

REVEAL Spiritual Life Survey Technical Report

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The REVEAL Spiritual Life Survey (SLS) helps local church leaders to determine the spiritual vitality of their congregation and target ways to increase the church's effectiveness in helping congregants grow spiritually. The SLS has been through several revisions since its launch in 2007. To date, more than 425,000 individuals in approximately 2,000 churches have responded to the survey. While the demographic characteristics of the churches and individuals who have taken the survey don't perfectly mirror a representative national sample of churches or congregants, there is substantial diversity in the SLS database. Estimates of reliability for subscales of the SLS indicate good internal consistency reliability. Available evidence for the validity of the Spiritual Vitality Index, a measure derived from SLS items, and the spiritual continuum of growth also is positive.

Introduction

The *REVEAL Spiritual Life Survey* (SLS) was launched in 2007 as a tool to help local churches assess the spiritual health of their congregations. To date, more than 2,000 churches and 425,000 individuals have responded to the SLS. The SLS is a multiple-choice, online questionnaire administered through local churches that sign up to have their congregation take the survey. It includes items on the respondent's attitudes, beliefs, spiritual practices, involvement in church activities, involvement in serving the community, and satisfaction with their church experiences. Previous version of the SLS required that most respondents to spend 45 to 60 minutes answering items. A new version of the survey, launched in 2015, included about one-third of the items from earlier versions and is expected to take most respondents 15 to 20 minutes. This report outlines the development and refinement of the SLS, the characteristics of the churches and individuals who have taken the SLS, and the psychometric properties of the SLS.

History and Development of the *Spiritual Life Survey*

Both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were employed in the development of the SLS.

Qualitative Phase

In 2006, one-on-one interviews were conducted with 68 congregants in the more advanced stages of spiritual growth. Topics included spiritual life history, church background, personal spiritual practices, spiritual attitudes and beliefs. This research captured language and insights that guided the development of the SLS.

Quantitative Phases

Phase 1. In early 2007, the initial version of the SLS was fielded with seven churches. These churches represented a diversity of geography, size, ethnicity, and format. Nearly 5,000 surveys were completed by congregants at these churches. The survey consisted of 53 sets of questions on topics such as:

- attitudes about Christianity and one's personal spiritual life
- personal spiritual practices, including statements about frequency of Bible reading, prayer, journaling, etc.
- satisfaction with the role of their church in their spiritual growth
- importance and satisfaction of specific church attributes (e.g. helps me understand the Bible in depth) related to spiritual growth
- most significant barriers to spiritual growth
- participation and satisfaction with church activities, such as weekend services, small groups, youth ministries and serving

Phase 2. The survey was revised based on Phase 1 results and fielded in mid-2007 with 25 churches diverse in geography, size, ethnicity and format. A total of 15,977 respondents completed surveys.

Phase 3. The survey was revised again based on Phase 2 results. It was expanded to include 20 statements about core Christian beliefs and practices from *The Christian Life Profile Assessment Tool Training Kit*.^{*} Additionally, importance and satisfaction measures for specific attributes related to weekend services, small groups, children's and youth ministries and serving experiences were added. Between October 2007 and February 2008, the survey was fielded with 487 churches diverse in geography, size, ethnicity and format, including 91 churches in 17 countries outside the United States. A total of 136,547 surveys were completed.

^{*} Randy Frazee, *The Christian Life Profile Assessment Tool Training Kit* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2005).

Phase 4. This third revision refined the survey items based on Phase 3 research and on qualitative data from interviews with best-practice churches. Additionally, the survey was expanded to include 17 items measuring congregants' ratings of importance and satisfaction with aspects of the senior pastor's leadership as well as eight items measuring importance and satisfaction with aspects of the church's role in spiritual growth. The Phase 4 survey was launched in September 2008 and remains in use. As of June 30, 2015, 318,226 individuals had responded to the Phase 4 SLS.

Phase 5. A fourth revision of the survey launched in September 2015 and is the current survey version. This revision incorporates additional items that were piloted with churches in 2013 and 2014. Other items were eliminated to shorten the survey to about one-third of the total number of items in the Phase 4 survey. The items retained allow for reliable calculation of all composite scores and classification algorithms.

