

# PRESBYTERIAN PANEL REPORT

*Listening to Presbyterians*



## SPIRITUALITY THE FEBRUARY 1994 PRESBYTERIAN PANEL

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## THE PRESBYTERIAN PANEL: AN OVERVIEW

The Presbyterian Panel (1994-1996) consists of several thousand Presbyterians in the United States and Puerto Rico who agreed to respond to a quarterly mail survey beginning February 1994. The Panel contains independent, representative samples of four groups affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): members, elders, pastors, and clergy in specialized ministries. (The exact number of cases in each sample may be found at the beginning of the appendix.)

Participants in each of these samples were selected according to scientific sampling procedures, a detailed description of which can be found in Appendix B of the *Background Report for the 1994-1996 Panel* (Louisville: Research Services, Division of Congregational Ministries, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 1994). The member sample was drawn in two stages. First, 425 congregations were sampled, with the probability of selection proportional to membership size. Each of the 425 congregations was, in turn, requested to supply the names of eight members, based on applying a set of random numbers to its current list of active members. The elder sample was drawn from a denominationally-maintained list of all elders currently serving on sessions of Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) congregations. To ensure geographical representation, elders were sampled proportionately according to their overall distribution across the church's 16 synods. The pastor sample is a random sample of all ordained ministers of the Word and Sacrament who, at the time of sampling, occupied a staff position in a congregation or other parish. The specialized clergy sample is a random sample of all ordained ministers in the denomination who, at the time of sampling, worked outside a parish (e.g., chaplains, counselors, teachers, church officials). Retired clergy were excluded from the Panel. Pastors and specialized clergy were both slightly oversampled to permit individuals who had served in the 1991-1993 cycle of the Panel to be excluded from the new samples.

The Office of Research Services, lodged in the Congregational Ministries Division of the national offices of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), maintains the Panel as a service to the General Assembly, its agencies, councils, committees, and other entities. The primary purpose of the Panel is to aid these national bodies within the church by gathering information on Presbyterian opinions and behavior for use in planning and evaluation. Secondly, the Panel exists to provide the church as a whole and the larger society with information of general interest on Presbyterians.

All Panel data are publicly available, with the exception that no data will be released that might compromise the confidentiality of respondents. Requests for Panel data in computer-readable format for research purposes will be considered on an individual basis. Responsibility for the maintenance and disposition of Panel files ultimately rests with the Office of Research Services.

### SAMPLING ERROR

Time and costs preclude inclusive surveys of all but the smallest populations. With larger populations, representative samples are drawn and the responses of smaller subsets are used to extrapolate to the total population—much as medicine draws a sample of blood to profile the entire blood supply within the human body. The values obtained from a scientifically-selected sample will not necessarily be the same ones that would have been obtained if the entire population had been surveyed, but we can know, within a certain degree of probability, the range above and below the sample value within which the actual population value is likely to fall. By convention, surveys usually report 95% “confidence intervals,” that is, the range above and below a sample value that, in 19 out of 20 samples (in other words, 95% of the time), will contain the true population value. This range is also known as sampling error.

Sampling error is dependent largely on the number of cases in the sample and, with percentages, how large or how small the particular values are. In general, the larger the sample, the smaller the sampling error, and the closer a percentage is to 50% (as opposed to 0% or 100%), the larger the sampling error. Approximate sampling errors for Panel samples are:

REPORTED PERCENTAGE	MEMBERS	ELDERS	PASTORS	SP. CLERGY
	95% CONFIDENCE INTERVAL			
50%	±4%	±4%	±4%	±5%
30% or 70%	±4%	±4%	±4%	±5%
20% or 80%	±4%	±4%	±4%	±4%
10% or 90%	±3%	±3%	±3%	±3%
5% or 95%	±2%	±2%	±2%	±2%

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Ninety percent of Presbyterians pray at least several times a week and many pray more frequently. Among pastors, 77% reported that they pray several times a day, but only 42% of members pray that frequently. Among both members and elders, women pray more often than men. In every sample, panelists 50 years of age or older report that they pray more often than do younger panelists. (p. 1)
- Presbyterians pray in many different ways. Pastors and specialized clergy are more likely than members and elders to read from a book of prayers. Members and elders are more likely than members of the clergy to recite prayers from memory. All panelists are likely to talk with God in their own words when they pray. (p. 2)
- The percentage of Presbyterians who say they ask God for things they need when they pray is lower than the rate among Americans in general (28% vs. 42%). (p. 3)
- A plurality in every sample said they were satisfied with their prayer lives. Pastors are more likely than members and elders to be part of a prayer group and to report that they pray daily, but they are also more likely to say they are dissatisfied with their prayer lives. (p. 4)
- Satisfaction with one's prayer life is related to the frequency of prayer: those who pray least often are the most dissatisfied with their prayer lives. (p. 4)
- Among members, 17% said they read the Bible in private daily or almost daily and another 10% read it several times a week. Twelve percent of members never read the Bible. (p. 5)
- About half of members and elders, but over 70% of pastors and specialized clergy, say grace before meals daily or almost daily. Members with children living at home are not much more likely to say grace before meals than are those who do not live with children. (p. 6)
- Only 22% of members and 15% of elders have never attended church school and 42% of members say they attend church school weekly. (p. 7)
- Nine in ten panelists say that attending Sunday morning worship services makes them feel good and challenges them to lead a more faithful life. (p. 7)
- A little over a quarter of members and elders, 9% of pastors, and 14% of specialized clergy regularly read their horoscopes or astrological forecasts in newspapers or magazines. Few take them seriously though. (p. 8)
- Majorities in all samples say they do not believe in reincarnation, but almost a third of members and elders are not sure if they do or not. (p. 8)
- Three activities stand out as being important for spiritual growth among panelists who reported they had grown spiritually in the past year—sharing in the Lord's Supper, reading the Bible, and private devotions. (p. 8)
- About a third of members and elders and eight in ten pastors and specialized clergy say they have had a religious experience—"a particularly powerful insight or awakening that changed the direction of your life." (p. 10)
- Fully 88% of members and 92% of elders said that in the last year their pastors preached on spiritual growth. (p. 11)
- The largest percentages of members and elders said that, in case of spiritual crisis, they would turn to their pastors for support. In contrast, of the eight options presented, the largest percentages of pastors and specialized clergy said they would turn to their spouses in such situations. (p. 12)
- Eleven percent of members, 16% of elders, 39% of pastors, and 32% of specialized clergy said they were presently involved "to a large extent" in a religious search. (p. 13)

## INTRODUCTION

The subject of the February 1994 Presbyterian Panel questionnaire was spirituality. This questionnaire was developed for the Christian Faith and Life area of the Congregational Ministries Division of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) with their assistance. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather information that would provide a partial description of the religious activities that Presbyterians participated in during the previous year and an understanding of the concerns Presbyterians have about their spiritual growth.

Questionnaires were mailed in February 1994 and a postcard reminder was mailed to non-respondents two weeks later. Response rates by sample are: members, 76%; elders, 79%; pastors, 85%; and specialized clergy, 88%. The appendix reports, by sample, the percentage distribution of responses to each question.

The responses to many of the questions indicate that there are differences between men and women in the nature and frequency of their religious activities. Whenever the differences are statistically significant and appear meaningful to the author, they are reported and discussed here. In general, gender differences are the greatest for members and smallest for pastors. In fact, for most questions, the responses of men and women pastors did not differ. Elders and specialized clergy fell in between, with the elders' responses being closer to those of members. The responses of specialized clergy are more similar to those of pastors.

