



Research report:

Evaluating spiritual life

Evaluating the overall spiritual life of the international Salvation Army and identifying areas of strength and needed growth.

‘So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, **rooted** and **built up** in him, **strengthened in the faith** as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness’.

- Colossians 2:6–7

The spiritual life of our people is at the heart of who we are as The Salvation Army. It is important to remember that it is not a programme or a department. It is the foundation of our identity and mission.

As a movement, we want to help people grow in their relationship with Jesus and keep spiritual life central in everything we are and everything we do.

This report is not only about numbers or data. It is about people. It reflects the voices of Salvationists and those connected to our mission from around the world. It gives us a glimpse into how our people are doing spiritually: where they feel they are in their relationship with Jesus, what’s helping them to grow, and where they may be struggling. In those places where they may be struggling, we want to consider how we can respond with care by offering resources, encouragement and support that meet people where they are and help them continue their journey with Jesus.

What follows is a reflection on the steps we have taken to better understand the spiritual life of our people. It offers insight into the questions we have asked, the people we have listened to, and the themes or trends that have emerged. As you read, I pray you’ll be encouraged, trusting that God is doing a new thing in our midst.

Commissioner Patti Niemand

World Secretary for Spiritual Life Development

A photograph of a person's legs and feet walking on a sandy beach. The person is wearing white, loose-fitting robes and black sandals. The background is a soft-focus view of the sand and some distant figures. The text 'Come, follow me.' is overlaid in a large, white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

‘Come, follow me.’

‘Come, follow me.’ This was the call of Jesus to his first disciples and this invitation to follow Jesus still stands for us today. An invitation to go with him, to get to know him, to adopt his rhythm of work and rest, to mirror his attitude and character to the world. And through the work of the Holy Spirit within us, to become more like him and able to do the things he did.

The spiritual life of our movement and its people matters. As individuals and as a movement, we seek to put Jesus at the centre – to know him, to become like him and to do the things he did – but how are we doing?

In April 2025, the Spiritual Life workstream of Compass established a research project to help us better understand our strengths and identify areas of needed growth in the spiritual life of our people and our movement. The insights gathered through this survey have affirmed the recommendations presented to and approved at The General's Council. These findings confirm the direction already taken by the Spiritual Life workstream and will help guide international leadership as we invest in areas that support spiritual growth so that we continue to be a people and a movement drawing closer to Jesus.

evaluate the overall spiritual life of the international Salvation Army and identify areas of **strength** and needed **growth**.¹

Recognising that only God can truly evaluate the spiritual health of a person, we seek to measure an individual's commitment to holiness, to becoming more like Christ every day, and their desire for continued growth in relationship with Jesus.

We also look at activities and habits that may lead to spiritual growth (disciplines or practices) and the behaviours, attitudes and aspects of character that may be an outward display of a healthy inner life and indicative of spiritual growth (fruit of the Spirit, participation in the church body, service etc.).

We all continue to be formed and transformed throughout our entire life, none of us reaching perfection until heaven. With this in mind, we seek to normalise the journey of life-long development and growth in relationship with God and with others.

As well as providing us with rich data to learn from, we hope this research has given participants the opportunity to reflect on their own spiritual health and identify their own strengths and areas of needed growth.

We have identified strengths by looking for patterns among these responses of spiritual vibrancy, desire for growth and holiness. We have identified areas of needed growth in common challenges and shared experiences.

Recognising that spiritual life is not static, and that this research captures only a snapshot in time, we recommend ongoing measure of spiritual health, both for individuals and our movement, and the development of tools and criteria to assist with this.

A note on research methods

While only God can truly measure spiritual life, we can measure a person's desire to grow, we can seek to understand how people are nurturing their own spiritual lives and the fruit that is evident in their character and behaviour.

With a combination of self-evaluation and peer assessment, quantitative and qualitative research methods, we have been able to identify trends and draw out common challenges. In this report we reference two data sets: an international spiritual life survey and locally-led spiritual life focus groups, two methods applied to help us evaluate the overall spiritual life of the international Salvation Army.

When we are considering spiritual life, we are considering something beautiful and fluid and relational and we recognise the need to seek out experiences and real stories. To do this, every territory was invited to host focus groups, small group conversations, using the same set of questions. As well as adding depth and richness to the feedback we have received, focus groups have allowed us to reach those who are less likely to participate in survey research (children and young people, those living in remote spaces etc.).

In our research, we set out to hear from as many people connected to The Salvation Army as possible – soldiers, officers, those

who are part of our corps communities, as well as those who volunteer, our employees and service users – and specifically designed questions that would help us to hear meaningfully from each of these groups. We wanted to ensure the voices of the world were heard so that in identifying strengths and areas for growth, these are truly reflective of the international Salvation Army – and not just a few people in a few places. An online survey has been helpful in gathering measurable information from a lot of people around the world. The online survey was made available in 25 languages and focus group questions translated locally to increase opportunity for fuller participation.

This research achieved a large and diverse response base, providing a strong foundation for meaningful insights. However, some demographic groups, such as individuals under 25 and certain geographic areas, were less represented, which may influence how fully the findings reflect the entire population. As participation was voluntary, it is also possible that respondents were more likely to be individuals with a strong interest in spiritual life, which could introduce some bias. These factors should be considered when interpreting the results, but the breadth and volume of responses significantly enhance the reliability and richness of the data overall.

A photograph of a group of young women, likely in a church or religious setting, singing and clapping. They are wearing dark clothing, and the background is blurred. The text "Who took part in this spiritual life research?" is overlaid on the image.

**Who took part
in this spiritual
life research?**

There are many people within and connected to The Salvation Army - attendees, volunteers, soldiers, ministry leaders, officers, employees, service users, divisional, territorial and international leaders. In seeking to measure the spiritual life of The Salvation Army, we include those who are choosing to live out their discipleship to Jesus within The Salvation Army and those who are encountering or participating in the mission of The Salvation Army in other ways – there is potential for the spiritual life of all to be impacted in some way by their participation or interaction.

8371 research participants

Over 8000 people participated in this research, 8080 in the online survey and 291 in locally-led focus groups. Here, we share a breakdown of participant demographics.

Gender

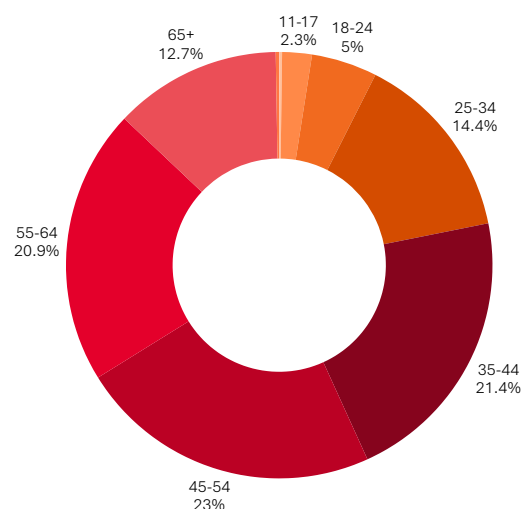
While there was slightly higher female participation in this research, the distinction is minimal. This allows us to reliably identify any gender-based patterns and trends.



Male: 3678 | Female: 4591 | Prefer not to say: 102

Age

There is no age limit to relationship with Jesus so there was no age limit to participation in this research either. We received responses across all age groups, with some age groups better represented than others.



We have received some incredibly rich insights from those under 25, particularly in focus group discussions. Due to the limited number of children and young people who have participated in this research project, the findings from this group can be less reliably generalised and may not be considered representative of children and young people across The Salvation Army.

Location

We have received responses from every territory and region of The Salvation Army, although it is worth noting participation was far higher in some territories than others.

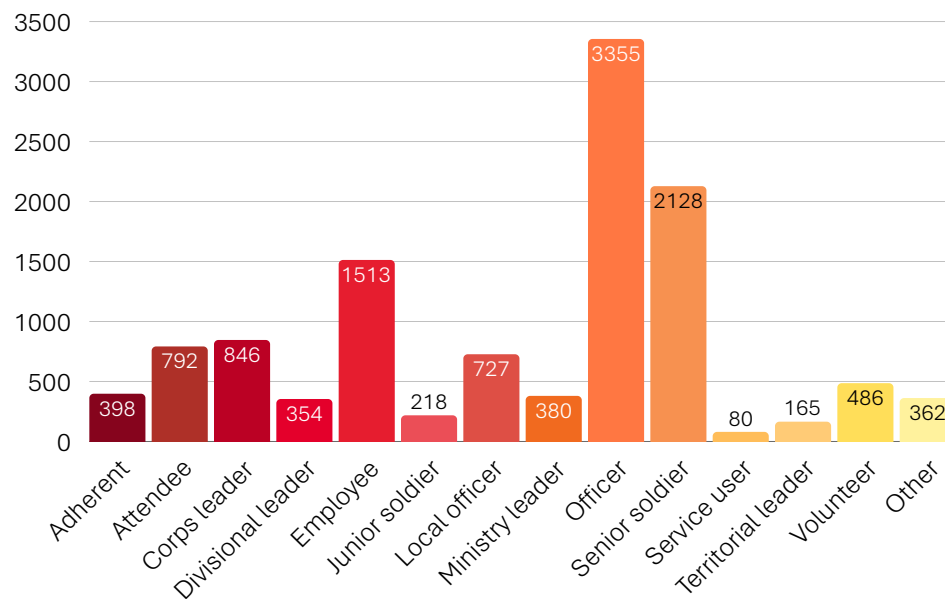
Total number of participants by territory:

This table shows the number of research participants from each territory, in both the online survey and focus groups:

Angola	39
Australia	414
Bangladesh	114
Brazil	42
Canada and Bermuda	281
Caribbean	27
Congo Brazzaville	7
Denmark and Greenland	27
DRC	2
EET	55
Finland and Estonia	18
France and Belgium	345
Germany, Lithuania and Poland	19
Ghana	33
Hong Kong and Macau	104
India Central	13
India Eastern	261
India Northern	67
India South Eastern	14
India South Western	64
India Western	39
Indonesia	123
Italy and Greece	128
Japan	23
Kenya East	281
Kenya West	795
Korea	308
Latin America North	68
Liberia and Sierra Leone	14
Malawi	10
Mali	6

Mexico	193
Middle East	14
Mozambique	39
The Netherlands, Czechia and Slovakia	64
Nigeria	49
Norway, Iceland and the Faeroes	109
New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa	378
Pakistan	619
Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands	25
Rwanda and Burundi	40
Singapore, Malaysia, Myanmar and Thailand	70
South America East	197
South America West	228
Southern Africa	208
Spain & Portugal	38
Sri Lanka	18
Sweden and Latvia	146
Switzerland, Austria and Hungary	76
Taiwan	8
Tanzania	5
The Philippines	62
Uganda	18
United Kingdom and Ireland	413
USA Central	427
USA Eastern	419
USA Southern	179
USA Western	174
Zambia	272
Zimbabwe and Botswana (with Madagascar)	128
Other	14

How would you best describe your relationship with The Salvation Army? (choose all that apply):



Relationship to The Salvation Army

We invited participation from all those connected with The Salvation Army and asked those who responded to best describe their relationship. These self-prescribed categories bring helpful insight and context to the analysis of responses. There was a high response rate by those identifying as officers (40% of all participants).

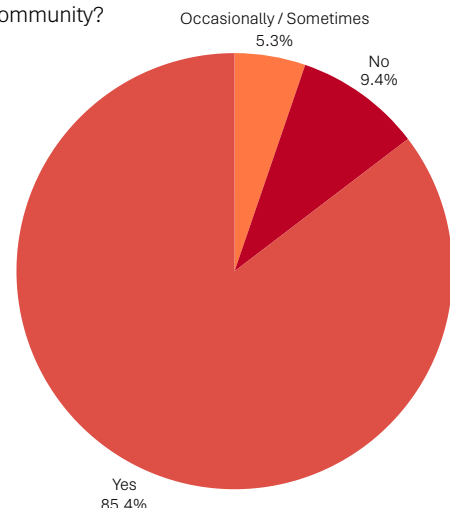
Place of worship

We also asked participants if they consider The Salvation Army to be their primary place of worship or spiritual community. Those who consider The Salvation Army to be their spiritual home were asked further questions related to their spiritual life and The Salvation Army, while those who answered 'no' were asked about their experience of faith in their encounters with The Salvation Army.

