

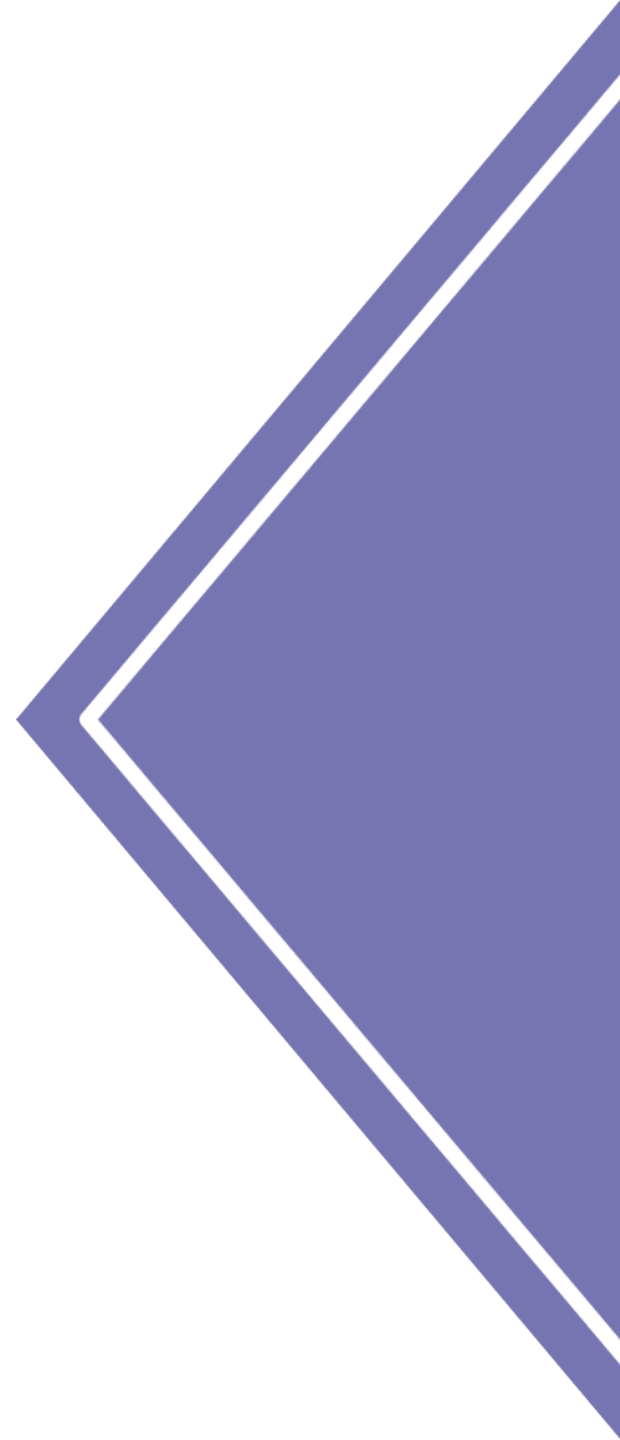
Protestant Churchgoer Views on Biblical Interpretation

Survey of American Protestant
Churchgoers

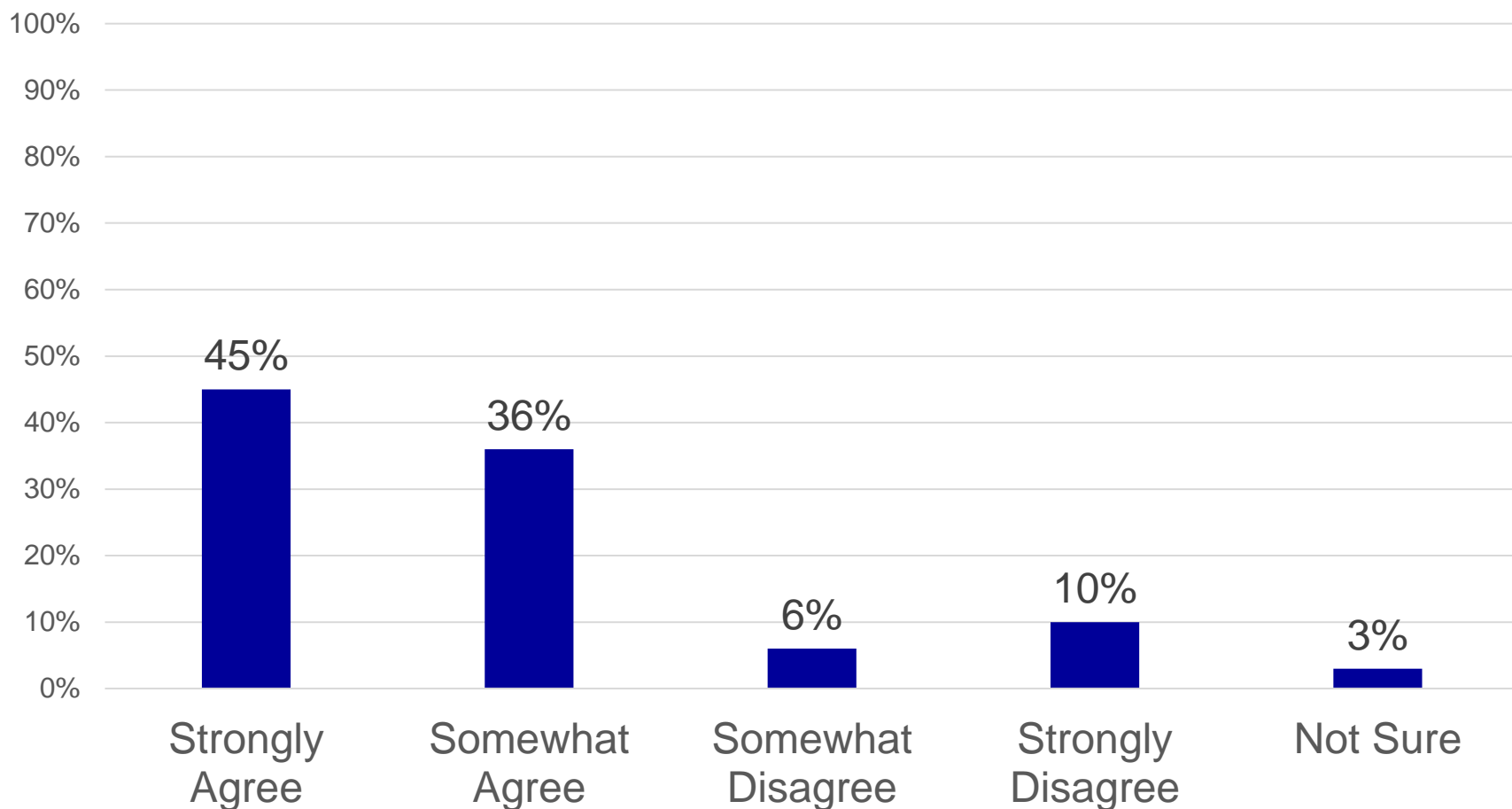
Methodology

- The online survey of 1,002 American Protestant churchgoers was conducted September 20-27, 2019 using a national pre-recruited panel
- Respondents were screened to include those who identified as Protestant/non-denominational and attend religious services at least once a month
- Quotas and slight weights were used to balance gender, age, region, ethnicity, and education to more accurately reflect the population
- The completed sample is 1,002 surveys
- The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error from the panel does not exceed $\pm 3.2\%$
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups

