

Back to the Bible's State of Christianity in America

The Annual Benchmark for Spiritual Formation in America

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Overview

The Annual Benchmark for Spiritual Formation in America

For decades, the Christian movement in the United States has spoken confidently about the harvest of souls. By nearly all the usual metrics—exposure, affiliation, attendance, decisions, media reach—Christianity’s influence has appeared extensive. But that confidence has rested on what researchers now call *vanity metrics*: numbers that measure activity, not outcomes. They reflect effort and access, but they don’t tell us whether lives are actually being changed. The 2025 SALT Index was designed to ask that harder question: Are all these efforts resulting in sustained spiritual formation and observable life transformation?

How the U.S. Church Measured Impact (Then vs. Now)

	What We Measured (Past 50 Years)	What We Needed to Measure
Evangelism	Decisions recorded	Reproducible disciple-making
Engagement	Attendance, content views	Scripture absorption (days/week)
Impact	Media impressions, reach	Observable life change
Formation	Program participation	Obedience and spiritual maturity
Growth	Size, speed, visibility	Depth, resilience, sustainability

In other words, what has become of the “harvest” of changed lives that all this activity is supposed to produce? Recent research suggests a sobering answer: many Americans, despite having an awareness of Christian beliefs, fail to follow through with meaningful action or life change in their daily lives.

The **2025 U.S. General Population SALT Index** was designed to address this gap. This nationwide survey captured responses from a random sample of more than 6,000 U.S. adults. Rather than measuring only ministry outputs or relying on self-selected religious samples, the SALT Index establishes a nationally representative baseline of spiritual belief, practice, and transformation among U.S. adults. The goal is to equip pastors and ministry leaders with real data about the state of spiritual formation in the U.S.

Findings from this inaugural 2025 study reveal a clear trend: core Christian beliefs are widely held, indicating that basic theological concepts remain culturally familiar even to

less-engaged Christians. However, agreement varies substantially across specific doctrines, and sizable minorities express disagreement or uncertainty about even some foundational claims. Meanwhile, numerous spiritual practices show an even steeper drop-off. For example, while prayer remains commonplace (even among many non-Christians), regular engagement with Scripture, participation in Christian community, and involvement in discipleship or outreach decline sharply by comparison.

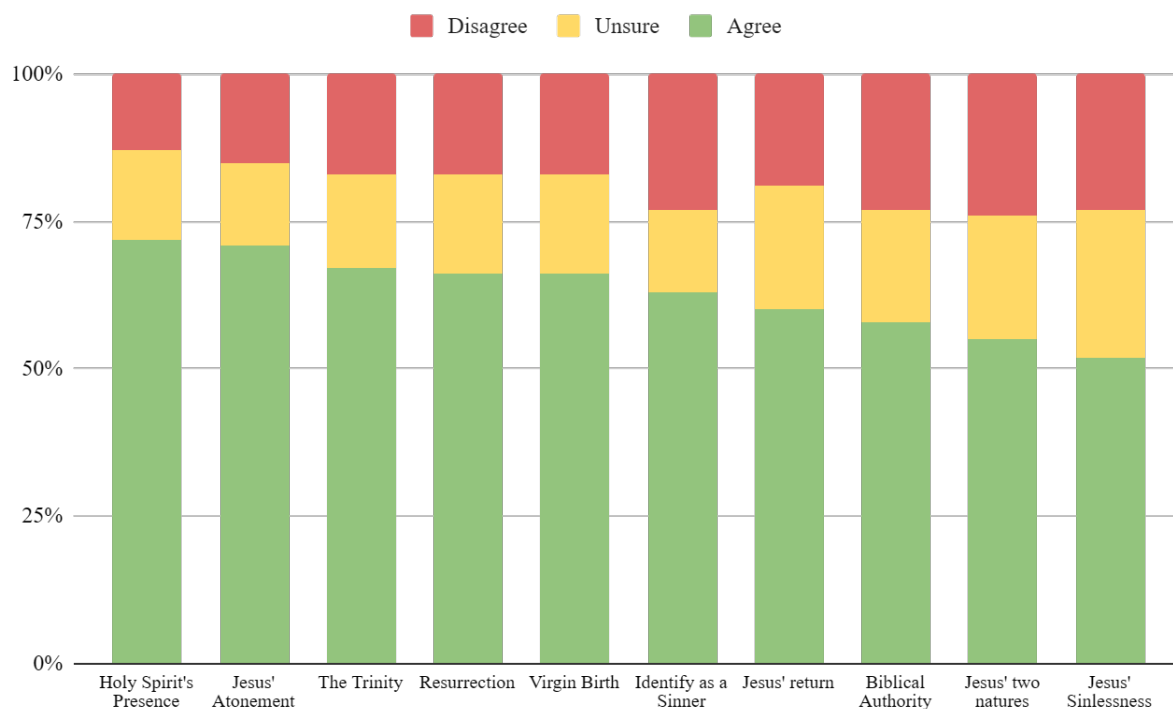
The study also explores emerging questions of discernment and authority in a digital age, including how people respond to AI-generated religious content. Promisingly, the data reveal that most Americans still trust biblical authority over any “AI spirituality.” Yet even here we find a need for vigilance, as a small minority appears open to novel or emotionally appealing claims that conflict with Scripture. This will be an important area to watch in the coming years.

Before unpacking these findings by category, it’s important to understand how the study was conducted. The strength of the SALT Index lies in its ability to quantify spiritual outcomes (not just activities) on a broad scale. By measuring how belief is held, practiced, and lived out across America, it provides a clear lens on the true state of Christianity in 2025.

