

Pastors' Views on Modern Day Idols

A SURVEY OF 1,000 PROTESTANT PASTORS

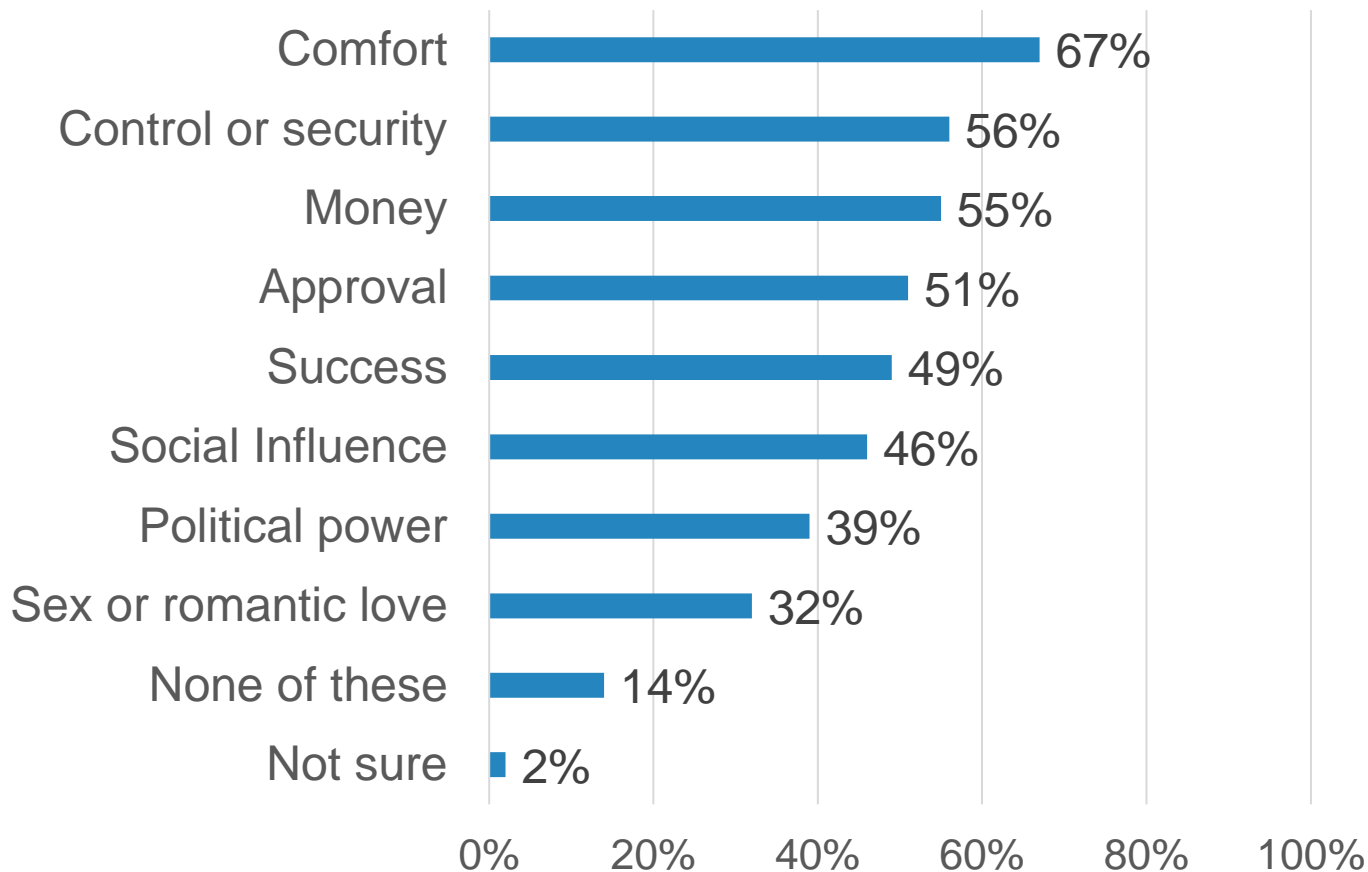
Lifeway **research**

Methodology

- The phone survey of 1,000 Protestant pastors was conducted September 1-29, 2021
- The calling list was a stratified random sample, drawn from a list of all Protestant churches. Quotas were used for church size
- Each interview was completed by the senior or sole pastor or a minister at the church
- Responses were weighted by region and church size to more accurately reflect the population
