

American Prayer Practices

Survey of 1,137 Americans

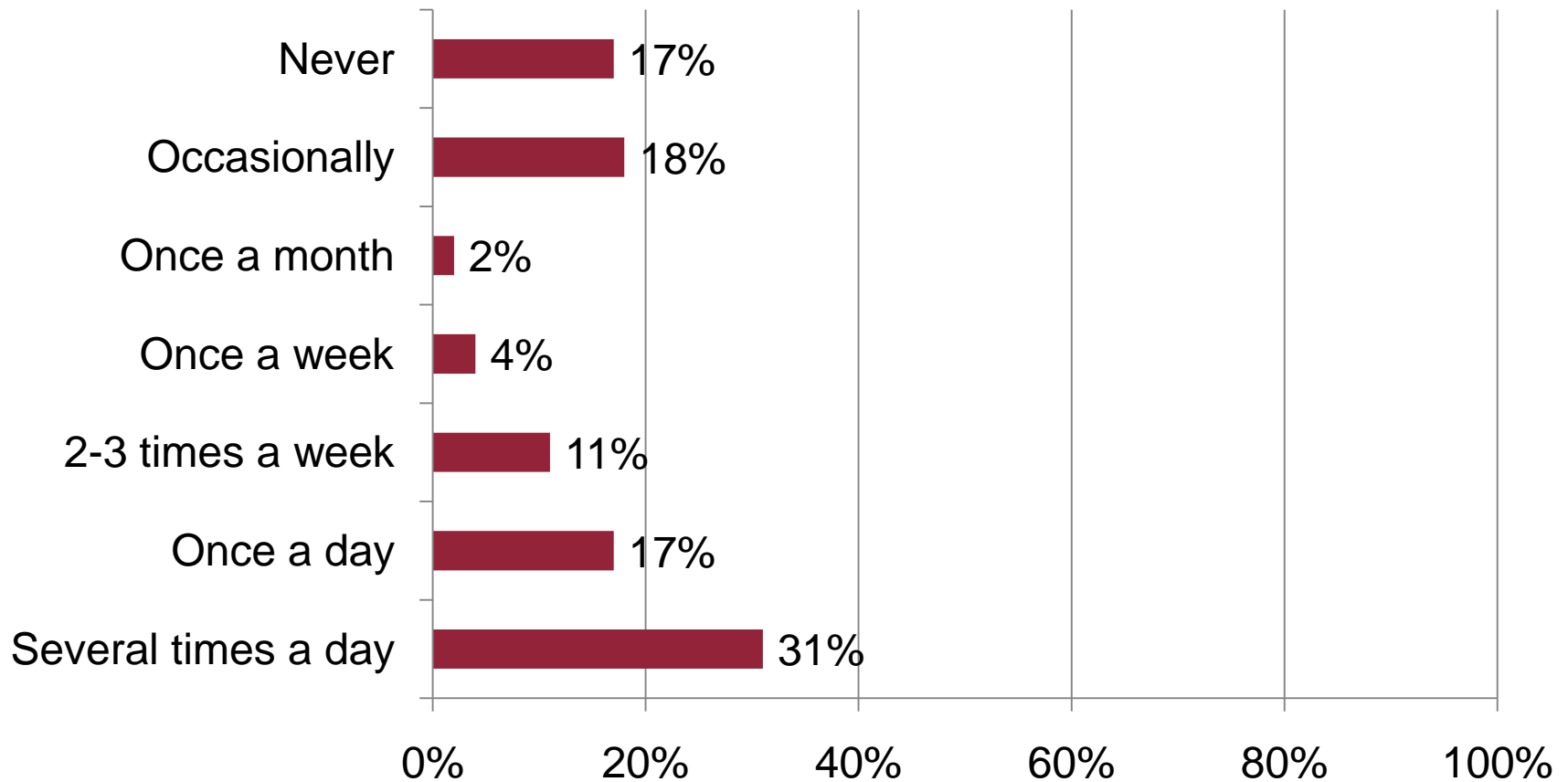
For Thomas Nelson and Max Lucado,
author of *Before Amen: The Power of
a Simple Prayer*