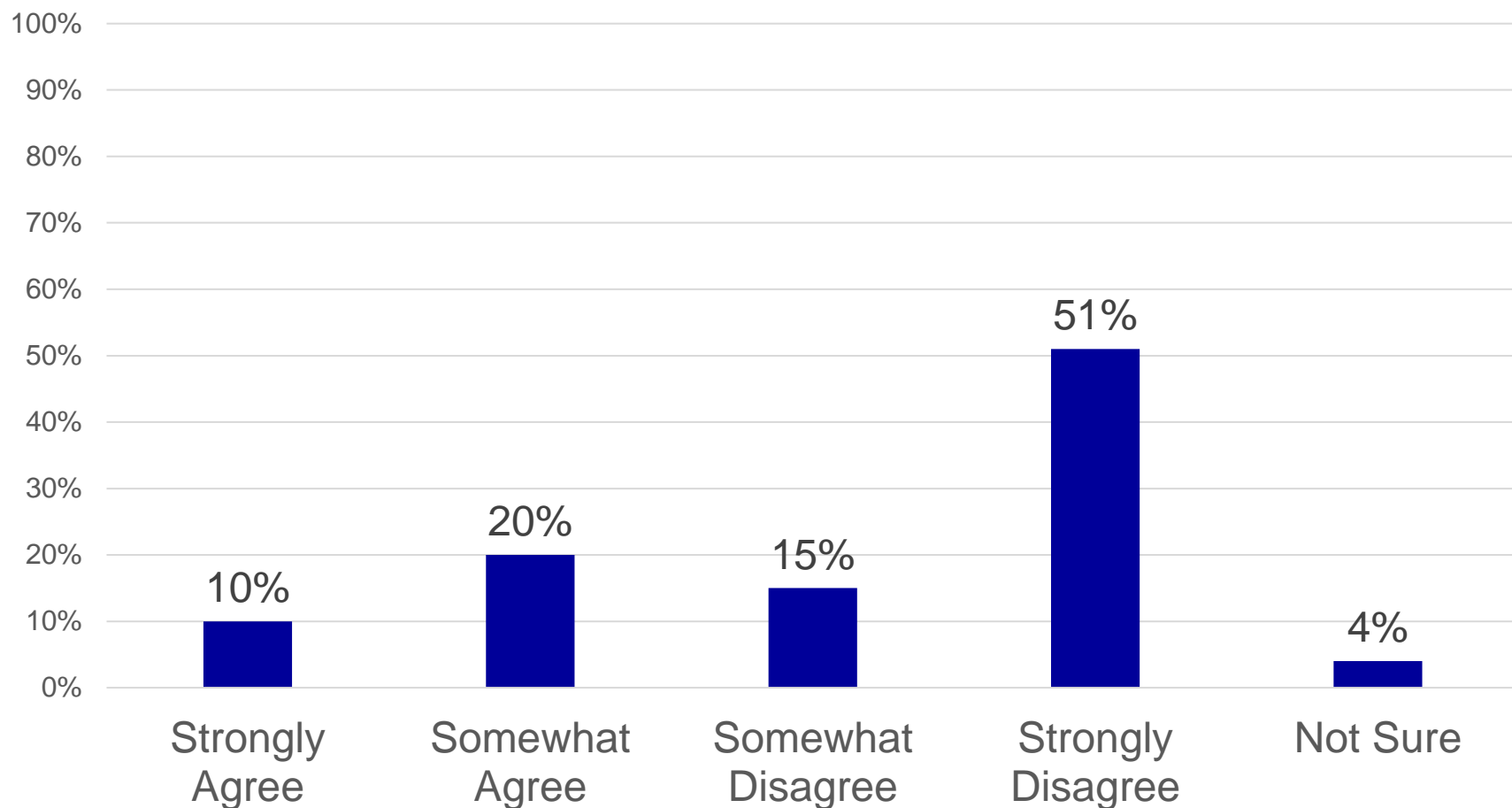
Survey Responses



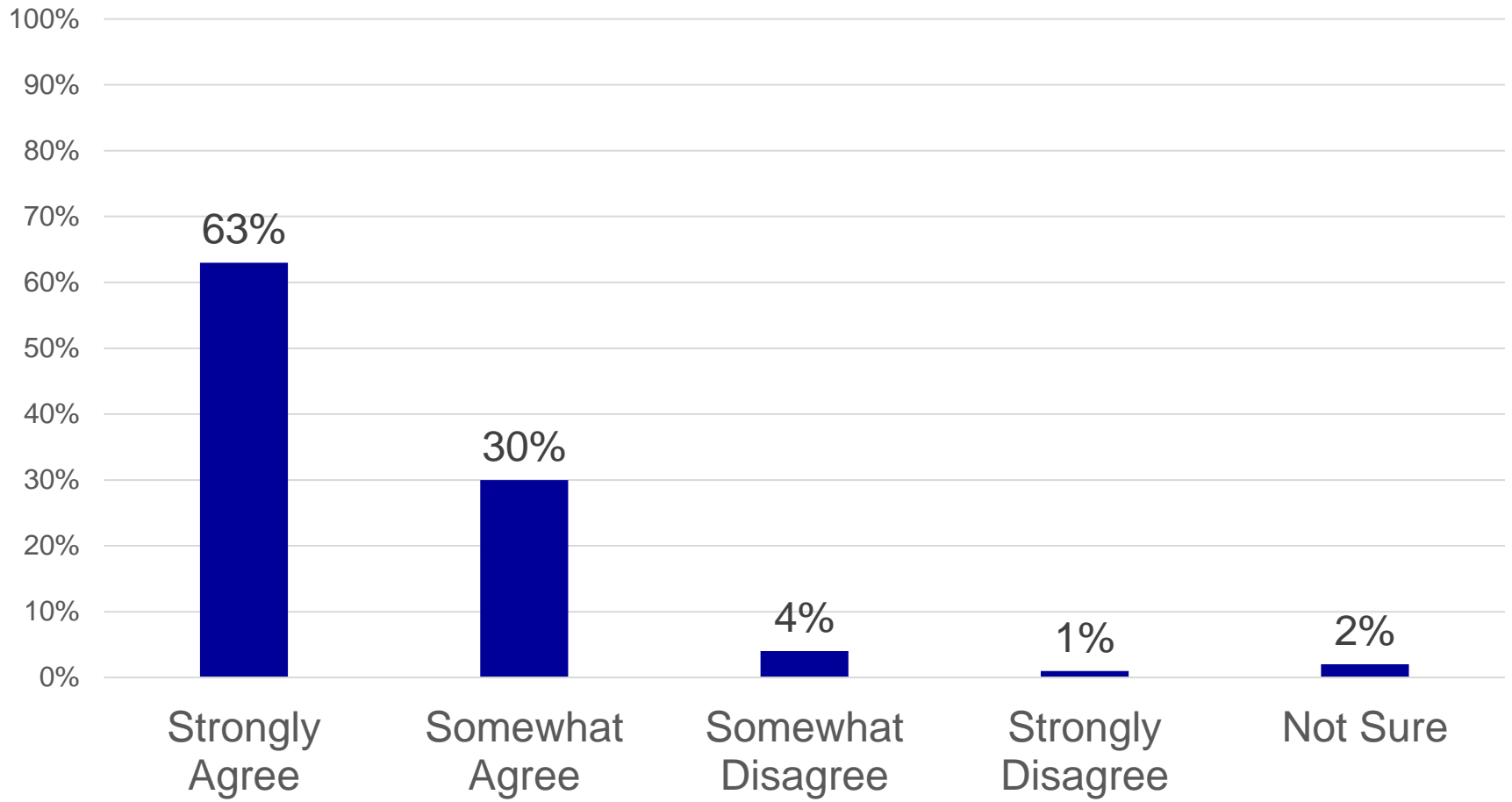
82% say that the truth of Scripture can mean different things to different people