Description of Churches Who Participated in the SLS in Phase 4

See the tables below for a breakdown of these churches by geographic location, weekend attendance, denomination, and style. Where possible, SLS churches are compared to a national random sample of churches that were surveyed by researchers at Duke University as part of the 2012 National Congregations Study (NCS).¹

As shown in Table 1, the Midwest accounts for over 40% of the U.S. churches that have taken the survey. Compared to the NCS sample, which reports that 26% of all U.S. churches are located in the Midwest, this region is over-represented in the SLS database. Similarly, the Northeast is under-represented, accounting for just 9.5% of churches in the SLS database, which is 3% less than in the NCS sample. Additionally, 8% of churches in the SLS Phase 4 Dataset are located in Canada.

Table 1. Geographic Distribution of Churches in the SLS Phase 4 Database (N=1518).

| Region | Geographic Section | Percentage of Churches Surveyed |
|-----------|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| Northeast | Mid-Atlantic | 7.2% |
| | New England | 2.3% |
| Midwest | E N Central | 29.3% |
| | W N Central | 12.1% |
| South | S Atlantic | 15.6% |
| | E S Central | 3.9% |
| | W S Central | 11.6% |
| West | Mountain | 6.4% |
| | Pacific | 11.7% |

Churches were asked to state their adult weekend attendance. See Table 2 for the distribution of churches by size. The SLS database contains a much smaller percentage of churches with attendance of less than 100 and less than 250 compared to the NCS sample, where 27% of churches had an adult attendance of 1 to 99 and 48% had an attendance of fewer than 250 adults.

¹ Chaves, Mark, Shawna L. Anderson, and Alison Eagle. 2014. *National Congregations Study*. Cumulative data file and codebook. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University, Department of Sociology. Data available at: <http://www.thearda.com/Archive/Files/Descriptions/NCSIII.asp>

Table 2. Adult Weekend Attendance of Churches in the SLS Phase 4 Database (N=1518).

| Weekend Adult Attendance | Percentage of Churches Surveyed |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Less than 100 | 5.0% |
| 100-249 | 27.9% |
| 250-499 | 25.7% |
| 500-999 | 25.5% |
| 1000-2499 | 12.8% |
| 2500-4999 | 2.3% |
| 5000 or more | 0.8% |

The denominational distribution of churches is shown in Table 3. All denominations representing 1% or more of churches in the dataset are listed. Non-denominational churches are over-represented, comprising 24% of the SLS database, compared to 15% of the Protestant churches in the NCS database. Despite these discrepancies, most major denominations are represented to some degree in the SLS database.

Table 3. Denominations of Churches in the SLS Phase 4 Database (N=1518).

| Church Denomination | Percentage of Churches Surveyed |
|--|--|
| Non-denominational Christian | 24.6% |
| Baptist | 14.0% |
| Methodist | 9.7% |
| Lutheran | 9.2% |
| Presbyterian/Reformed | 8.1% |
| Assembly of God/Church of God/Pentecostal | 5.1% |
| Christian Church/Church of Christ/Disciples of Christ | 4.5% |
| Evangelical Free | 2.8% |
| Christian & Missionary Alliance | 2.8% |
| Brethren/Mennonite | 2.3% |
| Wesleyan | 1.6% |
| Evangelical Covenant | 1.5% |
| Episcopal | 1.0% |
| Other | 12.8% |

The style descriptions shown in Table 4 reflect the words chosen most often by each participating church as best describing their church. Evangelical, Contemporary, and Seeker-Friendly were chosen most often. The NCS did not ask a similar question of its respondents, so a comparison was not possible for this characteristic.

Table 4. Top 10 Style Descriptors of Churches in the SLS Phase 4 Database (N=1518).

| Church Style* | Percentage of All Churches Surveyed |
|--------------------------|--|
| Evangelical | 63.3% |
| Contemporary | 60.7% |
| Seeker Friendly | 44.6% |
| Missionary-minded | 40.1% |
| Conservative | 28.7% |
| Innovative | 25.4% |
| Visionary | 24.9% |
| Traditional | 21.8% |
| Mainline | 17.5% |
| Multicultural | 10.7% |

*Multiple responses were possible. Each church chose up to three descriptors

In summary, the churches in the SLS dataset reflect a range of church styles, sizes, denominations, and locations. While the dataset is not perfectly representative of a random national sample of churches, it does contain sufficient diversity to allow it to serve as a normative comparison group for future churches that participate in the survey. The data from these churches are not weighted or redistributed in any way when survey results are presented from the aggregate dataset.

Description of Individuals Who Responded to the SLS in Phase 4

As of June 30, 2015, 318,226 individuals had been surveyed using the Phase 4 version of the SLS. See the tables below for a breakdown of these respondents by gender, age, race, household income, education, marital status, and presence of children in the home.

