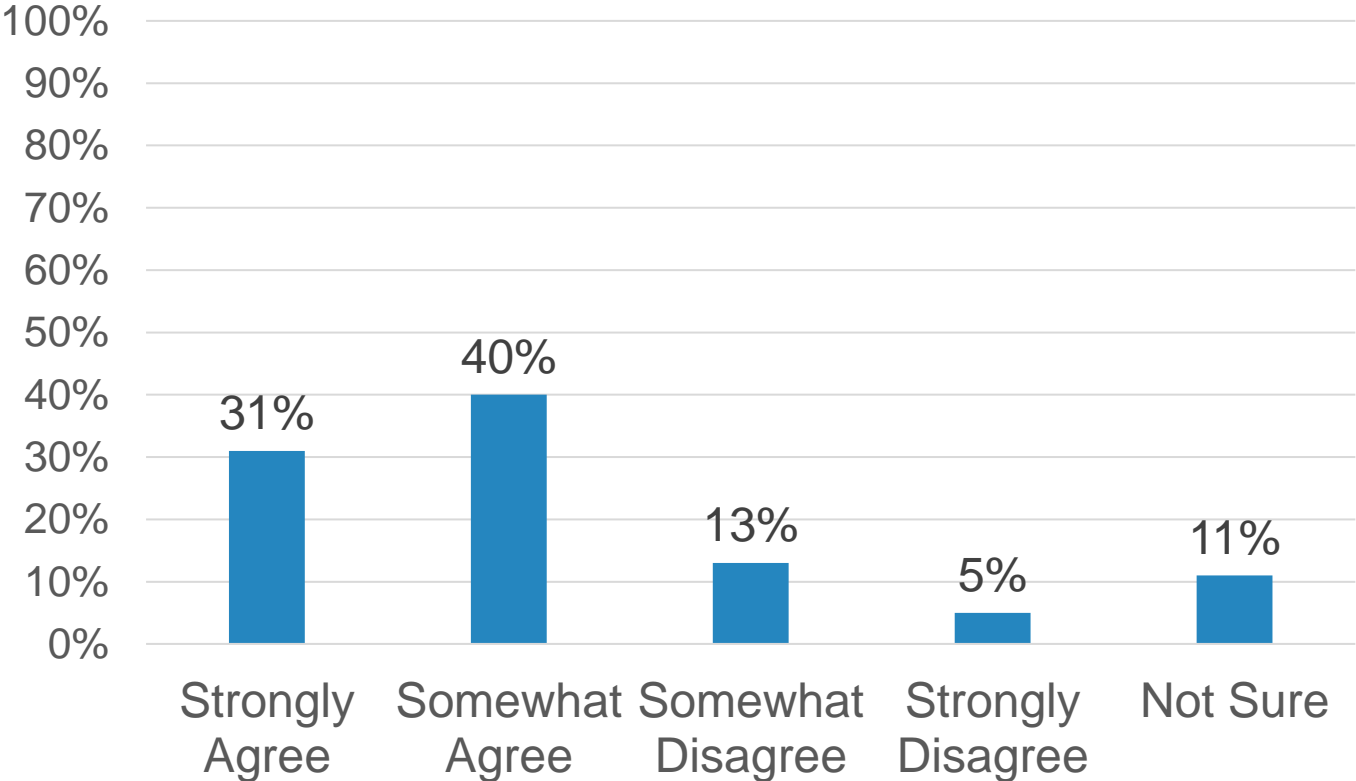
In January 2021, 37% participated in a small group as either a leader or participant



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Q23: "In January 2021, did you participate in small classes or groups for adults from church such as Sunday School, Bible study, small groups, Adult Bible Fellowships, etc.?" Asked of those who have a church in Q21 n=949

71% say that their church communicates the importance of being involved in a small group



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Q32: My church communicates it is important for every adult to be involved in a small class or group. “”

Significant Differences

Gender

Age

Ethnicity

Region

Education Level

Worship Service Attendance, January 2020

Denomination

Evangelical Beliefs

Significant Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among gender, age, ethnicity, region, and education.

GENDER	AGE	ETHNICITY	REGION	EDUCATION
Male	18-29	White	Northeast	High School graduate or less
Female	30-49	African American	Midwest	Some college
	50-64	Hispanic	South	Bachelor's Degree
	65+	Other Ethnicities	West	Graduate Degree

Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among worship service attendance, denomination, and evangelical beliefs.

