

Tea Party activists akin to religious Republicans

by [Kevin Eckstrom](#) in the [November 2, 2010](#) issue

Americans who identify with the Tea Party are more religious than the general population but are less religious than conservative Christians, according to a new American Values poll. The report said the religious profile of the Tea Party "differs only modestly" from the religious makeup of the Republican Party.

The survey of 3,013 adults by the nonpartisan Public Religion Research Institute found that 11 percent of Americans say they are part of the amorphous Tea Party movement, compared to 22 percent of Americans who identify as Christian conservatives.

Nearly half (47 percent) of those who claim the Tea Party label also consider themselves Christian conservatives or part of the religious right, according to the survey.

White evangelicals make up more than one-third of the Tea Party movement—more than double the size of the second-largest groups, mainline Protestants and Catholics (14 percent each). A full 70 percent of the movement are white Christians.

On three levels of religious engagement—taking a literal view of the Bible, attending church weekly and rating religion as the "most important" thing in life—Tea Partiers were more religious than Americans as a whole, but less so than conservative Christians:

- Take literal view of the Bible: Tea Party 47 percent, Christian conservatives 64 percent, Americans overall 33 percent.
- Attend church weekly: Tea Party 46 percent, Christian conservatives 64 percent, Americans overall 36 percent.
- Regard religion as most important: Tea Party 27 percent, Christian conservatives 39 percent, Americans overall 20 percent. —RNS