

# The Long and Winding Road

## Matthew 7:13-14





# Remember – You Are Never Alone

- ◆ **Isaiah 30:20-21** - <sup>20</sup> And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, yet your Teacher will not hide himself anymore, but your eyes shall see your Teacher. <sup>21</sup> And your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, “This is the way, walk in it,” when you turn to the right or when you turn to the left.
- ◆ **Joshua 1:9** - <sup>9</sup> Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”
- ◆ **1 John 5:4-5** - <sup>4</sup> For everyone who has been born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. <sup>5</sup> Who is it that overcomes the world except the one who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

# How to Successfully Navigate the Long and Winding Road

1. Willing to Start the Journey
2. Spiritual Growth – Lifelong Learning
3. Obedience – Actions Have Consequences
4. Complete the Journey – Don't Quit



## Willing to Start the Journey

◆ **Matthew 7:13-14** - <sup>13</sup> “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. <sup>14</sup> For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.



# Procrastination Does Not Solve Problems

- ◆ **Ecclesiastes 11:4** - He who observes the wind will not sow, and he who regards the clouds will not reap.
- ◆ **Ephesians 5:15-17** - Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.
- ◆ **2 Timothy 1:7** - <sup>7</sup>for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.

# Spiritual Growth – Lifelong Learning

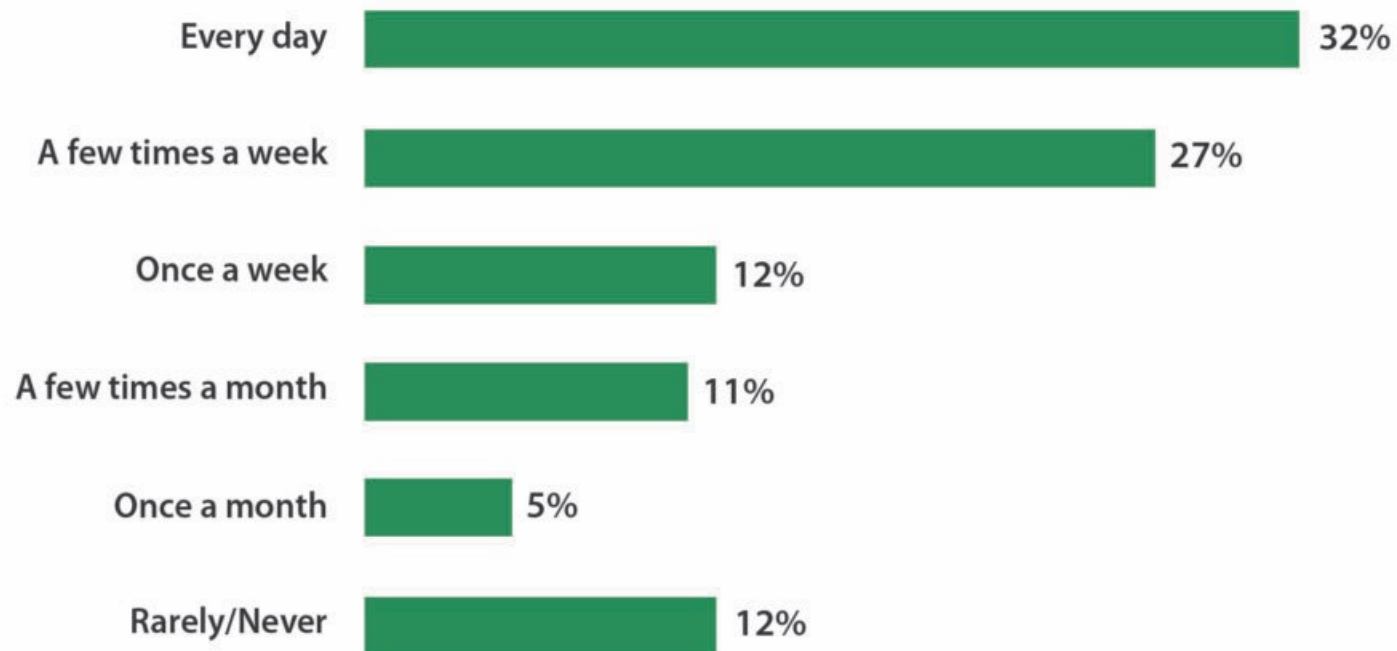
◆ **Matthew 7:15-20** - <sup>15</sup> “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. <sup>16</sup> You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? <sup>17</sup> So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. <sup>18</sup> A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. <sup>19</sup> Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. <sup>20</sup> Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.