Theological Belief

Affirmation of core Christian doctrine remains widespread across the U.S. adult population, as illustrated in Figure 1. Most Americans still agree with the essential tenets of the Christian faith. For example, roughly two-thirds of U.S. adults affirm foundational beliefs like the resurrection of Jesus (64% agree) and the belief that Jesus died for our sins (around 70% agree). In fact, about 61% of Americans say they consider themselves “followers of Jesus Christ,” indicating a broad self-identification with Christianity as part of their personal identity.

Figure 1. Agreement with Basic Christian Theology.

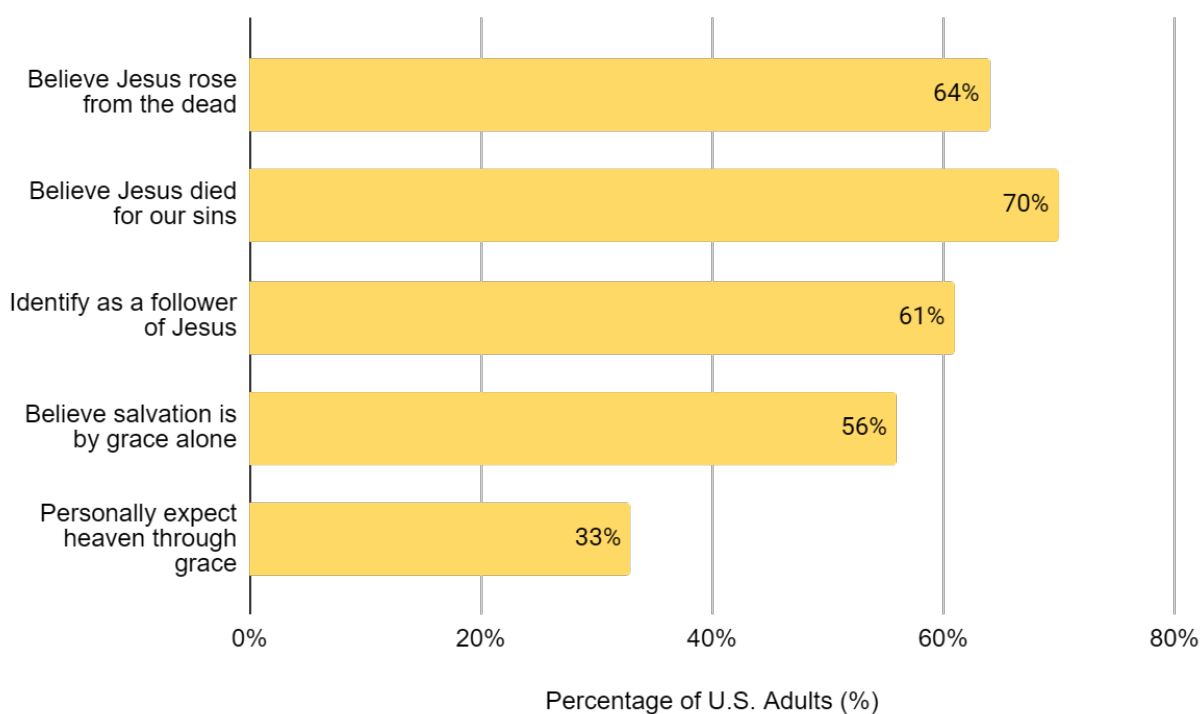


However, beneath this veneer of agreement lies a more mixed theological landscape. Doctrinal certainty varies significantly. Only about 52% firmly believe that Jesus is fully God and fully human – a central Christological doctrine – while roughly one-quarter of adults say they are unsure about that claim. Similar proportions express uncertainty on other theological points. And significant minorities outright reject or question various traditional teachings: roughly 15–25% of respondents did *not* affirm key doctrines such as the Trinity, the authority of the Bible, or Jesus’s sinless life, despite those being cornerstones of orthodox belief. One notable example is that 23% of Americans actively disagreed with the simple statement “I am a sinner,” a percentage that exceeds those who were unsure on that

item – indicating a sizable segment reluctant to accept the Bible’s teaching on human sinfulness (a core premise of the gospel).

These patterns suggest that while Christian theology remains broadly recognizable in American culture, the depth of understanding is often shallow. Many people are familiar with Christian language and claims, but that familiarity doesn’t always translate into clarity, conviction, or consistency. In some cases, agreeing with doctrinal statements may function more as a cultural or identity marker than as a deeply held, life-shaping conviction. In short, belief expressed through survey responses may overstate actual spiritual formation. Widespread doctrinal agreement can mask the reality that much of this “belief” is only surface-level – not necessarily well-understood or integrated into one’s worldview and daily decision-making.

Figure 2. Beliefs about Salvation.



A prime example of the contrast between surface assent and spiritual formation relates to beliefs around salvation. Most survey respondents agreed in principle that salvation is a gift of God’s grace rather than something earned by good works. Yet only about one-third (33%) say they *personally* expect to go to heaven *because* they are saved by that grace through faith in Jesus. In other words, roughly two-thirds of adults do not place their confidence in