- The completed sample is 1,000 surveys
- The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error does not exceed $\pm 3.2\%$ This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups

“Which of the following modern-day idols do you believe have a significant influence on your congregation?”

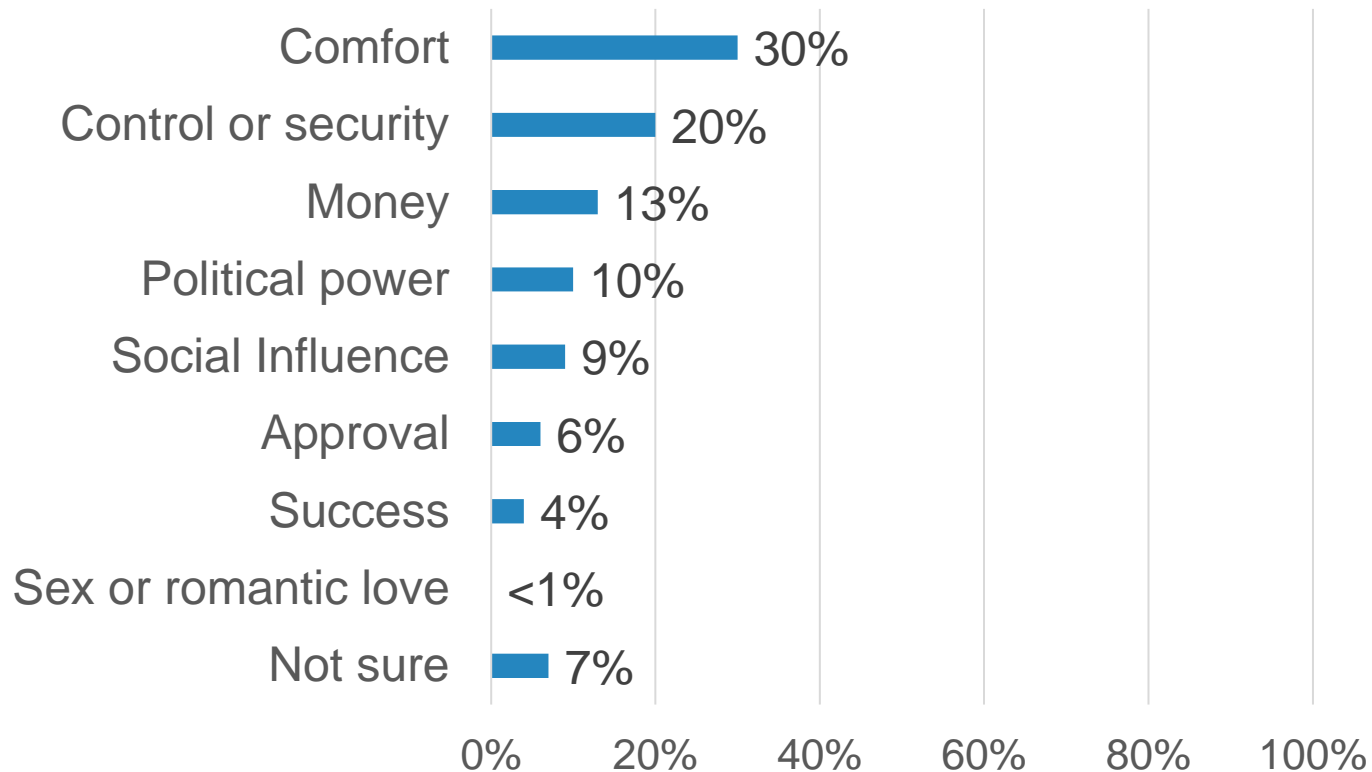
Among Protestant Pastors



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30% say that Comfort is the modern-day idol having the most influence on congregations; 20% say that Control or Security is