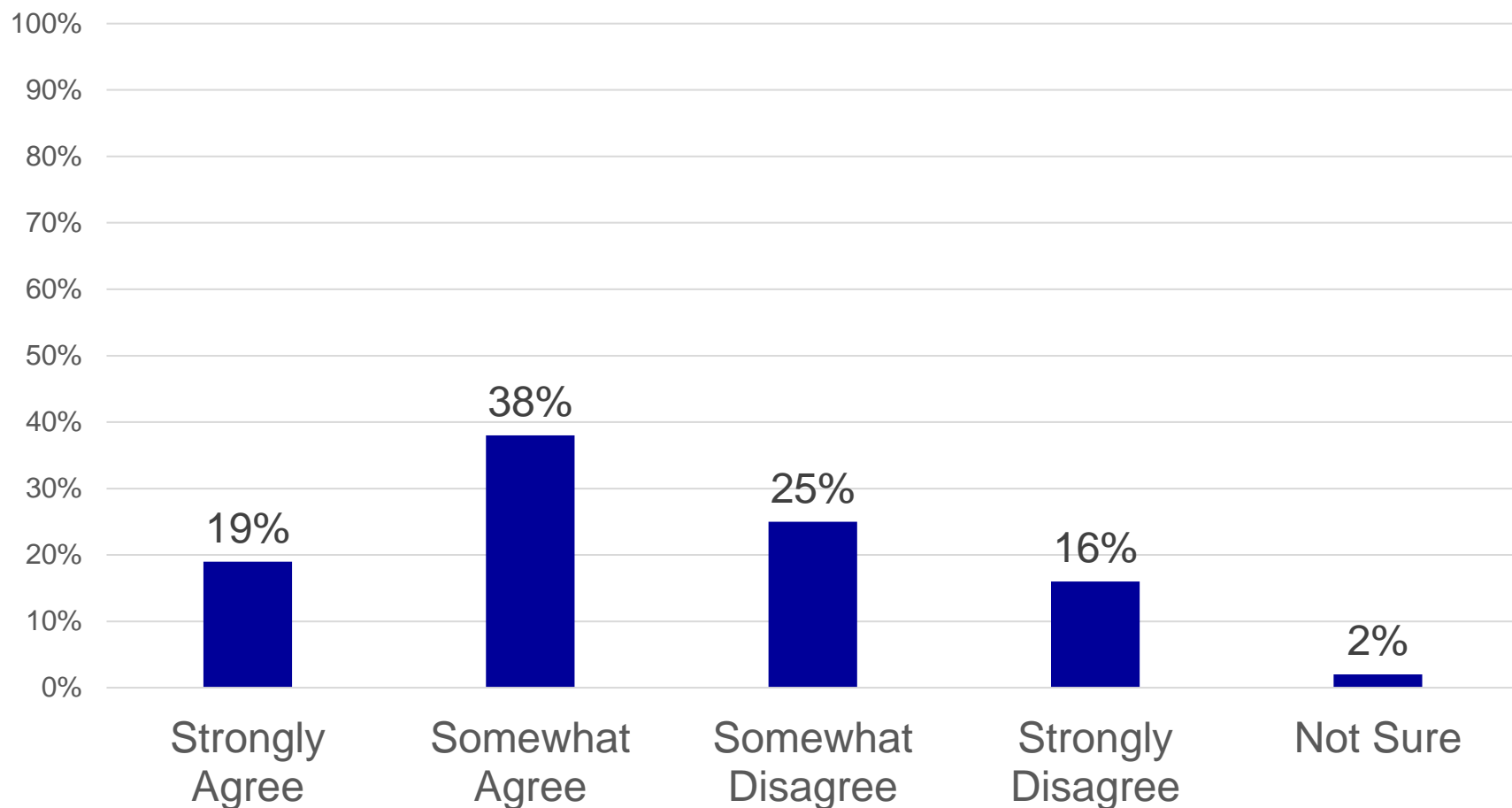
3 out of 10 accept some truths from the Bible, but others don't fit their beliefs



