

Renovo Spiritual Life Inventory– FAQ’s

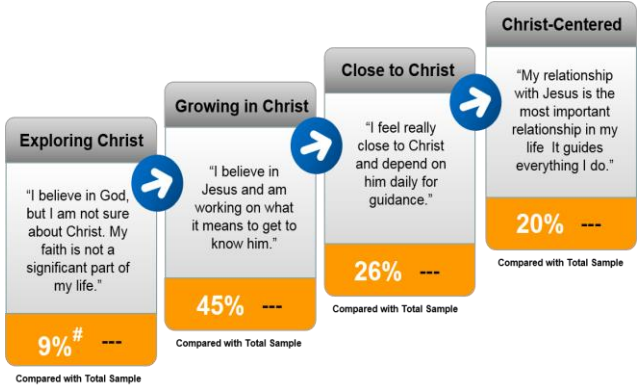
What is Renovo’s approach?

The core leadership of a church cares deeply about answering two important questions.

*Are the people at our church really growing spiritually?
What actions should we take to help them grow?*

Foundationally, a church is striving to fulfill Matthew 28’s mandate to “go and make disciples of all nations”. The Renovo Spiritual Life Inventory provides two key analyses to help answer these two questions.

First, a spiritual “snapshot” of congregants, using a breakthrough research technique to assess people’s spiritual attitudes and behaviors based on this framework of four distinct spiritual segments.



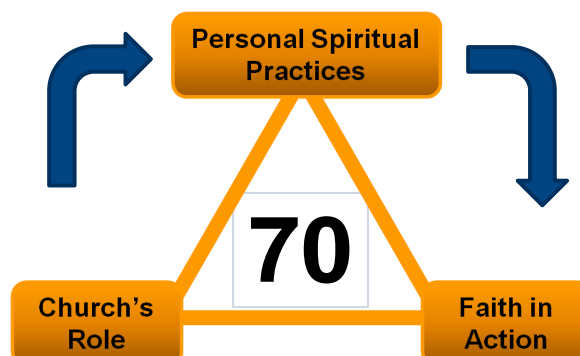
Second, placement into one of eight spiritual archetypes that most American congregations find themselves: troubled, complacent, extroverted, average, introverted, self-motivated, energized, and vibrant. Each archetype has a clear and practical pathway of next steps that will allow it to thrive spiritually.

| | | Church "Input" | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| | | Lack Focus | Inward Focused | Average | Outward Focused |
| Congregant "Output" | Flourishing | | "Mobilized" | | "Vibrant" |
| | Action Oriented | "Troubled" | | "Extraverted" | |
| | Average | | "Introverted" | "Average" | "Energized" |
| | Contemplative | | | | |
| | Complacent | | "Complacent" | | |

What is the Spiritual Vitality Index?

The objective of the Spiritual Vitality Index (SVI) is to present a one-number snapshot of the spiritual vitality of a congregation. It is based on a number of metrics from the inventory that we have identified as significant indicators of growth. They are divided in three broad categories as follows:

- **Personal Spiritual Practices** – measures the level of engagement with spiritual disciplines, such as reflection on Scripture and prayer, that advance the level of spiritual maturity and intimacy with God.
- **Faith in Action** – measures spiritual behaviors that mark a Christ-follower, such as evangelism and serving those in need, as well as attitudes of surrender to Christ.
- **Church's Role** – measures the effectiveness of the church's role in helping its congregation grow spiritually.



What the Spiritual Vitality Index DOES and DOES NOT measure:

- It DOES NOT measure the health of your church in terms of attendance growth, financial strength or staff morale.
 - It DOES measure how well your church helps people grow spiritually.
 - By helping them understand the Bible.
 - By helping them develop a personal relationship with Christ.
 - By challenging them to take next steps.
- Its primary goal is to measure the spiritual vitality of your people.
 - That's why two of the three buckets measure things your people do OUTSIDE church walls (spiritual practices and faith in action).
 - The focus is on people, not the church.

How the score is calculated: To calculate the score itself, all of the variables in the categories are equally weighted and yield a number that is the percentage of the congregation meeting the criterion of excellence for each variable. Obviously, there is no perfect church, so we developed a measure of how closely a particular church approaches perfection. To make the Index user friendly, it was converted to a score where 70 is average.

Is the Spiritual Life Inventory reliable and valid?

Yes. Using research terminology, the estimates of reliability for the Spiritual Life Inventory indicate good internal consistency. Available evidence for the validity of the Spiritual Vitality Index, a measure derived from the inventory items, and the Spiritual Continuum also is positive. To read more details, please request the *Spiritual Life Inventory Technical Report*.

What churches have taken the Spiritual Life Inventory?

The hundreds of churches surveyed reflect a diversity of church models, congregations, and sizes. These include but are not limited to: mainstream denominations, traditional Sunday-school model churches, African-American churches, mission-focused churches, international churches, and churches representing a wide range of geographies and styles. Contact us to request a profile of the churches included in the benchmark database.

Can I see a copy of the inventory?

We can actually do better than providing you a copy of the inventory. We have actually created a document that not only provides you with the questions that we ask but just as importantly why we ask them so you can fully understand the goals of the inventory. Please request a copy of the *Spiritual Life Inventory Questions and Rationale*.

What is the timetable for launching the Spiritual Life Inventory?