Among Protestant Pastors



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Q21: "Which one modern-day idol do you believe has the most influence on your congregation? (Select one)" n=866

Significant Differences

Pastor

Ethnicity

Age

Gender

Education Level

Self-identified Evangelical/Mainline

Church

Region

Denomination

Average Attendance

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Significant Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among the pastor's ethnicity, age, gender, education, self-identified Evangelical or Mainline.

AGE	GENDER	ETHNICITY	EDUCATION	Self-Identified
18-44	Male	White	No College Degree	Evangelical
45-54	Female	African American	Bachelor's Degree	Mainline
55-64		Hispanic	Graduate Degree	
65+		Other Ethnicities	Doctoral Degree	

Significant Statistical Differences

Comparisons were made to determine if there are any significant statistical differences among the church's region, denomination, and attendance.

REGION	DENOMINATION GROUP	ATTENDANCE
Northeast	Baptist	0-49
South	Lutheran	50-99
Midwest	Methodist	100-249
West	Pentecostal	250+
	Presbyterian/Reformed	
	Christian/Church of Christ	
	Non-Denominational	

Note: Region is defined by the US Census locations

“Which of the following modern-day idols do you believe have a significant influence on your congregation?”

Political power

- Pastors age 18-44 are the most likely to select (55%)
- Pastors age 65+ are the least likely to select (24%)
- Male pastors are more likely to select than females (43% v. 30%)
- White pastors (41%) are more likely to select than African American pastors (29%)
- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (46%) are more likely to select than those with no college degree (29%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (33%)
- Pastors in the Midwest (45%) and West (45%) are more likely to select than those in the South (35%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (60%) are more likely to select than Baptists (41%), Lutherans (39%), Methodists (41%), Pentecostals (35%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (32%)

“Which of the following modern-day idols do you believe have a significant influence on your congregation?”

Money

- Pastors age 18-44 (63%) and 45-54 (58%) are the more likely to select than pastors age 65+ (46%)
- Male pastors are more likely to select than females (59% v. 44%)
- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (64%) or a Doctoral Degree (57%) are more likely to select than those with no college degree (43%)
- Lutherans (62%) and Methodists (62%) are more likely to select than Baptists (50%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 100-249 (59%) and 250+ (60%) are more likely to select than those at churches with attendance of 0-49 (48%)

“Which of the following modern-day idols do you believe have a significant influence on your congregation?”

Sex or romantic love

- Pastors age 18-44 (41%) and 45-54 (37%) are more likely to select than pastors age 65+ (22%)
- Male pastors are more likely to select than females (36% v. 21%)
- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (36%) or a Doctoral Degree (39%) are more likely to select than those with no college degree (22%)
- Baptists (39%), Lutherans (35%), Christian/Church of Christ (45%), and Non-denominational (39%) are more likely to select than Methodists (24%) and Presbyterian/Reformed (23%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 100-249 (39%) and 250+ (40%) are more likely to select than those at churches with attendance of 0-49 (21%) and 50-99 (30%)

“Which of the following modern-day idols do you believe have a significant influence on your congregation?”

Success

- Pastors age 18-44 (59%) are more likely to select than pastors age 55-64 (44%) and 65+ (43%)
- Male pastors are more likely to select than females (52% v. 41%)
- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (55%) or a Doctoral Degree (54%) are more likely to select than those with no college degree (42%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (41%)
- Methodists (54%) and Pentecostals (58%) are more likely to select than Presbyterian/Reformed (42%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 100-249 (53%) and 250+ (54%) are more likely to select than those at churches with attendance of 0-49 (43%)

“Which of the following modern-day idols do you believe have a significant influence on your congregation?”