## PRAYER

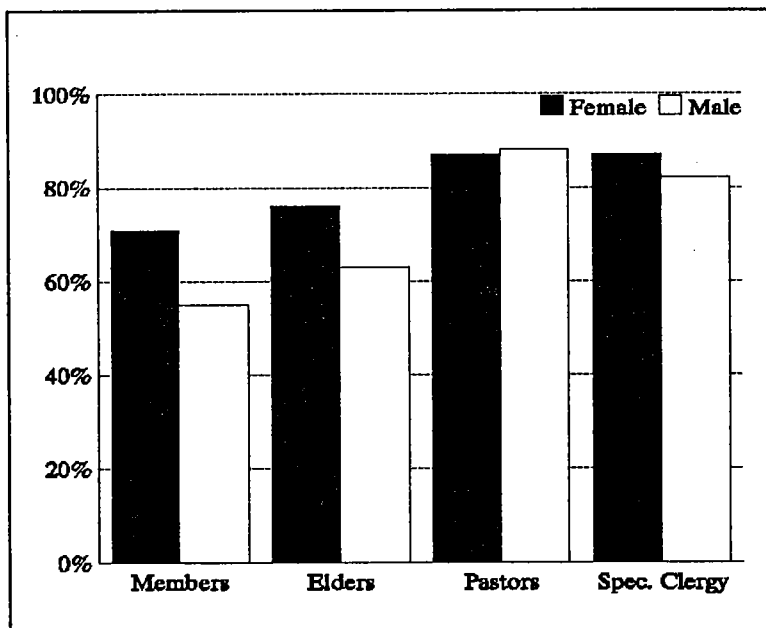
### Frequency of Prayer

Ninety percent of Presbyterians pray at least several times a week and many pray more frequently (Q-1). It is no surprise that of the four Panel samples, pastors pray most frequently and members pray least frequently. Among pastors, 77% reported that they pray several times a day—only 42% of members pray that frequently.

It is interesting that among both member and elders, women pray more often than men. For pastors and specialized clergy, however, there is no statistically significant difference in the frequency of prayer between men and women. These differences can be seen in Figure 1 which shows the percentage of men and women in each sample who reported that they pray either "once a day" or "several times a day."

Figure 1

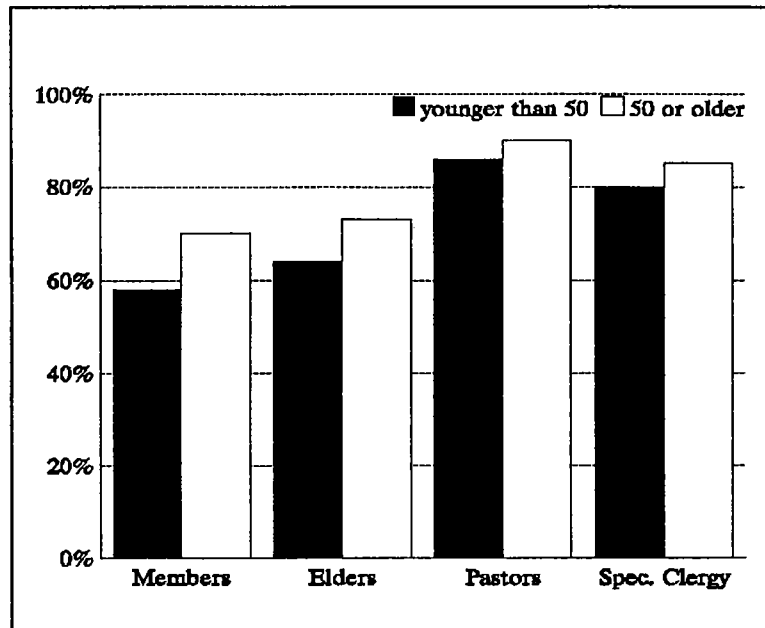
PANELISTS WHO PRAY AT LEAST ONCE A DAY,  
BY SAMPLE AND SEX



Age is also related to how often Presbyterians pray (see Figure 2). In every sample, panelists 50 years of age or older report that they pray more often than do panelists who are less than 50 years old. While this finding is interesting, we do not know if the difference is due to a difference between the generations in their attitudes toward and practice of prayer or if it is an aging effect. Evidence from other studies indicates that such changes are usually age-related. Thus, we might conclude that younger persons have always prayed less often than older ones.

Figure 2

PANELISTS WHO PRAY AT LEAST ONCE A DAY, BY SAMPLE AND AGE



### How Do Presbyterians Pray?

Presbyterians pray in many different ways (Q-2). More pastors and specialized clergy are likely to read from a book of prayers when they pray (35% and 29%, respectively, said they were likely to do so), than are members and elders (12% and 14%, respectively). On the other hand, members and elders are more likely than pastors and specialized clergy to recite prayers from memory (40% of members and elders compared to 30% of pastors and 29% of specialized clergy). Almost all panelists, regardless of whether they are ordained or not, talk with God in their own words during prayer (96% or more in each sample).

While praying, pastors and specialized clergy are more likely to try to listen to God speak to them (91% and 88%, respectively, say they do so), than are members or elders (65% and 74%, respectively) (Q-2k). Eighty percent of pastors also say they spend prayer time quietly thinking about God (Q-2h). Approximately 70% of pastors also spend time just “feeling” the presence of God (Q-2i) and worshipping and adoring God (Q-2j). The percentage of members who spend prayer time in these ways is about 20 percentage points lower (61% of members say they quietly think about God, and about 53% spend time “feeling” the presence of God when they pray or spend time worshipping and adoring God).

Participation in prayer groups is not very common in any sample: only 13% of members said they were part of a prayer group, compared to 32% of pastors (Q-4). When we asked this same question of panelists in 1991, similar percentages reported being involved in prayer groups.<sup>1</sup>

We asked panelists, “As a regular part of Sunday morning worship services, do the worship leaders of the church you attend ask those in attendance for their prayer concerns?” (Q-6). Large majorities in every sample (ranging from 68% of members to 77% of elders) said that those in attendance were asked for prayer concerns on Sunday morning. It is not surprising that panelists from large congregations were less likely to say their worship leaders asked for prayer concerns—logistical problems make doing so difficult in large congregations. Fully 90% of elders who belong to congregations with less than 200 members (compared to 46% of elders who are members of congregations with 1,000 or more members) said worship leaders regularly ask for prayer concerns.

### **For What Do Presbyterians Pray?**

In all samples, 96% or more said they thank God for blessings when they pray (Q2-g). Almost as many (94% or more in every sample) said that they ask God for guidance in making decisions (Q-2f). About 90% say they ask God to forgive their sins (Q2-e).

Members and elders are not as likely as pastors or specialized clergy to ask God for material things when they pray (Q-2c), although the percentages who say they do are not large in any sample. Twenty-eight percent of the members and elders, but 39% of pastors and 35% of specialized clergy, ask God for material things they need. This difference could be related to the finding that many of the members’ prayers may be at mealtimes—probably prayers of thanksgiving—whereas pastors and specialized clergy pray under a wider variety of circumstances.

Among Presbyterians, the percentage who ask God for material things when they pray is somewhat lower than among Americans in general. In a Gallup Poll of 1,000 persons selected to represent the nation, results revealed that 42% of adults in the American public say they ask for material things when they pray.<sup>2</sup>

### **Experiences During Prayer**

The most striking finding concerning panelists’ experiences during prayer (Q-3) is the consistent, large differences between the experiences of members and pastors. It is common to find a difference between the responses of these groups, but for experiences during prayer, these differences are very large.

Of the options presented, panelists’ most common experience during prayer in the previous year was “. . . a deep sense of peace and well-being” (Q-3a). This is also the experience that was most uniformly experienced across the four Panel samples: 21% of members, 24% of elders, 32% of specialized clergy, and 36% of pastors have “regularly” had this experience during prayer in the last year. In addition, about 50% of every sample reported they at least “occasionally” experienced such a feeling. Only 9% of members, 5% of elders, 2% of specialized clergy, and 1% of pastors who pray “never” experienced this sense of peace (see Table 1).

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<sup>1</sup> February 1991 Panel Report. Copies are available for \$3.00 each from the Research Services Office in Louisville.