Leading others

As well as self-assessment of spiritual health, we wanted to hear from those who are responsible for leading others in their Salvation Army setting – about their experience of leadership and their understanding of the spiritual temperature of those they are leading. An additional set of questions was put to this group in both the survey and focus groups. Of the 4889 leaders who participated, 59% were officers with others leading in their role as an employee, as a local officer or person responsible for leading a ministry area in their corps or community.

Do you consider The Salvation Army to be your primary place of worship or spiritual community?



Community
Welcome Employee
Faith Social
Enriching
Frustrating Spiritual
Work Aid Good
Jesus
Committed Positive
Hope Busy Support
People Care Challenging
Help Service Professional
God
Hurt Action
Respect Love
Kind

Describe your experience of
The Salvation Army in **three** words

The Salvation Army is not my spiritual home.

While not everyone who interacts with The Salvation Army considers it their spiritual home, the movement's Christian identity and mission are widely recognised. Among those who identify as employees, volunteers or service users, but not part of the worshipping community, 94% are aware that The Salvation Army is part of the universal Christian Church and exists to preach the gospel and meet human needs in Jesus' name without discrimination.

When asked to describe their experience of The Salvation Army in three words, responses were mixed but generally carried positive inferences. The most frequently used words are displayed to give an indication of the sentiments that are most strongly felt among this group.

Perhaps even more encouraging, is that almost 3 in 4 of these individuals have had a conversation about faith through their encounter with The Salvation Army. This suggests spiritual influence extends beyond our congregational boundaries. Faith conversations are happening – not just in churches but in service centres, offices and community spaces.

Faith conversations are happening – not just in churches but in service centres, offices and community spaces.

The mission of the international Salvation Army is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ and meet needs *in his name* without discrimination. When those who *do* call The Salvation Army their spiritual home were asked what aspects of their discipleship they find difficult, a quarter of respondents struggle with talking about their faith or telling others about Jesus. Equipping and empowering our people to confidently share their faith with others, to talk about Jesus and the reason for their service, could see more opportunities for faith conversations realised in all areas of ministry and life.

As individuals and as a movement, it is essential that we keep Jesus at the centre of who we are and all we do, even in those spaces and interactions that may not seem typically 'spiritual'.

Spiritual health: thriving or just surviving?

All journeys of life, and of faith, have different seasons. And in every season, some hearts overflow while others hold on quietly. Among those who call The Salvation Army their spiritual home, we seek to hear how many feel they are thriving in their walk with Jesus, how many are navigating a season of survival, faithfully persevering even when growth feels slow or uncertain.

Across both focus groups and survey responses, a hopeful image emerges of a community where many are flourishing, pressing deeper into their relationship with Jesus and finding nourishment in Scripture, in community and the presence of the Holy Spirit every day.



On a scale of 1 to 10, how would you rate your personal relationship with God right now?

Whether describing their own journey or reflecting on the spiritual health of those they lead, there is generally a positive outlook on spiritual life. Where 80% of individuals describe themselves as growing or thriving, leaders also see signs of spiritual momentum, with 44% identifying growth, increased engagement and deepening faith, and 10% recognising their communities as places where they see strong spiritual health, passionate discipleship, and active faith in action. This shared recognition of progress points to a community that is spiritually alive, not static – and seeking to grow.

‘I feel spiritually dry, but I keep showing up.’²

At the same time, among both groups we see signs of weariness, stagnation and the need for renewal. A fifth of individuals share concerns of dryness and fragility, with some even admitting their faith is non-existent right now, and almost half of leaders observe lukewarm engagement and symptoms of apathy or struggle among those they lead.

So what is getting in the way?

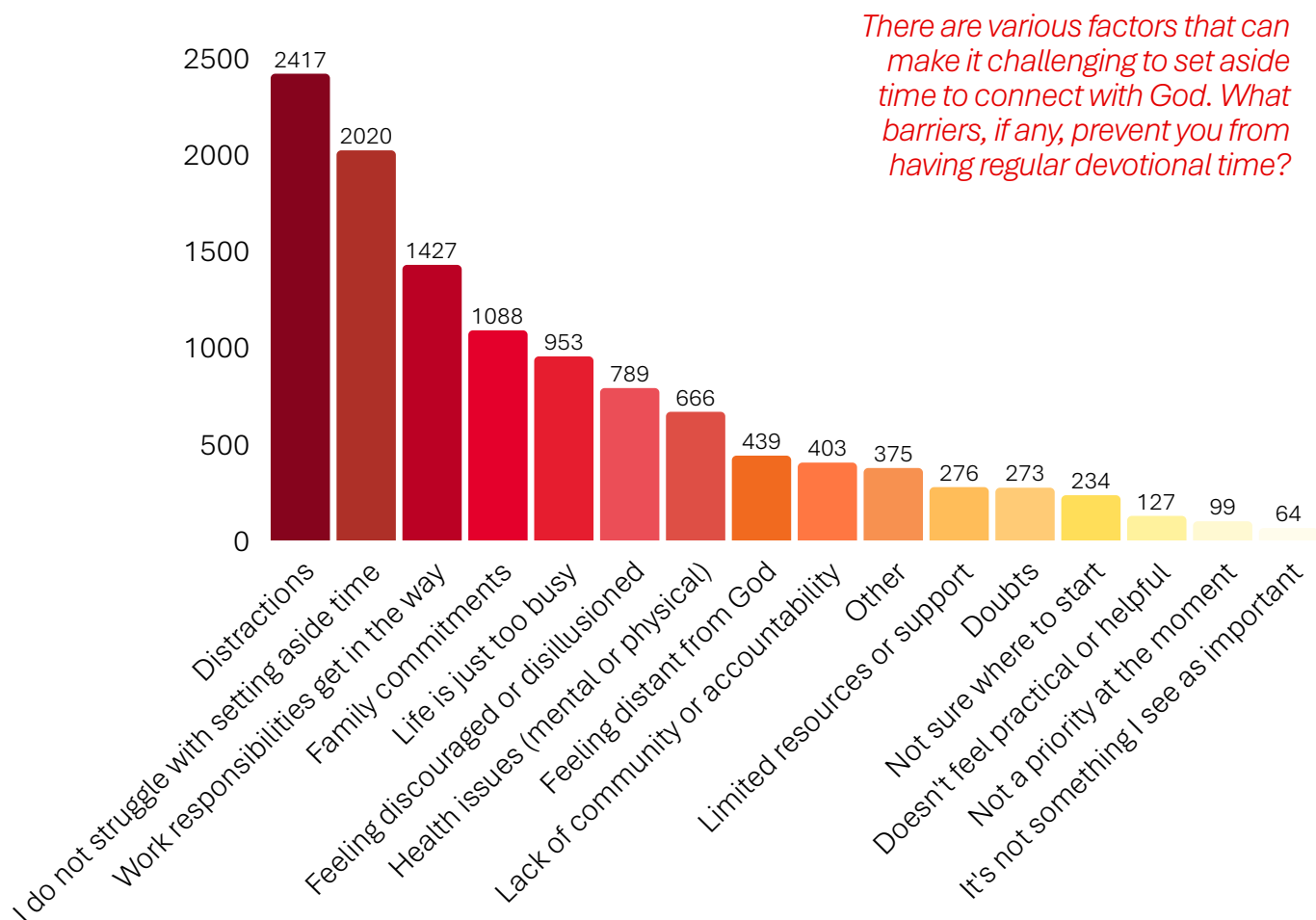


Barriers to growth: what is getting in the way?

Following Jesus in a world that often moves in the opposite direction is not easy - and it never has been. Scripture is full of stories of people who wrestled with doubt, identity, hardship, and distraction, yet still pursued God.

Over a quarter of respondents report no struggle in setting aside time to be with God each day, indicating that many have found rhythms that make space for regular devotional time.

From the survey and focus groups, we see the most common barriers to spiritual growth are not just personal, but deeply human: the pressures and demands of everyday life, emotional and mental burdens, struggles with faith and identity, and relational and structural issues within church communities. Some feel spiritually dry, others overwhelmed, and some simply unsure of where to begin.





Digital distractions are a major competitor for our time, energy and attention with over a third of respondents claiming their screentime (social media, video streaming etc.) is getting in the way of time spent connecting with God. Perhaps unsurprisingly, this is a more common barrier among those under 25 but is consistently high across age groups.

The practical pressures and demands of life – work, family and general busyness - are also among the most reported barriers to spending time with God and make spiritual practices difficult to sustain.

‘My humanity is the greatest hindrance... my imperfections and limitations.’³

Both individuals and leaders identified the emotional toll of life and its impact on spiritual engagement, recognising that feeling discouraged or disillusioned, poor mental health, burnout and loneliness can make it hard to connect with God, even when the desire is present.

Leaders also mention various relational and structural challenges within the church community that they consider to be

hindering growth among their people. Some feel disconnected due to broken relationships, division within the church body or a lack of love and care. Others are disillusioned by poor leadership, outdated structures and stewardship problems.

The reasons self-identified by participants do not reflect negatively on their desire to spend time with God with only a very small number of participants finding time with God ‘impractical, unhelpful or not important’. However, it is interesting to note that apathy, indifference and a lack of commitment were among the most common spiritual struggles leaders identified in their people.

These findings remind us that spiritual growth happens in the reality of everyday life. The barriers people have shared are not necessarily signs of weakness but honest reflections of what it means to follow Jesus in a complex and demanding world. They invite us to respond with care and thoughtfulness, asking how we can come alongside our people in practical ways that help them stay connected to God and continue growing in their faith and relationship with Jesus.

³ Focus group response to the question: What challenges or barriers do you find can make it challenging to grow in your relationship with God? See Appendix 2

Rhythms, resources and relationships: what is helping us to learn and grow?

There are many ways to grow and strengthen our relationship with God. There are practices and habits that we can build into the rhythm of our lives that help us to connect with God and grow in our understanding and experience of who he is. As well as seeking to understand what is making it difficult for our people to invest in their relationship with Jesus, we want to hear what is helping them to learn and grow in their Monday to Sunday lives.

‘Prayer is my lifeline’⁴

Prayer was the most frequently cited practice among all demographics with over 70% of respondents naming prayer as a regular and helpful practice. Prayer, talking and listening to God, is foundational to a flourishing relationship. As we spend more time in prayer, we grow increasingly comfortable in bringing our honest and authentic selves before God and learn to recognise his voice.

While prayer is the most valued practice, establishing a consistent prayer life is also one of the most cited struggles and recognised areas of needed growth among respondents. This suggests the struggle is not in recognising the value of prayer but in creating a regular rhythm of prayer that withstands the competing demands of daily life.

There are many ways to grow and strengthen our relationship with God. Which of the following practices do you regularly engage in to deepen your spiritual life and connect with him?

Prayer	5205	71%
Bible Reading	4714	65%
Worship	4145	57%
Sermons / teaching	3454	47%
Bible study	3430	47%
Serving others	3263	45%
Giving	2609	36%
Meditation / reflection	2501	34%
Time in nature	1493	20%
Silence and solitude	1420	19%
Fasting	1230	17%
Celebrating	898	12%
Journaling	785	11%
Creating	534	7%
Other	282	4%
Feasting	257	4%

⁴ Focus group response to the question: What is helping you to grow as a disciple of Jesus? See Appendix 2 for all responses.

Alongside prayer, engaging with the Bible and worship dominate personal rhythms. The reading and study of God’s Word was mentioned in over 8000 survey responses as a regular spiritual practice. Both individual and group Bible study is considered helpful, often supported by apps and digital resources or structured plans.