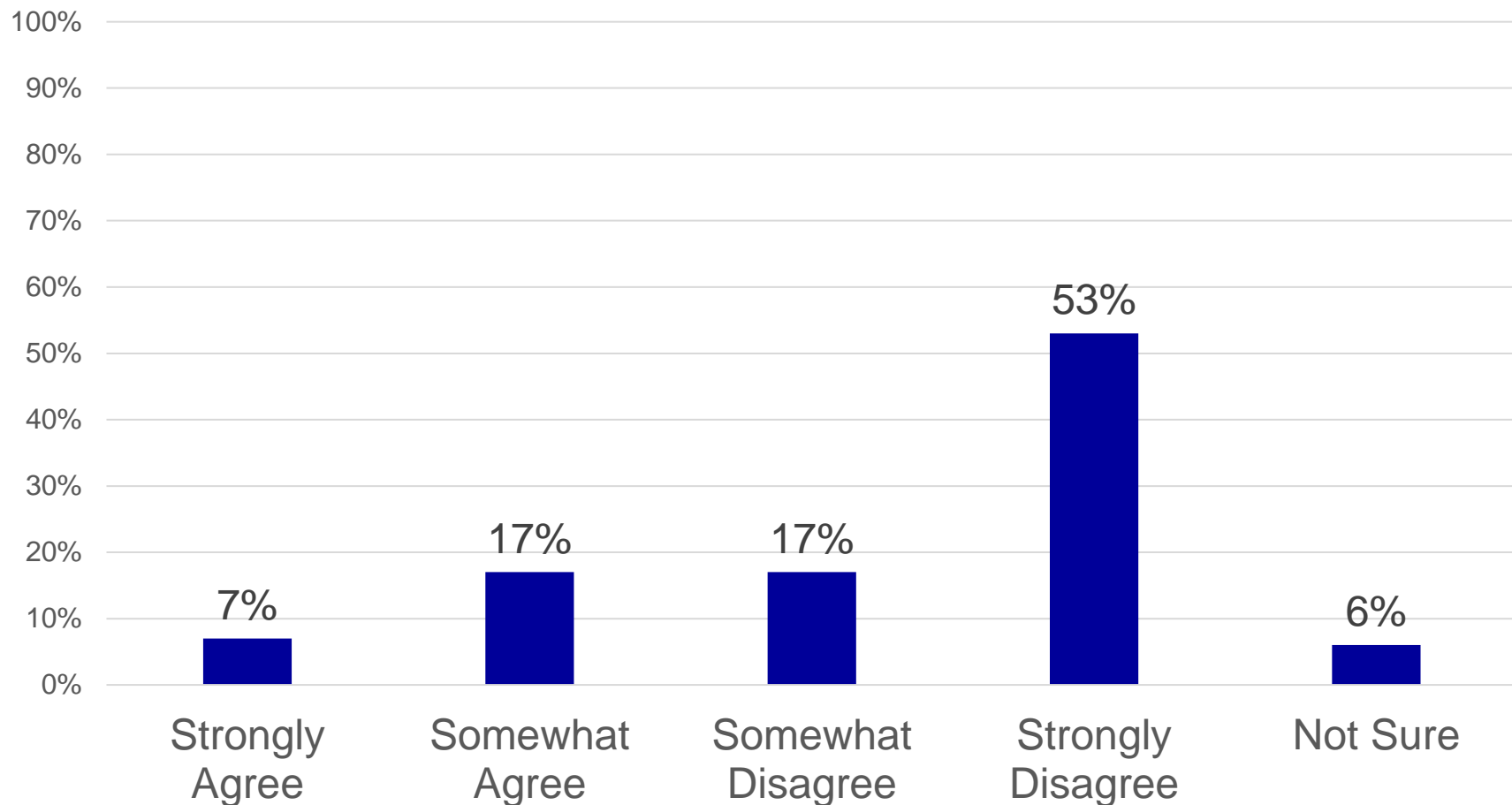
93% enjoy exploring a passage of Scripture to understand its meaning



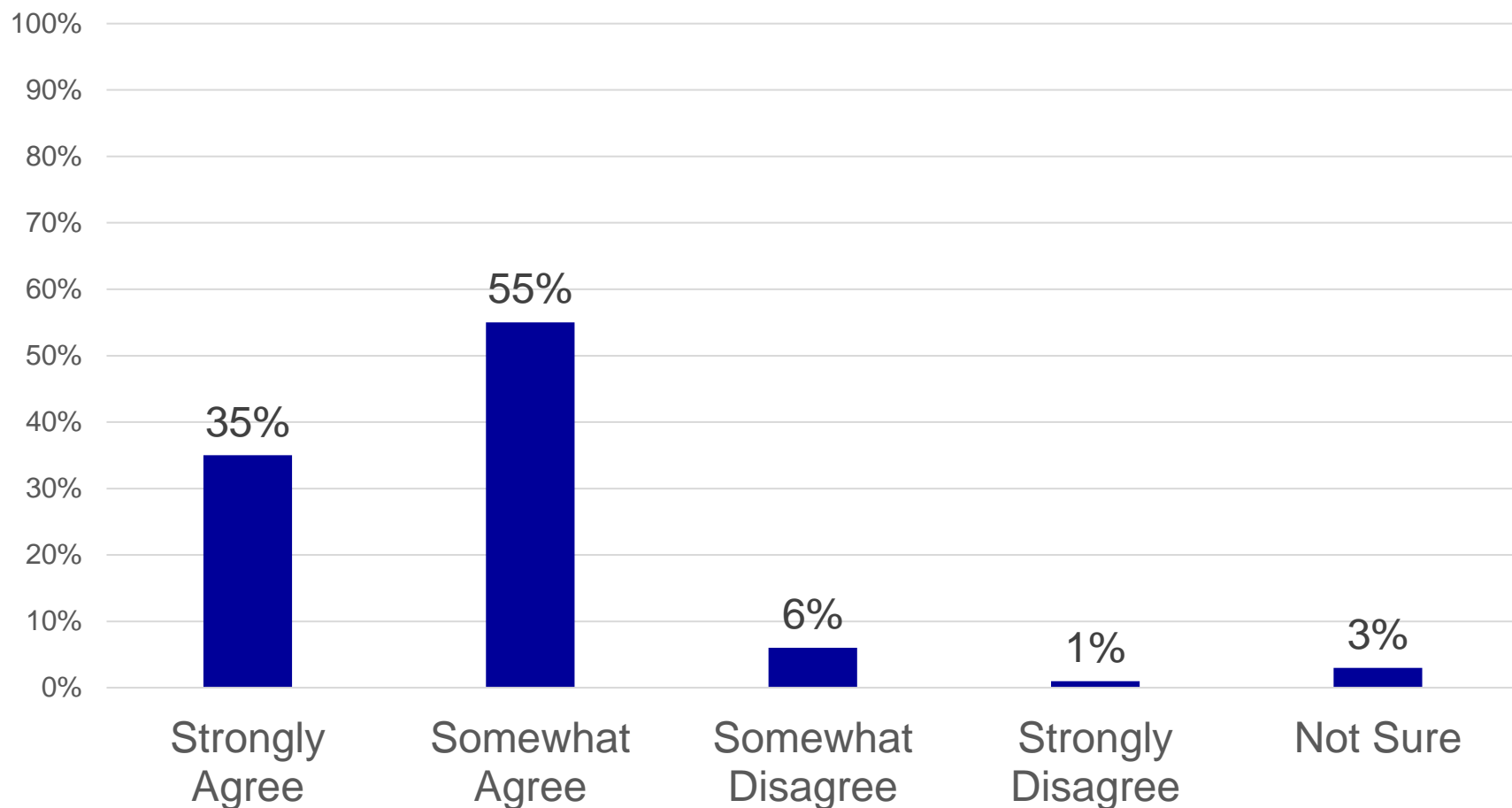
57% find it challenging to make sense of the Bible when they read it on their own