<sup>2</sup> Poloma, M.M. and Gallup, Jr., G. H. *Varieties of Prayer: A Survey Report*. Philadelphia: Trinity Press (1991).

Table 1

Experiences During Prayer: Percentages Reporting They "Never" Had Such Experiences (Q-3)				
	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
deep sense of peace and well-being	9%	5%	1%	2%
strong presence of God	18%	11%	3%	5%
definite answer to a prayer	19%	15%	7%	12%
deeper insight into spiritual truth	29%	21%	2%	3%
inspired by God to act	30%	21%	6%	10%

This compares to members' *least common* experience during prayer—"felt divinely inspired or led by God to perform some specific action" (Q-3e). One-third of members (30%) said they had "never" experienced such inspiration. In addition, 29% of members said they had never received what they "believed to be a deeper insight into a spiritual or biblical truth" (Q-3d).

Pastors are about three times more likely to have had these experiences and, thus, less likely to say they "never" had these experiences. Only 2% of pastors said they had never received what they believed to be "a deeper insight into a spiritual or biblical truth" and just 6% said they had never "felt divinely inspired . . . to perform some specific action."

Twenty-one percent of pastors, compared to 8% of members, said they "regularly" "felt divinely inspired or led by God to perform some specific action" (Q-3e). Thirty-seven percent of pastors, compared to 10% of members, said they "regularly" received what they believed to be "a deeper insight into a spiritual or biblical truth" (Q-3d).

### Satisfaction with Prayer Life

Of the four samples, pastors are most likely to be part of a prayer group (Q-4) and to report that they pray daily (Q-1), but they are also somewhat more likely to say they are *dissatisfied* with their prayer lives (Q-5). Two in ten pastors said they are "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied" with their prayer lives. As Table 2 shows, a plurality in every sample said they were either "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their prayer lives and about a third in each sample said they were "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied." This pattern of results is also similar to that of responses to the same question asked of panelists in 1991.

Table 2

Satisfaction With Prayer Life (Q-5)				
	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
very satisfied or satisfied	48%	50%	45%	49%
neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	39%	34%	34%	36%
dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	13%	16%	22%	14%

Satisfaction with one's prayer life is related to the frequency of prayer: in every sample, those who pray least often are the most dissatisfied with their prayer lives (see Table 3). Among pastors and specialized clergy, one-third of those who pray less than once a week said they were either "dissatisfied" or "very dissatisfied" with their prayer lives.

Table 3

<i>Dissatisfaction with Prayer Life (Q-5) by Frequency of Prayer (Q-1)</i>				
	PERCENTAGE SAYING THEY ARE "DISSATISFIED" OR "VERY DISSATISFIED"			
	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
Frequency of Prayer				
several times a week	11%	11%	19%	11%
once a week	10%	17%	22%	11%
less than once a week	18%	21%	38%	33%

### OTHER RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

#### Bible Reading and Bible Study Groups

The first two questions concerning participation in religious activities (Q-7) dealt with Bible reading. The responses of pastors were what one would expect. They are more likely than any other group to report that they read the Bible "daily/almost daily" or "several times a week," with 42% saying they read the Bible privately every day or almost every day (Q-7a).

Members are least likely to report frequent Bible reading. Even among members, however, 17% said they read the Bible in private "daily/almost daily" and another 10% read it "several times a week." While 12% of members said that they "never" read the Bible privately, no pastors made this response.

Few panelists in any sample reported frequent *family* Bible reading (Q-7b). Of the four samples, pastors were most likely to say they "read the Bible with family or friends" either "daily/almost daily" or "several times a week" (21% of pastors, but only 7% of members, chose one of these responses regarding family Bible reading).

When asked if they attend Bible study groups, 49% of members said they have "never" attended one (Q-7c). One-third of elders reported that they have "never" attended a Bible study group. At the other extreme, 22% of members and 31% of elders attend Bible study more than once a month, as do 65% of pastors.

Women are more likely than men to read the Bible in private and to attend Bible study groups. Additionally, larger percentages of women are frequent Bible readers. The greatest differences between the sexes is for members and elders. Table 4 shows these differences for private Bible reading. Four in ten female members read the Bible at least weekly, but only three in ten male members do so.

Table 4

<i>Frequency of Private Bible Reading (Q-7a): Male and Female Members and Elders</i>				
	MEMBERS		ELDERS	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
daily/almost daily	19%	14%	23%	17%
weekly/several times a week	21%	16%	31%	26%
monthly/several times a month	18%	16%	22%	21%
yearly/several times a year	31%	40%	20%	31%
never	11%	14%	4%	5%



## Prayer Meetings

It is evident from panelists' responses that prayer meetings are not a common occurrence among Presbyterians (Q-7d). Majorities of members (69%) and elders (55%) reported that they have never attended one. Likewise, almost a third of pastors (27%) and four in ten specialized clergy (40%) have never attended a prayer meeting. But some panelists do attend prayer meetings, including 17% of members, 30% of elders, 58% of pastors, and 36% of specialized clergy who said they attend them more than once a year. Few attend frequently: 26% of pastors, 13% of specialized clergy, 10% of elders, and 6% of members attend a prayer meeting at least once a week.

## Grace Before Meals

This author always thought that saying grace before meals was the *minimum* that one would expect from a Christian. (Though there is no theological justification for this assumption.) Thus, it was surprising (and somewhat disappointing) to find that only 45% of members and 50% of elders say grace before meals "daily/almost daily" (Q-7f). Pastors and specialized clergy were somewhat more likely to say grace daily (79% and 71%, respectively do), but even among these groups it is not a universal habit.

What was even more disturbing was the finding that members with children living at home are not much more likely to say grace before meals than those who do not live with children (see Table 5). This suggests that saying grace may become even less common in the future. Children learn from their parents and seeing their parents pray at mealtime provides one way for children to see that prayer is important in their parents' lives. That only half of members "model" this behavior for their children daily is discouraging.

Table 5

Grace Before Meals (Q-7f): Frequency of Practice in Households With and Without Children				
	MEMBERS		ELDERS	
	With Children	Without Children	With Children	Without Children
Grace Before Meals				
daily	50%	42%	50%	49%
less than daily	44%	53%	44%	47%
never	5%	6%	5%	4%

In contrast, pastors typically say grace whether or not children are present. Around 80% of pastors say grace every day whether they do or do not have children. Seventy-five percent of specialized clergy with children, compared to 64% of those without children at home, say grace "daily/almost daily."

Almost 50% of members and elders, 60% of pastors, and 58% of specialized clergy seek God's will through prayer "daily/almost daily" (Q-7g). Another 16% of members and over 22% of elders and clergy seek God's will through prayer several times a week.

If saying grace before meals is considered the *minimum* in a person's prayer life, it might be reasonable to expect that those who seek God's will through prayer also say grace before meals. That is true for about 60% of members and elders. That is, about 60% of members and elders who say grace "daily/almost daily" also seek God's will through prayer "daily/almost daily." The opposite is also true—about 60% of those who seek God's will through prayer "daily/almost daily" also say grace "daily/almost daily."

