

Pastors' Views on the Prosperity Gospel

A SURVEY OF AMERICAN PROTESTANT PASTORS

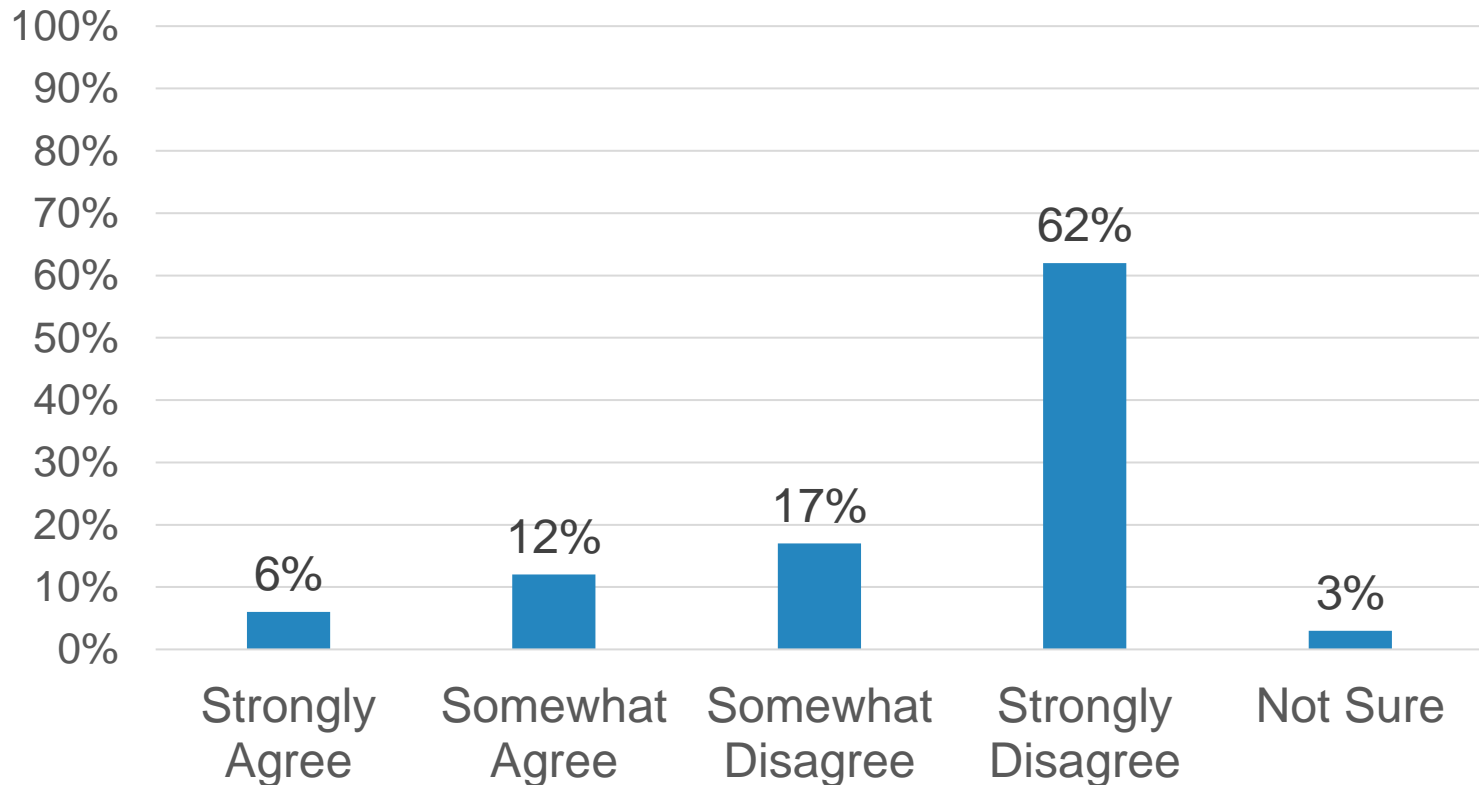
Lifeway research

Methodology

- The phone survey of 1,003 Protestant pastors was conducted August 8 – September 3, 2024
- 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 conducted with the senior pastor, minister or priest at the church
- Responses were weighted by region and church size to more accurately reflect the population
- The completed sample is 1,003 surveys
- The sample provides 95% confidence that the sampling error does not exceed $\pm 3.3\%$ This margin of error accounts for the effect of weighting
- Margins of error are higher in sub-groups

18% say their churches teach that God will bless you if you give more money to their church or charities

