

NCD PATHWAY 6 – Inspiring Worship part 1

What makes a worship service inspiring?

When we look at the definition of what it is to be inspired, it indicates that to inspire another person is to make them feel they want to do something and can do it. If we put this in the context of worship being inspiring we would need to awaken something in the worshipper that fills them with a desire to “do” something.

The questions in the survey relate to the degree to which the worship service is *inspiring*. The higher the question’s result, the greater its contribution to the spirituality of the church being passionate.

As we look at the eleven questions related to Inspiring Worship in the survey, seven of the ten questions can be changed or influenced by the individual and their personal experience. These questions can be grouped into 7 categories and we will look at the first three in this article.

1. Why?
2. Preparation
3. Impact
4. Preaching the Word
5. Music
6. Visitors
7. ‘The God Connection’

1. Why?

Q 50 – I can easily explain why I come to the worship service

Before the invention or necessity of online worship, many church leaders took it for granted that people knew why they gathered corporately and were always surprised by a low score in this area. They are even more surprised when they struggle with the question themselves.

So why do people come to church? You may be shocked by some of the answers, like this one which I have heard more than once: “I come for the food and chat after the service”.

Once upon a time people came because they came out of loyalty to the institution, but no longer. The “why” of worship is foundational to it being inspiring. With attending worship now an option, it has caused every one of us to ask the question “why”? I have heard members saying they don’t want to go back to the way things were, that Sabbath now feels like Sabbath and enjoying no pressure of responsibilities and tasks.

2. Preparation

Q 88 – I always look forward to the worship service

Q 89 – I prepare myself to participate in the worship service

It is easy to forget that the principal “ingredient” to worship is people not ritual. The frame of mind in which people arrive has a fundamental impact on their receptiveness to what occurs. Knowing

why they are coming to worship will shape expectations. Regular positive worship experiences will heighten anticipation. Expecting a spiritual encounter increases both preparation and participation.

Imagine a church where you left every week with anticipation of what would happen next week and people couldn't wait to be there.

3. Impact

Q 56 – I'm often bored during the worship service

Q 15 – I feel the worship service has a positive influence on me

Q47 – Attending the worship service is an inspiring experience for me

These questions try to give an overall impression from a personal perspective. This is important because corporate worship does rest on the capacity of individuals to worship, as we have seen over recent months.

The questions also acknowledge that perceptions of the corporate worship experience are based largely on the entire service and not individual components.

The questions relate to the degree of impact on the worshippers – from completely “switched off” to totally “switched on”. Worshippers are not concerned with models of worship, liturgical style or rituals etc, but engagement in worship.

“So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life – your sleeping, eating, going to work, and walking around life – and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him.” Romans 12:1 (The Message)