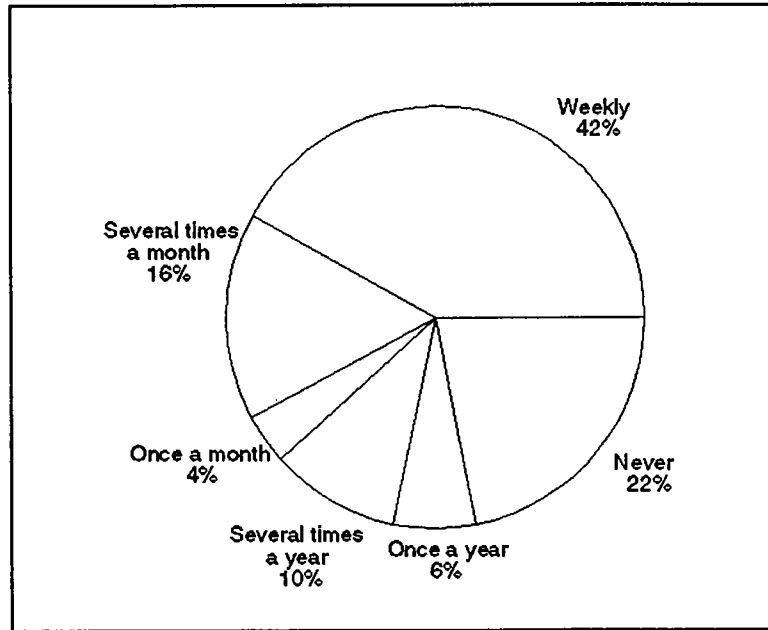
It is interesting that 29% of those members and elders who *never* say grace nonetheless seek God's will through prayer "daily/almost daily." The reverse is not as common. Only 12% of those who *never* seek God's will through prayer say grace "daily/almost daily." This points to the need to be cautious in assuming that individuals who participate in one type of prayer activity also participate in other types.

## Church School

Only 22% of members and 15% of elders have *never* attended church school (Q-8). Perhaps more surprising is the finding that 42% of member panelists say they attend church school weekly (see Figure 3). Extrapolating these figures to the entire population of Presbyterians means that every Sunday over one million adult Presbyterians are in church school.<sup>3</sup> It is possible that this question was misread by panelists. Some may have stopped reading after the word “church” and assumed we were asking how often they attend worship services, rather than church school.

Figure 3

### FREQUENCY OF CHURCH SCHOOL ATTENDANCE AMONG PRESBYTERIAN MEMBERS



However, that theory, if correct, does not explain everything. When we compared responses regarding church school attendance to panelists' responses to a previous question regarding attendance at Sunday worship services,<sup>4</sup> we found that 12% of the elders and members who said on this survey that they attend church school *weekly* also said on a previous survey that they *never* attend Sunday worship.

## Sunday Morning Worship

In Q-13, we asked panelists whether they had had certain experiences in the past year as a result of attending Sunday morning worship. A majority of panelists in all four samples said Sunday morning worship services made them feel good (Q-13d): 83% of specialized clergy and over 90% of panelists in the other samples had this experience. Many panelists also said that worship services challenged them “to lead a more faithful life” (Q-13-b: 89% of members and over 90% of elders, pastors, and specialized clergy experienced this challenge).

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<sup>3</sup> Compare this figure to data from the 1993 Session Annual Statistics Reports: a total of 1,116,922 individuals of all ages were enrolled in church school classes throughout the denomination in 1993, and on an average Sunday, 1,225,668 attended worship.

<sup>4</sup> From the 1994-97 Presbyterian Panel Background questionnaire, mailed in the Fall of 1993. Copies of this Report are available for \$5.00 from the Research Services Office.

A significant minority of members (23%) said worship services did *not* make them “feel a part of the body of Christ” (Q-13c) or “lead them to want to learn more about God” (Q-13f). In addition, 19% of members said worship services did *not* “lead them to want to serve God by serving others” (Q13-e). Elders were more likely to experience these outcomes, and no more than 6% of pastors said they had *not* had these experiences.

### Horoscopes

A little over a quarter of members and elders, 9% of pastors, and 14% of specialized clergy regularly read their horoscopes or astrological forecasts in newspapers or magazines (Q-10). Few take them seriously though. When panelists who read their horoscopes were asked why they do so (Q-11), about 95% of members, elders, and specialized clergy, and 98% of pastors said they do it “only for entertainment” (Q-11). Less than 1% of pastors and specialized clergy and about 1% of members and elders believe their horoscopes or use their astrological forecasts to plan their activities.

### Reincarnation

Majorities in all samples say they do not believe in reincarnation (Q-12), but almost a third of members and elders are not sure if they do or do not. Men are more likely than women to say they do not believe in reincarnation and women are more likely to say they’re “not sure” (see Table 6).

Table 6

Belief in Reincarnation: Men vs. Women								
	Members		Elders		Pastors		Specialized Clergy	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Do You Believe in Reincarnation? (Q-12)								
no	51%	61%	56%	64%	81%	89%	80%	84%
yes	12%	14%	14%	13%	6%	3%	5%	5%
not sure	37%	24%	31%	23%	13%	8%	16%	11%

### GROWING IN SPIRITUALITY

Over 90% of the pastors and specialized clergy said “yes” when asked if they had grown spiritually in the last year (Q-14). Likewise, over 80% of elders and almost three-quarters of members said they had grown spiritually.

In a follow-up question, panelists who reported they had grown spiritually were asked if any of seven factors had helped them in their spiritual growth (Q-15). Three activities stand out as being important for large majorities of panelists in all samples—sharing in the Lord’s Supper, reading the Bible, and private devotions (see Table 7). Only about a third in each sample said that “a personal tragedy” helped them grow spiritually, and a third of members and elders, but half of pastors and specialized clergy, found help in their spiritual growth by reading secular material.

Table 7

Factors Important in Helping Panelists Grow Spiritually (Q-15)				
	PERCENT SAYING "YES"			
	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
sharing in the Lord's Supper	74%	86%	84%	78%
reading the Bible	71%	77%	94%	87%
private devotions	70%	72%	84%	84%
example set by a friend	59%	57%	69%	64%
church school	46%	54%	58%	41%
a personal tragedy	36%	31%	34%	37%
reading secular materials	34%	35%	52%	56%

Note: Only panelists who reported they had grown spiritually in the last year were asked to answer this question.

Among members, reading the Bible, private devotions, an example set by a friend, personal tragedy, and reading secular materials were more likely to be mentioned by women than by men as being important in helping them grow spiritually (see Table 8). There were no significant differences among men and women specialized clergy. There were few significant difference between male and female elders, but these mirrored the differences for members. A unique pattern of differences was found among pastors. Male pastors were *more likely* than female pastors to say that reading the Bible, church school, and private devotions were important in their spiritual growth. Like members, however, female pastors were more likely than male pastors to say personal tragedy was important in helping them grow spiritually.

Table 8

Factors Important in Helping Panelists Grow Spiritually: Differences Between Men and Women								
	Members		Elders		Pastors		Specialized Clergy	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
sharing in the Lord's Supper	75%	71%	84%	87%	84%	85%	75%	79%
reading the Bible	74%	67%*	78%	76%	88%	95%*	86%	87%
private devotions	76%	60%*	75%	68%*	76%	85%*	86%	83%
example set by a friend	65%	48%*	58%	56%	70%	69%	68%	63%
church school	48%	44%	53%	56%	46%	59%*	45%	39%
a personal tragedy	44%	24%*	36%	27%*	48%	32%*	38%	36%
reading secular materials	38%	27%*	38%	34%	53%	52%	52%	57%

\* Indicates there is a significant difference ( $p < .05$ ) between the responses of men and women in this sample for this question.

Note: Only panelists who reported they had grown spiritually in the last year were asked to answer this question.

### NOURISHING RELATIONSHIPS WITH GOD

The previous question about factors that support spiritual growth was asked only of those panelists who said they had grown spiritually in the last year. A subsequent question asked *all* panelists to rate how helpful six factors had been in nourishing their relationships with God (Q-16).

The Bible (Q-16a) was seen as "very helpful" in nourishing relationships with God by the largest percentage of pastors (78%) and specialized clergy (66%). Majorities of pastors and specialized clergy also rated music (Q-16b) and prayer (Q-16-d) as "very helpful." Among members and elders, the largest percentages found

prayer to be “very helpful” (49% of members and 54% of elders chose this option for prayer—Q-16d). No other option was described as “very helpful” by a majority of members or elders.