Among Protestant Pastors

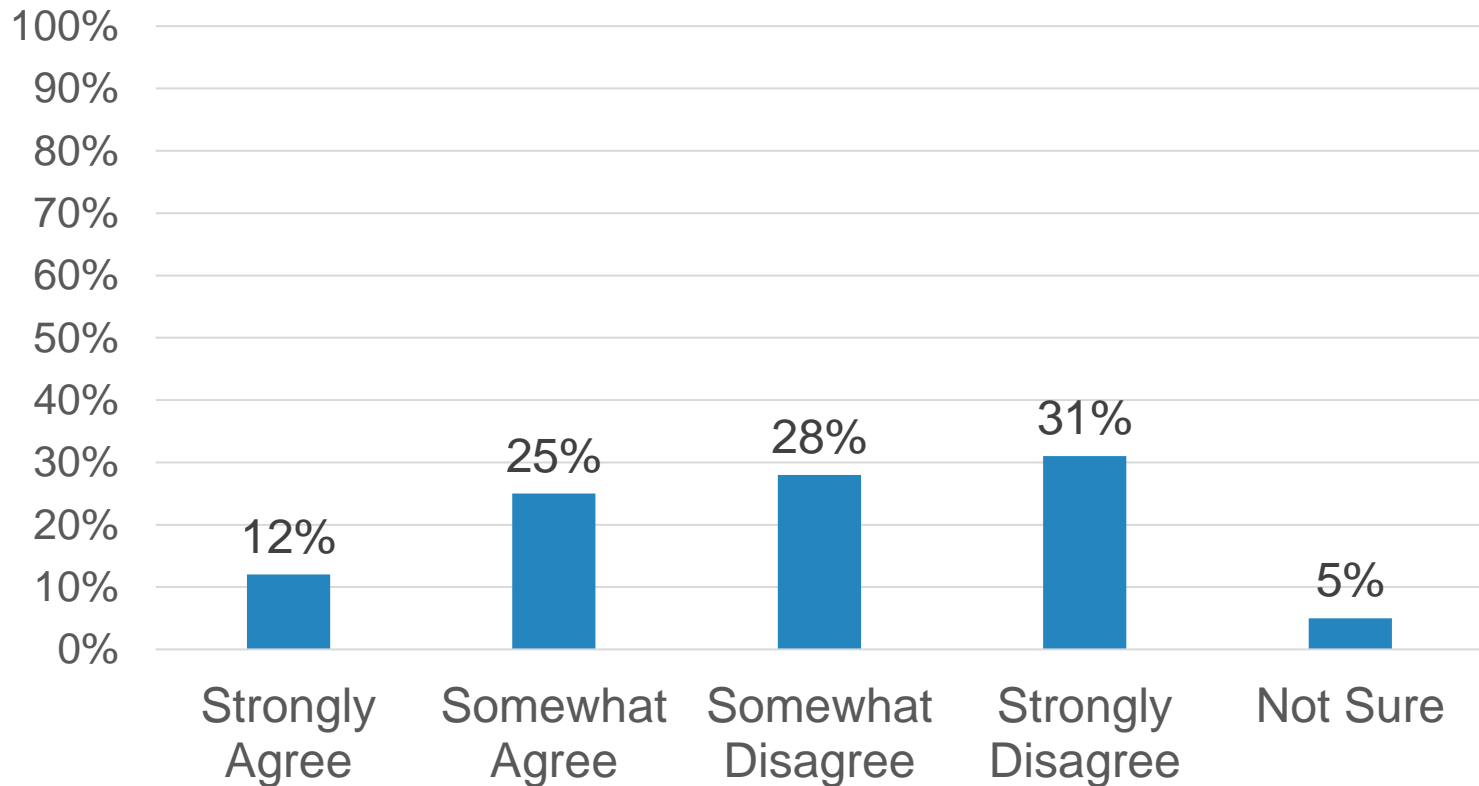


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Q: "Our church teaches that if you give more money to our church and charities, God will bless you in return." n=1,003