Methodology

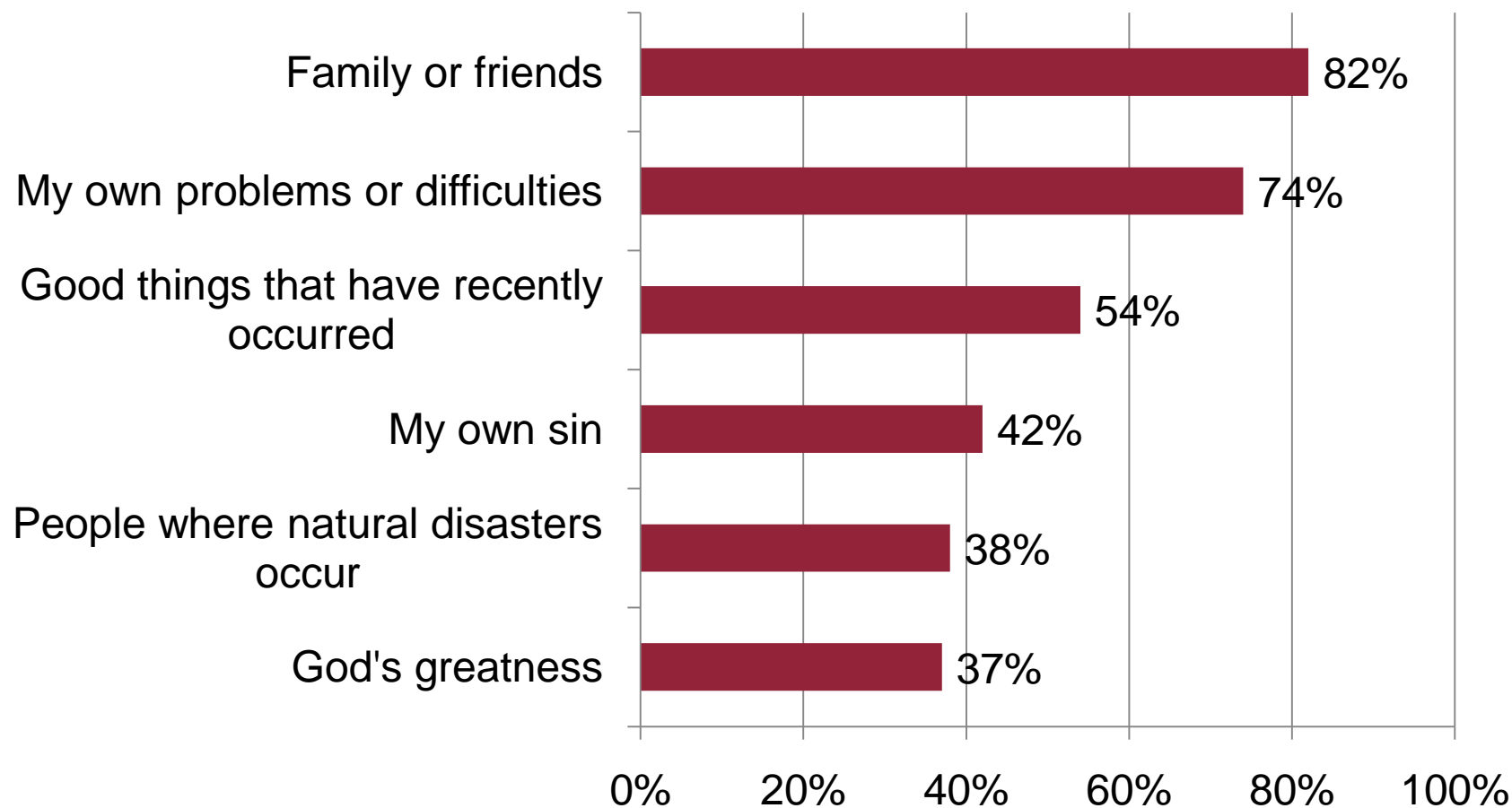
- ❑ The study was sponsored by Thomas Nelson
- ❑ The online survey of adult Americans was conducted August 7, 2014
- ❑ A sample of an online panel representing the adult population of the US was invited to participate
- ❑ Responses were weighted by region, age, ethnicity, gender, religion and income to more accurately reflect the population
- ❑ The completed sample is 1,137 online surveys
- ❑ The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error from this panel does not exceed $\pm 2.9\%$
- ❑ Margins of error are higher in sub-groups