The smallest percentages of panelists described devotional magazines as helpful in nourishing relationships with God (Q-16e). In fact, approximately 40% of panelists in every sample said devotional magazines were “not helpful.” For no other item did more than 10% of any sample choose “not helpful.”

There are significant differences between men and women in what they find to be “very helpful” in nourishing their relationships with God (see Table 9). Female members and elders were more likely than male members and elders to describe several items as “very helpful,” whereas male pastors were more likely than female pastors to describe the Bible as “very helpful.”

Table 9

Factors Described as “Very Helpful” in Nourishing Relationships With God (Q-16)								
	Members		Elders		Pastors		Specialized Clergy	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
the Bible	40%	36%	49%	49%	63%	81%*	61%	68%
music	41%	27%*	44%	33%*	58%	52%	55%	50%
prayer	55%	39%*	61%	47%*	60%	63%	64%	54%
devotional magazine	16%	8%*	19%	8%*	4%	8%	8%	8%
the Lord’s Supper	33%	30%	47%	38%*	49%	48%	45%	44%

\* Indicates there is a significant difference ( $p < .05$ ) between the responses of men and women in this sample for this question.

## FAITH EXPERIENCES

### Religious and Conversion Experiences

Panelists were asked if they had ever had a religious experience, defined as “a particularly powerful insight or awakening that changed the direction of your life” (Q-17). About a third of members and elders (31% and 40%, respectively), 80% of pastors, and 79% of specialized clergy said they *had* had such a religious experience. The vast majority of those who had such experiences, over 80%, said this experience involved Jesus Christ (Q-18b). Just over half of members (53%) and elders (55%), and somewhat less than half of pastors (43%) and specialized clergy (40%) said their religious experience was “a conversion experience—an identifiable turning point that included asking Jesus Christ to be your personal savior” (Q-18c). Over 90% of those who had had religious experiences said these experiences are still important in their lives today (Q-18a).

### Other Experiences

Only about 2% of panelists said they regularly “felt as though you were really in touch with someone who had died” (Q19-d), had “seen events that happened at a great distance as they were happening” (Q-19c), or had experienced *déjà-vu* (“thought you were somewhere you had been before, but knew it was impossible” Q-19a). Only 4% of elders, pastors, and specialized clergy, and 7% of members, said they have regularly felt in touch with someone who was very far away (Q-19b).

The vast majority of panelists (84% or more in every sample) have *never* seen events happening a great distance away as they were happening. Around two-thirds of panelists (ranging from 61% of members to 66% of pastors) have never felt in touch with someone who has died.

A majority of panelists have either “once or twice” or “occasionally” felt as though they were in touch with someone who was far away (from 55% of elders to 60% of specialized clergy) and thought they were somewhere they had been before, but knew it was impossible (from 55% of elders to 62% of pastors).

## SPIRITUAL CONNECTIONS

### Relationships with God and with the Local Church

In evaluating their relationships with God and with their local churches (Q-20), around three-quarters of the panelists said they were basically content with their relationships with God. The same percentage of members and pastors said they were content with their relationships with their local churches. A greater percentage of elders are content with the local church (80%) than are content with God (74%). The opposite trend was found for specialized pastors—a greater percentage of specialized clergy are content with God (76%) than are content with the local church (60%).

Large majorities of panelists (89% of members, 94% of elders, 97% of pastors, and 96% of specialized clergy) say their relationships with God have been “positive and uplifting” (Q-20e). A smaller percentage, but still a sizeable majority, say the same thing about their relationships with their local churches.

These positive findings are tempered somewhat by the fact that about one-third of the panelists in every sample believe that “something is missing in my relationship with God” (Q-20b). With the exception of elders, a somewhat larger percentage of panelists believe “something is missing in my relationship with the local church.”

In addition, at least 50% of every sample said, about their relationships both with God and with their local churches, that they are “looking for a relationship that makes sense.” One possible interpretation of the fact that a number of panelists are content with their relationships with God and with their local churches, but are also looking for relationships that make sense is that they are looking for *even more meaningful* relationships with God and with their local congregations.

### Activities Surrounding Spiritual Growth/Growing in Faith

Fully 88% of members and 92% of elders said that in the last year their pastors preached on spiritual growth/growing in faith (Q-21a). In addition, 55% of members and 59% of elders said their congregations had classes or discussions on that topic in the last year (Q-21b).

While almost half of the pastors (48%) went on spiritual retreats last year, only 13% of members and 23% of elders did so (Q-21c). Much higher percentages of panelists (59% of members, 63% of elders, 87% of pastors, and 82% of specialized clergy) said they had worked on spiritual growth/growing in faith *privately* (Q-21d).

Women who are members, elders, or specialized clergy were much more likely than men in those three categories to have worked privately on spiritual growth in the past year (see Table 10). Additionally, women who are members or specialized clergy were more likely than men to have gone on a retreat on spiritual growth/growing in faith and to have discussed this subject with family or close friends.

Table 10

Spiritual Growth Activities: Differences Between Men and Women								
	Members		Elders		Pastors		Specialized Clergy	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
went on a retreat	14%	9%*	78%	76%	52%	48%	48%	34%*
worked on spiritual growth privately	64%	52%*	70%	56%*	86%	88%	92%	79%*
discussed with family	51%	41%*	59%	54%	86%	80%	86%	73%*

\* Indicates there is a significant difference ( $p < .05$ ) between the responses of men and women in this sample for this question.

### Serious Discussion About Living Out Your Faith

Over nine in ten pastors (96%) and specialized clergy (92%) said that in the last year they had had one or more serious discussions about what they or others could do to live out their faith in this world (Q-22). This is in contrast to 50% of members and 64% of elders who said they had had such conversations.

Fifty-four percent of the female members compared to 45% of the males said they had had discussions about living out their faith in the world. Female elders (70%) are also more likely than male elders (59%) to have had conversations about living out their faith.

### To Whom Do Presbyterians Turn for Spiritual Support?

The largest percentages of members (85%) and elders (82%) said that, in case of spiritual crisis, they would turn to their pastors for support (Q-23). In contrast, of the eight options presented, the largest percentages of pastors (89%) and specialized clergy (85%) said they would turn to their spouses for support. (See Table 11.)

Table 11

Sources of Support Panelists Would Turn to During a Spiritual Crisis (Q-23)				
	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
your pastor	85%	88%	67%	71%
spouse	81%	81%	89%	85%
neighbor/friend	79%	82%	79%	80%
other family member	76%	75%	59%	55%
professional counselor	40%	36%	69%	68%
neighboring Presbyterian pastor	26%	31%	77%	67%
non-Presbyterian pastor	26%	34%	62%	55%
executive presbyter	12%	14%	46%	37%

There are interesting differences between the responses of men and women to this question, especially among members and elders (see Table 12). In all samples, men are more likely to turn to their wives for support during a spiritual crisis than women are to turn to their husbands. In contrast, women are more likely than men to turn to a neighbor or friend for support. Among members, men are more likely than women to turn to a neighboring Presbyterian pastor, and among elders, men are more likely than women to turn to a non-Presbyterian pastor. Finally, among members, elders, and pastors, women are more likely than men to turn to a professional counselor.

Table 12

Sources of Support Panelists Would Turn to During a Spiritual Crisis: Differences Between Men and Women								
	Members		Elders		Pastors		Specialized Clergy	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
your pastor	85%	85%	87%	88%	52%	69%	52%	69%*
neighboring Presbyterian pastor	24%	30%*	32%	30%	78%	77%	70%	66%
non-Presbyterian pastor	25%	29%	30%	37%*	65%	62%	55%	55%
neighbor/friend	84%	70%*	88%	76%*	85%	78%*	90%	77%*
spouse	74%	91%*	72%	89%*	71%	92%*	76%	87%*
other family member	78%	71%*	79%	71%*	57%	59%	58%	53%
professional counselor	44%	32%*	41%	30%*	78%	67%*	72%	67%

\* Indicates there is a significant difference ( $p < .05$ ) between the responses of men and women in this sample for this question.