As shown in Table 5, the gender distribution of respondents is skewed toward females. This skew likely reflects true gender differences in church attendance. A 2011 study by the Barna Group found that 44% of women and 36% of men attend church regularly.² The 2014 General Social Survey (GSS; conducted by the National Opinion Research Center)³ reported a nearly identical gender distribution among those who attend church once per month or more.

Table 5. Gender Distribution of Individuals in the SLS Phase 4 Database.

| Gender | Percent |
|---------------|----------------|
| Male | 38.0% |
| Female | 62.0% |

The age distribution of respondents, shown in Table 6, is skewed toward older respondents, with 72.5% of respondents being age 40 or older. However, data from the 2014 GSS showed a similar distribution of

² Barna Study of Religious Change, 2011. Available at <http://www.barna.org/faith-spirituality/514-barna-study-of-religious-change-since-1991-shows-significant-changes-by-faith-group>

³ Smith, Tom W, Peter Marsden, Michael Hout, and Jibum Kim. General Social Surveys, 1972-2012 [machine-readable data file] /Principal Investigator, Tom W. Smith; Co-Principal Investigator, Peter V. Marsden; Co-Principal Investigator, Michael Hout; Sponsored by National Science Foundation. --NORC ed.-- Chicago: National Opinion Research Center [producer]; Storrs, CT: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, University of Connecticut [distributor], 2013. Data available at: <http://www3.norc.uchicago.edu/GSS+Website/Download/>

ages among those who stated that they attend church one time per month or more, with 70% of these individuals being age 40 or older.

Table 6. Age Distribution of Individuals in the SLS Phase 4 Database.

| Age | Percent |
|--------------|---------|
| 18 and under | 1.3% |
| 19-24 | 3.2% |
| 25-29 | 5.7% |
| 30-39 | 17.2% |
| 40-49 | 23.9% |
| 50-59 | 25.2% |
| 60-69 | 15.5% |
| 70 and older | 7.9% |

The race and ethnicity distribution of the Phase 4 SLS dataset is shown in Table 7. Compared to GSS respondents who attend church once per month or more, SLS respondents are disproportionately White and Non-Hispanic. This category comprises approximately 30% more SLS respondents than GSS respondents.

Table 7. Race/Ethnicity of Individuals in the SLS Phase 4 Database.

| Race/Ethnicity | Percent |
|---------------------------|---------|
| White and Non-Hispanic | 89.4% |
| Black or African-American | 3.0% |
| Hispanic or Latino | 2.0% |
| Asian or Pacific Islander | 2.0% |
| Other Ethnic Group | 0.7% |
| Prefer not to answer | 2.7% |

The marital status of SLS respondents is shown in Table 8. Compared to GSS respondents who attend church one time per month or more, SLS respondents are more likely to be married currently (78.4% for SLS respondents vs. 50.5% for GSS respondents).

Table 8. Marital Status of Individuals in the SLS Phase 4 Database.

| Marital Status | Percent |
|----------------|---------|
| Now married | 78.4% |
| Widowed | 3.2% |
| Divorced | 7.9% |
| Separated | 1.1% |
| Never married | 9.5% |

The reported household income of SLS respondents is shown in Table 9. Compared to GSS respondents who attend church one time per month or more, SLS respondents tend to have higher annual incomes. Approximately 25% of SLS respondents have incomes below \$50,000, compared to 49% of GSS respondents.

Table 9. Household Income of Individuals in the SLS Phase 4 Database.

| Household Income | Percent |
|-----------------------|---------|
| Less than \$30,000 | 10.5% |
| \$30,000 - \$49,999 | 14.7% |
| \$50,000 - \$74,999 | 19.5% |
| \$75,000 - \$99,999 | 16.0% |
| \$100,000 - \$149,999 | 16.5% |
| \$150,000 or more | 10.6% |
| Prefer not to answer | 12.3% |

The highest level of education attained by SLS respondents is shown in Table 10. SLS respondents overall have achieved more education than GSS respondents who attend church once per month or more. The percentage of these GSS respondents who have completed a four-year college degree or more is 31.1%, compared to 58.4% of SLS respondents.

Table 10. Level of Education of Individuals in the SLS Phase 4 Database.

| Highest Level of Education | Percent |
|---|---------|
| Completed some high school | 3.3% |
| Completed high school/G.E.D. | 12.7% |
| Currently in college/some college | 14.9% |
| Completed Associate's degree | 10.7% |
| Completed 4 year college degree | 32.7% |
| Currently in post-graduate or professional school | 2.8% |
| Completed post-graduate or professional degree | 22.9% |

In summary, SLS respondents are similar to a random sample of church-attending GSS respondents with respect to gender and age. Compared to GSS respondents, SLS respondents are disproportionately White, more likely to be currently married, have higher household incomes, and are more likely to have completed a four-year college degree.

