

STRONGR Church Theological Communication Survey



For looking at the way a church articulates it's theological beliefs

Theology Through Church Communication

This survey is meant to be taken by a member of a church. This test is most helpful when taken by at least 6 people and when the results from phases 2, 3 and 4 are averaged.

In this survey, you will be exploring various theological topics and the frequency/clarity with which these topics should be and are being covered in your church. At it's core, this is a philosophical survey. It's philosophical because what we're really pondering is **how much** these topics should be communicated. Phase 1 will explore your personal philosophical views on each of the topics. Phase 2 will explore your church's public facing communication on these topics. Phase 3 will look at your church's pulpit teaching on these topics. Phase 4 will look at individual communication on these topics. For each phase, you will chose the answer that best matches your opinion from the following options.

- 1 - This topic does not need to be addressed in the church
- 2 - This topic rarely needs addressed in the church
- 3 - This topic needs to be somewhat regularly addressed in the church
- 4 - This topic needs to be addressed regularly in the church

Phase 1 - Your Philosophy on Church Communication

Here we will explore your personal philosophical views on 21 theological topics. The first 11 are core theological topics. The next 10 are important cultural topics. Every one of these 21 points meets two criteria. First, they are topics of debate in one way or another. Secondly, they are deeply and profoundly important.

Read through the 21 topics below and for each topic, **highlight** the number that represents the statement you most agree with.

PART A - CORE THEOLOGY

1. God's Identity

1 2 3 4

2. The Goodness of God

1 2 3 4

3. The Greatness of God

1 2 3 4

4. Humanities Fallenness

1 2 3 4

5. Our Source of Knowledge (God's Word)

1 2 3 4

6. Our Future Hope

1 2 3 4

7. Hell

1 2 3 4

8. What Will Happen in the End Times

1 2 3 4

9. The Old Testament

1 2 3 4

10. The Church

1 2 3 4

11. The Steps of Salvation

1 2 3 4

PART B - CULTURAL ISSUES

1. Abortion

1 2 3 4

2. LGBTQ Issues

1 2 3 4

3. Racism

1 2 3 4

4. Science and Religion

1 2 3 4

5. Politics

1 2 3 4

6. Other Religions

1 2 3 4

7. Heresies

1 2 3 4

8. False Christian Groups

1 2 3 4

9. Social Media Usage

1 2 3 4

10. Money

1 2 3 4



Phase 2 - Public Facing Communication

In this phase, you will look at public facing communication. In specific, this evaluation only looks at items of communication that a first-time attender could plainly access (such as text on a website, a handout available for taking in the lobby, a denominational view, or a referenced creed or confession) Put these materials in front of yourself so you can reference them easily.

For each of the previous statements, circle the number that you would think to be most true of the church's philosophy if you only had access to these public facing piece of communications.

Phase 3 - Pulpit Teaching

In this phase, you will look at pulpit teaching. In specific, try to evaluate each statement only based on communication you have heard from the pulpit on Sunday morning at your church. If you have sermon notes, you are welcome to use them.

For each of the previous statements, put a square around the number that you would think to be most true of the church's philosophy if you only had access to these pulpit teachings.

Phase 4 - Individual Communication

In this part, you will look at personal communication of church leaders. This could be one-on-one conversations, small groups discussion time, a pastor's personal social media posts, etc. Here, we're not going to separate the church leadership's

For each of the previous statements, put a triangle around the number that you would think to be most true of the church's philosophy if you only had access to these individual communications.

Using this Survey

*The entire purpose of this survey is to give church members a way to grapple with their philosophy and their church's philosophy surrounding theological communication. It's one thing to say "we're on the same page regarding our view on LGBTQ issues." but it's entirely another to say "we're on the same page regarding **how** to communicate our view on LGBTQ issues." Below we'll look at an example to see how one might yield conclusions from this survey.*

4. Humanities Fallenness



In this example, the survey taker's personal view (highlight) of the importance of addressing this topic is very high, and the church's public facing communication (circle) is incredibly clear about human fallenness. But when it comes to sermons, the survey taker has never heard a teaching on or affirmation of humanities fallenness. In personal conversation, she thinks she may have heard a pastor refer to humanities fallenness in reference to evil in the world. This may raise some concern, and rightly so; It would be wise for the survey taker to take note that there appears to be some sort of disconnect between the church's public stance and what is taught from the pulpit. This could be for a number of reasons:

1. It could be a coincidence and completely unintentional.
2. It could be due to the church leadership viewing Sunday sermons as primarily aimed at the unbeliever, and wanting to make the sermons more palatable. Maybe there are other areas and spaces in the church with solid and clear teaching on this topic.
3. It could be due to the leadership knowing that there is a variety of opinions among the church on this topic, and actively choosing not to wade into the controversy.
4. It could be due to the pulpit minister not believing in the historicity of the fall in Genesis 3.

The survey taker may have a few next steps. She may want to meet with someone on the church's leadership team to learn what they think about this topic. She may want to raise this observation with them. She may offer to co-lead a six-week class at the church on the topic of humanities fallenness. There are a number of ways for the survey taker to "move forward" in a healthy way that promotes unity and understanding. She may end up finding out that number 3 or 4 above is true. In this case, she may have some thinking to do.