The inventory is typically in the field for two weeks (covering three weekends) after it is launched. After ordering the inventory, we will send you a short Church Profile survey at which time we will arrange a start date that for the launch.

How long does it take to complete the inventory?

The inventory is administered in an on-line format containing just under forty questions in series of single-response, multiple response, and grid style questions. The average length of time for completing it is 20 to 25 minutes. Please keep in mind that this is an average. Some people complete the inventory in less than 20 minutes and others take well over an hour. This discrepancy is due to the thought-provoking nature of the questions.

Is there a paper-and-pencil version of the inventory?

Yes, a paper form of the inventory is available. We do not promote it widely because it requires additional effort to pursue this path. For example, you will have to print off the inventories from an electronic copy that we provide. In the paper form, the inventory is fifteen pages in length because we are unable to hide questions that people might typically skip in an online survey.

Also, your church will need to enter all the responses from those inventories into the online tool. We do provide some resources to facilitate that process. Churches that have used the paper form typically find and train volunteers for this task. If you decide to pursue the paper-and-pencil option, please contact us so we can make sure you get the materials you need.

Who should respond to the inventory?

The inventory is ideally designed to be completed by those age 18 and over in your church.

What type of response rate should be look to achieve?

It really varies by size of church. For smaller churches (<250 average adult weekend attendance) you are going to want to look for an overall response rate of around 55 to 65 percent. For churches in the 250 to 499 average adult weekend attendance you are targeting something in the 40 to 50 percent participation rate. For churches 500 and over in average weekend attendance you are ideally looking to achieve a minimum participation rate in the 25 to 35 percent range.

What happens if we don't achieve a 25% response rate or for smaller churches (under 250) a response rate of 55%?

As long as we receive 30 responses, we will generate a report. However, we will recommend caution regarding taking action based on findings from response rates that are below these targets.

Does a church have to be a certain size in order to take the inventory?

No, in fact we find that smaller churches are more likely to achieve higher participation rates. Many churches that have under a 100 adults in average weekend attendance we find achieve response rates exceeding 70% and it is not uncommon to see participation rates over 100% (remember participation is based upon "average" adult weekend attendance).

While the inventory is in the testing window how will we know the participation rate at our church?

We will provide **response rate updates** so you know how you're doing. You'll receive updates on how many responses we've received from your church twice a week during the inventory period.

Can we have the inventory open longer than two weeks?

We limit the inventory to two weeks because based on our experience most of those who respond do so within the first few days that they become aware of it.

Who will see our results?

Only two people on the Renovo team have access to church reports and we treat your information as highly confidential. No one outside of the Renovo team will see your results without your permission. Your Renovo report will be emailed **only** to the Senior Pastor.

Will I see inventory results from individuals in my congregation?

No. Your congregation's responses are collected anonymously by an independent research organization.

Once the field work is closed, when are results available?

The report is sent to you thirty days after the inventory closes. So it's six weeks from the launch of the inventory until the receipt of the final report. We are also willing to accommodate a church that needs the report more quickly.

Will we get access to the raw data from the inventory?

We do not make available the raw data from the inventory. However we provide a comprehensive appendix in addition to the church report. Between the appendix and the report, you'll receive all significant data on your church.

Can I see what a final report looks like?

Of course. Please request a copy of the *Sample Spiritual Life Inventory Report* to see an example of a final report.

Has there ever been any negative feedback about the inventory?

After ten years of doing the inventory with hundreds of churches, it would be hard to imagine that we would receive no negative feedback. However, we always provide the online questionnaire link ten days prior to its launch date so that church leaders can experience the inventory prior to distributing it to their congregation. We inform all Spiritual Life Inventory client churches that they can have a full refund if they decide not to move forward with the questionnaire after this trial period. This has not happened once.

Can we participate in the Spiritual Life Inventory again to monitor changes?

Absolutely. However, we recommend waiting for two years before you field the inventory again, but the decision is totally up to you. But please note that our experience shows that it takes time—more than a few months—for any changes you implement to begin to have an impact on people’s lives. Also fielding a second inventory too soon after the first can compromise response rates.

Can you help us understand our results from one wave to the next?

Yes. In fact we have developed a special tracking report so you can easily compare your results from one wave to the next.

What additional information will I learn from the tracking report?

The tracking report is intended to add to the information you are receiving by highlighting meaningful differences from one wave of the inventory to the next. It is not intended to replace your standard summary report but provide you with a quick overview of any changes that have occurred on the key measures in the inventory.

How do you define a “meaningful change” from one wave to the next?

We define a statistically meaningful change as a change of one-half of a standard deviation from one inventory to the next. Standard deviation is a unit of measure commonly used in statistics. One use of this statistic is to measure change over time. The standard deviations used to define meaningful change in this report come from the pooled data in our comparative database of churches that have taken the inventory since August 2008.

Is the Renovo Spiritual Life Inventory available outside the US?

Yes. We have completed approximately 50,000 inventory's with 300 churches outside the US. However, with the exception of a handful of countries (like Argentina, Germany, Switzerland Netherlands, and Brazil), the inventory is conducted in English. So if conducting the inventory in English is not a barrier for you, we have the experience and norms in place to field the inventory outside the US.

Do you provide any kind of inventory helpline or customer assistance?

We will equip you to be able to respond to issues. For major technical problems or questions, please email Mel Probst at Mel.Probst@Renovou.com