Normative Database

For nearly all of the items on the Phase 5 SLS, a normative comparison is provided against the Phase 4 database of churches profiled above. The comparison is based on where the responses from a church taking the current version of the survey fall on a given item in the distribution of churches who have taken the Phase 4 survey. Due to differences observed in the Phase 4 database between churches with 250 or fewer adults who attend weekend worship services and churches with more than 250 adult attenders, two sets of norms were developed. The normative database for smaller congregations contains 540 churches and the database for larger congregations contains 978 churches.

In the Church Archetype Report, for ease of reference, we have color-coded the percentile breaks. Items with red shading indicate that the church's result falls in the bottom 10 percent of the distribution. Yellow corresponds to the 11th through 25th percentiles; grey to the 26th through 74th percentiles; light green to the 75th through 89th percentile; bright green to the top 10 percent of the database.

Psychometric Properties of the Spiritual Life Survey

Reliability analyses seek to estimate the degree of stability and the degree of error present in a set of items. The two primary types of reliability are test-retest reliability, which is determined by administering the items to the same person on at least two occasions separated by a short interval, and internal consistency reliability, which requires multiple items that measure the same construct. In the case of the SLS, the length of the survey makes it difficult to establish test-retest reliability. Therefore, estimates of internal consistency were used to determine the reliability of subscales of the Phase 4 SLS.

Internal consistency reliability reflects the extent to which a set of items is measuring the same construct. It is most often calculated using Cronbach's coefficient alpha, which is (in simple terms) the average of all of the correlations among all of the items. Coefficient alpha can range from -1.0 to +1.0 (though negative values are extremely uncommon). The number of items present in a scale affects estimates of internal consistency reliability, with shorter scales having lower reliability estimates. A coefficient alpha level of 0.80 is considered the minimum acceptable criterion for a scale, with an alpha of 0.90 or higher considered best. For the SLS, alpha was calculated for subscales that represent aspects of spiritual growth and church life.

Christian Life Profile Subscales

Twenty items from the *Christian Life Profile* (CLP), created by Randy Frazee, senior minister of Oak Hills Community Church in San Antonio, Texas, are included in the Phase 4 and 5 SLS. These include the CLP Beliefs and CLP Disciplines subscales. The 10-item CLP Virtues subscale was piloted with approximately 24,500 individuals between 2009 and 2014. This subscale was added to the Phase 5 SLS released in 2015.

In developing the CLP, Frazee engaged church leaders, theologians, and others in a rigorous process of biblical inquiry to find the core, repeatable characteristics of a follower of Christ. The statements were then tested and refined in multiple forums, including *The Spiritual State of the Union*, an ongoing benchmark of the "spiritual temperature" in America, sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania and The Gallup Organization. Among the experts contributing to this comprehensive effort were Dallas Willard, J.I. Packer, and Larry Crabb.

No data on the reliability of the CLP from previous studies using these items were available. Internal consistency reliabilities were calculated for each subscale using all available SLS data. Cronbach's coefficient alphas are reported in Table 11. All subscales met the criteria for acceptable or good reliability.

Table 11. Internal Consistency Reliability Estimates for *Christian Life Profile* Items.

| Subscale | Coefficient Alpha |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Beliefs | 0.97 |
| Disciplines | 0.96 |
| Virtues | 0.88 |

Love of Others

Eleven items that measure love of others were added to the Phase 5 SLS. These include items asking about satisfaction with who God has made you to be, the practice of forgiveness, love of family, and love and respect for those who are different from you. These items were pilot tested with approximately 24,500 individuals between 2009 and 2014. The internal consistency reliability for this set of items was acceptable at coefficient alpha=0.88.

Other Items

The SLS consists of many items in addition to those described above. However, these items ask about disparate aspects of spiritual growth and church life and multiple items are not used to measure them. As a result, internal consistency reliability cannot be determined for these items. The subscales described above do represent the most substantive aspects of the SLS. They are the subscales used most often in the REVEAL research conducted to date and represent the bulk of our findings regarding spiritual growth and church life.