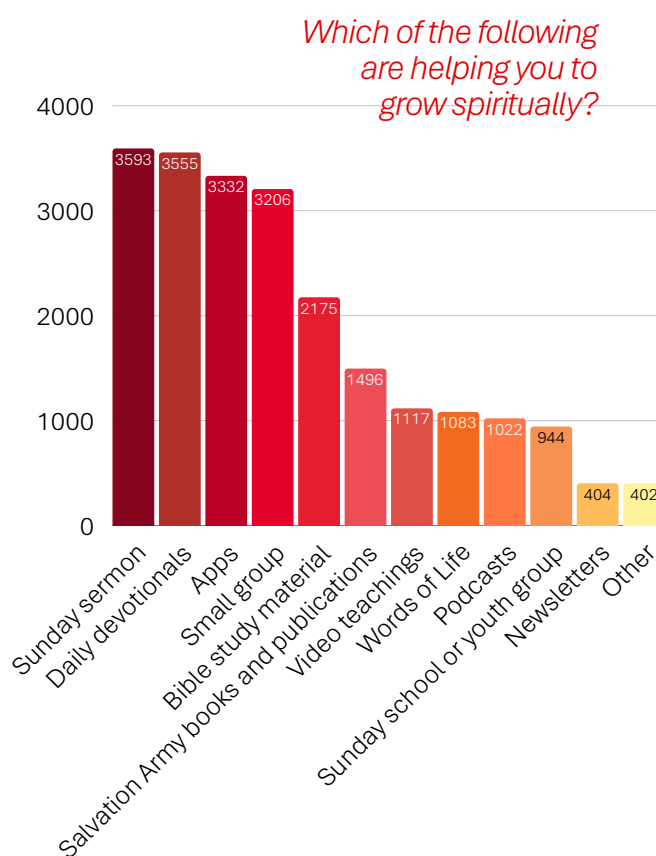
‘My corps has commenced a discipleship course... studying the Bible in a small group and one-on-one has been transformative.’⁵

Focus group participants described the importance of communal Bible study as a ‘weekly anchor’ and ‘a place of shared growth and accountability.’ We all come to Scripture with our own context and our own ideas, our own view of the world and our own relationship with Jesus. As we look at the living Word of God with others, we can learn from their experience, their understanding and perspective – and they can learn from ours. We begin to see familiar words in a new light and open our mind to how God is speaking to us and to others through his Word in many ways.

More contemplative or creative practices like silence and solitude, fasting or journaling are less common, which may suggest there are opportunities to broaden our spiritual toolkit and encourage people to explore new ways to connect with God and

deepen their faith. These disciplines of the inner life offer an antidote to the fast pace of modern life and can help us to discover more of who God is, as well as who he has created us to be.

We can see that spiritual growth is being nurtured through traditional teaching, digital tools and relationships. We can also see how necessary and important it is to engage individually and corporately in practices that help us to know Jesus, become like him and do the things he did. As well as sharing regular practices, we also asked participants to identify the types of tools and resources that are helping them to learn and grow:



⁵ Focus group response to the question: What is helping you to grow as a disciple of Jesus? See Appendix 2 for all responses.

Gathered and personal pursuit of God are important for a growing and thriving spiritual life. Both teaching in weekly gathered worship and resources that guide individuals to encounter God each day are valued. We can see that community matters. Over half of all participants shared that being part of a small group (including Sunday school or youth group) for study, prayer and fellowship is helping them to grow spiritually. This increases to 72% among young people. Among responses it is noted that healthy relationships within a worshipping community create an environment conducive to spiritual growth and are deeply valued for encouragement, accountability and mutual learning. Leaders recognise where relationships breakdown, where there are tensions or hurt, where the unity of the body is lacking, this can be a sign of poor spiritual health and has negative implications for the spiritual life of those in the community.

Technology is having an impact on our discipleship to Jesus with apps, podcasts and online communities becoming increasingly accessible and consistent tools in our daily formation. Apps like YouVersion, Glorify and Lectio 365 are repeatedly recommended by participants as resources that are helping them to grow. These resources are not just tools, but act as companions for the journey, prompting people to stay rooted and connected to their Heavenly Father while living with the demands and within the constraints of modern life.

While digital tools are generally praised, some lament the loss of embodied community where meeting with others is being replaced rather than complimented by the use of technology. One participant shares their experience of disconnection: 'I miss praying with someone in person' and another recognises their unhealthy relationship with their screen: 'I'm addicted to my phone and it steals so much of my time. Even when I'm with other people or when I try and read the Bible or use a devotional app, I get so easily distracted. I know it's not healthy.'

This is a tension that needs to be explored carefully as we move forward to allow us to make the most of the opportunities that digital platforms present, while recognising the limitations of their impact on our discipleship to Jesus too.

Name one resource you are finding helpful in the development of your spiritual life right now:

Words of Life

Lectio 365

Our Daily Bread

YouVersion Bible app

Practicing the Way

Right Now Media

The Bible Project

Pray as you go app

The Bible in a Year

Godly Play

Emotionally Healthy Discipleship

Hallow

Through the Word

Venture 12 Podcast (by TSA in Sweden)

Ask NT Wright Anything podcast

Salvation Army songbook

Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals

Salvationist Radio

Bible Gateway app

Strengthening the Soul of your Leadership – Ruth Haley Barton

Spiritual Misfits podcast

Find the full list of responses in Appendix 1

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.

We believe that there is only one God, who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.

We believe that there are three persons in the Godhead – the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.

We believe that in the person of Jesus Christ the Divine and human natures are united, so that He is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.

We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocency, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness, and that in consequence of their fall all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has by his suffering and death made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.

We believe that repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, are necessary to salvation.

We believe that we are justified by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and that he that believeth hath the witness in himself.

We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.

We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We believe in the immortality of the soul; in the resurrection of the body; in the general judgment at the end of the world; in the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.

These eleven doctrines set out the formal beliefs of The Salvation Army as detailed in Schedule 1 of The Salvation Army Act 1980. They define our understanding of God, humanity and the developing relationship of the Christian life. They are an expression of personal faith and a common vision.

Understanding: Knowing what we believe.

'The Salvation Army's 11 Articles of Faith (Doctrines) are an expression both of personal faith and a common vision. They are consistent with the classical Christian creeds and identify Salvationists as members of the body of Christ on earth.' – *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine*

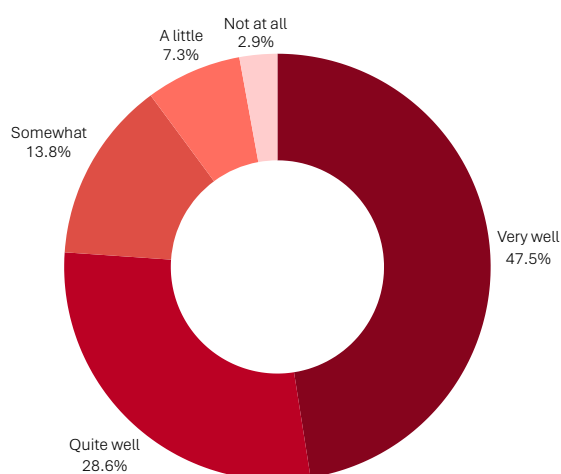
The Salvation Army has 11 doctrines that define what we believe about God, humanity and the developing relationship of the Christian life. There generally appears to be a good understanding of Salvation Army doctrine among participants but with most recognising there is room for growth in their knowledge or expressing a desire to know more.

Almost half of all participants feel they have a strong grasp of the doctrines and are able to confidently apply them in their faith and teaching with a further 29% understanding most of the doctrines and feeling able to explain them to others.

The Salvation Army has 11 doctrines that define what we believe about God, humanity and the developing relationship of the Christian life. How well do you feel you understand these doctrines?

Confidence in Salvation Army doctrine appears to increase with age. Only 17% of those under 25 feel they understand these beliefs 'very well' compared to 44% of those aged between 25-44 and 55% of those over 45. Almost a quarter of those under 25 feel they have little to no understanding of the doctrines compared to only 10% of those aged 25 and over.

As Salvation Army doctrine forms a foundational element of officer training, it is not surprising to see a correlation between officer leadership and increased doctrinal confidence. While more than two thirds feel they have a strong grasp of Salvation Army beliefs, there is still opportunity for growth in understanding and practice among the officer population.



**Holiness in
daily life: Living
what we believe.**



The Salvation Army, as a holiness movement, calls its people to live lives fully surrendered to God and transformed by the Holy Spirit. The survey data paints a hopeful and encouraging picture of how this call is being understood and lived out among respondents, while also revealing some significant opportunities for growth.

Responses such as ‘I’m curious about holiness and what it really means’ and ‘I understand holiness, but I’m still learning how to live it’⁶ suggest a hunger for deeper understanding. While many respondents grasp the concept of holiness, there is a clear recognition that living it out in daily life remains a journey. Almost 60% of respondents indicated capacity for greater understanding, signalling a strong need for continued teaching and discipleship.

For many, holiness is not merely a theological idea. The desire to be holy is actively shaping decisions, relationships, and daily rhythms. Encouragingly, 84% of respondents consistently see evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in their lives and believe others do too, while only 1% feel the fruit is not evident at all. This suggests that the majority are experiencing the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit and perceive evidence in their character and conduct.

‘But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!’


- Galatians 5:22-23 (NLT)

For others, there is still some disconnect between belief and practice. Almost 30% of all respondents feel that maintaining a Christlike attitude in difficult situations is something they struggle with and over a thousand respondents find it difficult to apply faith in daily life. Leaders echo these concerns, citing similar challenges observed among their people such as:

- Living out their faith
- Struggling to live holy lives in a crooked and corrupt economy
- Connecting spiritual journey with everyday
- Conforming to the world and its values, rather than Kingdom values.

These insights highlight the tension between aspiration and application - and an opportunity for increased focus on holiness teaching in a way that connects with everyday life to bridge the gap between understanding and practice.

⁶ Focus group responses to the questions: ‘How do you know you are growing as a disciple of Jesus?’ and ‘what challenges or barriers do you find can make it challenging to grow in your relationship with God?’ See Appendix 2 for all responses.



**Leadership
needs: Equipped
to shepherd?**

We invited those who are responsible for leading others in their Salvation Army setting to answer some additional questions about their experience of supporting others in their spiritual life. Of the 4889 leaders who participated, 59% were officers with others leading in their role as an employee, as a local officer or person responsible for leading a ministry area in their corps or community.

There is a general feeling of preparedness among leaders with 88% reporting they feel well-equipped to lead, support or mentor others in their spiritual life. With this considered, when invited, all were able to identify one thing they need to feel better equipped in this responsibility.

Among responses, there was widespread recognition of the need for leaders to nurture their own spiritual growth, with respondents emphasising the importance of consistent devotional time, accountability, and constant connection with God to sustain their leadership. When self-assessing their own faith journey, we found those who are responsible for leading others are more likely to be rooted and growing, and less likely to be drifting, than other participants.

Supportive relationships are also seen as essential in equipping leaders to lead, with many noting the significance of having

committed prayer partners, reliable mentors, and regular connection with peers to share both the joys and the load of ministry.

Many leaders expressed a desire for more care and support from their own leaders, and from those within their communities, as well as practical resources to assist in their ministry. These additional resources range from more time, money and technology to help overcome some of the physical challenges of their ministry to more accessible teaching tools (audio format teaching, discipleship courses, resources tailored to Salvation Army contexts) and opportunities for training and development.

Amid concerns about misplaced priorities and administrative pressures, leaders are expressing a desire for a renewed emphasis on spiritual formation and authentic discipleship across every area of our work.

These responses show that while many leaders feel equipped and committed, they also need ongoing support spiritually, relationally, and practically. As a movement, we must care for those who lead, ensuring they are resourced, sustained, and encouraged.

‘The development of the spiritual life is not a destination, but a continuous process of growth and transformation. Growing in our relationship with Christ helps us to live more balanced lives, to understand ourselves better and to establish more meaningful relationships with others and with the world around us. By nourishing our spiritual life with the life of Christ, we will discover an inexhaustible source of strength, hope and meaning.’⁷



Key findings:



Overall spiritual health: 80% of individuals describe themselves as growing or thriving in their faith, and leaders also see signs of spiritual momentum. However, 20% report dryness or fragility, and nearly half of leaders observe lukewarm engagement.



Barriers to growth: The most common obstacles include distractions (33%), work responsibilities (18%), family commitments (15%), and emotional or mental health challenges. Leaders also note structural and relational issues within church communities.



Helpful practices: Prayer (71%), Bible reading (65%), and worship (57%) are the most common spiritual practices. Small groups and community relationships are highly valued for accountability and growth.



Digital influence: Apps and online resources (e.g., YouVersion, Lectio 365) are widely used and appreciated, but some participants express concern about screen-related distractions and loss of embodied community.



Understanding and holiness: While most participants understand Salvation Army doctrines, there are gaps in knowledge, particularly among younger people. Many express a desire for deeper understanding of holiness and practical application in daily life.



