

# Protestant Churchgoer Views On Deconstructing Faith

A SURVEY OF 1,002 AMERICAN PROTESTANT CHURCHGOERS

Lifeway **research**

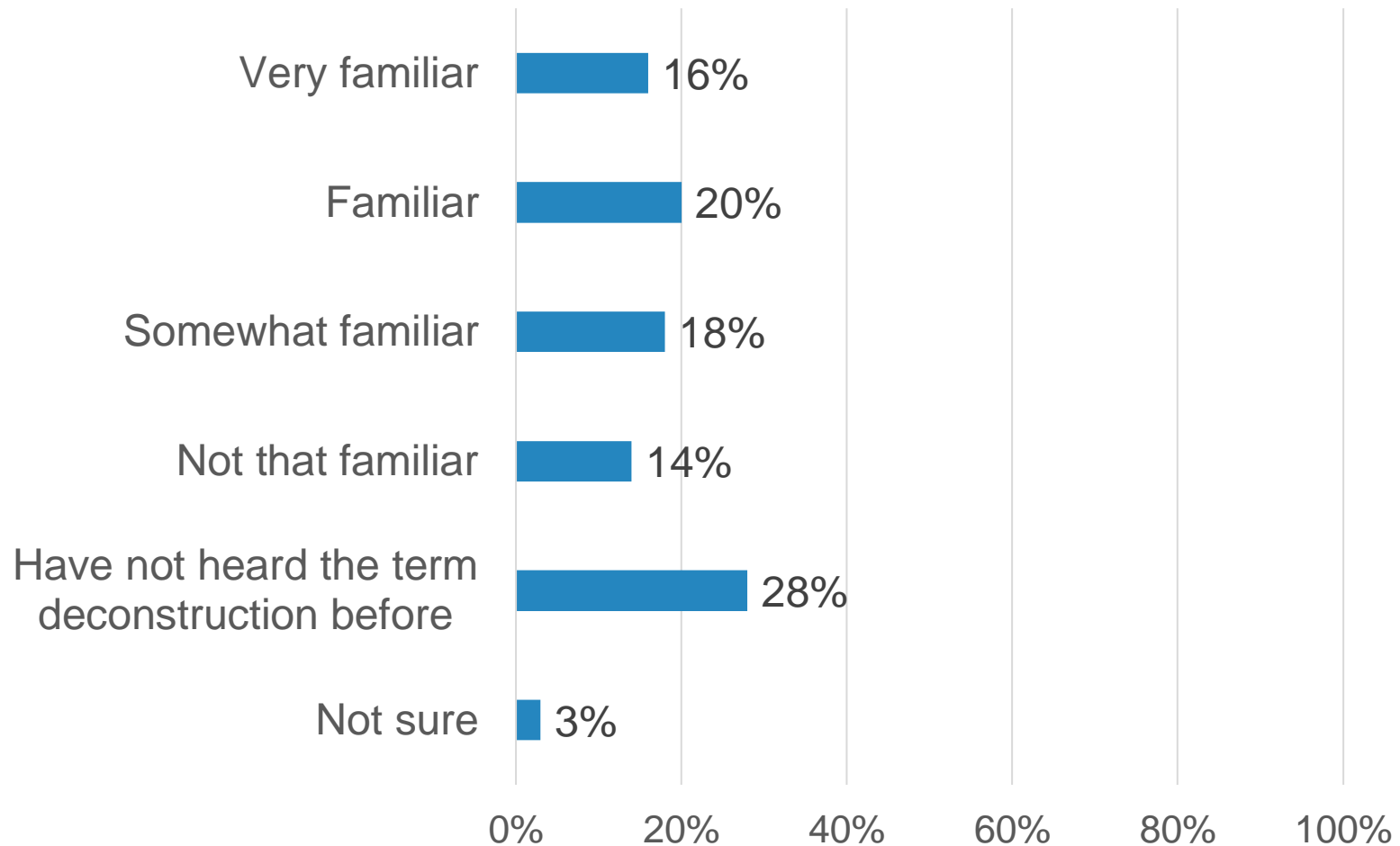
# Methodology

- The online survey of 1,002 American Protestant churchgoers was conducted September 19-29, 2022, 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, education, and religion 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  $\pm 3.3\%$  This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups

# 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

# 36% of churchgoers are familiar with the concept of deconstruction, but 28% have not heard of the term before

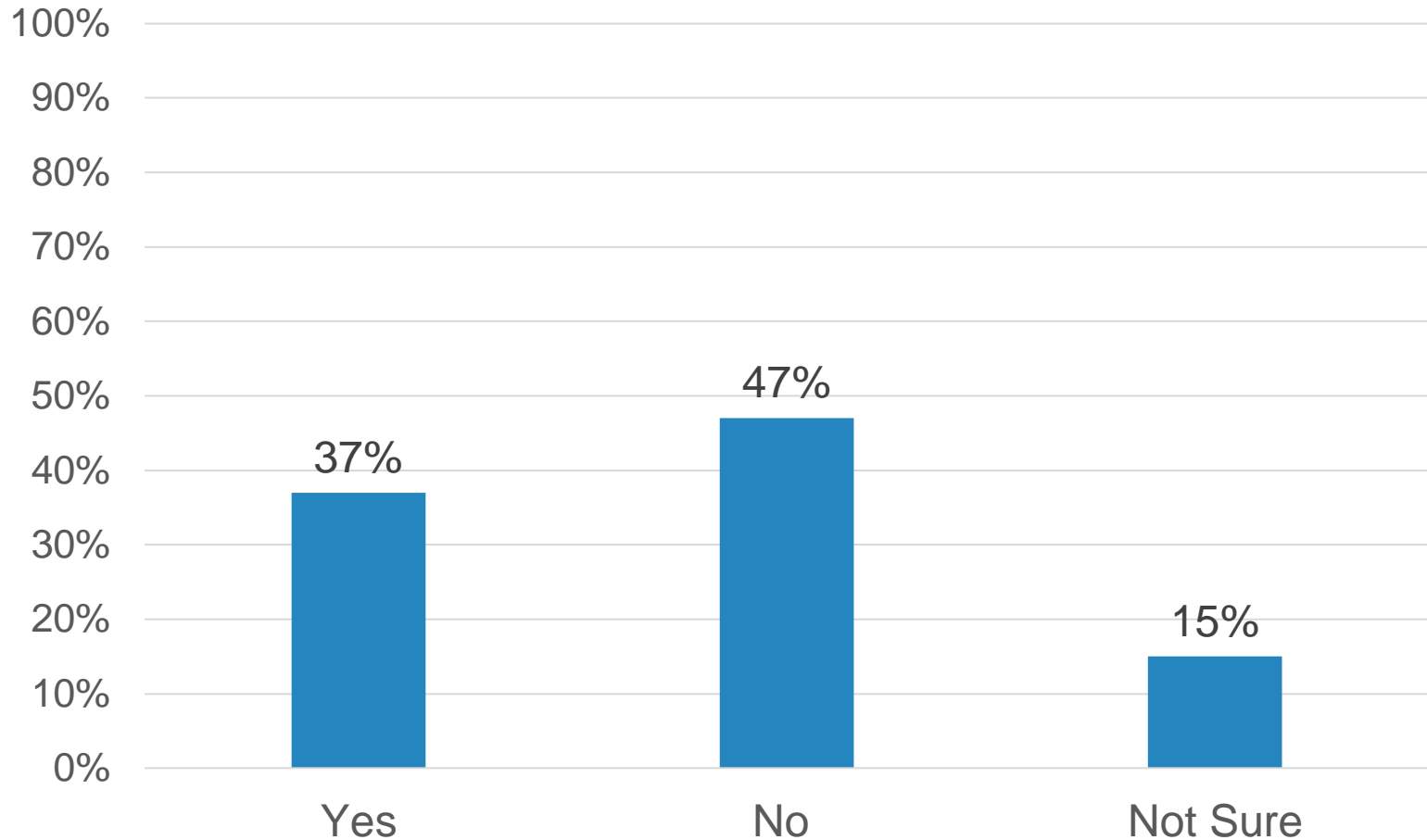


**Lifeway** research

Q: "How familiar are you with the concept of an individual deconstructing their faith in which they systematically dissect and often reject Christian beliefs they grew up with?" n=1,002