The Spiritual Continuum

History and Development. The spiritual continuum is one of the central findings that emerged from analysis of the SLS data in Phase 1. The SLS was initially launched to determine how best to measure the spiritual impact of a local church on its congregants. Researchers initially believed that participation in church activities such as small groups, Bible studies, and worship services would predict spiritual growth. Their hypothesis was that those who were most involved would be the most spiritually mature. Analysis of the survey data indicated that this hypothesis was not supported. Those with high levels of involvement in church activities differed little on spiritual growth indicators such as love of God and others compared with those with low levels of involvement.

Researchers reviewed other survey items in an attempt to find other possible predictors of spiritual growth, utilizing cluster analysis and other quantitative techniques. Ultimately, a single item that asked respondents to describe the closeness of their relationship with Jesus Christ from among seven statements was found to be the best predictor of love of God and others. Based on this item, researchers grouped respondents into four segments of increasing closeness to Christ: Exploring Christ, Growing in Christ, Close to Christ, and Christ-Centered. Demographic variables were not found to be associated in any meaningful way with membership in any segment on the continuum.⁴

Validity. It is not possible to calculate internal consistency reliability when a scale consists of a single item because the formula requires at least two items. Psychometric theory states that any measure that does not demonstrate reliability cannot demonstrate validity. However, all of the items that do demonstrate reliability as described above indicate that the continuum is a valid means of distinguishing between people in different stages of spiritual growth. All of the spiritual beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors measured by the SLS on the CLP items increase markedly and on a steady slope across the spiritual continuum, with the percentage of respondents who chose the strongest response increasing significantly from one segment of the continuum to the next. Additional behaviors measured by the SLS such as evangelism, tithing, and serving in the church and in the world show the same pattern of increase. Analysis of Variance also confirms that statistically significant differences exist between segments on the continuum. For example, on the CLP Beliefs scale the average of the sum of scores for the 10 items differs significantly for all four groups, increasing from 41.98 for the Exploring group to 55.79 for the Christ-Centered group. Statistically significant differences were found between groups on all of the CLP subscales and the spiritual practices scale. Little variance in levels of beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors was observed within each segment on the continuum.

Evidence for concurrent validity is found in correlating the segmenting item with two other items on the SLS that similarly measure one's self-described attitude toward God. An item from the CLP Disciplines subscale that measures the respondents' willingness to risk everything for the sake of Christ correlates

⁴ For a detailed description of each segment on the spiritual continuum, see G. Hawkins and C. Parkinson, *Move: What 1000 Churches Reveal About Spiritual Growth*. Zondervan, 2011. For more on the development of the continuum, see G. Hawkins, C. Parkinson, and E. Arnson, *REVEAL: Where are you?* Willow Creek Association, 2007.

0.47 with the item used to create the spiritual growth continuum. Another SLS item that asks respondents to state their level of agreement with “I love God more than anything else” correlates 0.50 with the item used to create the continuum. These correlations are moderate, indicating some shared variance and some unique variance. The item used to create the continuum involves aspects of love for God and of valuing Christ above all else and surrendering one’s life to Him. However, it also captures something more than either of these two items in allowing respondents to express their degree of closeness to Christ using a wider set of response options that allow for greater expression than an agreement/disagreement scale can capture.

Additionally, the face validity for this approach to defining spiritual maturity has a biblical base. In Genesis 3:9, God asked Adam a single question: “Where are you?” God didn’t ask this question in order to locate Adam in the garden. Rather, He was asking Adam where he was in relationship to Him. “Where are you?” is the central question between God and every person. All the other questions about one’s spiritual life become additional information that points to potential next steps for spiritual growth. Therefore, defining spiritual maturity using this single core question can measure spiritual maturity successfully.

The Spiritual Vitality Index

History and Development. Researchers created the Spiritual Vitality Index (SVI) in response to requests from churches for a way to summarize their survey results and benchmark their results for comparison in the future when the church next administered the SLS. The objective of the SVI is to present a single number that represents the spiritual vitality of a church and its congregation. It is based on nine items from the SLS that researchers identified as the most significant indicators of spiritual vitality. These items include three spiritual practices, three church characteristics, and three items that represent faith in action through activities such as serving and evangelism.

Computation. To compute the SVI, the percentage of the congregation meeting a set criterion of excellence for each question (e.g., the percentage of the congregation that engages in daily reflection on the meaning of Scripture) is calculated. A deviation formula is then used to determine how far a given church is from perfection (defined as 100% of the church’s congregants meeting the criterion of excellence). When the SVI was developed, this deviation score was scaled to have a mean of 70 and a standard deviation of 10. The SVI was developed following Phase 3, when 357 churches had participated in the survey. In that database, the SVI demonstrated a nearly normal distribution. In 2010, the SVI was re-scaled using the combined Phase 3 and Phase 4 database. In this database of 1,252 churches, a near normal distribution was observed, with the calculated value for skewness of 0.50 and a slightly leptokurtic value of 1.55 (indicating an excessive number of SVIs situated near the mean).