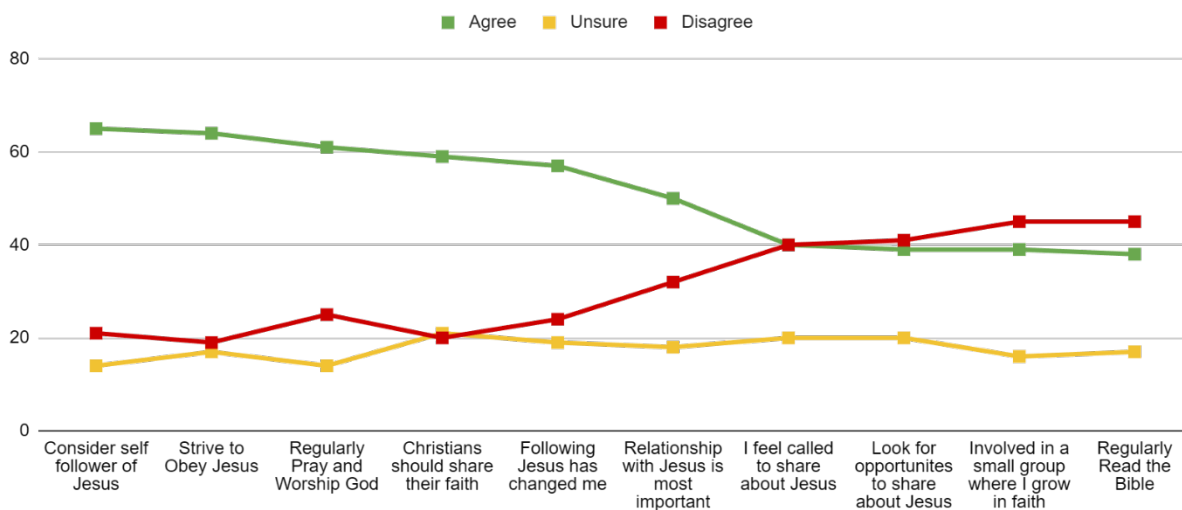
Christ's grace alone when considering their own eternal destiny. This sobering gap between doctrinal assent and personal trust underscores how even widely recognized truths may not be genuinely embraced at a heart level.

The Gap Between Belief and Practice

If professed belief is relatively high, consistent religious practice is much more limited. The SALT Index reveals low levels of US adults engaging in traditional spiritual disciplines. While a majority say they believe in Jesus, far fewer are living out those beliefs through regular practices or community involvement.

As Figure 3 shows, personal prayer is the one area that approaches ubiquity: about 60% of U.S. adults report that they pray to God or engage in worship on a regular basis. Private prayer, in other words, remains fairly common even among those who aren't otherwise active in a church. Beyond prayer, however, engagement drops sharply. Only around 35% of Americans say they read the Bible *regularly* (at least on a weekly basis), and nearly half of adults (~45–50%) admit that in a typical week they do **not** spend any time reading Scripture. In short, Scripture engagement for most people is infrequent if at all, even though prayer may be maintained.

Figure 3. Engagement in Spiritual Practices.



Involvement in communal and missional activities is also modest. Roughly 38% of adults are involved in a church-based small group or Bible study – meaning only about two in five have that kind of relational faith connection in their lives.

Only about 36% actively look for opportunities to share their faith with others – this despite many more *saying in principle* that Christians should evangelize. Likewise, just 31% of adults say they have personally mentored or disciplined someone one-on-one in their spiritual growth. In other words, most Americans (nearly 7 in 10) have never taken an intentional role in helping someone else grow spiritually, and only about a third are even proactively talking about their faith with those around them.

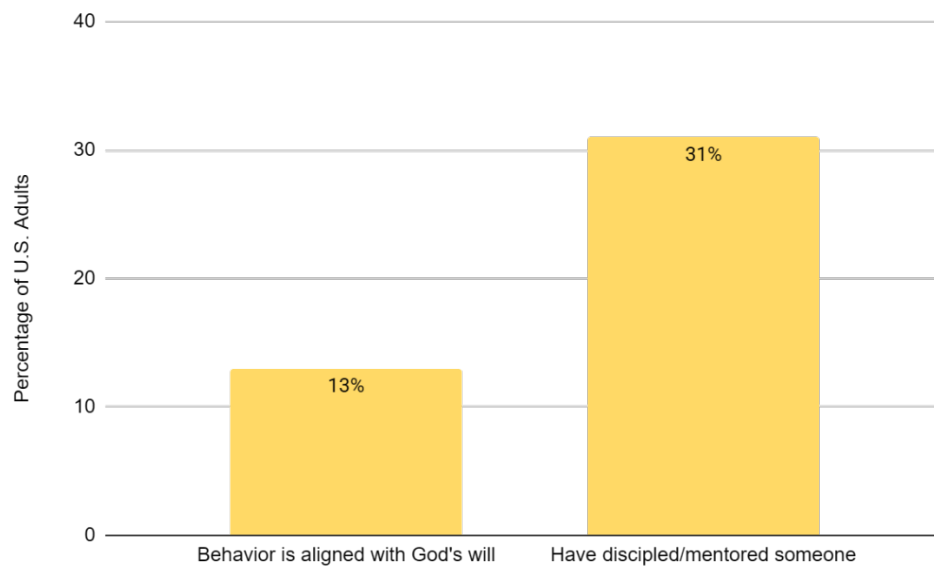


Figure 4a. Discipleship Activity.

One startling finding was that those who don't identify as Christ-followers disciple at virtually the same rate as those who do. Christian identity is not producing higher multiplication outcomes at scale.