Leadership needs: 88% of leaders feel equipped to guide others, yet many request more resources, mentoring, and time for personal spiritual growth. There is a strong call for renewed emphasis on authentic discipleship over administrative priorities.

STRENGTHS

We sense spiritual vitality and a desire to grow.

A hopeful picture emerges across both survey and focus-group data: about four in five describe themselves as growing or thriving, with leaders likewise recognising movement toward growth and pockets of thriving communities. This indicates a living, not static, spiritual culture that wants to keep moving toward Jesus.

Core practices are widely embraced.

Prayer (71%), Bible reading (65%), and worship (57%) anchor personal discipleship. Scripture engagement, individually and together, functions as an ‘anchor’ and a shared learning environment that deepens understanding and accountability.

Community and small groups matter - and work.

Over half of all participants point to small groups (including Sunday school/youth group) as a key growth driver, with even stronger influence among young people. Healthy relationships in a worshipping community are seen as catalytic for encouragement, accountability, and development.

We see tangible evidence of transformation.

84% consistently see evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in their lives (and believe others do too), suggesting the Spirit’s ongoing work in character and conduct across the movement.

Our movement is having spiritual influence beyond congregational settings.

Among employees, volunteers and service users who do not view The Salvation Army as their primary worship community, 94% still recognise the Christian identity and mission of our movement; nearly 3 in 4 have had faith conversations through their TSA encounter - showing impact in service centres, offices and community spaces.

Our people are benefiting from access to digital formation tools.

Apps (Bible, prayer, meditation tools) and devotionals are widely used and appreciated, helping many sustain daily habits under the constraints of modern life.

Leaders largely feel equipped and personally rooted.

Of 4,889 leaders, 88% feel equipped to support others spiritually. Leaders self-report being more “rooted and growing” than other participants, and they name peer support, mentoring, and time with God as essential to sustain healthy leadership.

Capacity, not desire, is holding us back from prioritising time with God.

The greatest obstacles are distractions (33%), work (20%), family commitments (15%), busyness (13%), discouragement / disillusionment (11%), and health challenges. Very few see time with God as unimportant - suggesting there is a need to review our personal priorities and address the barriers that prevent us from developing sustainable spiritual rhythms.

Digital formation: manage the ‘companion vs. competitor’ tension

Digital tools aid formation, yet screen time is the single most cited barrier to unhurried time with God. Guidance toward a ‘digital rule of life’ could help many keep technology in service of devotion, not the other way around.

We see some spiritual dryness and fatigue among our people.

While the overall picture is hopeful, around 20% report spiritual dryness or fragility, and nearly half of leaders observe lukewarm engagement. The quote ‘I feel spiritually dry, but I keep showing up’ captures a faithful perseverance that nonetheless signals need for renewal.

Prayer is valued but inconsistent.

Although prayer is the most valued practice, many also name it among their key struggles, indicating the need for simple, sustainable patterns and community support to make prayer a regular rhythm, not a sporadic aspiration.

Supporting and resourcing leaders.

Even with high self-reported readiness, leaders ask for more replenishment, mentoring, peer connection and accessible tools alongside relief from administrative burdens that crowd out spiritual focus.

There is some disconnect between our beliefs and intentions, and our living.

Nearly a third struggle to maintain a Christlike posture in difficult situations, and over a thousand find it hard to apply faith in daily life. Leaders echo this, naming the challenge of living holy lives amid cultural/economic pressures and connecting the spiritual journey to everyday contexts as present among their people.

There are gaps in doctrine confidence and understanding.

Across all demographics, there is room for growth in knowledge and practice of Salvation Army doctrine, highlighting an opportunity for more accessible teaching that builds understanding and ownership. As confidence in Salvation Army doctrine is notably lower among those under 25, some intentional teaching among this age group may be valuable.



Spiritual life is dynamic so discernment must be ongoing.

Recognising this research only captures a moment in time snapshot of something living and relational, the rich responses highlight the value of continued attentiveness, of listening to the Spirit and to our people. We recommend ongoing measure of spiritual health, of individuals and our movement, and the development of tools, indicators and criteria to assist with this.

Work is already underway to refine the Territorial Review process so that it better reflects the spiritual life of a territory. By integrating spiritual indicators into review conversations, we can help ensure discipleship remains central not just alongside strategy and governance, but as a defining measure of health and mission.

Continuing the conversation around spiritual life.

The focus group questions used in this research project remain available as a tool for exploring spiritual health with your corps or small group, or for your own personal reflection. These questions offer a helpful starting point for conversations around spiritual health and may help you to identify your own strengths and weaknesses, personally and as a community.

- When and where do you feel close to God?
- What has been the most significant moment in your spiritual life in the past year?
- How is your daily life impacted by following Jesus?
- What is helping you to grow as a disciple of Jesus?
- How do you know if you're growing as a disciple?
- What challenges or barriers do you find can make it challenging to grow in your relationship with God?

If members of the group are also responsible for leading others:

- How would you describe the overall spiritual health of the people you lead?
- What are the most common spiritual struggles among those you minister to?
- Do you feel well-equipped to lead/support/mentor others in their spiritual life?
- What do you need to feel better equipped as you support others?

Only God can truly measure the heart, yet the voices gathered here trace a hopeful contour: **a people hungry for Christ, formed by prayer and Scripture, strengthened in community, and open to the Spirit's renewing work.** Where weariness and distraction threaten, grace invites a deeper abiding. The signs suggest not stagnation but a stirring. If we continue to put Jesus at the centre of all we are and do, as we seek to know him more, to become like him and do what he did, we will see fruit.



What is Compass?

In September 2024, General Lyndon Buckingham launched Compass, a global strategic framework for the international Salvation Army with a focus on empowering people, enhancing mission impact and establishing an enduring legacy.

Spiritual Life is one of twelve priority areas identified for the global Salvation Army, recognising there is a need for us as a movement and as individuals to enhance our spiritual depth and commitment to holiness and to stay true to our mission and values as The Salvation Army.

You can find out more about Compass and how you can get involved at sar.my/strategy.

Appendix 1: Collated survey questions and responses.

The Salvation Army International
Spiritual Life Survey

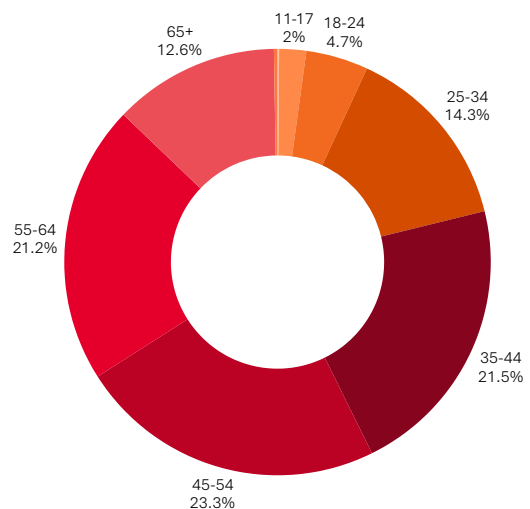
SECTION 1

About you.

Tell us a little about yourself and your relationship with The Salvation Army.

1. Age:

Under 7 years	3
7-10 years	7
11-17 years	165
18-24 years	381
25-34 years	1152
35-44 years	1738
45-54 years	1879
55-64 years	1708
65+	1016
Prefer not to say	22



2. Gender:

Male	3580
Female	4428
Prefer not to say	82

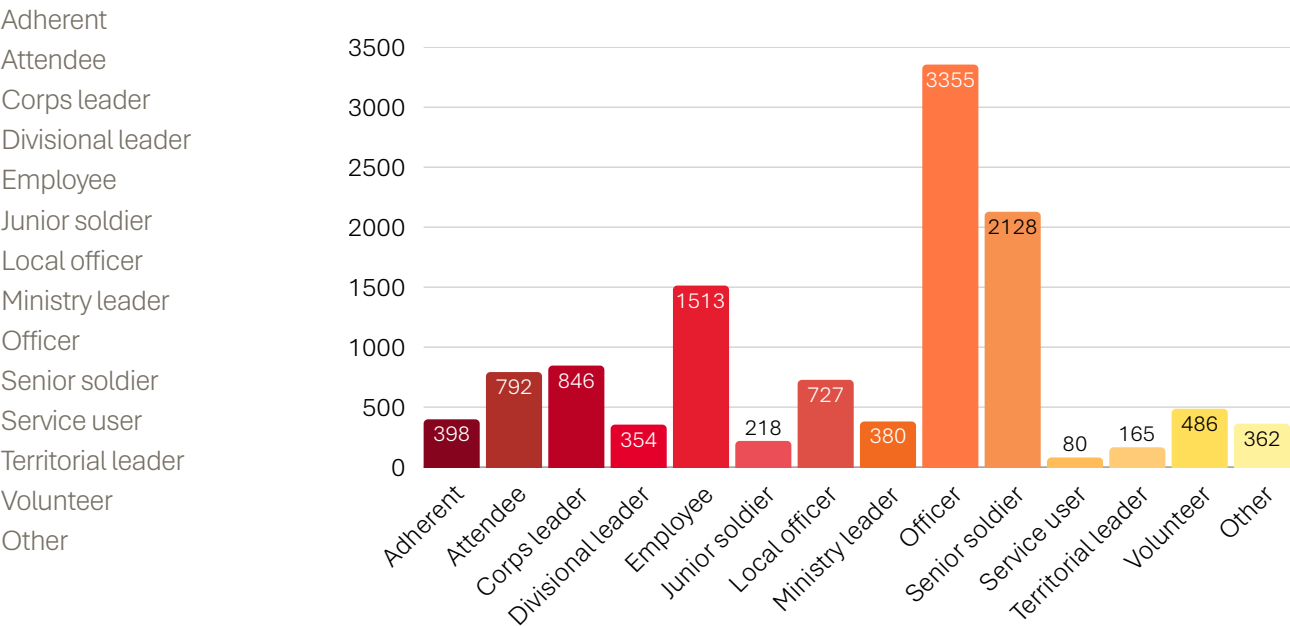
3. Country: [select from list of all countries]

The Salvation Army in Kenya is made up of two territories. Which one do you live in?
Kenya East / Kenya West / I don't know

The Salvation Army in the USA is made up of four territories. Which one do you live in?
USA Central / USA Eastern / USA Southern / USA Western / I don't know

The Salvation Army in India is made up of six territories. Which one do you live in?
India Central / India Eastern / India Northern / India South Eastern / India South Western / India Western

4. How would you best describe your relationship with The Salvation Army? (Choose all that apply).



5. Do you consider The Salvation Army to be your primary place of worship or spiritual community?

Yes	6855
No	785
Occasionally / sometimes	440

SECTION 2 - to be completed by those who selected 'no' in question 5.
Your experience of The Salvation Army.
Tell us some more about your experience of The Salvation Army.

6. The Salvation Army is part of the universal Christian church and seeks to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and meet human needs in his name without discrimination. Did you know this?

Yes	738
No	47

7. Have you had any conversations about faith with someone in The Salvation Army?

Yes	581
No	204

8. Describe your experience of The Salvation Army in three words.

SECTION 3 - to be completed by those who answered 'yes' and 'occasionally/sometimes' in question 5.

Your spiritual life.

Tell us about your current spiritual life, how you are growing in faith and relationship with God right now.

6. How would you rate your personal relationship with God right now? (From 0 'distant and disconnected' to 10 'close and deeply connected')

Promoters (9-10)	2894
Passives (7-8)	3246
Detractors (0-6)	1155

7. Faith journeys have different seasons. Which of the following best describes where you are right now?

Rooted, growing and thriving in Christ	3366
Growing	2499
Maintaining but not growing	607
Struggling but pressing on	751
Drifting away	60
Non-existent	12

8. In a typical week, how often do you set aside time to connect with God (through prayer, Bible reading, study, reflection etc.)?

Everyday	4284
4-6 times a week	1385
2 or 3 days a week	1145
Once	393
Never	88

9. There are various factors that can make it challenging to set aside time to connect with God. What barriers, if any, prevent you from having regular devotional time?