Reliability. Internal consistency reliability was calculated at the church level using the percentage of congregants meeting the criterion of excellence for each question. The coefficient alpha for the nine-item SVI scale was 0.88, which is acceptable to good for a scale of this length.

Validity. The SVI was validated through qualitative research. Leaders of churches that participated in Phase 3 and scored in the top 5 percent of all churches were interviewed to determine if their churches indeed were thriving. Interview results indicated that these churches shared common traits and that their congregations showed evidence of spiritual vitality consistent with the SVI results.⁵

⁵ For more on these churches, see G. Hawkins and C. Parkinson, *Move: What 1000 Churches Reveal About Spiritual Growth*. Zondervan, 2011.

Church Archetypes⁶

History and Development. As more and more churches took the SLS, and members of the REVEAL team consulted with their leaders, patterns emerged that reflected similarities between them. Over time, we began to name and describe these patterns. In 2010, the REVEAL team set out to analyze the database of 727 churches that had responded to the Phase 4 SLS between September 2008 and June 2010 to determine if these patterns would rise to the surface when tested statistically.

Best Practice Principles. On the Phase 4 SLS, respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with 19 church attributes. Some of these items and a few additional items from the Phase 4 SLS were used to measure the five REVEAL best practice principles. To validate the correspondence of these items to each best practice principle, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The final model consisted of 3-5 items per principle, all of which had loadings of 0.60 or higher on their corresponding factor/best practice principle. Fit indices for the measurement model indicated that it had excellent fit for the data, with moderate correlations between the five principles.

Catalysts. In a similar way, items that measured beliefs, personal spiritual practices, and faith-in-action behaviors from the Phase 3 and 4 SLS that had been shown to be catalytic to congregants' spiritual growth in previous REVEAL research were tested in a CFA to validate the overall model and each item's correspondence to each catalyst. The final CFA model consisted of 3-4 items per catalyst, all with loadings of 0.60 or higher on their corresponding factor/catalyst. Fit indices for the measurement model indicated that it had excellent fit for the data, with moderate correlations between the three catalysts.

Determining the Archetypes. Using the items identified in the CFAs, the churches in the Phase 4 SLS dataset were given percentile ranks for their average scores for the set of items used to measure each principle and catalyst. This percentile rank represented the church's level of effectiveness in each area relative to all of the other churches in the dataset. Using these percentile ranks, we ran a K-means cluster analysis to group churches based on these variables. We analyzed the catalysts and best practice principles separately. Our goal was to find a solution that included only groups that are distinct from each other in ways that are meaningful in defining the archetype represented by each cluster. A five-group clustering solution achieved these criteria for both the best practice principles and the catalysts in separate K-mean cluster analyses. When we combined the two frameworks to create the 5x5 grid shown in Table 12 below, the differences between each archetype crystalized. The combination provided the best overall means of sorting churches according to where they are on a continuum of spiritual vibrancy.

Churches taking the SLS from September 2015 onward will receive a Church Archetype Report that provides information on their archetype. Churches are classified into an archetype based on an algorithm derived from the 727 churches whose data were used to develop the archetype framework.

⁶ For a more in-depth discussion of the church archetypes, see C. Parkinson and N. Scammacca Lewis, *Rise: Bold Strategies to Transform Your Church*. NavPress, 2015. See the Appendix for a detailed discussion of the research methodology used to develop the archetypes.

Table 12. Combined Framework of Archetypes.

| | | Spiritual Catalysts Clusters | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| | | Low | Medium | High |
| Best Practice Principles Clusters | Low | Troubled | | |
| | Medium | Complacent | Introverted Average | Extroverted Self-Motivated |
| | High | | Energized | Vibrant |

Closing Comments

The *REVEAL Spiritual Life Survey* has an extensive history and an expansive database that provides normative comparisons based on results from more than 1,500 churches. The current version of the SLS has been refined to measure the spiritual condition of a congregation with the greatest accuracy possible. The SLS is intended to be fielded every 18 to 24 months within a congregation to measure change over time. The REVEAL Team remains committed to providing church leaders with a tool to identify ways to increase the spiritual vitality of their congregation and help every member take the next step in spiritual growth.