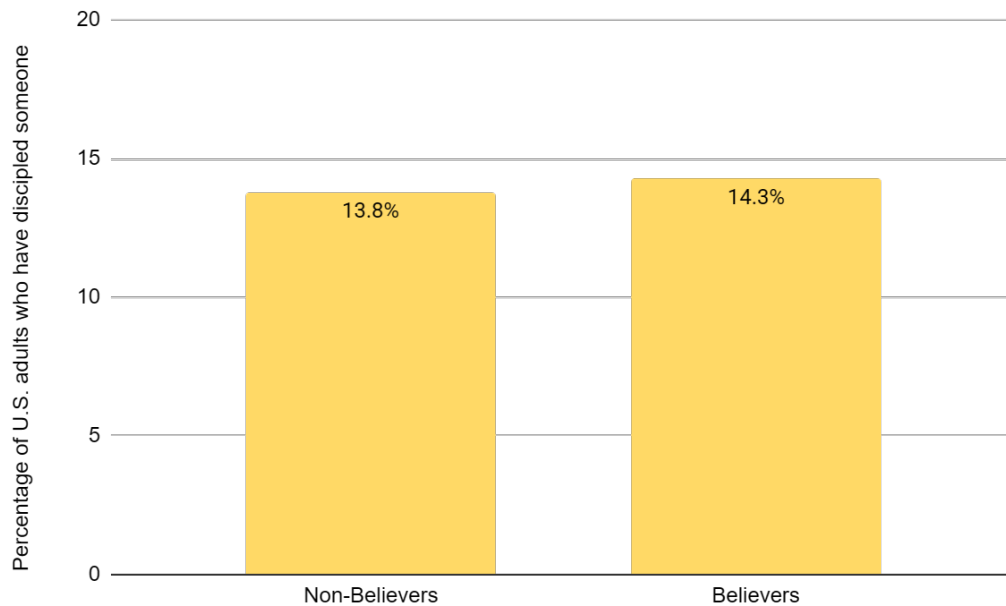


Figure 5b. Discipleship Activity.

When it comes to organized religion and community participation, the numbers indicate that a large share of Americans remain on the sidelines. About one-third of the population is consistently involved in church attendance or small groups, and only a small subset engages in intensive spiritual activities like one-on-one discipleship or outreach. This reveals a substantial behavioral gap: many who profess Christianity are not actively practicing it in any regular, tangible way. The data makes clear that it is far easier to *identify* as Christian than to maintain the habits of an actively devout Christian.

Life Change and Transformation

The most probing survey questions asked if people’s faith is changing their life in tangible ways. Here again, a gap emerges – this time between internal transformation and external change. Just over half of respondents (54%) agreed that “following Jesus has noticeably transformed my life” in terms of attitudes or behaviors. In other words, a slim majority do perceive some personal change that they attribute to their faith. Many Americans, especially self-identified Christians, say they have experienced internal growth or renewal through their relationship with Jesus. For instance, 61% report that because of Jesus’ teachings they have been able to forgive someone they previously found difficult to forgive, and 57% say they have felt greater inner peace or joy through Christ. Around 46%–49% also indicate other positive shifts (e.g., developing new priorities or actively serving others)

resulting from their faith. These self-reported changes suggest that millions of individuals are seeing some “fruit of the Spirit” in their personal and relational lives (e.g. improved patience, forgiveness, hope, sense of purpose) which they directly tie to following Jesus.

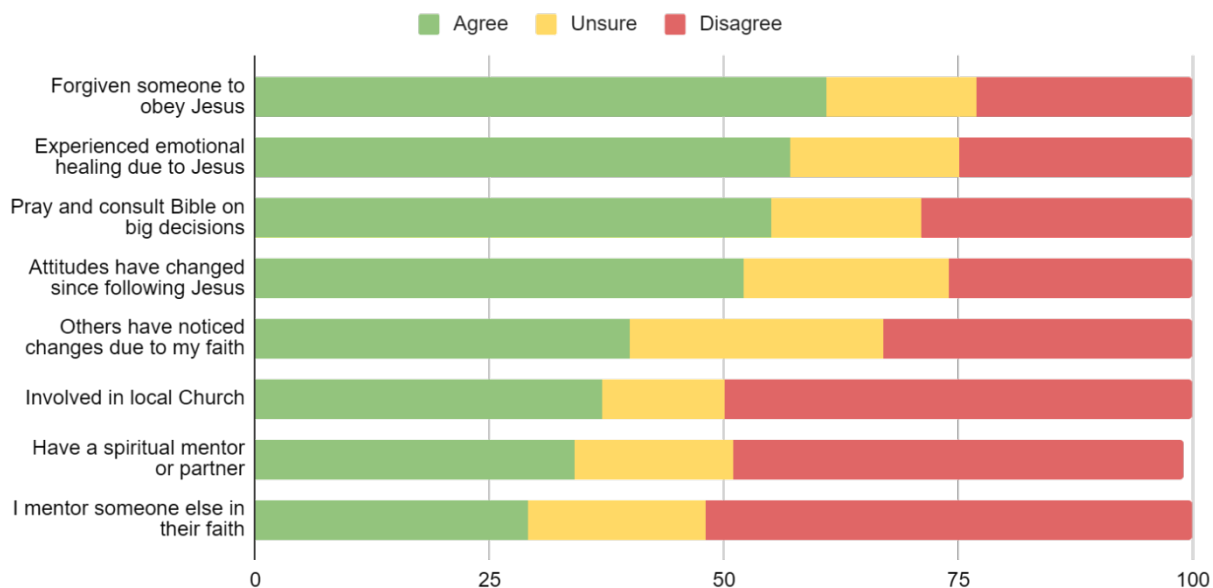


Figure 6. Life Transformation.

However, far fewer report visible, outward changes that others would recognize. Only about 40% of adults say that people around them (friends or family) have noticed changes in their life since they became a Christian. And less than half indicate active outward expressions of transformation – for example, well under 50% of respondents say that they “serve others” in tangible ways because of their faith, or that they have made significant lifestyle sacrifices on account of their religious convictions.

Evangelistic boldness remains limited, as noted earlier, with only about one-third actively sharing their faith. Taken together, these findings suggest that internal change is more prevalent than external change. Many believers report experiencing private, heart-level renewal without a corresponding public or behavioral impact. In short, transformation often remains an “inside job,” where people may feel their attitudes and outlook have been changed by God, yet their outward habits, relationships, and engagement with the world remain largely the same.