Survey Responses

31% of Americans say they pray several times a day



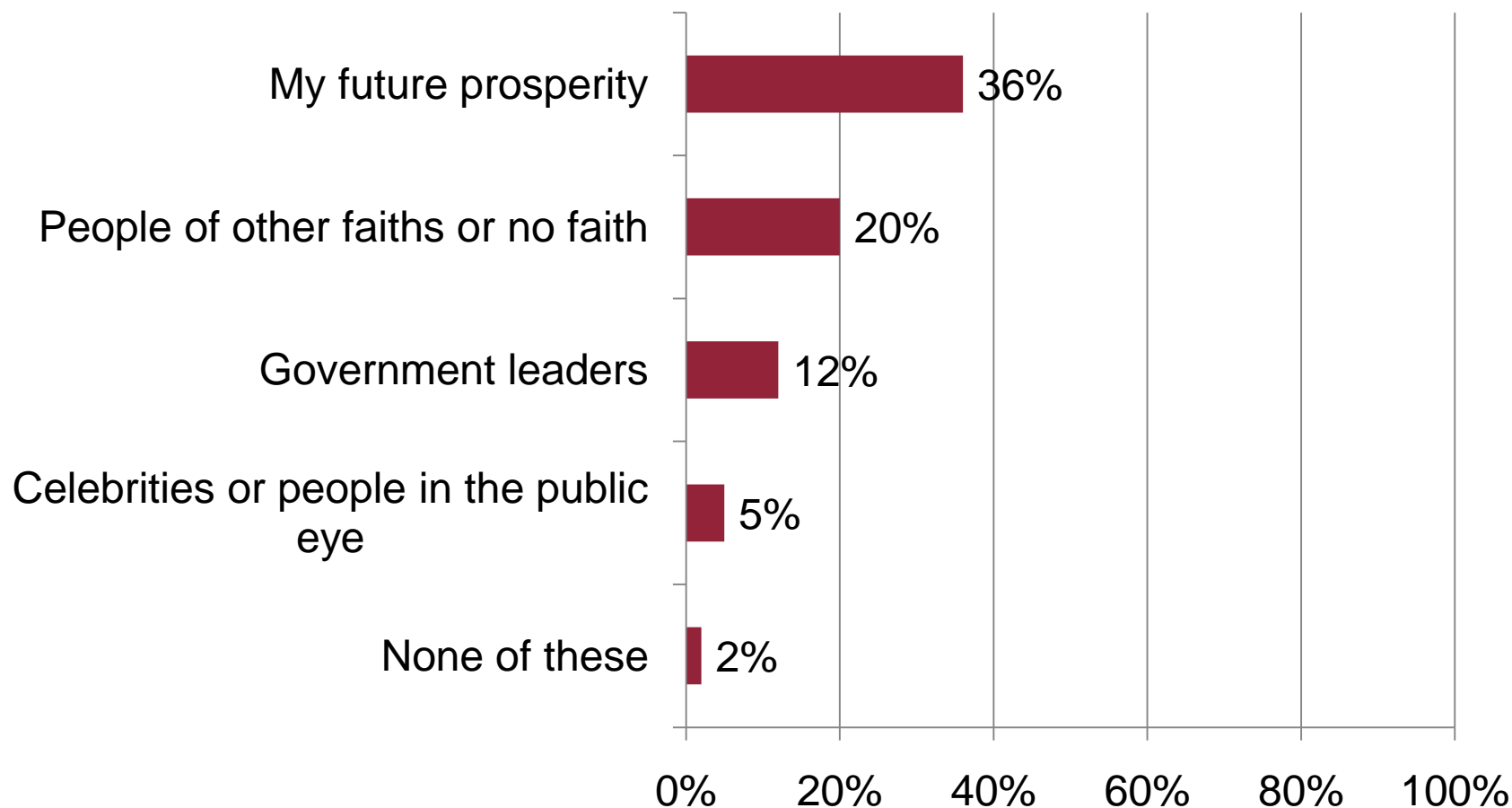
82% of Americans who pray typically pray about family or friends, while 42% pray about their own sin



Q2: "Which of the following do you typically pray about? (Select all that apply)"

(Asked of those who pray at least occasionally N=966)

