



Episode 7: What's New with the REVEAL for Church Survey?

This episode focused on the REVEAL for Church survey itself. It's the tool we've used over the past decade to give pastors insights into where their people are in their spiritual growth and what church leaders can do to help them. The survey was updated in 2016 with several significant improvements that are discussed in this episode.

What makes the REVEAL for Church Survey unique?

Our database consists of survey responses from more than 500,000 people attending over 2,000 churches. Because of the size of our data, we have established statistical norms. These norms allow us to, for example, compare the percentage of your people who pray daily to that of other churches in our database and tell you that your church how your church is doing when it comes to prayer. This information is not available anywhere else.

What has not changed about the REVEAL for Church Survey?

- *Pricing.* Our pricing is reasonable in order to make it accessible to churches of every size. The biggest investment a church makes is the time and effort required to promote the survey (with help from resources that we provide).
- *The product package.* All REVEAL churches receive two reports: an Executive Summary Report that highlights the key findings and a Comprehensive Report that breaks down the data from the survey by the four groups on the Spiritual Continuum, with normative comparisons for each group. Churches that have taken the survey before also get their previous survey results in the current Executive Summary Report format to make it easy to see how your church has changed over time.

What is new about the REVEAL for Church Survey?

- The survey is *more streamlined*. Because so many churches have taken the survey, we have been able to assess what items are most important and eliminate items that did not provide much insight. As a result, the time it takes for most people to respond to the survey is 15-20 minutes, versus 35-40 minutes in the prior version.
- The reports are *more focused*. The original 45-page PowerPoint Executive Summary Report is now 20 pages because we are able to focus on the key findings that are most important to church leaders.
- The survey is much *more user-friendly*. You can take the survey on a tablet, a laptop, or a smart phone. Also, you can stop in the middle of the survey and pick up later where you left off.

- The survey is more *automated*. It is easier than ever to order the survey (www.revealforchurch.com/order) and a new dashboard lets churches track the number of survey responses they have received in real time, allowing them to take action quickly if numbers are lower than they should be.
- We can *track people's growth over time*. The survey used to be completely anonymous, meaning that when a church came back to take the survey again we couldn't identify who had taken the survey before and tell churches how those people had changed over time. Now, we also ask people to provide a name and email address when they take the survey so that we can link their data from past surveys and give churches a more accurate picture of spiritual growth in their people over time. Survey responses are confidential; we never release a list of individuals who have taken the survey to anyone, including church leaders.
- We can both *diagnose and prescribe*. The survey has always been a diagnostic tool, able to pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses in a congregation's spiritual profile. Today it is far more capable of providing practical, fact-based advice. In 2014, we discovered eight church archetypes (or personalities). These archetypes transformed the survey into a prescriptive, as well as a diagnostic, tool because we can tell churches their archetype and recommend specific next steps that have helped other churches with that archetype to improve.

When is the best time of year to field the survey?

The best time to field the survey is in the late fall and the early spring. Specifically we see the highest response rates in November and March.

What response rate should I try to reach?

To be sure the survey reflects the voice of an entire congregation, we encourage churches that have more than 250 adult congregants to achieve a response rate of 25% or more (35-40% is ideal). For churches with 75-250 adult congregants, a response rate of at least 50% and ideally 70% is best. The survey is not available for churches with less than 75 adults because our norms are not as accurate when the number of responses is small.

How can I promote the survey to get the best response rate possible?

One strategy is to focus all of your communication channels on promoting the survey. Make it as easy as possible for people to take it. Many churches make laptops or tablets and helpers available after weekend services to aid congregants who may not be comfortable with technology. Above all, the key to promoting the survey is the senior pastor. Having the senior pastor as a strong advocate for the survey is critical to getting a high response rate.