Comfort

- Pastors age 18-44 (73%) are more likely to select than pastors age 55-64 (62%) and 65+ (62%)
- African American pastors are the least likely to select (56%)
- Pastors with no college degree are the least likely to select (52%)
- Pastors in the Midwest (71%) are more likely to select than those in the South (64%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (77%) are more likely to select than Pentecostals (56%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 100-249 (71%) are more likely to select than those at churches with attendance of 0-49 (60%)

“Which of the following modern-day idols do you believe have a significant influence on your congregation?”

Social influence

- Pastors age 18-44 (51%) are more likely to select than pastors age 65+ (41%)
- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (51%) are more likely to select than those with no college degree (40%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (43%)
- Methodists (53%) are more likely to select than Presbyterian/Reformed (39%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 100-249 (51%) and 250+ (55%) are more likely to select than those at churches with attendance of 0-49 (39%) and 50-99 (42%)

“Which of the following modern-day idols do you believe have a significant influence on your congregation?”

Approval

- Pastors age 18-44 (60%) and 45-54 (54%) are more likely to select than pastors age 65+ (41%)
- White pastors (53%) are more likely to select than African American pastors (40%)
- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (58%) are more likely to select than those with no college degree (43%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (43%)
- Pastors in the Midwest (57%) are more likely to select than those in the South (49%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (62%) are more likely to select than Presbyterian/Reformed (45%)

“Which of the following modern-day idols do you believe have a significant influence on your congregation?”

Control or security

- Pastors age 18-44 are the most likely to select (72%)
- Pastors age 65+ are the least likely to select (42%)
- Male pastors are more likely to select than females (60% v. 47%)
- Pastors with a Master’s Degree (67%) or a Doctoral Degree (64%) are more likely to select than those with no college degree (38%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (47%)
- Methodists (68%) are more likely to select than Baptists (58%), Pentecostals (43%), Presbyterian/Reformed (49%), and Non-denominational (52%)

“Which of the following modern-day idols do you believe have a significant influence on your congregation?”

None of these

- Pastors age 55-64 (18%) and 65+ (19%) are more likely to select than pastors age 18-44 (9%) and 45-54 (10%)
- African American pastors (25%) are more likely to select than white pastors (13%)
- Pastors with no college degree are the most likely to select (25%)
- Pentecostals (20%) and Non-denominational (23%) are more likely to select than Methodists (9%) and Christian/Church of Christ (6%)

“Which one modern-day idol do you believe has the most influence on your congregation?”

- Pastors age 18-44 (14%) and 45-54 (13%) are more likely to select “Political power” than pastors age 65+ (5%)
- Pastors age 65+ (13%) are more likely to select “Social influence” than pastors age 18-44 (5%)
- White pastors (12%) are more likely to select “Political power” than African American pastors (2%)
- Pastors with no college degree (35%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (38%) are more likely to select “Comfort” than those with a Doctoral Degree (22%)
- Pastors with no college degree (9%) are the least likely to select “Control to security”
- Pastors in the Midwest (14%) and West (14%) are more likely to select “Political power” than those in the South (7%)

“Which one modern-day idol do you believe has the most influence on your congregation?”

- Baptists (11%), Methodists (11%), and Non-denominational (15%) are more likely to select “Political power” than Presbyterian/Reformed (4%)
- Christian/Church of Christ (18%) are more likely to select “Social influence” than Baptists (8%), Methodists (8%), and Pentecostals (5%)
- Pentecostals (13%) are more likely to select “Success” than Baptists (5%), Methodists (3%), Presbyterian/Reformed (3%), and Christian/Church of Christ (<1%)
- Methodists (29%), Pentecostals (25%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (22%) are more likely to select “Control or Security” than Non-denominational (8%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 250+ (17%) are more likely to select “Social influence” than those at churches with attendance of 50-99 (7%) and 100-249 (6%)

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