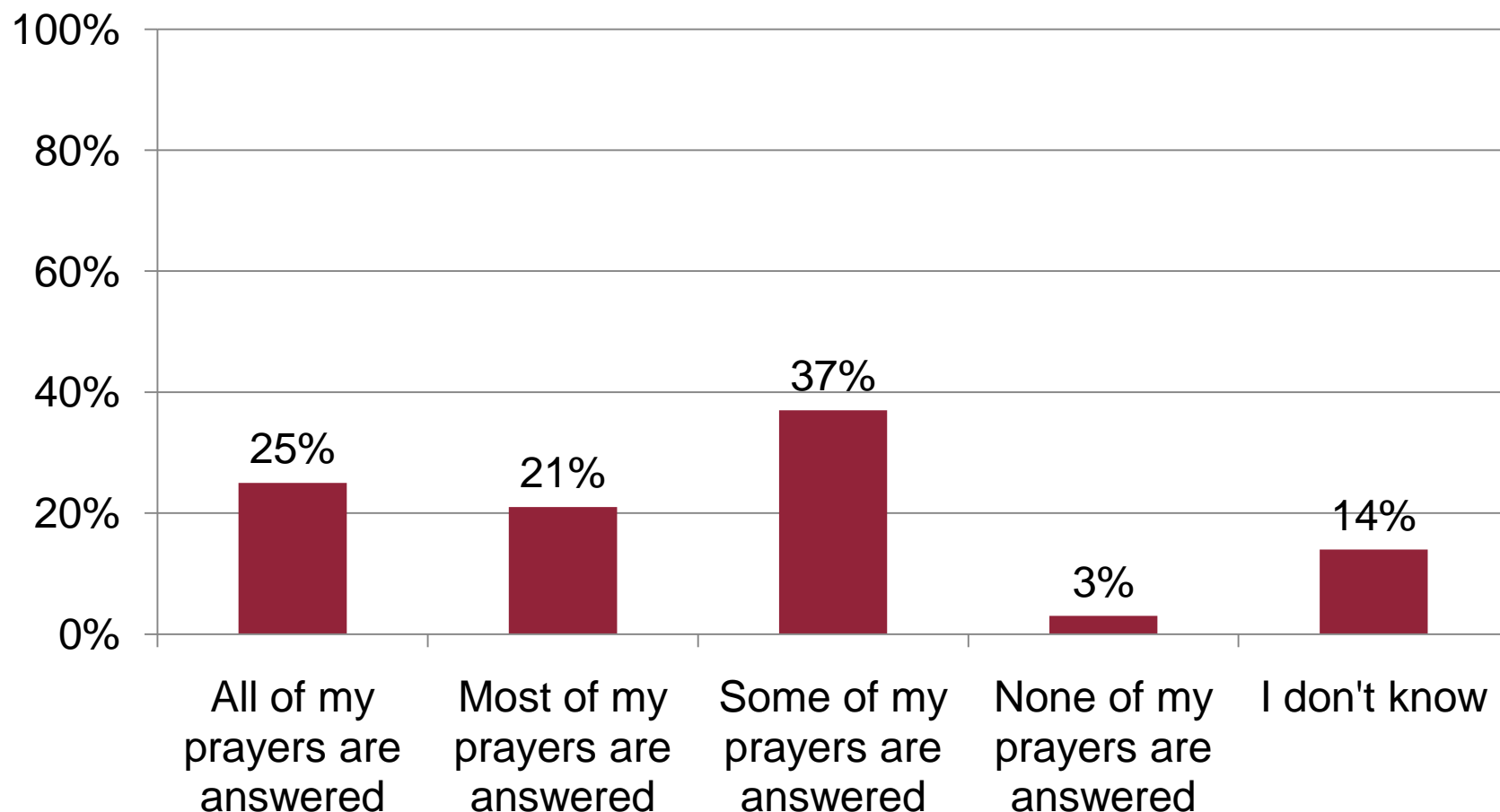
36% of Americans who pray typically pray about their future prosperity; only 12% pray about government leaders



Q2: "Which of the following do you typically pray about? (Select all that apply)"

(Asked of those who pray at least occasionally N=966)