About 12% of members, 11% of specialized clergy, and 8% of pastors, but only 4% of elders, said there was no one in their congregations with whom they felt "safe to talk honestly about yourself, your thoughts and feelings about God and your life struggles" (Q-24). Interestingly, a smaller percentage in every sample said there was no one *outside their congregations* (Q-25) with whom they could have such conversations.

One can look at these results in two ways. It is disappointing that all panelists did not report at least five persons *within their congregations* with whom they felt safe to talk about spiritual matters. (One-third of members and specialized clergy and four out of five elders and pastors reported five or more such personal confidants). At the same time, majorities in every sample (ranging from 53% of members to 74% of specialized clergy) reported three or more persons *outside their congregations* with whom they felt they could share their honest feelings about spiritual concerns. (Whether these individuals are family members, neighbors, co-workers, or others, however, is not known.) The fact that panelists feel safe to talk about spiritual issues with that many persons outside their congregations may bode well for evangelism programs.

### Religious Search

The last question asked panelists the extent to which they are "presently involved in a religious search" (Q-26). Pastors and specialized clergy were much more likely to say they are involved in a religious search than were members and elders. Eleven percent of members, 16% of elders, 39% of pastors, and 32% of specialized clergy said they were involved "to a large extent."

Almost 40% of the members and 27% of elders, but only 13% of pastors and 16% of specialized clergy, said they were either "not at all" or only "to a slight extent" involved in a religious search.

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**FEBRUARY 1994 PRESBYTERIAN PANEL — SPIRITUALITY**

**APPENDIX**

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Elders</b>	<b>Pastors</b>	<b>Specialized Clergy</b>
Questionnaires sent: . . . . .	1518	1371	1261	685
Questionnaires returned: . . . . .	1161	1086	1071	600
Percent returned: . . . . .	76%	79%	85%	88%

Q-1. How often do you pray? (Circle the number next to the choice that best describes your prayer life.)

	<b>Members</b>	<b>Elders</b>	<b>Pastors</b>	<b>Specialized Clergy</b>
several times a day . . . . .	42%	49%	77%	69%
once a day . . . . .	24%	21%	11%	14%
several times a week . . . . .	23%	25%	12%	14%
once a week . . . . .	5%	4%	*	1%
less than once a week . . . . .	6%	1%	*	2%
never . . . . .	1%	*	*	*

Q-2. When you pray are you likely to . . . (For each question, circle the number in the appropriate column.) [Note: Those who answered "never" to Q-1 did not answer this question.]

	<b>Members</b> (n=1,125)	<b>Elders</b> (n=1,060)	<b>Pastors</b> (n=1,049)	<b>Specialized Clergy</b> (n=585)
a. read from a book of prayers?	+	+		
no . . . . .	88%	86%	65%	71%
yes . . . . .	12%	14%	35%	29%
b. recite prayers you have memorized?	+	+		
no . . . . .	60%	60%	70%	71%
yes . . . . .	40%	40%	30%	29%
c. ask God for material things you need?	+	+		
no . . . . .	72%	72%	61%	65%
yes . . . . .	28%	28%	39%	35%
d. talk with God in your own words?				
no . . . . .	4%	3%	2%	3%
yes . . . . .	96%	97%	98%	97%
e. ask God to forgive your sins?				
no . . . . .	10%	8%	8%	11%
yes . . . . .	90%	92%	92%	89%
f. ask God to provide guidance in making decisions?				
no . . . . .	6%	4%	2%	5%
yes . . . . .	94%	96%	98%	95%
g. thank God for his blessings?				
no . . . . .	4%	2%	2%	3%
yes . . . . .	96%	98%	98%	97%
h. spend time quietly thinking about God?	+	+		
no . . . . .	39%	32%	20%	25%
yes . . . . .	61%	68%	80%	75%
i. spend time just "feeling" the presence of God?	+	+		
no . . . . .	47%	39%	32%	33%
yes . . . . .	53%	61%	68%	67%

\* = less than 0.5%

- = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more for this sample on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents

Q-2. When you pray are you likely to . . . (For each question, circle the number in the appropriate column.)  
 [cont.] [Note: Those who answered "never" to Q-1 did not answer this question.]

	Members (n=1,125)	Elders (n=1,060)	Pastors (n=1,049)	Specialized Clergy (n=585)
j. spend time worshipping and adoring God?				
no . . . . .	46%	36%	28%	30%
yes . . . . .	54%	64%	72%	70%
k. try to listen to God speak to you?				
no . . . . .	35%	26%	9%	12%
yes . . . . .	65%	74%	91%	88%

Q-3. This question asks about some experiences that you might have had during prayer. How often in the last year have you experienced the following? [Note: Those who answered "never" to Q-1 did not answer this question.]

	Members (n=1,125)	Elders (n=1,060)	Pastors (n=1,049)	Specialized Clergy (n=585)
a. experienced a deep sense of peace and well being				
never . . . . .	9%	5%	1%	2%
once or twice . . . . .	19%	16%	9%	11%
occasionally . . . . .	51%	55%	54%	55%
regularly . . . . .	21%	24%	36%	32%
b. felt the strong presence of God				
never . . . . .	18%	11%	3%	5%
once or twice . . . . .	25%	24%	15%	20%
occasionally . . . . .	41%	43%	49%	44%
regularly . . . . .	16%	22%	33%	31%
c. received what you regarded as a definite answer to a specific prayer				
never . . . . .	19%	15%	7%	12%
once or twice . . . . .	30%	29%	23%	27%
occasionally . . . . .	38%	41%	51%	45%
regularly . . . . .	13%	15%	19%	16%
d. received what you believed to be a deeper insight into a spiritual or biblical truth				
never . . . . .	29%	21%	2%	3%
once or twice . . . . .	28%	27%	10%	15%
occasionally . . . . .	32%	40%	51%	51%
regularly . . . . .	10%	12%	37%	30%
e. felt divinely inspired or led by God to perform some specific action				
never . . . . .	30%	21%	6%	10%
once or twice . . . . .	31%	32%	26%	31%
occasionally . . . . .	31%	35%	47%	42%
regularly . . . . .	8%	11%	21%	16%

Q-4. Are you part of a prayer group, that is, a group of people who get together regularly to pray? [Note: Those who answered "never" to Q-1 did not answer this question.]

	Members (n=1,125)	Elders (n=1,060)	Pastors (n=1,049)	Specialized Clergy (n=585)
no . . . . .	87%	81%	68%	78%
yes . . . . .	13%	19%	32%	22%

\* = less than 0.5%

- = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more for this sample on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents

Q-5. How satisfied are you with your prayer life?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
very satisfied . . . . .	8%	10%	6%	10%
satisfied . . . . .	40%	40%	39%	39%
neither satisfied nor dissatisfied . . . . .	39%	34%	34%	36%
dissatisfied . . . . .	12%	15%	21%	14%
very dissatisfied . . . . .	1%	1%	1%	*

Q-6. As a regular part of Sunday morning worship services, do the worship leaders of the church you attend ask those in attendance for their prayer concerns?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
no . . . . .	32%	23%	32%	30%
yes . . . . .	68%	77%	68%	70%

Q-7. Approximately, how frequently do you engage in the following activities? (Circle one number for each statement.)

