

CONNECT WITH GOD

DISCOVER YOUR SPIRITUAL PATHWAYS



LIVE|LOVE|LEAD

Assessment by John Ortberg Ruth Haley Barton, *An Ordinary Day with Jesus: Participant's Guide* (Barrington, IL: Willow Creek Association, 2001), 67-72,
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Connect with God:

Discover Your Spiritual Pathways

Just as we all have different ways to refresh ourselves, we also connect with God in different ways. This means that, just as we enjoy a variety of ways to refresh mentally and physically, God has given us a variety of ways to refresh ourselves spiritually and connect with Him. These ways of connecting with God are called “spiritual pathways.”

- Definition: A spiritual pathway is the way we naturally connect with God and grow spiritually.
- Each of us has a preferred pathway, a way that we naturally gravitate toward as a way of connecting with God.
- Most of us don't use just one, but we do tend to prefer one or two main pathways.
- There is usually one pathway that is very unnatural for us, and it takes some stretching for us to experiment with using that pathway.
- Once you discover your pathway(s), the goal is to experience great freedom and joy in using it. Finding and using your spiritual pathway(s) will help you experience God's presence with you in an “ordinary” day.
- If you don't identify, discover, and use your spiritual pathway(s), it will be very difficult to experience God's presence in the normal routine of an “ordinary day.”

Spiritual Pathway Assessment

1. Respond to each statement below according to the following scale.
Put the number in the block before each statement.

3 = Consistently / Definitely true of me

2 = Often / Usually true of me

1 = Once in a while / Sometimes true of me

0 = Not at all / Never true of me

2. Transfer the numbers you gave for each assessment statement to the grid on the last page.
3. Total each column. The highest number identifies your preferred spiritual pathway; the next highest number, your secondary pathway.

- | | | |
|-----|-----|---|
| ___ | 1. | When I have a problem, I'd rather pray with people than pray alone. |
| ___ | 2. | In a church service, I most look forward to teaching. |
| ___ | 3. | People who know me would describe me as enthusiastic during worship times. |
| ___ | 4. | No matter how tired I get, I usually come alive when a challenge is placed before me. |
| ___ | 5. | Spiritual reality sometimes feels more real to me than the physical world. |
| ___ | 6. | I get distracted in meetings or services if I notice details in the surroundings that haven't been attended to. |
| ___ | 7. | A beautiful sunset can give me a spiritual high that temporarily blocks out everything bothering me. |
| ___ | 8. | It makes me feel better about myself to hang out with people I know and like. |
| ___ | 9. | I've never understood why people don't love to study the Bible in depth. |
| ___ | 10. | God touches me every time I gather with other believers for praise. |
| ___ | 11. | People around me know how passionate I feel about the causes I'm involved in. |

- ___12. I experience a deep inner joy when I am in a quiet place, free from distractions.
- ___13. Helping others is easy for me, even when I have problems.
- ___14. When faced with a difficult decision, I am drawn to walk in the woods, on a beach, or in some other outdoor setting.
- ___15. When I am alone too much, I tend to lose energy or get a little depressed.
- ___16. People seek me out when they need answers to biblical questions.
- ___17. Even when I'm tired, I look forward to going to a church service.
- ___18. I sense the presence of God most when I'm doing His work.
- ___19. I don't understand how Christians can be so busy and still think they're hearing from God.
- ___20. I love being able to serve behind the scenes, out of the spotlight.
- ___21. I experience God in nature so powerfully I'm sometimes tempted not to bother with church.
- ___22. I experience God most tangibly in fellowship with a few others.
- ___23. When I need to be refreshed, a stimulating book is just the thing.
- ___24. I am happiest when I praise God together with others.
- ___25. "When the going gets tough, the tough get going" – that's true about me!
- ___26. My family and friends sometimes tease me about being such a hermit.
- ___27. People around me sometimes tell me they admire my compassion.
- ___28. Things in nature often teach me valuable lessons about God.
- ___29. I don't understand people who have a hard time revealing personal things about themselves.
- ___30. Sometimes I spend too much time learning about an issue rather than dealing with it.