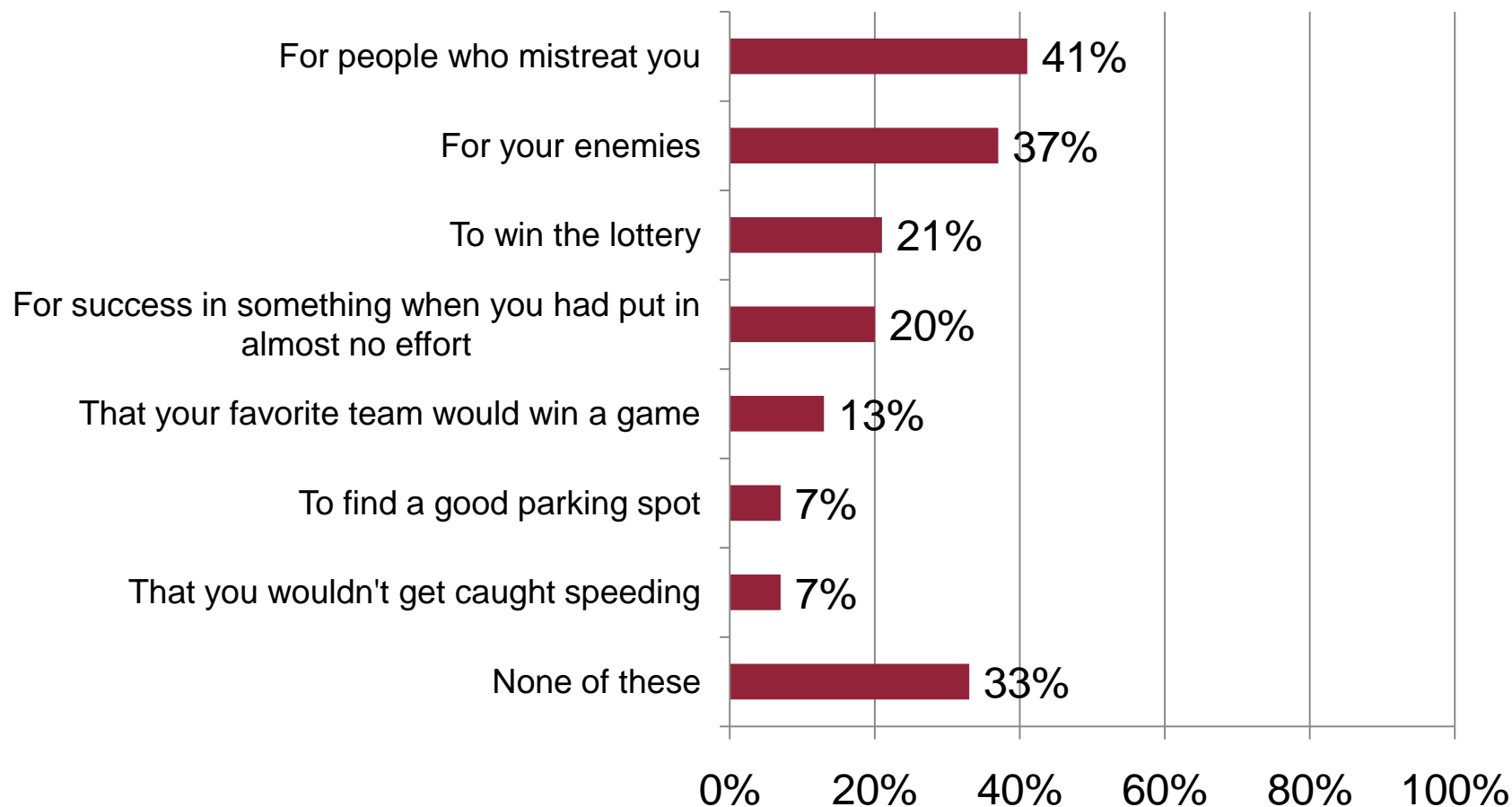
25% of Americans who pray believe all of their prayers are answered



Q3: "Which of the following best describes your beliefs about prayer? (Select One)"

(Asked of those who pray at least occasionally N=966)

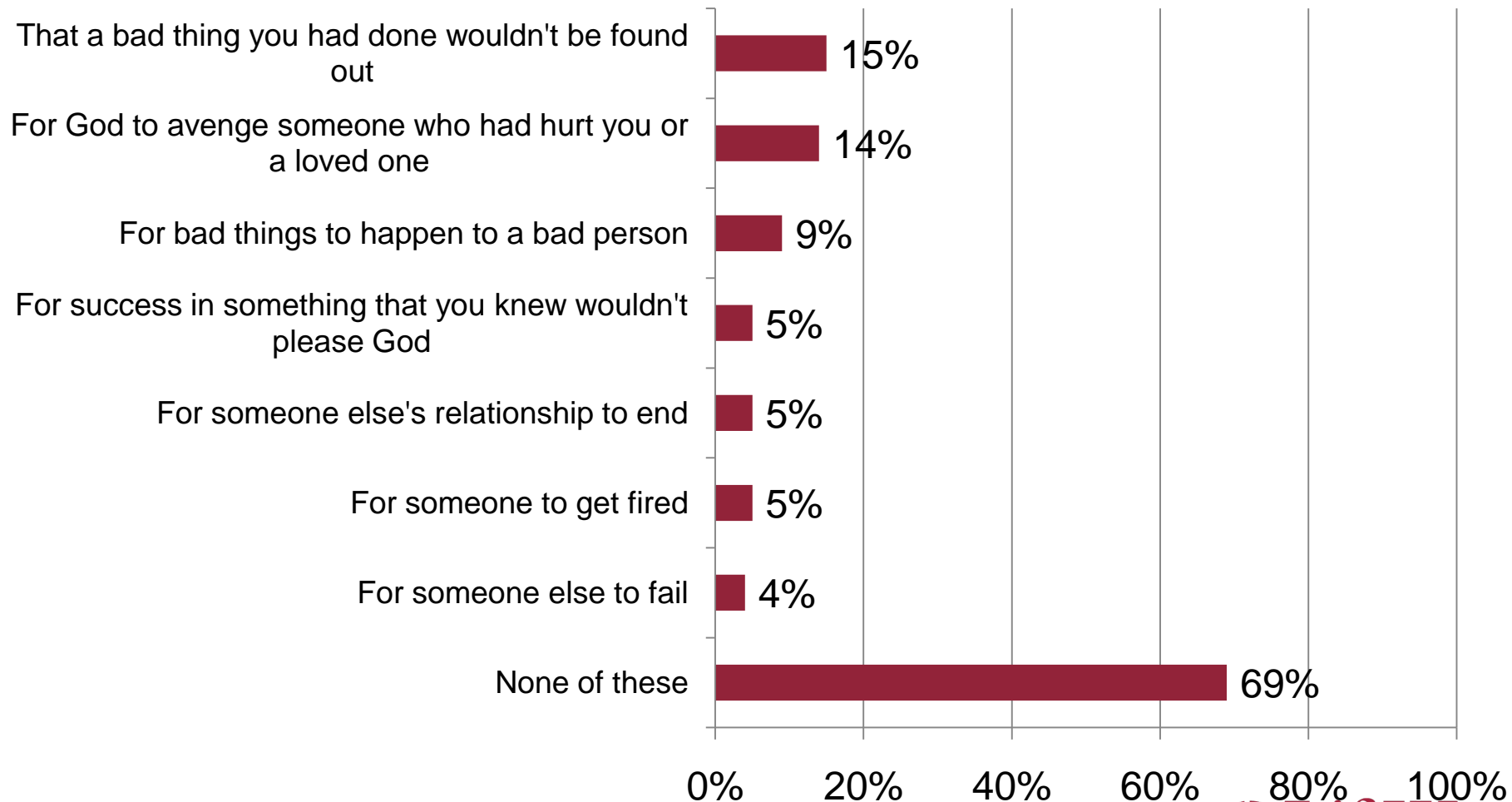
Among Americans who pray, 21% have prayed to win the lottery, and 13% have prayed that their favorite team would win