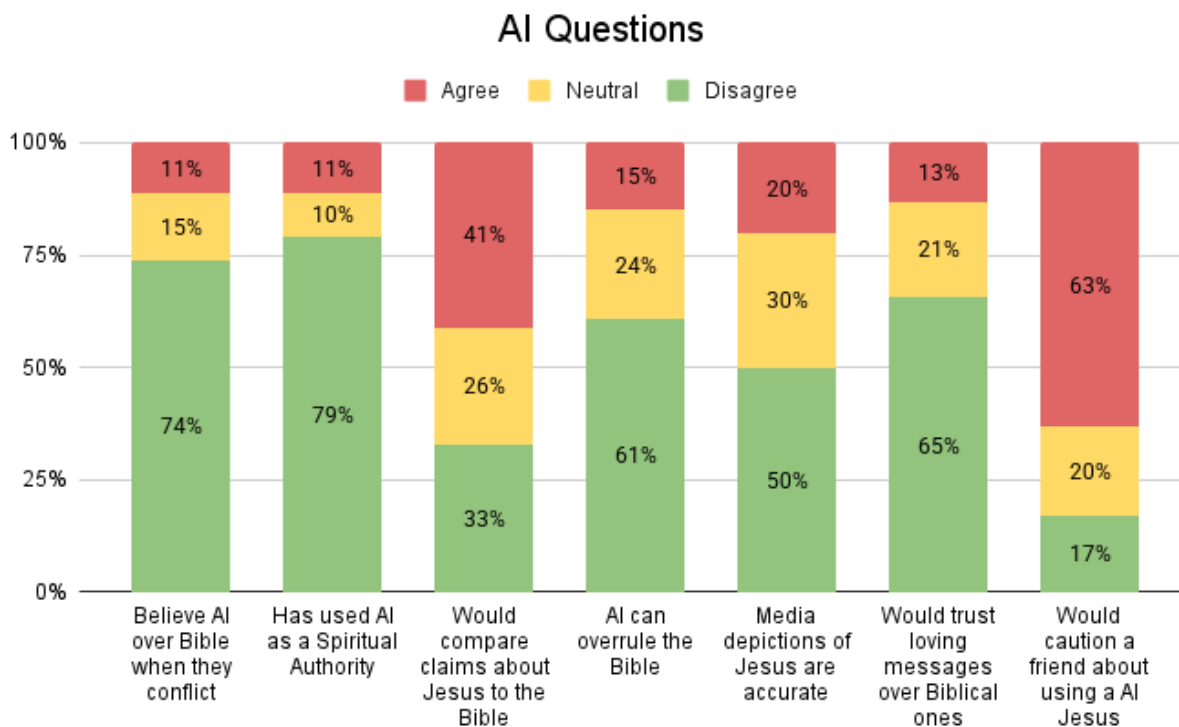
Several factors could help explain this imbalance. In some cases, a person’s outward life may not require dramatic adjustment – for instance, a morally upright individual who comes to faith might experience profound internal changes (new peace, hope, or sense of

meaning) without needing an obvious external course correction in behavior. In other cases, individuals may be modest or restrained in their self-assessment – committed believers often hold themselves to very high standards and might downplay the extent of change, or be keenly aware of how much further they have yet to go. Indeed, the survey included a series of self-rating questions that revealed a general tendency toward *humility* (or dissatisfaction) regarding one’s own spiritual progress. When asked to rate themselves on various ideals – living morally, being patient, helping others, trusting God, and so on – the majority of adults admitted they are **not** consistently meeting those marks. In other words, most people, including most Christians, readily acknowledge a “discipleship gap” between the life they aspire to lead and their present reality. This honest self-appraisal may indicate a population that is spiritually hungry or still “in process,” rather than complacent about their shortcomings.

Discernment, Authority, and AI

One unique aspect of the 2025 SALT Index was its examination of how people approach AI-driven religious content, a very new issue given that technologies like chatbots impersonating Jesus or other religious figures have only recently emerged. The survey results indicate that Americans are, on the whole, very cautious and even skeptical about integrating AI into matters of faith. When presented with a provocative hypothetical – *“If an AI ‘Jesus’ chatbot told me something that conflicted with the Bible, I would accept the AI’s answer.”* – an overwhelming 74% disagreed, including a large percentage who *strongly* disagreed. In other words, roughly three-quarters of the public flat-out reject the idea of an AI’s teachings overruling Scripture. Likewise, about two-thirds of adults dismiss the notion that AI could ever reveal spiritual truths that go beyond what is in the Bible. These figures underscore a broad sentiment that the Bible remains the supreme authority for truth, and any claims by an artificial intelligence that contradict or add to Scripture are met with deep suspicion by most people.

Figure 7. Discerning in the Modern World.



Consistent with that stance, actual usage of “AI Jesus” tools is very low at this point. Only around 11% of Americans say they have ever *tried* an AI chatbot that imitates Jesus or provides spiritual advice, and the vast majority (89%) have not. This finding suggests that in 2025 such tools were more of a niche curiosity than anything close to mainstream. Even among younger, tech-savvy adults, most had not engaged with an AI spiritual advisor. The SALT data further show that most people – including most Christians – exhibit a “Bible-first” discernment posture: about 62% said they would warn a friend to be cautious about any religious content coming from AI, urging discernment and verification against Scripture before trusting it. In contrast, only a small minority (roughly 10–15% of respondents) appeared more open to AI’s input. For instance, a single-digit percentage admitted they *might* trust advice from an AI Jesus if it “felt loving,” even if it didn’t fully match biblical teaching.