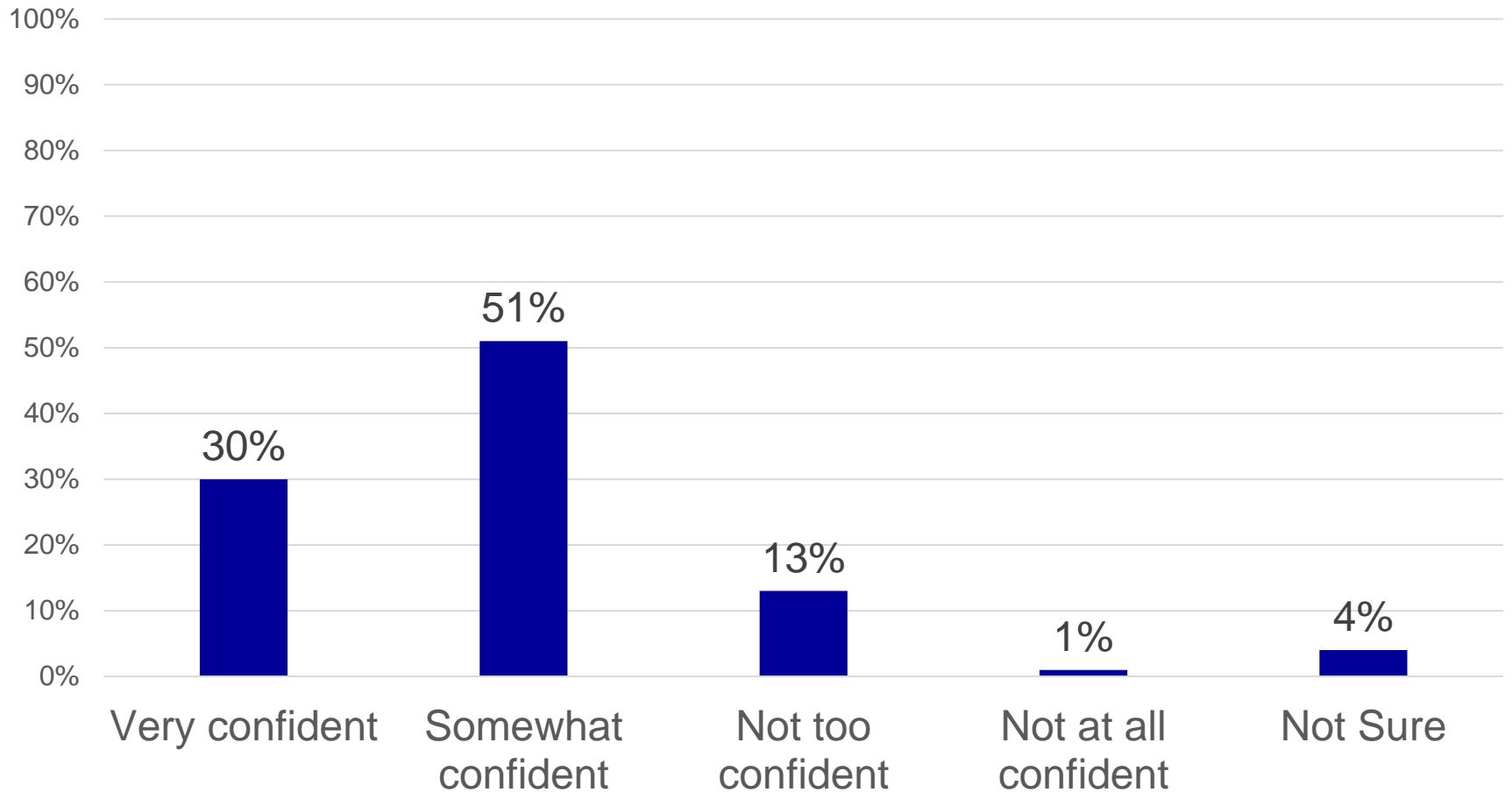
24% say that some biblical truths become obsolete as culture changes



9 out of 10 say they can usually understand how a passage of Scripture is relevant to them