Q4: "For which, if any, of the following have you ever prayed? (Select all that apply)"

(Asked of those who pray at least occasionally N=966)

More than 1 in 7 people who ever pray have prayed that a bad thing they had done wouldn't be found out



Q5: "Knowing that no one else would know what you were praying, have you ever prayed ... (Select all that apply)"

(Asked of those who pray at least occasionally N=966)

Significant Differences

Region
Age
Gender
Education Level
Ethnicity
Religious Affiliation
Income

Significant Statistical Differences

- Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among region of the country, age, gender, and education level.

Region	Age	Gender	Education Level
Northeast	18-29	Male	No College Degree
Midwest	30-44	Female	College Degree
South	45-54		
West	55-64		
	65+		

Notes:

Region is defined by US Census locations

Significant Statistical Differences

- Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among denomination, religion, income, and ethnicity.

Denomination	Religion	Income	Ethnicity***
Catholic	Christian	<\$30K	White
Protestant/ Nondenominational	Other Religious*	\$30K-49K	African American
	Nonreligious**	\$50K-74K	Hispanic
		\$75K- 149K	Asian American
		\$150K+	

Notes:

*Other religious includes those identifying as Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Christian Scientist, Jehovah's Witness, and Unitarian

**Nonreligious includes those identifying as Atheist, Agnostic, and No preference

***Other ethnicities were recorded but sample sizes were too small for comparison

“How often do you pray?”

- Men are less likely to select “Several times a day” (27% v 36%) and more likely to select “Never” (22% v 11%)
- Those in the Northeast (18%) are less likely to select “Several times a day” than those in the South (42%)
- Those in the Northeast (27%) are more likely to select never than those in the Midwest (13%) and South (10%)
- Those in the West (23%) are more likely to select “Never” than those in the South (10%)
- Those age 45-54 (31%) and 55-64 (42%) are more likely to select “Several times a day” than those age 18-29 (20%)
- Whites (27%) are less likely to select “Several times a day” than African Americans (49%)
- Asian Americans (34%) are more likely to select “Once a day” than Whites (17%)

“How often do you pray?”

- African Americans (5%) are less likely to select “Never” than Whites (19%) and Hispanics (20%)
- Compared to Christians, nonreligious people are less likely to select “Several times a day” (3% v 39%), “Once a day” (9% v 20%), “2-3 times a week” (5% v 13%), and “Once a week” (1% v 5%), and more likely to select “Occasionally” (28% v 14%), and “Never” (53% v 7%)
- Compared to other religious Americans, nonreligious people are less likely to select “Several times a day” (3% v 23%), and “Once a week” (1% v 9%), and more likely to select “Never” (53% v 7%)
- Compared to other religious Americans, Christians are less likely to select “Occasionally” (14% v 38%)
- Protestant and nondenominational Christians (43%) are more likely to select “Several times a day” than Catholics (31%)

“How often do you pray?”