Distractions	2417
I do not struggle with setting aside time	2020
Work responsibilities get in the way	1427
Family commitments	1088
Life is just too busy	953
Feeling discouraged or disillusioned	789
Health issues (mental or physical)	666
Feeling distant from God	439
Lack of community or accountability	403
Other	375
Limited resources or support	276
Doubts	273
Not sure where to start	234
Doesn't feel practical or helpful	127
Not a priority at the moment	99
It's not something I see as important	64

10. There are many ways to grow and strengthen our relationship with God. Which of the following practices do you regularly engage in to deepen your spiritual life and connect with him?

Note: this is not an exhaustive list. Please feel free to suggest another.

Prayer	5205
Bible reading	4714
Worship	4145
Listening to sermons/teaching	3454
Bible study	3430
Serving others	3263
Giving	2609
Meditation/reflection	2501
Spending time in nature	1493
Silence and solitude	1420
Fasting	1230
Celebrating	898
Journaling	785
Creating	534
Other	282
Feasting	257

11. Which of the following are helping you to grow spiritually?

Sunday message/sermon	3593
Daily devotionals	3555
Bible, prayer or meditation apps	3332
Small group	3206
Bible study material	2175
Salvation Army books and publications	1496
Video teachings	1117
Words of Life	1083
Podcasts	1022
Sunday school or youth group	944
Newsletters	404
Other	402

12. Name one resource you are finding helpful in the development of your spiritual life right now:

- Words of Life
- Lectio 365
- Our Daily Bread
- YouVersion Bible app
- Practicing the Way
- Right Now Media
- The Bible Project
- Pray as you go app
- The Bible in a Year
- Godly Play
- Emotionally Healthy Discipleship

- Hallow
- Through the Word
- Venture 12 Podcast (by TSA in Sweden)
- Ask NT Wright Anything podcast
- Salvation Army songbook
- Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals
- Salvationist Radio
- Bible Gateway app
- Strengthening the Soul of your Leadership – Ruth Haley Barton
- Spiritual Misfits podcast
- Praying the Names of God – Ann Spangler
- The Ten Minute Bible Hour podcast
- How to Pray – Pete Greig
- Everyday Faith – Church of England app
- Everyday with Jesus – app from Waverley Abbey Retreat Centre
- Celebration of Discipline
- The Daily Examen
- God in my Everything – Ken Shigematsu
- Daily Manna
- She Reads Truth
- Dwell Bible app
- Renovation of the Heart – Dallas Willard
- Matthew: Living everyday as Jesus taught us – Scot McKnight
- BSF – Bible Study Fellowship
- Wordgo – BSF app
- Open-handed living in a tight-fisted world
- My phone alarm – a reminder to read the Bible
- Logos app
- Pray.com
- Beholding – Strahan Coleman
- Falling Upward – Richard Rohr
- The Way app
- Alpha
- Abide
- The Upper Room Disciplines: A book of daily devotions
- The Bible Course from Bible Society

13. The Salvation Army has 11 doctrines that define what we believe about God, humanity and the developing relationship of the Christian life. How well do you feel you understand these doctrines?

Very well – I have a strong grasp of the doctrines and confidently apply them in my faith and teaching.	3466
Quite well – I understand most of the doctrines and can explain them to others.	2085
Somewhat – I have a general understanding but could learn more.	1005
A little – I know some basic points but not much detail.	530
Not at all – I have little to no understanding of the doctrines.	209

14. The Salvation Army is a holiness movement, emphasising a life transformed by the Holy Spirit and fully surrendered to God. How well do you feel you understand holiness and its role in your personal walk with Jesus?

Not at all – I have little to no understanding of holiness.	65
A little – I’ve heard about it but don’t fully grasp what it means.	304
Somewhat – I understand the basics but could learn more.	1112
Quite well – I have a solid understanding and can explain it to others.	2795
Very well – I deeply understand holiness and apply it in my daily life.	3019

15. Holiness is not just a belief, it’s a way of life that shapes our thoughts, actions, and decisions. God’s children are called to reflect God’s holiness and allow his Holy Spirit to transform them. To what extent does the doctrine of holiness guide your everyday life?

Not at all – It doesn’t influence my daily life or decisions.	62
A little – I’m aware of it, but it doesn’t shape my choices much.	301
Somewhat – It influences me at times, but not consistently.	806
Quite a bit – It guides many aspects of my faith and decisions.	2533
To a great extent – It is the foundation of how I live and make decisions daily.	3593

16. The fruit of the Spirit is not something believers can produce on their own. It is the Holy Spirit who works in the lives of Christians to cultivate these aspects of character. Galatians 5:22-23 describes the fruit of the Spirit as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Reflecting on this, how evident do you feel the fruit of the Spirit is in your life right now?

Not at all – I don’t see the fruit of the Spirit in my life, and I don’t think others do either.	65
A little – I see some evidence of the fruit of the Spirit, but it’s not consistent.	1077
Quite a bit – The fruit of the Spirit is evident in many areas of my life.	3745
To a great extent – The fruit of the Spirit is clearly visible in my life.	2408

17. As disciples of Jesus, we are in training for life! We all continue to learn and grow, have our own strengths and areas for growth. What do you find difficult?

Controlling my thoughts and emotions	2580
Maintaining a Christlike attitude in difficult situations	2132
Consistent prayer life	1777
Overcoming temptation	1499
Bible study	1151
Trusting God in uncertain times	1106
Applying faith in daily life	1074
Telling others about Jesus	988
Talking about my faith with others	833
Experiencing joy in my faith	778
Understanding scripture	643
Living out my faith in a region where Christians are persecuted or are in the minority	611
Loving and serving others	556
Other	489

SECTION 4

Supporting others in their spiritual life.

18. Are you currently responsible for leading others in your Salvation Army setting? (corps officer, local ministry leader etc.)

Yes 4889

No 2406

The following questions are to be answered by those who answered 'yes' to question 18.

19. How would you describe the overall spiritual health of the people you lead?

Struggling – Facing significant spiritual challenges, low engagement, and little growth.	418
Weak – Some spiritual activity, but many are disengaged or stagnant.	475
Maintaining – A steady but lukewarm spiritual atmosphere; some growth but also challenges.	1371
Growing – Seeing spiritual momentum, increased engagement, and a deepening faith.	2157
Thriving – Strong spiritual health, passionate discipleship, and active faith in action.	468

20. What are the most common spiritual struggles among those you minister to? [duplicates removed from this list]

- Doubt
- Identity and purpose
- Prayer
- Spiritual discipline
- Temptation and sin
- Understanding the grace of God personally
- During times of challenge are enticed into traditional religious practices that contradict Army beliefs and practices
- Living out their faith
- Struggling to live holy lives in a crooked and corrupt economy
- Lacking self-reflection
- Steady but lukewarm spiritual atmosphere
- Poor emotional health
- Weak faith
- Spiritual, emotional and physical fatigue
- No consistency in practicing spiritual disciplines
- Question where the Army is going
- Connecting spiritual journey with everyday
- Compromise
- Lack of discipleship and time
- Holding tightly to tradition
- Apathy – no hope, no vision, no sense of life
- Excessively stressed
- Consistency in attendance
- Lack of depth in Bible study and biblical understanding
- Struggle with relationships
- High school Sunday school students find Bible reading and daily devotion a challenge
- Forgiving themselves

- Need for pastoral care
- Social networks
- The social and economic crises of the country
- Bad example and administration of previous officers, which damaged the faith of the brothers
- They hold false beliefs and others have a very rigid or legalistic view of the gospel.
- Mental health, anxiety and depression
- Lack of authority to evangelize
- Stagnation
- Belief in witchcraft
- Connecting faith with action
- Perception of God as an angry Santa Klaus who rewards and punishes
- Loneliness
- Past trauma
- Distraction from those who refuse to grow
- Fear and anxiety
- envy, problems with authority, lack of love and forgiveness
- Trusting God!
- Division between the people, lack of love and care in corps community
- Religiosity which impedes growth
- Power, control, abuse, misuse of authority
- Unfaithfulness to God and a tendency to worship other Gods
- I think the main battle we see is the struggle to deny ourselves. (Refusing to always be right.)
- To live in complete dependence on God
- Disengagement and complacency - Becoming complacent due to age and longevity in their faith
- Understanding the biblical perspective about giving
- Taking individual responsibility for their faith
- Limited understanding of God's capacity to transform
- Inconsistent teaching in the church
- Living too fast and not making time to slow down
- Lack of joy
- Burnout
- Selfishness
- Overcoming a sense of not being good enough
- Deeper understanding of holiness and theology
- Seeing the value of walking in relationship with God, rather than just declaring you are a Christian and maintaining the status quo. Many love the tag that they go to church, but it is social, not tied to their heart.
- not seeing daily growth in their spiritual life
- Poverty
- Addiction
- immaturity in their spiritual life
- Gossip
- Lacking in good relationships within church community - inability to have honest, direct conversations with leaders, peers, corps members
- I live in senior living facility and so many of the residents have no relationship with Christ and realize they are in the last stages of their lives. Many struggle with regrets, poor health and family history. The lack of opportunity to attend their churches and practices disappoints them. I am trying to fill the gaps with my witness and prayers. I do a small group and I feel it's helpful! I'm praying God will grant me the strength it requires to be help!
- Thinking they are too old to grow
- Lack of understanding of what it means to be a disciple - many are 'born Christian' and have learned by rote what to do but without a meaningful personal experience.

- Seeing unchristian attitudes in other Christians
- A church that is outdated and confining
- Are not growing, always more on serving the community needs and events and no deep bible study, or Worship services
- Little sense of belonging
- Stewardship problems
- Being guided by the Holy Spirit
- They assume they have "arrived" so they are stunted rather than growing
- Indifference
- Conflict in country
- Lack of integrity, people don't live what they say they believe
- Do not have a living experience of the Lord
- Learning difficulties
- Conforming to the world and its values, rather than kingdom values
- Too much grumbling and negativity
- The challenge of life change ... from old patterns to patterns of discipleship and being an apprentice of Jesus
- Biblical illiteracy

21. Do you feel well-equipped to lead/support/mentor others in their spiritual life?

Yes 4298

No 591

22. What one thing do you need to feel better equipped or supported as you support others in their spiritual life?
[duplicates removed from this list]

- Resources
- Audio teachings
- Personal time with God
- Mentorship
- Mobile data
- Prayer support and encouragement from others
- More education
- Resources for Salvation Army context
- Safety
- A spiritually invested Corps Officer who will tell me the things that I do not want to hear about a life in Jesus and challenge my spirit to come closer to God so as to serve others efficiently.
- More visual and technological resources
- Focus coming from HQ seems to be more focussed on business and what we do socially than on the spiritual leadership development or encouragement. This leads to greater focus on business outcomes which leads to greater pressure on frontline. Frontline ends up supporting work of HQ rather than HQ supporting frontline. So the one thing is a reversal of this approach.
- A team of officers and local officers who are focused on people
- More time
- Financial support
- More courage
- Love
- Contact with my Divisional Commander more than 1-2 times per year.
- More support from territorial leaders

continued...

- In my context, Salvation Army, I see a strong emphasis on outward holiness—such as abstaining from drinking, smoking, adultery, and maintaining tidy uniforms and hairbuns. But what about the condition of our hearts? Who is addressing that aspect? We can create hundreds of soldiers who refrain from drinking and smoking, or officers who claim they don't engage in financial corruption. However, what about the impact of our actions on others? What about the mistreatment and control over people's personal lives? As Jesus said, Blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and dish, and then the outside also will be clean. (Matthew 23:26) Are we become pharisee?
- Opportunity to receive foundational theology/foundational ministry training
- I need leadership too. Someone who will pray for me and with me, listen to me, and accompany me. We all need this exchange; it also makes the work easier.
- Workshops
- Having discipleship courses and seeing more officer support within the Corps would make a huge impact.
- people to be passionate enough to want to grow - something to inspire them
- I need community and social interaction.
- I think I have plenty of resources. I feel an accountability for my own spiritual life is important. I have an accountability partner. We have seasons of meeting well and seasons of not connecting very frequently. We are currently in a season of not connecting very well, and I can feel it in my soul. We have discussed making our connection more intentional and frequent.
- Some Leadership in the Corps to take some of the load off of me
- More time away from computer/stats/business of running corps
- A small group for officers where we can meet together - not venting about the army - but growing spiritually. It is hard to find a bible study where I can grow personally.
- Someone from my SA Corps to ask me about my own Spiritual life. While I have this accountability outside of the SA, there isn't anyone in my own congregation asking me how I am doing.
- A greater sensitivity to the Spirit and dependence on Him
- I feel well equipped, however, many around me do not seem as well equipped. I feel like what discipleship is, has been confused, complicated and abandoned. The reliance of shallow sermons, surface bible study/Sunday School is what leaders are relying on for people to go deeper and grow.
- Updated tools for evangelism
- I am not fed by my Army. I am entertained. I am brought to rally. I am everything but fed.
- guided discussion questions
- Being more consistently healthy in my faith journey so that I have enough in my tank to support and lead others
- Figuring out the balance between work and self-care, so that I can be more available to others.
- Innovative and practical programs that are accessible and can be shared as tools for everyone's growth, without too much cost.
- Support from my corps leaders and more trainings about the Salvation Army doctrines etc. And me personally having a consistent devotional time with God - if there could be resources to help with personal devotions will be very helpful
- More theology

Appendix 2: Collated focus group questions and responses.