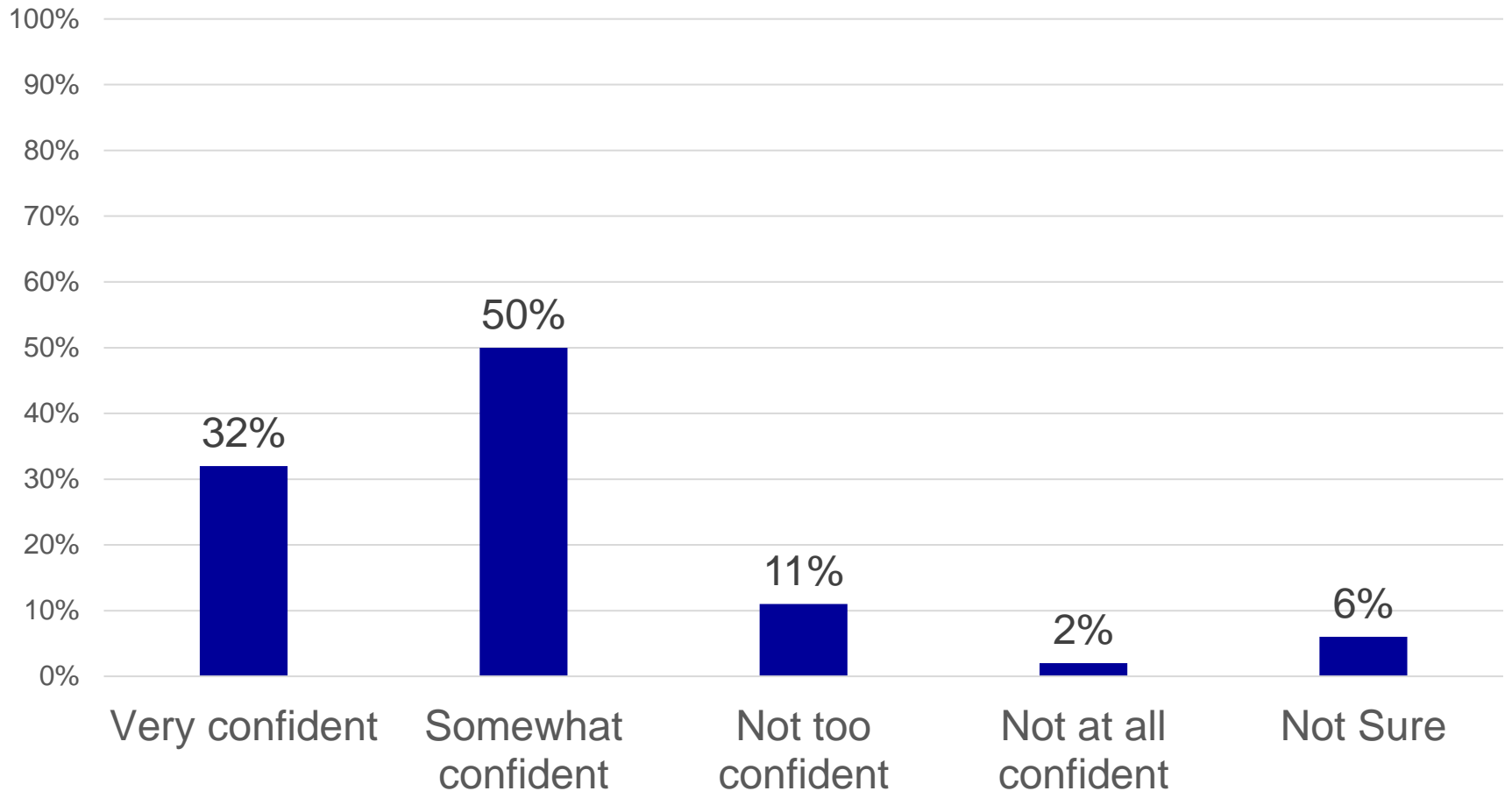


81% say they are confident they would be able to address someone's doubts about the truthfulness of Scripture



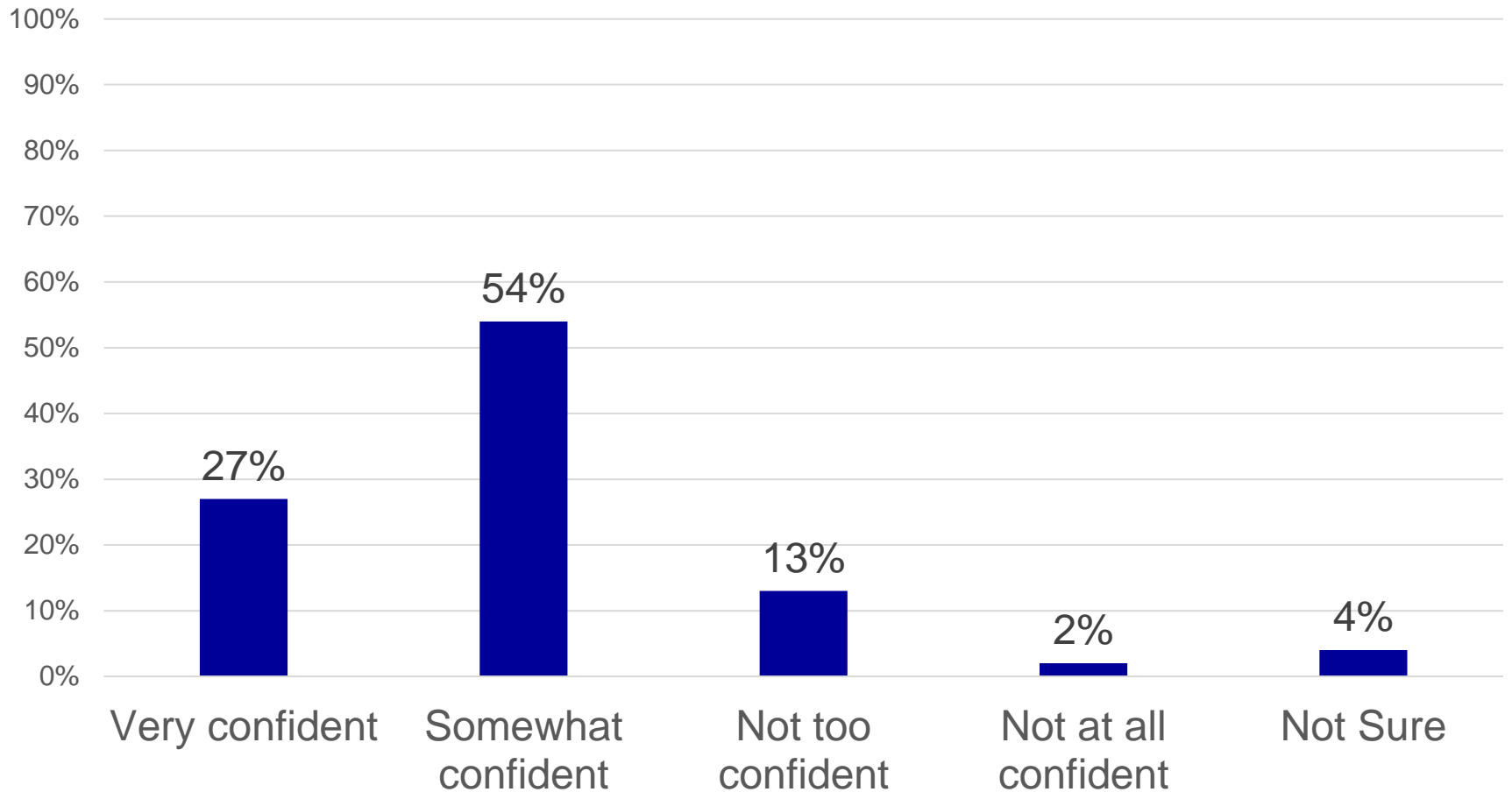
Q33: "If someone came to you expressing doubt about the truthfulness of Scripture, how confident are you that you would be able to directly address their doubts?"

82% say they are confident they could address someone's difficulty accepting morals taught in the Bible