- Those making \$30,000-\$49,999 (47%) are more likely to select “Several times a day” than those making \$50,000-\$74,999 (31%)
- Those with a college degree are more likely to select once a week (5% v 3%) and less likely to select occasionally (13% v 21%)

“Which of the following do you typically pray about?”

- **“My own problems or difficulties”**
- Women are more likely to select “Yes” (80% v 67%)
- Those age 65+ are least likely to select “Yes” (57%)
- Those age 55-64 (69%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those age 30-44 (85%)
- Asian Americans (63%) are less likely to select “Yes” than African Americans (81%) and Hispanics (96%)
- **“My future prosperity”**
- Southerners (45%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Midwesterners (29%)
- Those age 65+ are least likely to select “Yes” (17%)
- Those age 18-29 (51%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those age 45-54 (35%) and 55-64 (28%)

“Which of the following do you typically pray about?”

- **“My future prosperity”** (cont)
- Whites (29%) are less likely to select “Yes” than African Americans (63%) and Asian Americans (48%)
- **“Good things that have recently occurred”**
- Women are more likely to select “Yes” (57% v 50%)
- Protestants and non-denominationalists (61%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Catholics (39%)
- **“My own sin”**
- Those age 65+ (33%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those age 18-29 (49%), 45-54 (48%), and 55-64 (51%)
- African Americans (58%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Whites (43%) and Hispanics (22%)
- Christians (46%) are more likely to select “Yes” than other religious people (23%) and nonreligious people (14%)

“Which of the following do you typically pray about?”

- **“My own sin”** (cont)
- Protestants and non-denominationalists (51%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Catholics (37%)
- Those making \$150,000 or more are least likely to select “Yes” (20%)
- **“Family or friends”**
- Women are more likely to select “Yes” (90% v 71%)
- Those in the Northeast (74%) and West (74%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those in the Midwest (87%) and South (85%)
- Those age 45-54 (91%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those age 30-44 (73%) and 65+ (78%)
- Whites (83%) and African Americans (90%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Asian Americans (68%)
- Protestants and non-denominationalists (85%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Catholics (75%)

“Which of the following do you typically pray about?”

- **“Government leaders”**
- Southerners (17%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Northeasterners (5%) and Westerners (7%)
- Midwesterners (13%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Northeasterners (5%)
- Those age 18-29 (8%) and 30-44 (6%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those age 65+ (19%)
- Those age 30-44 (6%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those age 55-64 (19%)
- Christians (14%) are more likely to select “Yes” than other religious people (3%) and nonreligious people (2%)
- Protestants and non-denominationalists (17%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Catholics (6%)

“Which of the following do you typically pray about?”

- **“God’s greatness”**
- Southerners are most likely to select “Yes” (49%)
- Those age 30-44 (31%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those age 55-64 (45%)
- African Americans (62%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Whites (36%), Hispanics (23%), and Asian Americans (21%)
- Christians (40%) are more likely to select “Yes” than other religious people (22%) and nonreligious people (16%)
- Protestants and non-denominationalists (45%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Catholics (30%)

“Which of the following do you typically pray about?”

- **“People where natural disasters occur”**
- Women are more likely to select “Yes” (41% v 35%)
- Southerners (48%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Northeasterners (29%)
- Those age 55-64 (49%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those age 18-29 (35%) and 30-44 (34%)
- Protestants and non-denominationals (44%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Catholics (31%)
- **“Celebrities or people in the public eye”**
- Southerners (9%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Midwesterners (1%)

“Which of the following do you typically pray about?”

- **“People of other faiths or no faith”**
- Southerners (28%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Northeasterners (15%)
- Christians (22%) are more likely to select “Yes” than nonreligious people (8%)
- Protestants and non-denominationalists (26%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Catholics (13%)
- People making less than \$30,000 (26%) are more likely to select “Yes” than people making 50,000-74,999 (15%) or \$150,000+ (6%)
- **“None of these”**
- Those in the Midwest (1%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those in the West (5%)
- Those age 65+ (5%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those age 30-44 (1%) and 45-54 (<1%)

“Which of the following best describes your beliefs about prayer?”

- Women are more likely to select “Most of my prayers are answered” (24% v 17%)
- Southerners (31%) are more likely to select “All of my prayers are answered” than Northeasterners (15%)
- African Americans (38%) are more likely to select “All of my prayers are answered” than Whites (22%) and Asian Americans (19%)
- Asian Americans (33%) are more likely to select “Most of my prayers are answered” than Whites (19%) and Hispanics (7%)
- African Americans (21%) are less likely to select “Some of my prayers are answered” than Whites (36%) and Hispanics (64%)
- Hispanics (64%) are more likely to select “Some of my prayers are answered” than Asian Americans (29%)

“Which of the following best describes your beliefs about prayer?”