Total number of focus groups: 291

Please note the total number of participants in each demographic:

Under 7 years	0	Male	98	Adherent	10
18-24 years	37	Female	163	Junior soldier	10
45 – 54 years	38	Prefer not to say	20	Service user	2
7-10 years	8			Attendee	28
25-34 years	51			Local officer	23
55-64 years	37			Territorial leader	1
11-17 years	31			Corps leader	7
35-44 years	46			Ministry leader	0
65+	43			Volunteer	0
				Divisional leader	1
				Officer	26
				Other	43
				Employee	9
				Senior soldier	121

Question 1: How is your daily life impacted by following Jesus?

- There is a sense our lives are completely impacted, living a sacramental life
- Following Jesus shapes the way we act, believe, and speak
- Having followed Jesus for a long time, it's part of who I am – the values and 'Jesus outlook' I have (modelled by parents and others) I follow and live out in my life
- My faith in Jesus and the things in his word are the lens that I look through in everything. Not just in my decision making but in everything – the way I walk my journey
- Impacts the way I act and behave – in every area of my life, not just when I have my Salvo uniform on
- Faith comes up against the realities of life – the tough times, world events etc. and I have hope in all situations
- Honesty is a big thing – I find in my work I have to do things properly – not take shortcuts, doing things the best I can to the best of my ability because of my faith
- Doing the right thing – guided by my faith – that I'm true to who I am
- I live with an awareness of the people I interact or work with – not just about the task but about the people
- Mindfulness of others – seeking relationships that are honouring and healthy
- Awareness of those I interact with who don't have faith – conscious to do that well (i.e. don't 'bible bash') and answer questions as they arise. Being conscious of where people are at and not being 'too in their face'
- Living like 'Jesus is walking beside me' as I go
- Considering everything I say and do – is this honouring to God?
- As I walk the steps He has ordained for me – taking into account the chaos and everything, Jesus offset's that, giving me an assurance and confidence – giving me exactly what I need at the right time
- Love your neighbour – calls me to see others and to think of others differently
- In retirement I've mixed more with non-Christians more than ever before. This is a liberating challenge and to find that people sometimes ask me about my faith – I find myself speaking about my faith more, rather than about TSA (escaping the Salvation Army bubble)

Question 1: How is your daily life impacted by following Jesus? (continued)

- Prayer has become an integral part of my daily life. Spending time communing with Jesus daily serves to focus my mind on doing my best to manifest the qualities of the Messiah, including compassion, generosity, reliability, and purity. I have become a more accepting person due my Christian faith.
- I think about Jesus and what he would do, and what is required of me every day. I live “as unto God”, reflect on his Word and enjoy the benefits every day. I talk to him, and I try to focus on my blessings. I find opportunities to share a word in season about Jesus. I am at peace despite the troubles around me. I am saved daily by his grace and forgiveness. I am so thankful to him for dying on the cross for my sin and defeating death. I sing praises to him daily.
- It guides me in the choices and decisions I make. Do they line up with the teachings of Jesus?
- I am blessed with a way of life that makes me a much better person than I was before I found him 20 years ago.
- I try to live my life with Jesus at the forefront of everything I do. Making decisions based on the Scriptures and prayer.
- As a new Christian, I’m noticing that I’m changing. I question my behaviours more and I feel like my heart is more open to what I call “Churchy stuff”. I’ve always wanted to be a good person, but now I REALLY feel called to be a good person and to learn more. It’s been really interesting to notice the changes in myself. I actually read the bible and go to church now. Me from just a couple of years ago would have cringed at this idea!
- It helps me define what is right and wrong, how to treat others. It shows me I am loved and valued by the creator and give me the confidence to tackle what life throws at me.
- I’m not sure what you mean but its good.
- For me growing in my relationship with God and better following Jesus.
- Jesus is my life, everything I do is informed by my relationship with him. My purpose in life is to bring him honour and glory and to nurture my relationship with him.
- I could not go a day without following Jesus. He is our Good Shepherd, He guides, leads and strengthens us by His Holy Spirit. He will never leave us nor forsake us and I would like to think that my relationship with the Lord will remain steadfast and grow on a daily basis, staying close to Him in all aspects of my day. John 10.
- Following Jesus is a non negotiable in my life. He is my guide, my Saviour.
- I enjoy my life with peace and fell that someone with me
- Live harmony with others and try to avoid evil things
- Following Jesus sometimes there is bad impact, Muslim people rudely behave with me.
- Day by day growing up Spiritually
- I’m curious about holiness and what it really means
- Enjoy to read the Bible
- Inspire to lead life in honesty
- Everything is impacted. Whole life, whole being, all groups that you belong to is impacted
- All decisions and options are taken through the focus on Jesus. He guides and directs. Decisions about health, family, life, friendships, purchases are kingdom choices and not materialistic.
- We no longer feel that we are like the world, and that we belong less and less to it
- We want Jesus to come and reign in us and in the world
- We allow ourselves to be guided and shaped by him and not by the way the world works.
- I experience internal peace, joy and contentment.
- It makes my life easier and lighter; gives me strength to go ahead. Jesus is my help in every life situation.
- I know that I’m not alone. I know he protects me.
- It helps me in my workplace. People know I am different.
- It helps me respond with mercy and compassion, and boldness to evangelize.
- It gives me wisdom and guidance.

Question 1: How is your daily life impacted by following Jesus? (continued)

- It helps me live his example and not conform to the world.
- Influences the security of companionship and guidance
- Influences the need to strengthen myself to guide others.
- Influences the desire to be better every day.
- Following Jesus has given the sense of having a Father—someone who is always watching over and guiding each step. There is freedom from past pain.
- Direction is found in life, with guidance in decision-making. There is a sense of peace in knowing that one is not alone in anything they do or anywhere they go.
- Following Christ has had a positive impact. Many have seen changes in how they view life and relate to those around them. It has helped develop a level of self-confidence not previously experienced.
- Jesus' assurance and my faith in him instils peace within me
- Having the confidence in my life even when I am surrounded by trials and temptations
- Having a respectful life and relationships because of my identity in Christ.
- Not being negatively influenced by others
- Trying to live in a way that Jesus would
- How I act, the words I say, the food I consume, the drinks I drink, the way I treat people
- My outlook on life, deciding what really matters and what doesn't
- How I spend my time
- The media I consume
- My political views
- Everything (but I still make mistakes)
- The way I communicate – to friends, to strangers
- My opinion of myself and others
- Changes who I am and how I make decisions
- I love more and hate less
- I feel better about myself
- I am happy and smile more
- Makes me different to others
- Patience that comes from God
- Helps me to know what is right and what is wrong
- Pray everyday

Question 2: What is helping you to grow as a disciple of Jesus?

- Personal and intentional time with the Lord
- Corporate worship
- Reading other resources
- Professional pastoral supervision, and spiritual direction
- Private worship and prayer
- Listening to my COs sermons ☺
- Corporate faith community
- Personal reflection
- Holy Spirit movement – when I spend time with the Lord, he speaks to me and helps me to grow – bringing words of refocus, a prompting etc.
- By listening to Rick Warren's podcast – this has really grown me as a Christian (he puts things in an easy way to understand, as he's podcasting to new Christians and as well as long term Christians)
- Listening to Timothy Keller as I walk in the mornings (and other podcasts)

Question 2: What is helping you to grow as a disciple of Jesus? (continued)

- Commitment to different disciplines – Lectio 365, time in prayer, daily rituals and rhythms of life that help me focus and immerse myself in God's presence, which helps me to notice things about others and situations
- Apps on my phone and other aids help me daily
- Technology – access to other speakers and theologians on YouTube etc. Putting faith questions in other realms
- Since COVID, IHQ has been more engaged in social media and that has helped. General's messages are very helpful and relevant to what's happening. The increase of material is helpful and necessary today
- Spending time with people of no faith really helps me nail down what I believe and how I communicate my faith with others – a season of chaplaincy has been a gift to really help me in this (and how I approach life and ministry)
- My Corps has commenced a discipleship course which is geared towards this type of growth. In addition, I find studying the Bible (in a small group and one-on-one with various ministers) to be transformative. With regards to the one-on-one sessions, I regularly engage in – I have been informed by the faith with which ministers read the Bible. My own background as a professional historian and critical thinker has resulted in a symbiotic relationship with my counterparts that lead to a rich and nuanced understanding of the Testaments.
- Prayer, reading the Bible, reading devotionals, listening to sermons by other preachers like those found in the Cornerstone Teaching Library (<https://cornerstonechapel.net/teachings/teaching-library/>), conversations with other Christians and attending Sunday services. A kind friend read the Bible with me recently.
- Asking myself what would Jesus do? Do I reflect the fruits of the Spirit.
- My involvement in the Christian community through The Salvation Army's church activities, as well as understanding more about the bible through the teachings of the Bible Project (<https://bibleproject.com>) and the joy of listening to Christian music through YouTube music.
- Daily Bible reading, prayer and studying the Scriptures. Fellowship with other believers is also important in my life
- Getting to know Him better. Learning more about Him. An Alpha course I'm doing is really helpful. Also an online bible study. I prefer these formats to Church in terms of learning, and I like learning from people who understand what it's like to go from being a non-believer to believing, because I can't relate to people who have always believed.
- Prayer, reading scripture, mixing with other Christians. Worship and contributing through service.
- With connection and formation.
- My time with God and drawing into the teachings of Jesus, as lead by the Spirit.
- Daily devoted time in the word and prayer, focused study of the word, worship and fellowship with fellow believers and service at corps level and in community.
- Spending time with the Lord Jesus, reading the Word of God and trusting Him and knowing His will for me. Getting to know Him intimately. Hearing His voice and responding in love and obedience as Holy Spirit directs me. I need to be focused on Holy Spirit teaching me as I read the Word of God. It is not just the pages, but the profound presence of God as I seek the Living Word. Discipleship is also inspired by others in the body of Christ who draw along side. Also, always being ready to repent when necessary. Ultimately, it is the Power in His precious Blood that brings forgiveness of sin, healing and wholeness to us and giving God all the glory as He transforms us by His Holy Spirit. Really it is all about deep loving relationship with the Lord.
- Bible teaching at worship, my small group seeking the word and how we can live like Jesus.
- Bible Reading ,meditation and Sharing Bible taught with friends and family
- Listen the Sermon/ Message, Join Corps activities
- Reading Christian Books, Holy Spirit Inspiration

Question 2: What is helping you to grow as a disciple of Jesus? (continued)

- Holy Spirit inspiration, Fasting Prayer
- Church Moral and Spiritual Teaching
- Participate Church Evangelical work,
- Good preaching. Scripture explained by people who may think differently. Bible based teaching. Preparing sermons is also a way of developing ourselves personally. It is exciting to prepare around God's word!
- Important to "pronounce" and live out what we are reading. Through song or in sharing the word.
- Being part of Bible study groups.
- Seeing spiritual results in others as they grow in Christ – inspiring.
- Translating material from English to other languages – blessed in this preparation.
- Listening to Christian music – an hour's bus journey to work each way!
- Living out what we read. Living out testimonies that we hear from others. Putting into action our words and learning.
- Times of Solitude with God
- Reading the Word, sharing it and praying together
- We also grow through health difficulties, for example, because we know that God will never abandon us
- By doing our own personal worship: praying, singing, reading the Word for ourselves, listening to teachings using today's media, delving deeper on our own, using commentaries and guides that nourish us, etc.
- God's Word – reading (including other versions and languages), studying (alone or in a group), meditating on it. My Corps officer helps me understand. The example of Jesus in the Word.
- Prayer (alone and with others, and as a regular habit), and answer to prayer.
- Other Christians – their help, fellowship, testimony and example.
- Teaching my young children to follow Jesus helps me grow.
- Helping and serving others; testifying.
- Christian music
- The trials and difficulties of life
- Prayer
- My relationship with other Christians to share aspects of faith.
- Reading books on Christian growth and Bible studies
- Attending church on Sundays and participating in other church programmes, including Bible study and mentoring by an officer.
- Prayer is my lifeline
- Seeking the Lord by setting aside quiet time to read the Bible, listen to the Word, and engage in worship was a common response. Having Christian friends also encourages a deeper relationship with God.
- Involvement in Bible study, receiving daily Bible verses shared online by leaders, attending Sunday services, and hearing testimonies from people who see Jesus at work in their lives.
- Self-control through the leading of the holy spirit
- Reading the scriptures
- Fear of the Lord
- Dependence on God
- Holding on to the truth
- Church family who support and pray for me
- My parents, friends, church and myself
- Friends, family and the Bible
- My mum
- Devotional apps / daily devotions
- Church
- Music

Question 2: What is helping you to grow as a disciple of Jesus? (continued)

- Being committed
- Prayer
- Madison Ryan Ward
- Auntie Barbie
- Bible YouTube videos
- Music
- Auntie Margaret
- Jesus
- Spoken prayer
- Youth group

Question 3: How do you know if you're growing as a disciple?