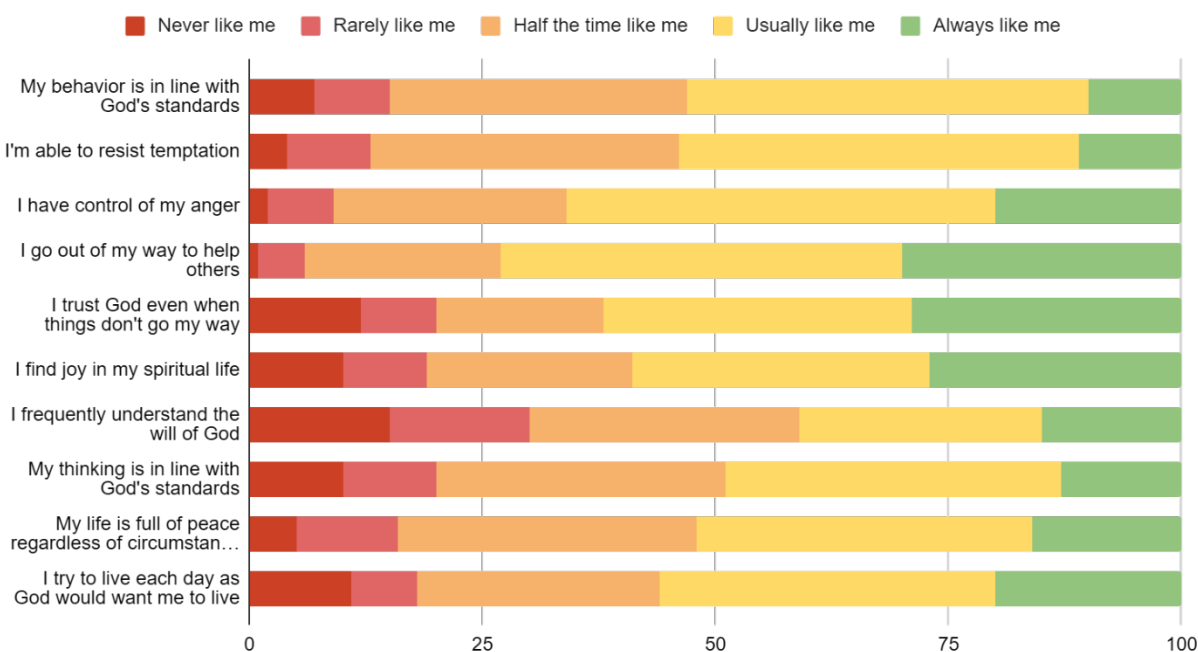
Overall, the public’s stance on this issue in 2025 was quite conservative. Even in an age of rapidly advancing technology, Americans largely trust old truths over new tools. They are not, for now, easily swayed by digital or pseudo-spiritual novelties. This is a reassuring finding for traditional faith leaders, indicating a continued strong adherence to biblical authority despite the rise of new tech. At the same time, it highlights a potential need for ongoing guidance: faith communities may want to educate the small segment of seekers

who *are* intrigued by AI-based spiritual content, helping them learn to critically compare any such material against Scripture before accepting it. As technology evolves, the Church’s role in fostering discernment will remain vital so that convenience or curiosity never displaces truth.

Self-Assessed Spiritual Alignment

The 2025 SALT Index study also included a self-assessment portion that Back to the Bible previously developed as a “Fruit of the Spirit” scale (see Figure 7). Americans, by and large, do not give themselves high marks for personal holiness or Christlike character. Even as many claim to hold orthodox beliefs, most recognize that they fall short of living out those beliefs consistently. For example, only about 15% of respondents felt that their behavior is “completely in line with God’s standards. Even among devout individuals, traits like unshakeable joy or constant peace were exceedingly scarce – on the order of only 21% said they experience continuous joy or peace in their faith. Tellingly, the highest self-rating was on understanding God’s will for one’s life, yet still only 22% of adults felt they often discern God’s will in their day-to-day decisions. In virtually every area surveyed, a strong majority admitted they are *not* where they want to be spiritually – whether in moral integrity, patience, generosity, or trust in God.

Figure 8. Fruit of the Spirit Scale.



This humility in self-evaluation is a double-edged sword. On one hand, it shows that complacency is not the dominant attitude; many people are keenly aware of their imperfections and aspire to grow. It's worth noting that even some who are relatively inactive in church still acknowledge they aren't living up to the ideal Christian life, which could indicate an openness to change if given the right support. On the other hand, the gap between aspiration and reality is obviously wide. The average Christian in America does not see themselves as a model disciple; rather, they often see a lot of room for improvement. From a ministry standpoint, this is a significant insight: it suggests that a large portion of the population may be reachable and teachable if approached with grace and practical pathways for growth. People recognize the *discipleship gap* in their own lives – the data show they're not blind to it. The opportunity, then, is to channel that awareness into action, helping move believers from merely knowing the truth to consistently living it.

Methods

The 2025 SALT Index survey was conducted online with a nationally representative sample of 6,037 U.S. adults (age 18 and older) across all 50 states. The study was designed by Back to the Bible's research team to establish a baseline of not just religious affiliation, but actual faith *outcomes* in people's lives. All respondents initially answered a brief screening questionnaire about their openness to spiritual topics; approximately 5,037 individuals (about 83% of those invited) proceeded to complete the full survey after passing the screener.

To ensure representativeness, the data were weighted to match U.S. adult population benchmarks for key demographics – including age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, and education level – per U.S. Census parameters. This weighting corrected for minor sampling skews (for instance, the unweighted sample slightly overrepresented older, female, and actively religious individuals) and aligned the results with actual population proportions. In practice, weighting shifted most percentages only by a few points and did not alter the overall patterns; if anything, it reinforced the gaps between belief and practice by giving proper weight to less-engaged groups. All figures reported in this study are based on the weighted data and can be interpreted as nationally representative of U.S. adults in 2025.

Questionnaire Scope: The survey instrument covered five major domains of spiritual life, allowing for a comprehensive assessment of faith outcomes. These domains included:

- **Theological Beliefs and Doctrines:** Respondents' agreement with core Christian teachings (e.g., the divinity of Jesus, His resurrection, salvation by grace, the authority of the Bible).