# 37% say they have seen attendees of their church who deconstructed their faith

Among those who have heard of the term deconstruction



Lifeway research

# Significant Differences

Gender

Age

Ethnicity

Region

Education Level

Denomination

Worship Service Attendance

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	18-34	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 the US Census locations

# Significant Statistical Differences

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

DENOMINATION	WORSHIP SERVICE ATTENDANCE	EVANGELICAL BELIEFS
Baptist	1 to 3 times a month	Yes
Methodist	4 or more times a month	No
Lutheran	Not sure	
Presbyterian/Reformed		
Christian/Church of Christ		
Non-denominational		



## **“How familiar are you with the concept of an individual deconstructing their faith in which they systematically dissect and often reject Christian beliefs they grew up with?”**

- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select “Have not heard the term deconstruction before” (51%) followed by 50-64 (31%), 35-49 (13%), and 18-34 (6%)
- Those age 18-34 (69%) and 35-49 (54%) are more likely to select “Very familiar/Familiar” with the concept than those age 50-64 (26%) and 65+ (12%)
- Whites (33%) and Other Ethnicities (38%) are more likely to select “Have not heard the term deconstruction before” than African Americans (16%) and Hispanics (20%)
- Those in the Midwest are the most likely to select “Not that familiar” (21%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree are the most likely to select “Have not heard the term deconstruction before” (44%)

## **“How familiar are you with the concept of an individual deconstructing their faith in which they systematically dissect and often reject Christian beliefs they grew up with?” *Continued***

- Lutherans (53%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (43%) are more likely to select “Have not heard the term deconstruction before” than Baptists (28%), Methodists (7%), Christian/Church of Christ (20%), and Non-denominational (29%)
- Methodists (81%) and Christian/Church of Christ (54%) are more likely to select “Very familiar/Familiar” with the concept than Baptists (33%), Lutherans (11%), Presbyterian/Reformed (19%), and Non-denominational (34%)
- Those who attend a worship service 4 or more times a month (31%) are more likely to select “Have not heard the term deconstruction before” than those who 1 to 3 times a month (24%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “Have not heard the term deconstruction before” than those without evangelical beliefs (32% v. 26%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are less likely to select “Very familiar/Familiar” with the concept than those without evangelical beliefs (33% v. 39%)

## **“In the last two years, have you seen attendees of your church who have methodically deconstructed their faith?”**

- Males are more likely to select “No” than females (52% v. 44%)
- Those age 65+ are the most likely to select “No” (64%)
- Those age 18-34 (48%) and 35-49 (49%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those age 50-64 (31%) and 65+ (15%)
- Those in the Northeast (52%) are more likely to select “Yes” than those in the Midwest (33%) and South (34%)
- Those with a Bachelor’s Degree (59%) are more likely to select “No” than with some college (42%)
- Baptists (56%), Lutheran (59%), Presbyterian/Reformed (59%), and Non-denominational (48%) are more likely to select “No” than Methodists (19%) and Christian/Church of Christ (29%)
- Methodists (78%) and Christian/Church of Christ (63%) are more likely to select “Yes” than Baptists (27%), Lutherans (22%), Presbyterian/Reformed (20%), and Non-denominational (34%)

## **“In the last two years, have you seen attendees of your church who have methodically deconstructed their faith?”** *Continued*

- Those with evangelical beliefs are more likely to select “No” than those without evangelical beliefs (54% v. 43%)
- Those with evangelical beliefs are less likely to select “Yes” than those without evangelical beliefs (28% v. 44%)

# Protestant Churchgoer Views On Deconstructing Faith

A SURVEY OF 1,002 AMERICAN PROTESTANT CHURCHGOERS

Lifeway **research**