- Self assessment; am I engaging more with people
- Examining the fruit in your life
- Being like Jesus (Walking in the steps of the Rabbi)
- Steady response in your conviction
- Stepping out into the new; moving into the new with Jesus, doing things you might not normally do yet do so in an act of obedience and faith
- Pray for someone, and share a word with them
- Acts of service
- My theological perspective has changed somewhat – I have more questions these days and I'm not as black and white about things – I can relax in the mystery of God. I have a wider and open theology than I did many years ago
- I embrace a more inclusive stance
- I still have 'aha' moments and I'm still learning new things – I look at things from a different perspective (getting older and more mature)
- I know I'm growing because my responses aren't just 'my' responses, they are more in line with who God wants me to be. I am humbler now that I used to be
- I have a more natural rhythm to my life in being a disciple of Jesus – it's just who I am, connected to the vine and continually learning more about being a disciple, and there's an ease to this
- I measure my growth as a disciple through how closely I model Jesus Christ. Additionally, the richness of my prayer life can be measured by how fluid my conversations with God are, and on how vivid my visualisation practices become.
- When you are learning new things about God and his Word all the time, learning how to please him. You notice the impact of this in your life, the changes and what you have to share with others.
- Am I listening to and following the example of Christ.
- I am more willing to talk to others who are not Christians about my Christian faith and how it has helped me.
- Good question. I must admit that growth is hard to quantify. One way to know if you are still willing to step out and up when asked.
- I'm not sure. I feel less angry, I guess that's something. And the fact that I actually WANT to learn about God/Jesus.
- MY mindsets more reflect the love of Christ to this broken world.

Question 3: How do you know if you're growing as a disciple? (continued)

- Deepening Connection
- I feel it and I see God's promises.
- It is often evident in my level of faith and trust in God. Willingness to share my faith and what God is doing in my life and participation in faith community and fruit of the spirit manifest in my personal lives.
- Trusting and obeying are key to growth as a disciple. It is not necessarily about just following others, but by seeking God and His ways on a daily basis. Growth comes from being rooted in fertile ground, beside the Living Water. See Jeremiah 17:7-10 Then one remains in that humble place, trusting Him implicitly in all things. He entrusts wisdom, knowledge and revelation to those whose hearts are open, and desirous of growing in the things of God.
- John 15:8 says "By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples."
- By the way I trust Him for everything, by the conversations I have with people about faith
- Fell that everyday need to read the Bible and feel peace in heart
- Encourage other to join Church and share good news
- When Talk with God then feel comfort and not do the wrong things.
- Bible Read, Early Morning Prayer
- Theology Courses
- When Pray for others, Sick peoples its feel joy
- Sense God closer
- Others see in us
- Bible understanding develops
- If I give up bad habits and start new ones If change happens within me
- If I realise that I have acquired new skills If I have fewer fears If I know myself better
- If I learn to listen better to others, to judge less, and to love better
- By the change in my character:
- I have peace, calm and less fear.
- I can accept others without judging. I can forgive.
- I have more self-discipline in my language, thoughts, actions and relationships.
- I am humbler. I want the Lord to correct me when I make a mistake. I want to please Him.
- I love what Jesus loves, which I didn't before.
- Fruit of the Holy Spirit is evident.
- When I understand Scripture that I didn't understand before. When I can remember scripture.
- When I can determine the voice of the Holy Spirit; when growth is confirmed by the Word.
- When I can see that I am impacting the lives of others for good.
- When I'm able to testify and serve others.
- Because I sing hymns!
- Spiritual growth involves a change in our values, thoughts and actions, bringing us closer to the nature of Christ (It is a daily task).
- Outward actions manifest the change
- Mistakes are detected faster and hurt more and more.
- Hearing others speak about the positive impact one has had on their lives—often unknowingly—has led to a desire, rather than a sense of obligation, to know God more.
- There is a personal commitment to reading the Bible for understanding and self-growth, without being prompted. Participants report being able to pray through troubles and trials, speak freely about their faith among peers, and boldly share about Christ even on public platforms. They note a change in behaviour and character as they become more Christlike.
- Some have developed a heightened sensitivity to actions considered 'normal' by others, recognising them as inconsistent with the Word of God. This awareness encourages living in a God-fearing and set-apart way.

Question 3: How do you know if you're growing as a disciple? (continued)

- Continued change of behaviour in me
- Ability to sacrifice my time and resources for God's work
- Being able to resist sin and the urge to do bad things
- When I am able to abide with set regulations by the church leadership
- The ability to identify the right teachings from the wrong ones
- Your friends notice
- You are praying and talking to God more often
- Being independent in worship
- I can stay away from people who are keeping me away from Jesus
- Understanding what God wants me to do
- Being more intentional with prayer
- Being interested in God, wanting to read my Bible and think about God
- When people ask about God I know what to say
- Getting better at different things in the church environment
- I want to spend my time worshipping and praying and spending time with God
- Speaking about faith becomes easier

Question 4: What challenges or barriers do you find can make it challenging to grow in your relationship with God?

- The lack of time (especially blocks of time)
- Challenge of finding the time to be still
- The expectations or perceptions on how people see us; can impact the way you are treated because of your differences
- Family and friends are not followers of Jesus – sometimes the comparison with what they have, things they can do
- Corporate nature of our organisation against our spiritual nature
- When your job/appointment points you in a direction that is counter to your personal values
- When things are going well!
- We don't celebrate the 'wins' – taking the time to renew and refresh, to reflect on what has gone well and has been achieved
- The battle of self-doubt; "Am I the right person? Am I achieving anything?"
- Many things – they come in seasons but when my diary is full, that can hinder me and throw me off track
- Distractions can hinder my growth with God
- When there is friction in the faith community
- My own self-doubt can be a barrier because I don't feel I have all the answers
- Working for the Army and knowing too much information about what is going on can be a barrier (i.e. focus on budgets etc. and the way conflict can arise between departments because of this)
- When I sometimes confuse God with The Salvation Army
- When I don't disconnect my work for the Army with my place of worship and corps life
- When decisions, conversations and issues challenge my values – especially working in a Christian organisation. How I handle decisions I don't agree with
- My humanity is the greatest hinderance to my relationship with God. By that I mean, my imperfections and limitations. I do my best to mitigate these hinderances by reflecting on the perfections and limitlessness of God, and thus my need for forgiveness and humility.

Question 4: What challenges or barriers do you find can make it challenging to grow in your relationship with God? (continued)

- Tiredness and finding the time to read or listen. Working too hard. Not prioritising well. Distraction and self-doubt. Others' negativity, unfair judgement and/or lack of preparedness to talk about things. Other Christians being disagreeable or too focused on selfish and or sinful agendas is very distracting and can make you shy away from speaking the truth with them or in front of them.
- Understanding and reconciling the chaos of the world and its many distractions.
- There are so few other Christians in my orbit with the time to talk about matters of faith. I find church leaders way too busy with the church and welfare business of each day. It makes it very hard to schedule quality time for spiritual growth discussions or study. So I generally turn to the internet. Also, those closest to me, my immediate family, are not Christians.
- For me, it is mostly self-discipline.
- I'm addicted to my phone and it steals so much of my time. Even when I'm with other people or when I try and read the Bible or use a devotional app, I get so easily distracted. I know it's not healthy.
- Not knowing how to read the bible. Not having a mentor to guide me. My family and friendship circles are non-religious and so I feel lonely and awkward in this space.
- Lack of self-discipline, being time poor, and when the stresses of life start to add up. Also, poor behaviour of spiritual leader of people that claim to follow Christ when it isn't reflected in their daily conduct or how they treat others.
- Outside influences.
- Distraction by the stuff.
- Battle to maintain regular quality personal devoted time with God and the study of the word for personal faith development and not in preparation for a sermon or bible study or an assignment. Being time poor and balancing work and life responsibilities.
- Distractions, busyness, not spending time with the Lord in devotions and in prayer. Spending too much time following programmes rather than seeking God for His plans and purposes. Man's agendas can be very controlling and stifling. We need to always be in tune with what the Lord is requiring of us, therefore prayer is vitally important in our daily lives.
- I understand holiness, but I'm still learning how to live it.
- Distractions such as busyness, times of challenge.
- Often internet Addiction
- Busyness/ Time Shortness/ Work pressure for earn more money for the Family needs
- Family Barrier (All family member is not same minded)
- Tempted by Satan, Evil Things, Laziness,
- Work Pressure
- Physical sickness
- Busy lives
- Tiredness
- Not making time – linked to...
- External pressures and distractions
- Natural laziness
- Difficult circumstances
- Reactions and reasoning
- Various life situations that are difficult, or too many
- Time – trying to find it – and the pace of life make it hard to spend time in God's presence.
- Social media (e.g. Facebook, etc.)

Question 4: What challenges or barriers do you find can make it challenging to grow in your relationship with God? (continued)

- Being the only believer in my workplace
- Contradictions in the Bible; discrepancies between what I read in the Bible and what I see
- Understanding some speakers – intellectually, and their language (accent and speed)
- The inconsistency or hypocrisy of some believers
- Unbelievers in my family
- Mental health
- Lack of time to go deeper into the things of God.
- Human nature which always goes against the pursuit of holiness.
- Challenges such as fear of judgment, low self-esteem, and unforgiveness were often mentioned.
- Busy lifestyles make it difficult to set aside time for God. Choosing the wrong friends can also become a hindrance.
- I feel spiritually dry but I keep showing up.
- Missing Sunday services and a lack of leaders who are invested in the spiritual well-being of congregants were noted as barriers to growth.
- Limited access to resources and difficulty understanding the Bible after reading it were common concerns. Family dynamics and unanswered prayers can also make spiritual growth challenging.
- Struggles with falling back into temptation, mental health issues, and discouragement from fellow believers were identified as obstacles in the faith journey.
- Joined in marriage with a spouse of a weak faith
- Inability to participate in church programs e.g. giving, leading/preaching & service
- Serving as a soldier without the bible
- Leading a family that belongs to so many denominations and come back with different teachings causing arguments
- Poverty stricken mind leading to doubting God's care
- Being led by an officer who shows favouritism and lacks a spirit of salvationism
- Distractions
- My own laziness
- Too many things to believe
- Friends
- Troubles
- School
- Commitment
- Peoples ideas
- School
- Social media
- Laziness
- Feeling busy
- Exams
- Everyday life

Additional questions for those who lead others:

Question 5: How would you describe the overall spiritual health of the people you lead?

