

Most Pastors Avoid Controversial Issues to Keep Tithes Up

Pastors generally believe same-sex marriage and abortion are wrong, but most of them won't talk to their congregations about it for fear of losing members.

That's a basic takeaway from a recent Barna Group study. Research expert George Barna was on American Family Radio's *Today's Issues* broadcast to discuss what he discovered.

"What we're finding is that when we ask them about all the key issues of the day, [90 percent of them are] telling us, 'Yes, the Bible speaks to every one of these issues.' Then we ask them, 'Well, are you teaching your people what the Bible says about those issues?'—and the numbers drop ... to less than 10 percent of pastors who say they will speak to it," One News Now reports Barna saying.

As it turns out, pastors are willing to do "almost nothing" to get people active in politics.

"So the thing that struck me has been that when we talk about the separation of church and state, it's that churches have separated themselves from the activities of the state—and that's to the detriment of the state and its people," Barna said.

Barna pointed to five factors that most pastors turn to when asked if their church is successful: attendance, giving, number of programs, number of staff and square footage.

"Now all of those things are good measures, except for one tiny fact: Jesus didn't die for any of them," Barna said.

“What I’m suggesting is [those pastors] won’t probably get involved in politics, because it’s very controversial. Controversy keeps people from being in the seats, controversy keeps people from giving money, from attending programs.”

Barna also blames Bible school, in part, for the lack of motivation. Pastors, he said, are taught to exegete Scripture rather than engaging in cultural issues.