- **Spiritual Practices and Behaviors:** Participation in personal and communal religious activities (such as prayer, Scripture reading, church attendance, small groups, sharing one’s faith, and mentoring others in discipleship).
- **Life Transformation Outcomes:** Self-reported changes attributed to following Jesus – including internal attitude shifts (forgiveness, peace, joy) and external actions (serving others, observable moral changes in lifestyle).
- **Engagement with AI-Based Religious Content:** Exposure to or use of emerging technologies like AI chatbots posing as religious figures (“AI Jesus”), and attitudes toward their guidance or authority versus traditional Scripture.
- **Self-Assessed Spiritual Alignment:** Reflections on one’s own life in light of spiritual ideals (e.g. living up to God’s standards, controlling anger, helping others, maintaining faith under stress).

Fieldwork was completed in mid-2025. With a large sample size and careful design, the margin of error for the full sample is low (on the order of ± 1.5 percentage points). All comparisons noted in this report have been tested for statistical significance at conventional confidence levels.

Final Thoughts

The 2025 SALT Index provides an unprecedented empirical baseline of America’s spiritual condition in terms of both belief and lived behavior. The findings paint a picture of a nation where Christian heritage and knowledge remain widespread, but translating faith into practice and tangible transformation is still very much a work in progress. In many respects, the “harvest” of decades of Christian ministry effort – if measured by outcomes in people’s lives – appears limited or uneven. Large segments of the population still lack regular engagement with Scripture and church, and meaningful life change is often confined to private inner experience rather than public witness.

Even more sobering is the finding that only about one-third of Americans are truly relying on Christ’s grace for salvation, despite far more claiming to believe in it. This means that many who *know* the gospel intellectually have yet to internalize it as personal saving faith – a critical shortfall in the harvest. Such a disparity between knowing and trusting encapsulates the core challenge highlighted by the SALT Index. These results are not a verdict on any particular ministry or denomination, but rather a diagnostic of where things stand at a broad level. By quantifying the gaps between belief, practice, and transformation, the SALT Index highlights where new growth is needed. It challenges faith

leaders and communities to focus on measuring what truly matters – not just how many people can be reached or attracted, but how deeply people are being transformed in their day-to-day lives as followers of Christ.

Encouragingly, the survey also reveals points of hope and opportunity. The enduring commitment to core doctrines and the high level of personal devotion among those believers who are *most* engaged (young and old alike) provide a strong foundation on which to build. There is also a clear moral and spiritual awareness among the populace – many Americans recognize that they fall short of their ideals and are, in a sense, hungry for growth, as evidenced by their humble self-assessments of their spiritual life. These are fertile conditions for renewal: people know the truth and know they need to grow in living it out. In the coming years, churches and ministries can use these insights as a baseline to track progress and to direct resources where they are needed most. Whether it means discipling nominal Christians into committed practice, re-engaging disengaged groups like older men, or guiding tech-savvy youth in biblical discernment, the data point to concrete needs and open doors for ministry.

Future studies will be able to test whether these gaps narrow over time as intentional interventions and cultural shifts take place. In sum, the SALT Index establishes a starting point for a renewed emphasis on *outcomes* – on discipleship that moves beyond head knowledge or check-the-box affiliation and produces genuine life change. As this report’s framing question asks: “What has become of the harvest?” The 2025 snapshot of American Christianity indicates that the harvest, while present, has plentiful room to grow deeper roots. The hope is that by shining a light on both the victories and the shortfalls, this research will spur more effective strategies to cultivate enduring spiritual growth in the years ahead.

But none of that will change until we change what we measure. The real lesson of the 2025 SALT Index isn’t just that formation is weak—it’s that we’ve spent 50 years tracking the wrong signals and calling it success. If we want different outcomes in the decades ahead, we’ll need a different scorecard. One that prioritizes Scripture absorption over surface-level access, transformation over impressions, and discipleship over decisions. That shift won’t be easy. But it is essential. Because what we measure shapes what we build—and ultimately, what kind of Church we leave behind.

Sources: Back to the Bible, *SALT Index 2025 Survey* (Center for Scripture Absorption, 2025)

Why This Matters Globally: A Word to the Global Church

As we conclude, it's clear that the recent U.S. discipleship findings speak to more than an American audience. They offer the global Church a timely mirror. Not because our situation is unique, but because it reveals a pattern many of us recognize across cultures. The struggles and plateaus seen in American believers reflect a challenge that global church leaders from every continent will find familiar.

Why Global Movements Need Outcome Metrics

A Shared Discipleship Challenge: Global Indicators to Watch

EXPOSURE → PARTICIPATION → BELIEF → PRACTICE → OBEDIENCE → REPRODUCTION

Formation loss can happen at any stage. Measuring only the first three masks fragility in the last three.

The shared challenge is one of depth. Across the world, God's people have worked faithfully for decades to fulfill the Great Commission. By God's grace, we've seen tremendous efforts in evangelism, Bible translation, church planting, and training; Scripture is more available today than ever, churches have multiplied, and networks have expanded. These efforts and their integrity are not in question. Yet in contexts as diverse as cultural Christianity in the West, fast-growing churches in the Global South, or congregations under persecution, leaders quietly find themselves asking the same question: Why does deep, resilient, reproducing faith remain so difficult to cultivate? The U.S. data simply puts into words what many of us have sensed: believers around the world are often active and sincere, but maturity still plateaus short of the confident, outwardly fruitful faith we long to see. This is *not* a failure of our people's sincerity or effort. Many have served Christ faithfully for years. But it shows that something is missing in how we grow disciples.