- Overall, good spiritual health, although acknowledging it is difficult to analyse within many of our teams
- Surprising at times – evidence of deep faith that is not always obvious in conversations
- At times, complex and diverse
- Our corps is spiritually healthy
- We have some amazing prayer warriors who are devoted
- We have a very pastoral corps – good at keeping in touch
- A real sense of community and caring for each other
- Everyone hangs around after church – good community
- With any community there's always people lagging behind and we need to ensure we address this and keep a focus on those who don't feel connected
- There's a tangible vibrancy of life and faith at our corps – people who visit comment that there's something noticeable about how we interact and relationships here
- Strong community but it's still quite inward focused – we're good at caring for each other and we're not quite as good at caring for those on the fringes of our community
- People are genuinely attempting to live a Christ like life.
- Generally good. Most people are trying to live life in Christ as best as they can. But this world is a confusing, hostile place at times and many don't know how to react to things that aren't explicitly referenced in the bible so they are simply trying to do their best.
- At work, in progress.
- A mixture of strong faith and longstanding corps involvement, cultural Christianity as well as those that yet must come to a personal relationship with Christ.
- I would say that my congregation is 60% deeply following Jesus and 40% on the journey.
- It's not in very good level when led the Children
- when join church then seems to good but other time it's not good
- Need to take more focus on their spiritual life
- Family Spiritual health is quiet good but in community is not much good.
- Not good not bad
- Need to give more focus
- You can see someone's spirituality by their reactions and the fruit of the spirit being evident.
- In a group setting you can feel the work of the Holy Spirit as discussions and prayer take place. Words are spoken from the heart.
- Some people have the gift to change the atmosphere of the room when they sense there is need for uplift and spiritual input.
- Average
- Neither good nor bad
- It's a daily struggle, a constant watch, a constant tension.
- Varied: Some want to grow, and some are static.
- In a process of growth
- Inspired by Christ's example and wanting to be God-like
- Just sufficient, even if I am trying to help them grow through various means.
- At least an amount of spiritual health can be witnessed by the change in the way of speaking and relating to each other, and by their increased attendance at activities.
- This is not regarding overall health, but rather a comment that the people being led are too critical of leaders, yet not themselves willing to serve.

Question 5: How would you describe the overall spiritual health of the people you lead? (continued)

- Immaturity, they need a lot of accompaniments.
- Lack of constancy, very easily affected by day-to-day problems.
- Good, with great seek to meet spiritual needs.
- Some leaders assessed the overall spiritual health of their people as below average.
- Certain groups felt that the people they lead are spiritually mature.
- Many leaders described a lack of Bible knowledge and understanding among their people.
- A general lack of full commitment was also noted.
- Lukewarm. However, many show healthy spiritual standing, reflected in their attitude towards leading, preaching, participating in giving and being present in church in all seasons.

Question 6: What are the most common spiritual struggles among those you minister to?

- How they see others who profess to be spiritual
- Separation – especially in times of discipline; how do you show the love of Jesus when dismissing someone?
- Over-spiritualise but then the reality doesn't match up
- Divergent perspectives
- Physical health issues are a strong theme at our corps
- We have someone who isn't sure yet if there's a God, but he keeps on coming and connecting in fellowship – he's very regular
- We don't have small groups – this is a challenge for us and a concern. Are we providing what others need to grow?
- Some struggles aren't so obvious, and people don't express them (unknown)
- Perhaps not feeling connected – we do have our clicky groups and perhaps not everyone feels so connected
- Also, some people don't want to be connected and prefer to just come for the service
- People not believing that God can turn up and work in their life – they believe it for others but not for themselves
- People sometimes struggle with the uncertainty of how the Lord is going to 'turn up for me'
- Concern or disappointment at the demise of the church – and/or issues of the church (doesn't have the central place in society it once had etc.)
- Grappling with the relevance of the church in today's world
- How do I grow my faith without having to sit through a service (for young people)
- Understanding the meaning of their lives and how they hold onto their faith.
- Temptations. Also relevance of faith to daily life. How does one live out their faith in an environment where faith and spiritual practice is often not on show or considered important.
- People connecting with God and their personal and spiritual formation.
- The uncertainty of the times we live in currently. The stresses of aging and mortality, ill-physical and mental health, social ills and financial strain. All these often cause pain and despair and divert focus away from Christ. The task of ministering to support, encourage, speak life, hope and redirect focus to Christ becomes imperative.
- Unsaved family members, Does God hear my prayers?
- People can't forgive each other easily
- Forget the blessings
- Some Muslim people know Jesus but can't receive because of social barrier
- Time Pressure, Busyness

Question 6: What are the most common spiritual struggles among those you minister to? (continued)

- More focus to Financial sustainability, Bad impact of Social media
- Negativity
- Being too busy to give valuable time to spiritual development
- Political situation (especially for us in EET at present) is a distraction and occupies minds
- Experiencing forgiveness from others and from yourself
- Breaking out of the role of victim
- Becoming confident in God in the face of life's difficulties
- Brokenness, guilt, anger, view of themselves and of a world which has been unkind and unloving to them.
- "Thorns" and challenges of the world
- Witnessing about Jesus outside the Corps
- Not seeing conversions right away in those for whom they are praying
- "Crucifying the flesh," changing from the old nature to the new nature, holiness
- Spiritual immaturity, disagreement, indifference, lack of forgiveness
- The Italian vision of what 'community' should look like
- Hesitancy to commit
- Discouragement, depression.
- Financial and interpersonal problems
- Distractions of the world.
- Reluctance among soldiers to fully commit.
- Past experiences and traumas often lead to spiritual setbacks.
- Unbalanced priorities, with many placing greater emphasis on their careers.
- Double standard lifestyle of my followers (drinking and sexual indulgence)
- No mutual concerns for others, "each man for himself, God for us all" attitude.
- Failing to breaking lose from spiritual poverty

Question 7: Do you feel well-equipped to lead/support/mentor others in their spiritual life?

- Yes! A sense of walking together, learning from each other, and on a mutual and authentic journey
- Thinking about our church community, we're well equipped with the people we have but we don't have small groups etc. which is a barrier
- We need to put some extra things around our community to build on this
- Safety in not knowing – i.e. it's ok to not have all the answers (being part of the leadership team) and our faith community is broad enough and has others who can answer questions or talk through issues
- All on the journey of discovery together and these people we can lean into to help with questions etc.
- Our corps is a safe place to ask questions
- Yes, generally speaking I do feel equipped to lead and support others in their spiritual journey
- It is a challenge, but it also serves to re-enforce my faith.
- Reasonably well equipped yes. Still hit challenges often and I have to figure out the best way forward through that with people.
- Yes and no. From TSA, less business, for me mentor and spiritual supervision. Focus more on the spiritual and less on the business of making money or being "good." Lets do God's work not TSA's or ours.
- Not always, there is often a situation or circumstance that I have not encountered previously. I am learning all the time, and trusting God to empower me along the way.
- Mostly I do.
- They know Jesus and eagerly mentoring others
- Some of feel well-Equipped

Question 7: Do you feel well-equipped to lead/support/mentor others in their spiritual life? (continued)

- Feel Joy to mentoring when there is a spiritual need among the people
- Not fully equipped but try
- Need more strength and power of Holy Spirit
- Join Prayer cell group for developing
- Generally yes. The desire to develop in order to mentor others is key
- The Bible is all we need to keep Kingdom focused lives.
- Yes, although this is a lifelong process and regular training is needed to ensure that we don't get stuck at any one stage along the way
- The problem is mainly one of resources: lack of time, long distances to cover, pressure to deliver quantity rather than quality.
- Hyperactivity threatens the proper support of the people we hope to help
- One would never be adequate enough yet, having Christ as an example, following him, examining oneself and seeing the fruit of this process in daily life edifies and equips for service and leadership.
- Yes, with the help of the Holy Spirit.
- Not always, so I need complete trust in the Lord, who does not lack the means to equip at just the right time.
- My own life experience helps me to support others in their spiritual journey.
- Yes, but I would like to have more knowledge
- Yes, because we work as a team, and we complement each other.
- Yes, although it is never enough, you can always be better prepared
- Many leaders feel equipped but express the need for further development and access to relevant material to effectively engage in mentorship.
- Some do not feel fully equipped to lead others on their spiritual journey.
- Others feel well-equipped but desire additional support and guidance as they lead.
- No, no trainings for better understanding of my duties
- No resource materials given to me to lead the church
- Poverty levels disadvantage me to lead by example

Question 8: What do you need to feel better equipped as you support others?

- Intentional nurturing of our own spirituality
- Time (acknowledging some personal responsibility with this)
- Balance between management and pastoral care
- We don't have an articulated discipleship pathway
- A more intentional approach to discipling others
- Demand on leaders, being a smaller community, the demand can be large on individuals
- Imbalance of leaders and those who need care
- Resources – e.g. doing Alpha or other things differently
- What can we channel others into? What TSA resources are there, how do we advertise these (a starter pack for others of what is available)
- More resources from IHQ or Mission Support
- I feel there is always a need for more support particularly in relation to emphasising being part of a bigger purpose.
- More frontline resourcing and staff and less TSA bureaucratic or gate keeping nonsense. Less admin load and more time to be a minister not a manager. Better support from some “mission enablers” and departments.

Question 8: What do you need to feel better equipped as you support others? (continued)

- To really let go and focus on discipleship. Let business people lead and spiritual leaders disciple.
- I do have support on various levels in place, I am willing to learn and ask for help. I engage in reflective practice and pastoral supervision. I am and studying, have supportive colleagues and trusting God as I yield and obey. Continued covering in prayer is always appreciated.
- More time for Pastoral Care.... A whole lot less demands around organisational issues and requests.
- Overcome the social barrier and openly share the gospel
- I need to know deeply about spirituality
- Is there any supporting materials for growing up spiritually then helpful.
- If there is source to get Spiritual Developing materials
- Unity is Spiritual life
- One minded congregation and support each other.
- Be given the opportunity to minister to others
- Where there is a will and desire to support in this way – you will find resources
- Keep focused on heavenly things and God's will
- Respecting each person's limits as a leader
- Learning to communicate better at all levels
- Creating spaces for forgiveness and true love
- The Lord's presence and His Holy Spirit living in each one of us is a unique source in everyday life and service.
- Having TSA local and international community praying and supporting one another spiritually matters greatly.
- More spiritual support, and spiritual support from territorial headquarters.
- Consistency in prayer to the one who intercedes for us. He also uses brothers and sisters in Christ to support and encourage in prayer and in presence.
- More intercessory prayer, more study of God's Word.
- Guidance from my Officer
- More time and more preparation
- Meeting with other leaders would be helpful to hear their experiences.
- Access to relevant material and refresher workshops.
- Additional training, manuals, and more Bible study resources.
- A mentor to support personal spiritual growth and help build confidence in supporting others.
- Bible/ resource materials
- Affirmation and support from my corps officers
- Capacity building

Any other comments or observations:

- Through this process people are thinking their spiritual life. They understood we have to make intimate relationship with God and give more focus of their Spiritual life.
- Through this survey we are thinking of our Spiritual life. Need to follow up.
- This group have been Christians for a long time. Some have grown up in the Church but some came to faith later on in life. All of them expressed the desire to experience the Holy Spirit in their lives. To feel Him then they know they are growing. There was some acknowledgement that we don't always 'feel' but we just 'know' that God is there. All expressed the need to be good examples as they have seen in others who have influenced their lives.
- Brengle events featured highly in our conversation. The sense of the nearness of the Holy Spirit in those days that were dedicated to holiness.
- There was an agreement within the group that it is easier to develop spiritually if nurturing happens with a group of people.
- There is a great need in EET for good discipleship material/books to be translated into our languages. There are very few Christian bookshops and so resources we would normally suggest people read as part of their spiritual development, are not available.
- In conclusion, the development of the spiritual life is not a destination, but a continuous process of growth and transformation. Growing in our relationship with Christ helps us to live more balanced lives, to understand ourselves better and to establish more meaningful relationships with others and with the world around us. By nourishing our spiritual life with the life of Christ, we will discover an inexhaustible source of strength, hope and meaning.
- Young people's leaders expressed concern that many of the young people they lead are living a double life, struggling with the tension between God's standards and the world's standards. Several young participants spoke about the issue of temptation, with many specifically mentioning lust. A number of participants felt that having a mentor would be beneficial for their spiritual growth. Accountability was also identified as a helpful tool for growth; however, the absence of someone to provide that accountability was noted as a challenge. Many leaders expressed feeling ill-equipped to lead those they are responsible for and consistently voiced a strong need for additional support and guidance. However, it was encouraging to note that many participants recorded seeing how the Lord is actively at work in their lives.



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