37% believe that God wants people to prosper financially

Among Protestant Pastors

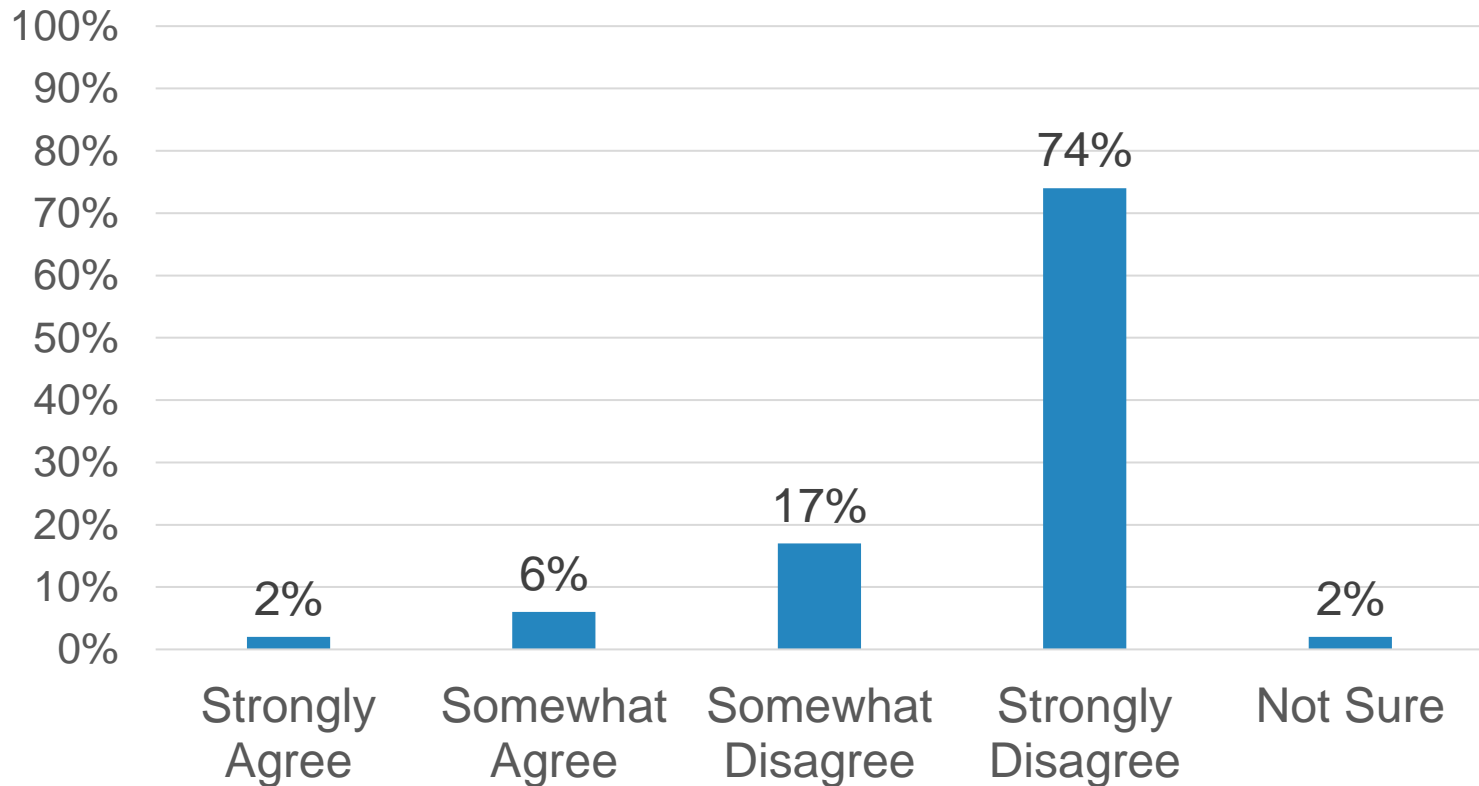


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Q: "God wants people to prosper financially." n=1,003

Only 8% believe that you have to do something for God to receive material blessings from God

Among Protestant Pastors



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Q: "To receive material blessings from God, we have to do something for God." n=1,003

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		Other Ethnicities	Graduate Degree	
65+			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

“Our church teaches that if you give more money to our church and charities, God will bless you in return.”

- Pastors age 18-44 are the most likely to Disagree (90%)
- African American pastors are the most likely to Agree (45%)
- Pastors with no college degree (30%) are more likely to Agree than those with a Master’s Degree (12%) or a Doctoral Degree (15%)
- Evangelical pastors are more likely to Agree than Mainline pastors (20% v. 14%)
- Pastors in the South (22%) are more likely to Agree than those in the Northeast (12%)
- Baptists (28%) and Pentecostals (35%) are more likely to Agree than Lutherans (3%), Methodists (16%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (5%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 0-49 (80%) and 50-99 (82%) are more likely to Disagree than those at churches with attendance of 250+ (70%)

“God wants people to prosper financially.”

- Pastors age 65+ (44%) are more likely to Agree than pastors age 18-44 (33%) and 45-64 (29%)
- African American pastors are the most likely to Agree (72%)
- Pastors with no college degree (51%) are more likely to Agree than those with a Master’s Degree (30%) or a Doctoral Degree (37%)
- Pastors in the South (43%) are more likely to Agree than those in the Midwest (33%)
- Pentecostals are the most likely to Agree (72%)
- Pastors at churches with attendance 250+ are the most likely to Agree (52%)

“To receive material blessings from God, we have to do something for God.”

- Pastors age 18-44 (94%) are more likely to Disagree than pastors age 65+ (87%)
- African American pastors (16%) and pastors of Other Ethnicities (15%) are more likely to Agree than White pastors (6%)
- Pastors with no college degree (14%) or a Bachelor’s Degree (11%) are more likely to Agree than those with a Master’s Degree (5%)
- Evangelical pastors are more likely to Agree than Mainline pastors (10% v. 5%)
- Baptists (12%), Pentecostals (16%), and Christian/Church of Christ (14%) are more likely to Agree than Lutherans (2%), Methodists (5%), and Presbyterian/Reformed (3%)

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