That "something missing" is not passion or programs, but how we define and measure spiritual growth. Long-term *exposure* to church activity, even solid teaching and doctrine, does not automatically produce deep formation. We've often measured success by outputs (attendance, access to Bibles, decisions made, programs run) and those measures do matter. However, they don't always tell us the whole truth. High involvement and sound teaching, as vital as they are, do not guarantee that Scripture has been absorbed into a

person's identity and daily life. In many cases, private faith outpaces public witness and participation exceeds reproduction, indicating a stall in growth despite our best efforts. This is *not* a critique of the hard work of ministries worldwide; rather, it's an honest recognition of a measurement gap in our discipleship approach. We may be counting people *in the pews* or *at the rallies*, but missing whether Christ is being formed in their character and choices.

Encouragingly, a growing number of global leaders are already responding to this gap by asking a different kind of question: not merely "How much Scripture was distributed or how many attended?" but "What is Scripture producing in people's lives?" The focus is shifting from exposure to outcome. From, how many have heard *about* Jesus to, how deeply has following Jesus taken root in their lives. Collaborative efforts like the *Harvest Project* and the development of the SALT Index have emerged from this shared global concern. These are not one-size-fits-all Western programs, but culturally adaptable frameworks born out of international partnership, aimed at observing whether Scripture is truly shaping believers in durable, reproducible ways. Such initiatives recognize that each context is different. In some places public faith is dangerous, in others Christianity is nominal, in others the church thrives with minimal structure. Yet everywhere, we must look beyond activities and access to the reality of formation. The encouraging takeaway is that the Lifeway research from the U.S. is *not* discouraging news at all, but clarifying news. It affirms what many pastors and missionaries intuitively feel: the main challenge before us isn't a lack of effort or resources, but a need for greater spiritual depth in our people.

So why does this matter globally? Because it calls us, as peers in the worldwide Church, to steward our mission with honesty and wisdom. We know that movements tend to celebrate what they measure, and if we only measure easy wins (like crowd size or Bible distribution), we might assume discipleship is happening when in reality it's thin. When output metrics dominate our reports, formation outcomes can too easily be *assumed* rather than examined. Over time, that can create a dangerous gap between perceived impact and actual lived reality among believers. In fact, without some baseline for tracking true spiritual formation:

- Scale can be mistaken for maturity
- Activity can obscure fragility
- Replication can outpace discipleship
- Visible growth can overshadow durable transformation

In other words, bigger numbers and bustling ministries do not automatically equal stronger disciples. As servant-leaders, we have a responsibility to ensure that what we count is actually counting for the Kingdom. Embracing outcome-based discipleship metrics is not about reducing ministry to statistics, it's about pursuing alignment with what Scripture defines as true "fruit" in a believer's life. It gives us a more truthful way to ask not only "*How far have we gone?*" in our mission, but "*How deeply is the gospel taking root?*"

Crucially, adopting formation-focused measures must be done with humility and sensitivity to each context. Such tools are meant to support, not replace, local wisdom and the Holy Spirit's work; they simply *confirm* what many frontline leaders already sense and give us common language to discuss it. For global networks like Lausanne and others, a shared emphasis on outcomes can foster unity around what God is doing *beneath the surface*, without enforcing uniform methods. It allows diverse ministries to learn from each other's insights without competing, and it encourages funders to invest patiently in efforts that may grow more slowly but more sustainably. In short, this shift toward honest discipleship metrics helps all of us steward our influence and resources for long-term faithfulness rather than short-term momentum. It's an act of integrity and stewardship, a way to ensure we are truly accomplishing the disciple-making Jesus commissioned us to do, and not just keeping busy.

Above all, let us approach this shared challenge with humility, hope, and partnership. The U.S. findings are offered in this spirit, as a humble contribution to our global conversation, not as a prescriptive formula. As one report put it, "Careful research, humbly offered and globally shared, can help us see more clearly where the work of formation still lies ahead." We recognize that the Great Commission was never only about spreading information or increasing statistics; it was always about forming disciples whose lives increasingly reflect Christ and who then help others follow Him. In every culture and generation, "*passing was never the goal... faithful, resilient, reproducing disciples... always were.*" The heart of our mission is to see believers so deeply shaped by Scripture that they can withstand trials, discern truth, and naturally disciple others. If the American study has done anything, it has simply reminded us—*all of us*—to ask whether we are achieving that goal.

My encouragement to fellow global leaders is that we take this insight as an invitation, not an indictment. Perhaps the next chapter for the global Church will require us to ask better questions, not just do more work. We may need to ask, in each of our contexts, how we can ensure that God's Word is not only *heard* but truly trusted, not only *taught* but genuinely integrated, not only *affirmed* but consistently lived out and shared. This is a shared journey of learning. Careful research and honest assessment cannot by themselves produce revival or growth in holiness. They cannot answer the question of deep discipleship on their

own. But they *can* help the Church ask the right questions more truthfully. They can help us see ourselves more clearly, without panic or pride, and point us back to the areas where we must pray, teach, and labor more intentionally for Christlike maturity.

In that spirit of partnership, I share these U.S. findings as one voice among many in the global Body of Christ. I have been deeply encouraged to realize that we are not alone in facing these issues, and I am hopeful that together we can spur one another on toward deeper, more resilient disciple-making. May we continue to learn from one another, refine how we measure what truly matters, and rededicate ourselves to the *long, patient work of formation*.

After all, our legacy will not be measured by how fast we spread the gospel or how impressive our numbers look, but by what kind of disciples we leave for the generation to come. Are we forming believers whose faith can endure whatever challenges lie ahead and who will faithfully pass it on? By God's grace, and with an honest appraisal of both our progress and our gaps, I believe we can. Let's continue this crucial conversation as co-laborers, humbly, hopefully, and together.

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