# How often do you read the Bible?

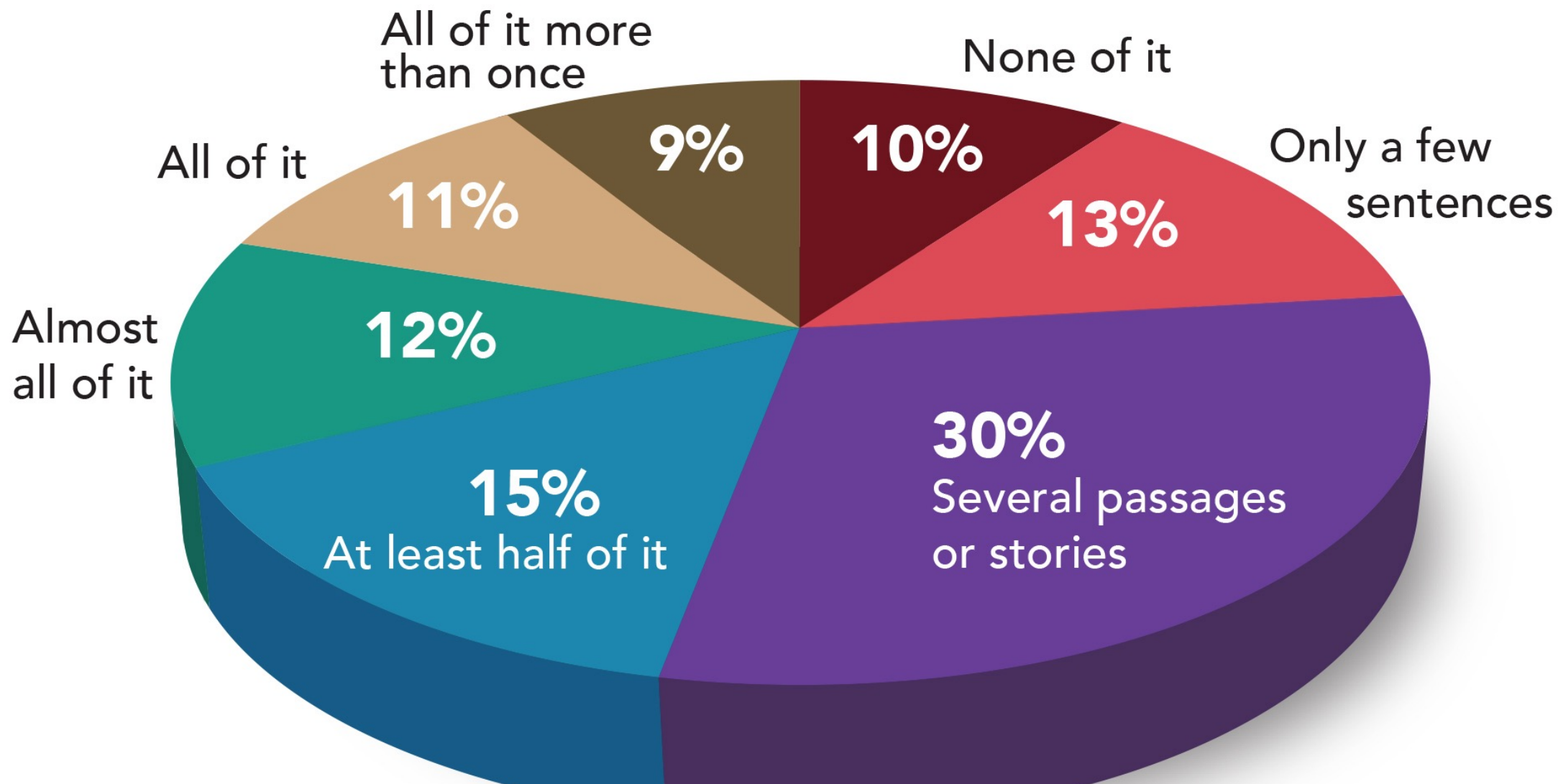
*Among Protestant churchgoers*



Note: May not equal 100% due to rounding.



# How much of the Bible have you personally read?



# Walk by Faith and Not Sight

◆ **2 Corinthians 5:7** - For we walk by faith, not by sight.  
(NKJV)

◆ **2 Corinthians 4:18** - So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.



# Faith and Trust

- ◆ **Psalm 119:105** - Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.
- ◆ **Hebrews 11:1** - Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.
- ◆ **Hebrews 11:6** - . <sup>6</sup> And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

# Lifetime Learner – Go Beyond Your Comfort Zone

- ◆ LIFETIME LEARNERS ARE CURIOUS ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE AND CULTURES AND GO BEYOND THEIR COMFORT ZONES TO REACH THE LOST
- ◆ **Acts 17:22-23** - <sup>22</sup> So Paul, standing in the midst of the Areopagus, said: “Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. <sup>23</sup> For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription: ‘To the unknown god.’ What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.



# Make the Effort – Reach the Lost

- ♦ **1 Peter 3:15** - <sup>15</sup> but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,
- ♦ **Acts 17:32-34** - <sup>32</sup> Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, “We will hear you again about this.” <sup>33</sup> So Paul went out from their midst. <sup>34</sup> But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them.

# Obedience – Actions Have Consequences

- ◆ **Matthew 7:21-23** - <sup>21</sup> “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. <sup>22</sup> On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ <sup>23</sup> And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’
- ◆ **John 14:15** - <sup>15</sup> “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.



# Trust in the Lord

- ◆ **Proverbs 3:5-6** - <sup>5</sup> Trust in the Lord with all your heart,  
and do not lean on your own understanding.  
<sup>6</sup> In all your ways acknowledge him,  
and he will make straight your paths.
- ◆ **Proverbs 28:26** - <sup>26</sup> Whoever trusts in his own mind is a fool, but  
he who walks in wisdom will be delivered.

# Do Not Boast

◆ **Jeremiah 9:23-24** - <sup>23</sup> Thus says the Lord: “Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, let not the mighty man boast in his might, let not the rich man boast in his riches, <sup>24</sup> but let him who boasts boast in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the Lord who practices steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth. For in these things I delight, declares the Lord.”



## Complete the Journey – Don't Quit

◆ **2 Timothy 4:6-8** - <sup>6</sup> For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

# It is Not How You Start – But How You Finish

- ◆ EVERY JOURNEY HAS A BEGINNING AND AN END.
- ◆ IT IS NOT HOW YOU START YOUR JOURNEY – BUT HOW YOU FINISH.
- ◆ **1 Corinthians 9:24-27** - <sup>24</sup> Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. <sup>25</sup> Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. <sup>26</sup> So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. <sup>27</sup> But I discipline my body and keep it under control lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.



# God Will Provide

- ◆ **Romans 8:28** - And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.
- ◆ **Philippians 4:19** - And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