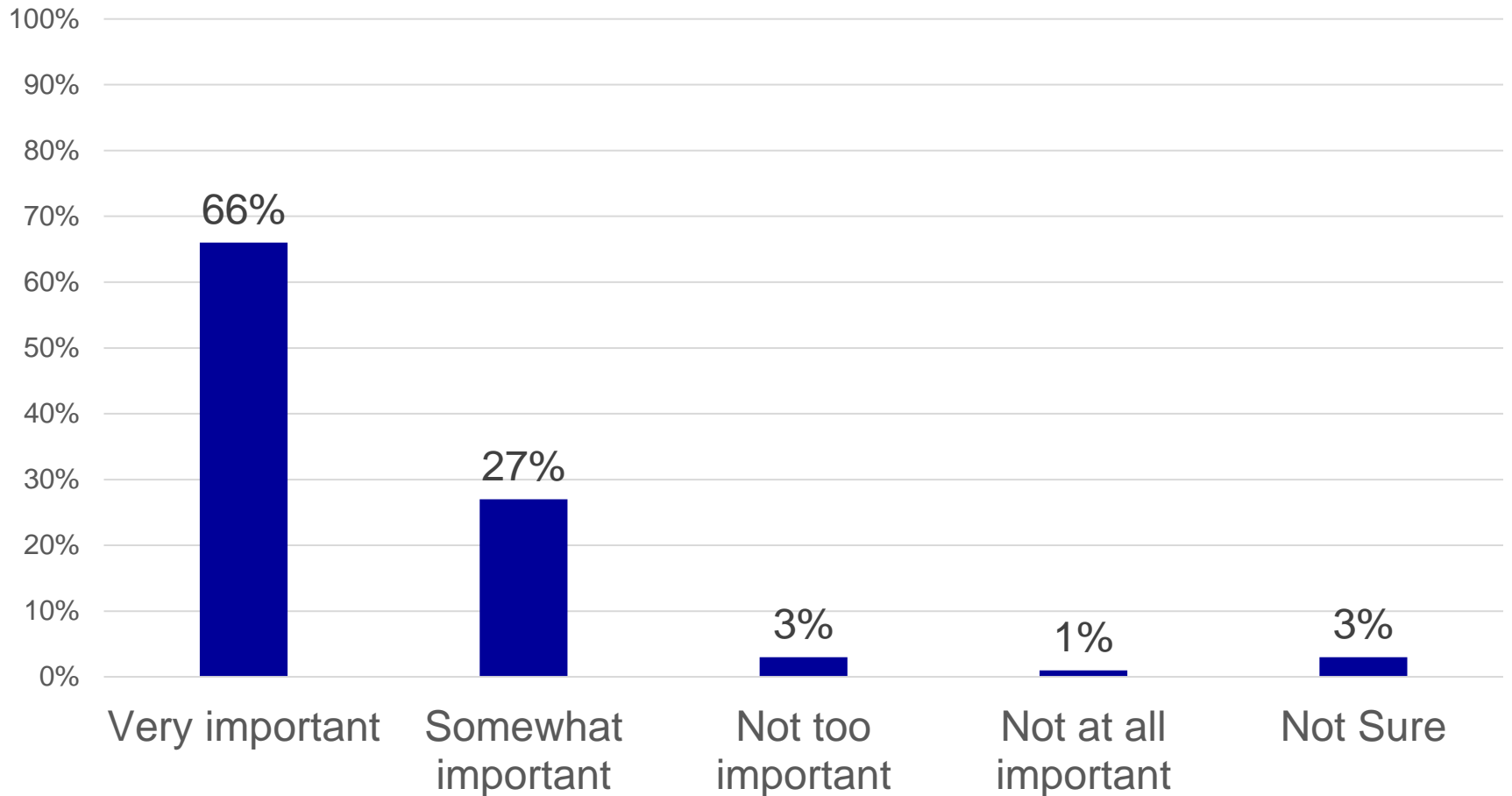
Q34: "If someone came to you expressing difficulty accepting morals taught in the Bible that don't fit their cultural values, how confident are you that you would be able to directly address their difficulties?"

81% are confident they would be able to address someone's confusion over a Bible passage

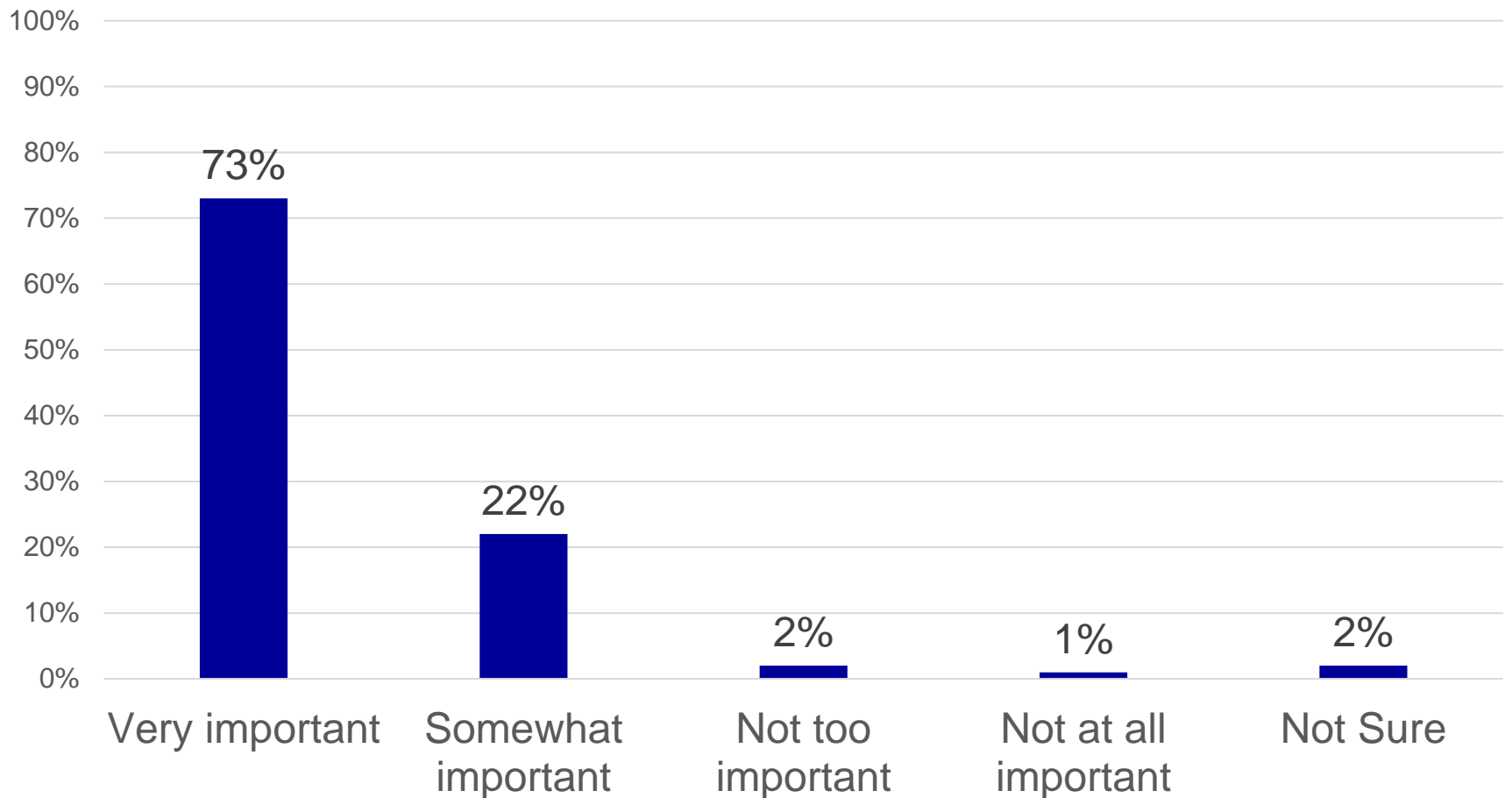


Q35: "If your neighbor came to you expressing confusion over a passage in the Bible, how confident are you that you would be able to directly address their confusion?"