- ___31. I don't think there's any good excuse for missing a worship time.
- ___32. I get tremendous satisfaction from seeing people working together to achieve a goal.
- ___33. When I face a difficulty, being alone feels most helpful.
- ___34. Even when I'm tired, I find I have energy and desire to care for people's problems.
- ___35. God is so real when I'm in a beautiful, natural setting.
- ___36. When I'm tired, there's nothing better than going out with friends to refresh me.
- ___37. I worship best in response to theological truth clearly explained.
- ___38. I like how all the world's problems – including mine – seem unimportant when I'm praising God at church.
- ___39. I get frustrated with people's apathy in the face of injustice.
- ___40. If the truth were told, I sometimes feel guilty for enjoying silence and solitude so much.
- ___41. I am happiest when I find someone who really needs help and I step in and offer it.
- ___42. Others know that if I'm not around, I'm most likely outside in a beautiful place.
- ___43. People around me describe me as a people person.
- ___44. I often read lots of books and articles to help me work through a problem.
- ___45. When I get overwhelmed, there's nothing like a good worship service to get me back on track.
- ___46. I should probably take more time to slow down, but I really love what I do, especially in ministry.
- ___47. Sometimes I spend too much time mulling over negative things people say about me.
- ___48. I experience God's presence as I counsel someone who is struggling or in trouble.
- ___49. When I see beauty, something wonderful stirs in me that is difficult to describe.

Transfer your numbers from the assessment to this grid and then total each column.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.
15.	16.	17.	18.	19.	20.	21.
22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.	28.
29.	30.	31.	32.	33.	34.	35.
36.	37.	38.	39.	40.	41.	42.
43.	44.	45.	46.	47.	48.	49.
TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL
A Relational	B Intellectual	C Worship	D Activist	E Contemplative	F Serving	G Creation

- A—Relational** I connect best to God when I am with others.
- B—Intellectual** I connect best to God when I learn.
- C—Worship** I connect best to God when I worship.
- D—Activist** I connect best to God when doing great things.
- E—Contemplative** I connect best to God in silence.
- F—Serving** I connect best to God while completing Kingdom tasks.
- G—Creation** I connect best to God in nature.

Spiritual Pathway Overview

Below is a brief summary of each pathway and the name of a person from Scripture who exemplifies that pathway.

Relational

Spiritual growth comes naturally when you're involved in significant relationships. Your life is an open book. Being alone can drive you crazy. You often sense God directing you through other people. You learn best in a group of other people, but guard against too much dependence on others. Stretch by developing the capacity for silence. (Peter)

Intellectual

The study of Scripture comes naturally. You are a thinker and a problem-solver with little patience for emotional approaches to faith. In a small group, you're concerned that sharing opinions is just swapping ignorance. Be careful to not confuse being smart with being spiritually mature. Stretch through greater intentionality in corporate worship and private adoration and prayer. (Paul)

Worship

You have a deep love for corporate praise and a natural inclination for celebration. In worship your heart opens up and you get through struggles. Even though worship opens your heart, you are not always outwardly expressive or demonstrative. Be careful to guard against experience-based worship that creates a "high." Stretch through service and by engaging in the discipline of study. (Asaph/Miriam)

Activist

The activist has a strong sense of vision and passion to build the church. You enjoy challenges and do things to bring out the potential in people. A fast-paced, problem-filled, complex life works for you. Be careful not to run over people or only use them in the pursuit of goals. Stretch by creating times to reflect/journal. (Nehemiah)

Contemplative

You connect with God through uninterrupted time alone; reflection comes naturally. You have a large capacity for prayer. If you get too busy or spend too much time with people, you will feel drained. Embrace your interior world, listen to God, and act on what you hear. However, be careful to not avoid the demands of the “real” world. Stretch by getting connected to people and becoming more active in doing ministry. (Mary, mother of Jesus)

Serving

When you are helping others, God’s presence seems tangible. Serving helps to connect you to the body. Look for glimpses of God’s presence as you serve; and prepare to serve by praying first so that your service takes on a spiritual focus. It’s important that you choose to be a part of a small group community and practice expressing love through words as well as service. Stretch by intentionally engaging in small group community. (Dorcas)

Creation

You respond deeply to God through nature. Being outdoors replenishes you and opens your soul. You are very aware of physical senses. Art, symbols, and rituals help you grow. You tend to be creative and beauty needs to be a part of your life. Be careful not to use nature as an escape. You can be disappointed by people and choose to be alone. Stretch by being involved in a worshiping community. (David)

Questions to Contemplate

What was your response to the assessment? Do you think it was accurate?

How can you implement your pathway(s) in more intentional ways to connect with God?

What will you do to give yourself permission to utilize your pathway?

How will you engage in activities that move you outside of your comfort zone to help you stretch a little in other ways?

For questions or comments:

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