- Christians (28%) and other religious people (21%) are more likely to select “All of my prayers are answered” than nonreligious people (5%)
- Christians (21%) are more likely to select “Most of my prayers are answered” than nonreligious people (13%)
- Christians (2%) are less likely to select “None of my prayers are answered” than nonreligious people (7%)
- Protestants and non-denominationalists (30%) are more likely to select “All of my prayers are answered” than Catholics (22%)

“For which, if any, of the following have you ever prayed?”

- **That your favorite team would win a game**
- Those age 18-29 (25%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those age 45-54 (10%) and 65+ (7%)
- Protestants and non-denominationals (11%) are less likely to select “Yes” than Catholics (20%)
- **For people who mistreat you**
- Women are more likely to select “Yes” (44% v 38%)
- Southerners (55%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Northeasterners (32%) and Midwesterners (37%)
- Those age 65+ (33%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those age 18-29 (46%)
- African Americans (52%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Whites (36%)
- Christians (46%) are more likely to select “Yes” than other religious people (22%) and nonreligious people (13%)
- Protestants and non-denominationals (48%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Catholics (40%)

“For which, if any, of the following have you ever prayed?”

- **For your enemies**
- Southerners (49%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Northeasterners (29%) and Midwesterners (34%)
- African Americans (47%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Whites (35%)
- Christians (41%) are more likely to select “Yes” than nonreligious people (14%)
- Protestants and non-denominationalists (46%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Catholics (28%)
- **To win the lottery**
- Those age 65+ (18%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those age 45-54 (29%)
- **That you wouldn’t get caught speeding**
- Women are more likely to select “Yes” (9% v 5%)
- Those age 18-29 (16%) are more likely than those 45-54 (5%), 55-64 (5%), and 65+ (4%)

“For which, if any, of the following have you ever prayed?”

- **For success in something when you had put in almost no effort**
- Southerners (25%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Midwesterners (15%)
- Those age 65+ (10%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those 18-29 (28%), 30-44 (23%), and 45-54 (21%)
- Those age 55-64 (14%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those 18-29 (28%)
- African Americans (36%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Whites (17%) and Asian Americans (6%)
- **None of these**
- Southerners (24%) are less likely to select “Yes” than Northeasterners (33%) and Midwesterners (41%)
- Those age 65+ (43%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those 18-29 (27%), 30-44 (31%), and 45-54 (33%)
- African Americans (15%) are less likely to select “Yes” than Whites (36%) and Asian Americans (44%)
- Christians (29%) are less likely to select “Yes” than nonreligious people (58%)

“Knowing that no one else would know what you were praying, have you ever prayed ...”

- **for someone to get fired**
- Westerners (11%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Midwesterners (2%) and Southerners (4%)
- Those age 65+ (1%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those age 30-44 (9%)
- Catholics (10%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Protestants and non-denominationalists (3%)
- Those making \$75,000-\$149,999 (5%) and \$150,000+ (19%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those making less than \$30,000 (1%)
- **for bad things to happen to a bad person**
- Those making \$150,000+ (25%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those making less than \$30,000 (8%) and \$30,000-\$49,999 (7%)
- **for God to avenge someone who had hurt you or a loved one**
- Those age 65+ (9%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those age 18-29 (24%)
- African Americans (18%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Asian Americans (4%)

“Knowing that no one else would know what you were praying, have you ever prayed ...”

- **that a bad thing you had done wouldn't be found out**
- Those age 65+ (8%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those age 18-29 (22%), 45-54 (16%), and 55-64 (19%)
- Those age 18-29 (22%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those age 30-44 (10%)
- Those making less than \$30,000 (20%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those making \$30,000-\$49,999 (11%)
- Those with a college degree are less likely to select “Yes” (11% v 17%)
- **for success in something you knew wouldn't please God**
- Men are more likely to select “Yes” (6% v 4%)
- Those age 18-29 (9%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those age 55-64 (2%) and 65+ (2%)
- Those making \$30,000-\$49,999 (2%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those making \$75,000-\$149,999 (8%)

“Knowing that no one else would know what you were praying, have you ever prayed ...”

- **For someone else to fail**
- Those with a college degree are more likely to select “Yes” (7% v 2%)
- **None of these**
- Those age 18-29 (56%) and 45-54 (66%) are less likely to select “Yes” than those age 65+ (79%)

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