WORSHIP SERVICE ATTENDANCE, JANUARY 2020	DENOMINATION	EVANGELICAL BELIEFS
0-1 times	Baptist	Yes
2 to 3 times	Lutheran	No
4 or more times	Methodist	
	Non-denominational	

“In January 2020 (before COVID-19) did you participate in small classes or groups for adults from church such as Sunday School, Bible study, small groups, Adult Bible Fellowships, etc.?”

- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “Yes, as a participant” (68%)
- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select “No” (57%)
- African Americans (62%) are more likely select “Yes, as a participant” to than Whites (48%)
- Those in the South (56%) and West (59%) are more likely to select “Yes, as a participant” than those in the Northeast (39%) and Midwest (48%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the most likely to select “No” (48%)
- Those that attended a worship service 4 or more times in January 2020 are the most likely to select “Yes, as a participant” (61%)
- Those that attended a worship service 0-1 times in January 2020 are the most likely to select “No” (75%)
- Baptists (59%) are more likely to select “Yes, as a participant” than Lutherans (34%) and Methodists (44%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Yes, as a participant” than those without evangelical beliefs (60% v. 45%)

“How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...”

Participated in in-person worship services at my own church

- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “More” (22%)
- Those age 50-64 (64%) are more likely to select “Less” than those 18-29 (49%) and 30-49 (54%)
- African Americans (19%) are more likely to select “More” than Whites (8%)
- Those in the South (12%) are more likely to select “More” than those in the West (7%)
- Those with some college (60%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (64%) are more likely to select “Less” than those who are High School Graduates or less (52%)
- Those that attended a worship service 4 or more times in January 2020 (12%) are more likely to select “More” than those that attended 2 to 3 times in January 2020 (8%)
- Baptists (32%) are more likely to select “Same” than Methodists (21%)
- Baptists are the least likely to select “Less” (48%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are less likely to select “Less” than those without evangelical beliefs (53% v. 61%)

“How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...”

Participated in online worship services at my own church

- Those age 30-49 (57%) are more likely to select “More” than those 65+ (48%)
- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “Same” (35%)
- African Americans (31%) and Hispanics (33%) are more likely to select “Same” than Whites (18%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree are the most likely to select “More” (71%)
- Those that attended a worship service 4 or more times in January 2020 are the most likely to select “More” (58%)
- Methodists (57%) and non-denominational (57%) are more likely to select “More” than Lutherans (42%)

“How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...”

Participated in online worship services from another church

- Those age 18-29 (27%) and 50-64 (23%) are more likely to select “More” than those 65+ (15%)
- African Americans (27%) and Hispanics (28%) are more likely to select “More” than Whites (18%)
- Those in the South (24%) are more likely to select “More” than those in the Northeast (16%) and Midwest (18%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (27%) are more likely to select “More” than those who are High School Graduates or less (18%)
- Those that attended a worship service 4 or more times in January 2020 (23%) are more likely to select “More” than those that attended 2-3 times in January 2020 (17%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are less likely to select “Less” than those without evangelical beliefs (10% v. 15%)

“How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...”

Participated in worship services on television

- Those age 18-29 (31%) and 30-49 (25%) are more likely to select “More” than those 50-64 (19%) and 65+ (17%)
- Hispanics (34%) are more likely to select “More” than Whites (20%)
- Those in the South (26%) are more likely to select “More” than those in the Northeast (16%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (32%) are more likely to select “More” than those who are High School Graduates or less (21%) or with some college (21%)
- Those that attended a worship service 4 or more times in January 2020 (26%) are more likely to select “More” than those that attended 0-1 times in January 2020 (13%)
- Lutherans are the least likely to select “More” (12%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “More” than those without evangelical beliefs (27% v. 19%)

“How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...”

Participated in worship services on radio

- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “More” (24%)
- African Americans (20%) and Hispanics (17%) are more likely to select “More” than Whites (7%)
- Those in the South (14%) are more likely to select “More” than those in the Midwest (5%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (15%) are more likely to select “More” than those who are High School Graduates or less (9%)
- Those that attended a worship service 2 or 3 times in January 2020 are the most likely to select “Same” (29%)
- Baptists (12%) and non-denominational (14%) are more likely to select “More” than Lutherans (4%) and Methodists (4%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “More” than those without evangelical beliefs (13% v. 9%)

“How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...”