93% say it is important to apply the meaning and principles of Scripture to today's context



96% say it is important to understand the context in which the Bible was written



Q37: "In reading and applying Scripture, how important is it to understand the context in which the Bible was written?"

Significant Differences

Gender

Age

Ethnicity

Region

Education Level

Denomination

Worship Service Attendance

Evangelical Beliefs

Church Size

Significant Statistical 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 | 18-34 | White | Northeast | High School graduate or less |
| Female | 35-49 | African American | Midwest | Some college |
| | 50-64 | Hispanic | South | Bachelor's Degree |
| | 65+ | Other Ethnicities | West | Graduate Degree |

Note: Region is defined by US Census locations

Significant Statistical Differences

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

| Denomination | Worship Service Attendance | Evangelical Beliefs | Church Size |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------|
| Baptist | 4 or more times a month | Yes | Less than 50 |
| Christian/Churches of Christ | Less than 4 times a month | No | 50 to 99 |
| Lutheran | | | 100 to 249 |
| Presbyterians | | | 250 to 499 |
| Non-denominational | | | 500 or more |

“The truth of God’s word can mean different things to different people.”

- African Americans (88%) are more likely to Agree than Whites (80%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are less likely to Agree than those who attend less than 4 times a month (79% v. 87%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are less likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (77% v. 87%)

“I accept some truths from the Bible, but others just don’t fit what I believe.”

- Those age 18-34 (38%) are more likely to Agree than those 50-64 (24%) and 65+ (25%)
- African Americans (36%) are more likely to Agree than Whites (28%)
- Those in the Northeast (41%) are more likely to Agree than those in the South (28%) and West (26%)
- Lutherans (37%) are more likely to Agree than Non-denominational (26%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are less likely to Agree those who attend less than 4 times a month (22% v. 42%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are less likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (17% v. 45%)
- Those who attend a church of Less than 50 people (33%), 50 to 99 (35%) and 100 to 249 (32%) are more likely to Agree than those who attend a church of 500 or more (18%)

“I enjoy exploring a passage of Scripture to understand what it means.”

- Females are more likely to Agree than males (95% v. 91%)
- Those in the South (95%) and West (95%) are more likely to Agree than those in the Northeast (89%) and Midwest (89%)
- Baptists (97%) and Non-denominational (95%) are more likely to Agree than Christian/Churches of Christ (83%) and Lutherans (76%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are more likely to Agree those who attend less than 4 times a month (95% v. 90%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (98% v. 87%)
- Those who attend a church of 500 or more people (97%) are more likely to Agree than those who attend a church of 50 to 99 people (90%)

“I find it challenging to make sense of the Bible when I read it on my own.”

- Those age 65+ are the most likely to Agree (71%)
- Those in the South (59%) are more likely to Agree than those in the Midwest (51%)
- Those who attend a church of 50 to 99 people (63%) are more likely to Agree than those who attend a church of 250 to 499 people (50%)

“As culture changes some biblical truths become obsolete.”

- Those age 18-34 are the most likely to Agree (36%)
- African Americans (31%) and Hispanics (30%) are more likely to Agree than Whites (20%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are less likely to Agree than those who attend less than 4 times a month (20% v. 31%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are less likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (14% v. 35%)
- Those who attend a church of 500 or more people are the least likely to Agree (13%)

“When I read a passage of the Bible on my own, I can usually understand how it is relevant to me.”

- Those age 18-34 (93%) and 35-49 (92%) are more likely to Agree than those 65+ (87%)
- Those in the Northeast are the least likely to Agree (83%)
- Baptists (93%) are more likely to Agree than Lutherans (85%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to Agree than those without evangelical beliefs (94% v. 87%)

“If someone came to you expressing doubt about the truthfulness of Scripture, how confident are you that you would be able to directly address their doubts?”

- Those age 65+ (19%) are more likely to select “Not too confident/Not at all confident” than those 35-49 (12%)
- Those in the Midwest (82%) and South (83%) are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those in the Northeast (73%)
- Baptists (87%) and Non-denominational (82%) are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than Lutherans (65%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those who attend less than 4 times a month (85% v. 74%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those without evangelical beliefs (89% v. 72%)
- Those who attend a church of 500 or more people (88%) are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those who attend a church of 50 to 99 people (79%)

“If someone came to you expressing difficulty accepting morals taught in the Bible that don't fit their cultural values, how confident are you that you would be able to directly address their difficulties?”

- Those in the Midwest (81%) and South (84%) are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those in the Northeast (72%)
- Those with a Graduate Degree (88%) are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those who are High School Graduates or less (79%)
- Baptists (86%) and Non-denominational (82%) are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than Lutherans (67%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those who attend less than 4 times a month (84% v. 77%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those without evangelical beliefs (88% v. 74%)
- Those who attend a church of 250 to 499 people (87%) are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those who attend a church of 50 to 99 people (78%)

“If your neighbor came to you expressing confusion over a passage in the Bible, how confident are you that you would be able to directly address their confusion?”

- Those age 65+ (20%) are more likely to select “Not too confident/Not at all confident” than those 18-34 (13%) and 35-49 (12%)
- Those in the South (83%) are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those in the Northeast (73%)
- Those with some college (84%) are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those who are High School Graduates or less (77%)
- Baptists (87%) and Non-denominational (80%) are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than Lutherans (69%) and Presbyterians (63%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those who attend less than 4 times a month (86% v. 73%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those without evangelical beliefs (88% v. 72%)
- Those who attend a church of 500 or more people (86%) are more likely to select “Very confident/Somewhat confident” than those who attend a church of 50 to 99 people (77%)

“In reading and applying Scripture, how important is it to apply the meaning and principles to today’s context?”

- Baptists (95%) are more likely to select “Very important/Somewhat important” than Lutherans (88%)

“In reading and applying Scripture, how important is it to understand the context in which the Bible was written?”

- Those age 35-49 (97%) are more likely to select “Very important/Somewhat important” than those 18-34 (93%)
- Those in the South (96%) and West (99%) are more likely to select “Very important/Somewhat important” than those in the Northeast (91%)
- Baptists (98%) are more likely to select “Very important/Somewhat important” than Christian/Churches of Christ (88%), Lutherans (93%), and Non-denominational (95%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Very important/Somewhat important” than those without evangelical beliefs (98% v. 93%)

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