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
<b>a. read the Bible privately</b>				
daily/almost daily . . . . .	17%	20%	42%	30%
several times a week . . . . .	10%	14%	39%	30%
weekly . . . . .	9%	14%	12%	16%
several times a month . . . . .	11%	15%	4%	12%
once a month . . . . .	6%	6%	1%	3%
several times a year . . . . .	21%	19%	2%	6%
once a year or less . . . . .	14%	6%	*	1%
never . . . . .	12%	4%	-	1%
<b>b. read the Bible with family or friends</b>				
daily/almost daily . . . . .	4%	3%	7%	8%
several times a week . . . . .	3%	3%	14%	8%
weekly . . . . .	11%	19%	30%	18%
several times a month . . . . .	7%	10%	10%	10%
once a month . . . . .	6%	6%	5%	7%
several times a year . . . . .	14%	18%	18%	20%
once a year or less . . . . .	15%	12%	7%	12%
never . . . . .	40%	28%	9%	17%
<b>c. attend Bible study groups</b>				
daily/almost daily . . . . .	1%	1%	2%	1%
several times a week . . . . .	1%	2%	9%	4%
weekly . . . . .	16%	22%	44%	28%
several times a month . . . . .	4%	6%	10%	8%
once a month . . . . .	9%	11%	7%	6%
several times a year . . . . .	9%	14%	18%	20%
once a year or less . . . . .	12%	15%	5%	13%
never . . . . .	49%	30%	6%	21%

\* = less than 0.5%

- = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more for this sample on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents

Q-7. Approximately, how frequently do you engage in the following activities? (Circle one number for each statement.)  
 [cont.]

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
d. attend prayer meetings	+	+		
daily/almost daily	*	1%	2%	1%
several times a week	1%	1%	3%	1%
weekly	5%	8%	21%	11%
several times a month	2%	4%	7%	5%
once a month	2%	4%	6%	5%
several times a year	8%	12%	19%	13%
once a year or less	14%	16%	16%	24%
never	69%	55%	27%	40%
e. participate in church social events				
daily/almost daily	1%	2%	4%	2%
several times a week	2%	7%	16%	4%
weekly	8%	13%	24%	16%
several times a month	14%	23%	28%	19%
once a month	14%	16%	12%	17%
several times a year	40%	36%	15%	35%
once a year or less	14%	2%	1%	5%
never	7%	1%	*	3%
f. say grace before meals				
daily/almost daily	45%	50%	79%	71%
several times a week	9%	12%	10%	12%
weekly	3%	4%	2%	2%
several times a month	7%	9%	4%	6%
once a month	4%	2%	1%	2%
several times a year	22%	17%	4%	5%
once a year or less	4%	3%	*	*
never	6%	4%	*	2%
g. seek God's will through prayer				
daily/almost daily	44%	47%	60%	58%
several times a week	17%	22%	26%	22%
weekly	6%	9%	6%	6%
several times a month	11%	9%	4%	6%
once a month	2%	2%	1%	1%
several times a year	12%	8%	3%	3%
once a year or less	3%	1%	*	1%
never	6%	1%	1%	2%

Q-8. How frequently do you attend church (Sunday) school?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
never	22%	15%	8%	15%
once a year or less	6%	4%	2%	6%
several times a year	10%	8%	7%	11%
once a month	4%	2%	2%	4%
several times a month	16%	13%	7%	12%
weekly	42%	58%	75%	52%

\* = less than 0.5%

- = zero (0,0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more for this sample on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents

Q-9. How often in the last year have you had any of the following experiences?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
a. felt the presence of God				
never . . . . .	20%	14%	3%	5%
once or twice . . . . .	22%	19%	12%	15%
several times . . . . .	27%	32%	33%	35%
frequently . . . . .	20%	25%	50%	43%
not sure . . . . .	12%	11%	2%	2%
b. prayed or spoken in tongues				
never . . . . .	89%	90%	86%	89%
once or twice . . . . .	2%	1%	4%	3%
several times . . . . .	3%	2%	5%	3%
frequently . . . . .	3%	4%	5%	4%
not sure . . . . .	3%	3%	1%	1%
c. had an out-of-the-body experience <i>not</i> associated with a near-death experience				
never . . . . .	92%	91%	90%	90%
once or twice . . . . .	2%	4%	6%	6%
several times . . . . .	1%	1%	1%	1%
frequently . . . . .	*	*	*	*
not sure . . . . .	4%	4%	2%	3%
d. had an out-of-the-body experience <i>associated</i> with a near-death experience				
never . . . . .	95%	94%	98%	96%
once or twice . . . . .	2%	3%	1%	2%
several times . . . . .	*	1%	*	1%
frequently . . . . .	-	-	-	-
not sure . . . . .	3%	3%	1%	1%

Q-10. Do you regularly read your horoscope or astrological forecast in a newspaper or magazine?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
no . . . . .	73%	74%	91%	86%
yes . . . . .	27%	26%	9%	14%

Q-11. If "yes," what is your general response to what you read? [Note: Only those who answered "yes" to Q-10 were asked to answer this question.]

	Members (n=299)	Elders (n=268)	Pastors (n=95)	Specialized Clergy (n=80)
I use this information often to help plan my life . . . . .	*	-	-	1%
I use this information occasionally to help plan my life . . . . .	2%	2%	-	4%
I believe what I read, but usually don't act on it . . . . .	2%	3%	2%	1%
I read it only for entertainment, and don't think about it afterwards . . . . .	95%	95%	98%	94%

\* = less than 0.5%

- = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

+ = nonresponses of 10% or more for this sample on this question (reported percentages for all questions omit nonresponses)

n = number of respondents

Q-12. Do you believe in reincarnation?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
no	55%	59%	88%	84%
yes	13%	14%	4%	5%
not sure	32%	27%	9%	12%

Q-13. Think about the Sunday morning worship services you have attended during the last year. Did they . . .

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
a. make you feel closer to God?				
no	13%	9%	6%	14%
yes	87%	91%	94%	86%
b. challenge you to lead a more faithful life?				
no	11%	8%	3%	8%
yes	89%	92%	97%	92%
c. make you feel a part of the body of Christ?				
no	23%	10%	3%	10%
yes	77%	90%	97%	90%
d. make you feel good?				
no	9%	8%	9%	17%
yes	91%	92%	91%	83%
e. lead you to serve God by serving others?				
no	19%	8%	3%	10%
yes	81%	92%	97%	90%
f. lead you to want to learn more about God?				
no	23%	13%	6%	18%
yes	77%	87%	94%	82%

Q-14. In the last year, have you grown spiritually?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
no	28%	16%	4%	7%
yes	72%	84%	96%	93%

Q-15. If "yes," have any of the following been particularly important in helping you grow spiritually? [Note: Only those who answered "yes" to Q-14 were asked to answer this question.]

	Members (n=777)	Elders (n=849)	Pastors (n=989)	Specialized Clergy (n=523)
a. reading the Bible	+			
no	29%	23%	6%	13%
yes	71%	77%	94%	87%
b. sharing in the Lord's Supper				
no	26%	14%	16%	22%
yes	74%	86%	84%	78%
c. Church school	+	+		+
no	54%	46%	42%	59%
yes	46%	54%	58%	41%

\* = less than 0.5%

- = zero (0.0); no cases in this category

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n = number of respondents

Q-15. If "yes," have any of the following been particularly important in helping you grow spiritually? [Note: Only those who [cont.] answered "yes" to Q-14 were asked to answer this question.]

