

Timing the Spirit

Have worship services gotten too long for contemporary attention spans?



One London church leader is trying to persuade fellow clergy that today's worship services are excessively long.

How long would you estimate your attention span to be? Ten minutes? A half hour? Ninety minutes? It is safe to say that the length of one's attention span would ultimately depend on the topic or issue at hand. What if the topic was your Creator—the lover of your soul?

The Bishop of Lichfield, Rev. Jonathan Gledhill submitted in his London diocese recently that “clergy should aim to keep the time of worship to no more than 50 minutes.” He believes worship has become too complicated, leading to confused and excluded churchgoers.

Spending more than an hour in church seems alien to some and even taboo to others. But to many of *Charisma's* Facebook fans, limitless services are the most fulfilling.

More than two dozen Facebook comments acknowledged the Holy Spirit as an immovable variable in worship time.

Colleen Cobb Audette of Micco, Fla., says: “The service should be led by the Holy Spirit. These ‘timed’ services are nothing but ‘religion.’ Too many times we get caught up in having an agenda. We pray, ‘Holy Spirit have your way, but make it quick because we have a lot to do this morning.’”

Christopher Ales of Daphne, Ala., prefers the clocks to be removed from the sanctuary. He feels pastors are more worried about pleasing the congregation instead of pleasing God. “Leave quietly if you want to leave,” Ales says, “but don't infringe on the Holy Spirit when He is moving. I am left to

wonder how many healings are missed, how many leave the same way they came in—bound—when deliverance was in our midst.”