Participated in an in-person Bible study with other adults

- Males are more likely to select “Same” than Females (25% v. 20%)
- Those age 18-29 are more likely to select “More” (24%)
- African Americans (18%) and Hispanics (16%) are more likely to select “More” than Whites (7%)
- Those in the South are more likely to select “More” (13%)
- Those with some college (36%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (43%) are more likely to select “Less” than those who are High School Graduates or less (26%)
- Those that attended a worship service 4 or more times in January 2020 (12%) are more likely to select “More” than those that attended 0-1 times in January 2020 (5%)
- Baptists (12%) and non-denominational (13%) are more likely to select “More” than Lutherans (2%) and Methodists (4%)

“How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...”

Participated in an online Bible study with other adults

- Males are more likely to select “Same” than Females (24% v. 16%)
- Those age 18-29 (31%) and 30-49 (34%) are more likely to select “More” than those 50-64 (16%) and 65+ (9%)
- Hispanics are the most likely to select “More” (41%)
- Those in the South (25%) and West (30%) are more likely to select “More” than those in the Midwest (17%)
- Those who are High School Graduates or less are the least likely to select “More” (15%)
- Those that attended a worship service 0-1 times in January 2020 (19%) are more likely to select “Less” than those that attended 4 or more times in January 2020 (11%)
- Baptists (26%) and non-denominational (27%) are more likely to select “More” than Lutherans (14%) and Methodists (12%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “More” than those without evangelical beliefs (27% v. 20%)

“How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...”

Gave a percentage of my income to my church

- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “More” (26%)
- Hispanics (27%) and African Americans (22%) are more likely to select “More” than Whites (11%)
- Those in the South (18%) are more likely to select “More” than those in the Midwest (9%) and West (11%)
- Those that attended a worship service 4 or more times in January 2020 attended are more likely to select “More” (18%)
- Baptists (17%) and non-denominational (18%) are more likely to select “More” than Lutherans (8%) and Methodists (7%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “More” than those without evangelical beliefs (19% v. 10%)

“How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...”

Read books on Christian living

- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “More” (27%)
- African Americans (25%) are more likely to select “More” than Whites (12%)
- Those in the West (52%) are more likely to select “Same” than those in the Northeast (36%) and South (39%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (25%) or a Graduate Degree (21%) are more likely to select “More” than those who are High School Graduates or less (14%) or with some college (11%)
- Those that attended a worship service 0-1 times in January 2020 are the least likely to select “Same” (29%)
- Baptists (20%) and non-denominational (16%) are more likely to select “More” than Lutherans (7%) and Methodists (7%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Same” than those without evangelical beliefs (47% v. 37%)

“How did COVID-19 impact your personal discipleship practices in 2020 compared to 2019? In 2020, I...”

Listened to Christian podcasts

- Males are more likely to select “Same” than Females (33% v. 23%)
- Those age 18-29 are most likely to select “More” (31%)
- African Americans (24%) are more likely to select “More” than Whites (12%)
- Those in the South (11%) are more likely to select “Less” than those in the Midwest (6%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (33%) are more likely to select “Same” than those who are High School Graduates or less (24%)
- Those that attended a worship service 4 or more times in January 2020 are the most likely to select “More” (19%)
- Baptists (19%) and non-denominational (18%) are more likely to select “More” than Lutherans (5%) and Methodists (5%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “More” than those without evangelical beliefs (18% v. 13%)

“In January 2021, did you participate in small classes or groups for adults from church such as Sunday School, Bible study, small groups, Adult Bible Fellowships, etc.?”

- Those age 18-29 are the most likely to select “Yes” (61%)
- African Americans (48%) and Hispanics (53%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Whites (32%)
- Those in the South (41%) and West (45%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those in the Northeast (25%) and Midwest (30%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (47%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those who are High School Graduates or less (33%)
- Those that attended a worship service 4 or more times in January 2020 are the most likely to select “Yes” (43%)
- Baptists (41%) and non-denominational (43%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Lutherans (20%) and Methodists (21%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Yes” than those without evangelical beliefs (43% v. 32%)

“My church communicates it is important for every adult to be involved in a small class or group”

- Those age 18-29 (79%) are more likely to Agree than those 50-64 (68%) and 65+ (66%)
- Whites are more the least likely to Agree (68%)
- Those in the South (75%) and West (77%) are more likely to Agree than those in the Northeast (55%) and Midwest (66%)
- Those that attended a worship service 4 or more times in January 2020 are the most likely to Agree (77%)
- Baptists (79%) and non-denominational (75%) are more likely to Agree than Lutherans (50%) and Methodists (64%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (82% v. 60%)

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