	Members (n=777)	Elders (n=849)	Pastors (n=989)	Specialized Clergy (n=523)
d. private devotions	+			
no	30%	28%	16%	16%
yes	70%	72%	84%	84%
e. example set by a friend	+	+		
no	41%	43%	31%	36%
yes	59%	57%	69%	64%
f. a personal tragedy	+	+		
no	64%	69%	66%	63%
yes	36%	31%	34%	37%
g. reading secular materials	+	+		
no	66%	65%	48%	44%
yes	34%	35%	52%	56%

Q-16. In your spiritual life, how helpful have you found the following in nourishing your relationship with God?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
a. the Bible				
very helpful	39%	49%	78%	66%
helpful	32%	32%	19%	25%
somewhat helpful	21%	17%	2%	8%
not helpful	8%	2%	*	1%
b. music				
very helpful	36%	38%	53%	51%
helpful	37%	40%	35%	34%
somewhat helpful	20%	18%	11%	13%
not helpful	8%	4%	1%	2%
c. sermons				
very helpful	40%	45%	44%	33%
helpful	40%	40%	42%	41%
somewhat helpful	18%	13%	13%	21%
not helpful	3%	2%	1%	4%
d. prayer				
very helpful	49%	54%	63%	56%
helpful	35%	35%	32%	31%
somewhat helpful	13%	10%	5%	11%
not helpful	3%	*	1%	1%
e. devotional magazines such as <i>These Days</i>	+	+		
very helpful	13%	13%	7%	8%
helpful	20%	22%	16%	18%
somewhat helpful	20%	29%	37%	32%
not helpful	47%	36%	40%	42%
f. The Lord's Supper				
very helpful	32%	42%	48%	44%
helpful	34%	39%	33%	32%
somewhat helpful	24%	14%	17%	20%
not helpful	10%	4%	1%	4%

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n = number of respondents

Q-17. Have you ever had a religious experience, that is, a particularly powerful religious insight or awakening that changed the direction of your life?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
no .....	69%	60%	20%	21%
yes .....	31%	40%	80%	79%

Q-18. Please answer the following about your experience: (If you have had more than one such experience, answer in terms of the most significant one.) [Note: Only those who responded "yes" to Q-17 answered this question.]

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
a. Is this experience still important to you in your everyday life?	(n=349)	(n=426)	(n=849)	(n=469)
no .....	7%	7%	7%	8%
yes .....	93%	93%	93%	92%
b. Did this experience involve Jesus Christ?				
no .....	19%	16%	12%	17%
yes .....	81%	84%	88%	83%
c. Was this a conversion experience — an identifiable turning point that included asking Jesus Christ to be your personal savior?				
no .....	47%	45%	57%	60%
yes .....	53%	55%	43%	40%

Q-19. How often have you had any of the following experiences? [Note: Only those who responded "yes" to Q-17 answered this question.]

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
a. thought you were somewhere you had been before, but knew that it was impossible	(n=349)	(n=426)	(n=849)	(n=469)
never .....	36%	41%	36%	40%
once or twice .....	30%	30%	34%	31%
occasionally .....	31%	25%	28%	27%
regularly .....	2%	3%	2%	2%
b. felt as though you were in touch with someone when they were far away from you				
never .....	38%	40%	38%	36%
once or twice .....	26%	26%	30%	29%
occasionally .....	30%	29%	28%	31%
regularly .....	7%	4%	4%	4%
c. seen events that happened at a great distance as they were happening				
never .....	85%	84%	90%	87%
once or twice .....	8%	10%	6%	7%
occasionally .....	5%	5%	3%	6%
regularly .....	2%	1%	1%	*
d. felt as though you were really in touch with someone who had died				
never .....	61%	63%	66%	63%
once or twice .....	20%	22%	22%	23%
occasionally .....	16%	12%	10%	12%
regularly .....	3%	2%	1%	1%

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n = number of respondents



Q-20. For each of these statements, indicate in column (1) whether or not it describes your relationship with God, and in column (2) whether or not it describes your relationship with the local church. (In each column, circle the appropriate number.)

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
a. I am basically content in my relationship with God				
no .....	25%	26%	22%	24%
yes .....	75%	74%	78%	76%
with the local church				
no .....	26%	20%	22%	40%
yes .....	74%	80%	78%	60%
b. I feel something is missing in my relationship with God	+			
no .....	65%	63%	65%	66%
yes .....	35%	37%	35%	34%
with the local church	+			
no .....	62%	71%	62%	56%
yes .....	38%	29%	38%	44%
c. My friends seem less content in their relationship than I am in mine with God	+	+		+
no .....	77%	72%	62%	66%
yes .....	23%	28%	38%	34%
with the local church	+	+		+
no .....	78%	69%	63%	67%
yes .....	22%	31%	37%	33%
d. I am looking for a relationship that makes sense with God	+	+		
no .....	49%	50%	48%	49%
yes .....	51%	50%	52%	51%
with the local church	+	+		
no .....	48%	48%	43%	40%
yes .....	52%	52%	57%	60%
e. My relationship has been positive and uplifting with God				
no .....	11%	6%	3%	4%
yes .....	89%	94%	97%	96%
with the local church	+			
no .....	19%	16%	14%	24%
yes .....	81%	85%	86%	76%

Q-21. Have you had any of the following experiences in the last year?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
a. My pastor preached (I preached) on spiritual growth/growing in faith				
no .....	12%	8%	2%	6%
yes .....	88%	92%	98%	94%
b. My congregation had a class or discussion meeting on spiritual growth/growing in faith	+			
no .....	45%	41%	23%	32%
yes .....	55%	59%	77%	68%

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n = number of respondents

Q-21. Have you had any of the following experiences in the last year?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
c. I went on a retreat on spiritual growth/growing in faith				
no	87%	77%	52%	63%
yes	13%	23%	48%	37%
d. I worked on spiritual growth/growing in faith, privately				
no	41%	37%	13%	18%
yes	59%	63%	87%	82%
e. My family or close friends and I discussed spiritual growth/growing in faith				
no	53%	43%	20%	24%
yes	47%	57%	80%	76%
f. I discussed spiritual growth/growing in faith with my pastor				
no	85%	71%	60%	68%
yes	15%	29%	40%	32%
g. I had a spiritual director				
no	95%	93%	89%	86%
yes	5%	7%	11%	14%
h. I attended a church school class that discussed spiritual growth/growing in faith				
no	72%	57%	47%	63%
yes	28%	43%	53%	37%
i. Other				
no	73%	69%	43%	40%
yes	27%	31%	57%	60%

Q-22. In the last year, have you had one or more serious personal discussions about what you or others can do to live out your faith in the world?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
no	50%	36%	4%	8%
yes	50%	64%	96%	92%

Q-23. If you were to have a spiritual crisis, would you turn to any of the following for support?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
a. your pastor				
no	15%	12%	33%	29%
yes	85%	88%	67%	71%
b. neighboring Presbyterian pastor				
no	74%	69%	23%	33%
yes	26%	31%	77%	67%
c. non-Presbyterian pastor				
no	74%	66%	38%	45%
yes	26%	34%	62%	55%
d. executive presbyter				
no	88%	86%	54%	63%
yes	12%	14%	46%	37%

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n = number of respondents

Q-23. If you were to have a spiritual crisis, would you turn to any of the following for support?  
[cont.]

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
e. neighbor/friend				
no	21%	18%	21%	20%
yes	79%	82%	79%	80%
f. spouse	+	+		
no	19%	19%	11%	15%
yes	81%	81%	89%	85%
g. other family member				
no	24%	25%	41%	45%
yes	76%	75%	59%	55%
h. professional counselor	+	+		
no	60%	64%	31%	32%
yes	40%	36%	69%	68%

Q-24. How many persons are there in your congregation with whom you feel safe in talking honestly about yourself, your thoughts and feelings about God and your life struggles?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
none	12%	4%	8%	11%
one or two	32%	26%	30%	34%
three or four	22%	24%	23%	23%
five or more	33%	45%	40%	32%

Q-25. How many persons are there outside your congregation with whom you feel safe in talking honestly about yourself, your thoughts and feelings about God and your life struggles?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
none	8%	6%	2%	3%
one or two	38%	36%	26%	22%
three or four	26%	27%	27%	29%
five or more	27%	31%	44%	45%

Q-26. To what extent would you say you are presently involved in a religious search?

	Members	Elders	Pastors	Specialized Clergy
to a large extent	11%	16%	39%	32%
to a moderate extent	19%	26%	26%	24%
to some extent	32%	32%	22%	27%
to a slight extent	22%	15%	8%	11%
not at all	16%	12%	5%	5%

Q-27. Please make any additional comments below.

panel/appendix/1638s

\* = less than 0.5%

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