

Sacred Pathways- we all have different ways of connecting with God. Answer this question, “I feel closest to God when....”

Score the following statements on a scale of five to one, with five being very true and one being not true at all.

1. NATURALIST- loving God out of doors

- I feel closest to God when I’m surrounded by what he has made- the mountains, the forests, or the sea
- I feel cut off if I have to spend too much time indoors, just listening to speakers or singing songs. Nothing makes me feel closer to God than being outside.
- I would prefer to worship God by spending an hour beside a small brook than by participating in a group service.
- If I could escape to a garden to pray on a cold day, walk through a meadow on a warm day, and take a trip by myself to the mountains on another day, I would be very happy
- A book called *Nature’s Sanctuaries: A Picturebook* would be appealing to me.
- Seeing God’s beauty in nature is more moving to me than understanding new concepts, participating in a formal religious service, or participating in social causes.
- The total of your answers

2. SENSATE- loving God with senses

- I feel closest to God when I’m in a church that allows my senses to come alive- when I can see, smell, hear, and almost taste his majesty.
- I enjoy attending a “high church” service with incense and formal communion or Eucharist.
- I’d have a difficult time worshipping in a church building that is plain and lacks a sense of awe or majesty. Beauty is very important to me, and I have a difficult time worshipping through second-rate Christian art or music.
- The words sensuous, colorful, and aromatic are very appealing to me.
- A book called *The Beauty of Worship* would be appealing to me.
- I would really enjoy using drawing exercises or art to improve my prayer life.
- The total of your answers

3. TRADITIONALIST- ritual and symbolism

- I feel closest to God when I’m participating in a familiar form of worship that has memories dating back to my childhood. Rituals and traditions move me more than anything else.
- Individualism within the church is a real danger. Christianity is a corporate faith, and most of our worship should have a corporate expression.
- The words tradition and history are very appealing to me.
- Participating in a formal liturgy or prayer-book service, developing symbols that I could place in my car, home, or office, and developing a Christian calendar for our family to follow are activities that I would enjoy.
- A book titled *Symbolism and Liturgy in Personal Worship* would be appealing to me.
- I would really enjoy developing a personal rule (or ritual) of prayer.
- The total of your answers

4. ASCETIC- solitude and simplicity

- I feel closest to God when I am alone and there is nothing to distract me from focusing on his presence.
- I would describe my faith as more “internal” than “external”.
- The words silence, solitude, and discipline are very appealing to me.

- ___ Taking an overnight retreat by myself at a onastery where I could spend large amounts of time alone in a small room praying to God and studying his Word, and fasting for one or more days are all activities I would enjoy.
- ___ I would enjoy reading the book *A Place Apart: Monastic Prayer and Practice for Everyone*.
- ___ I would really enjoy spending time on a night watch, taking a short vow of silence, simplifying my life.
- ___ The total of your answers

5. ACTIVIST- through confrontation

- ___ I feel closest to God when I'm cooperating with Him in standing up for justice: writing letter to government officials and newspaper editors, picketing at an abortion clinic, urging people to vote, or becoming familiar with current issues.
- ___ I get very frustrated if I see apathetic Christians who don't become active. I want to drop everything else I'm doing and help the church overcome its apathy.
- ___ The words courageous confrontation and social activism are very appealing to me.
- ___ Activities like confronting a social evil, attending a meeting to challenge the new curriculum before the local school board, and volunteering on a political campaign are important to me.
- ___ The book written by Frank Schaeffer, *A Time for Anger*, would be an important book for me to read.
- ___ I would like to awaken the church from its apathy.
- ___ The total of your answers

6. CARGIVER- loving others

- ___ I feel closest to God when I see Him in the needy, the poor, the sick, and the imprisoned. I feel God's presence most strongly when I am sitting quietly beside the bed of someone who is lonely or ill or taking a meal to someone in need. You can count on me to offer a ride or volunteer for helping activities.
- ___ I grow weary of Christians who spend their time singing songs while a sick neighbor goes without a hot meal or a family in need doesn't get help fixing their car.
- ___ The words service and compassion are very appealing to me.
- ___ I sense God's power when I am counseling a friend who has lost a job, preparing meals for or fixing the car of a family in need, or spending a week at an orphanage in Mexico.
- ___ A book entitled *99 Ways to Help Your Neighbor* would be very appealing to me.
- ___ I would rather nurse someone to health or help someone repair their house than teach an adult Sunday School class, go on a prayer and fasting retreat, or take a lonely walk in the woods.
- ___ The total of your answers

7. ENTHUSIAST- mystery, celebration- worship, excitement

- ___ I feel closest to God when my heart is sent soaring and I feel like I want to burst, worship God all day long, and shout out his Name. Celebrating God and His love is my favorite form of worship.
- ___ God is an exciting God, and we should be excited about worshipping Him. I don't understand how some Christians can say they love God, and then act like they're going to a funeral whenever they walk into church.
- ___ The words celebration and joy are very appealing to me.
- ___ I would enjoy attending a workshop on learning to worship through dance or attending several worship sessions with contemporary music. I expect that God is going to move in some unexpected ways.
- ___ I would enjoy reading the book *The Mystery and Excitement of Walking with God*.

- I spend more money on music and worship tapes than on books.
- The total of your answers

8. COMTEMPLATIVE- adoration: emotions, presence, friendship with God

- I feel closest to God when my emotions are awakened, when God quietly touches my heart, tells me that He loves me, and makes me feel like I'm His closest friend. I would rather be alone with God, contemplating His love, than participating in a formal liturgy or being distracted by a walk outside.
- The most difficult times in my faith are when I can't feel God's presence within me.
- The words lover, intimacy, and heart are very appealing to me.
- I really enjoy having thirty minutes of uninterrupted time a day to sit in a quiet prayer and "hold hands" with god, writing love letters to Him and enjoying His presence.
- I would enjoy reading *The Transforming Friendship*.
- When I think of god, I think of love, friendship, and adoration more than anything else.
- The total of your answers

9. INTELLECTUAL- with the mind

- I feel closest to God when I learn something new about Him that I didn't understand before. My mind needs to be stimulated. It's very important to me that I know exactly what I believe.
- I get frustrated when the church focuses too much on feelings and spiritual experience. Of far more importance is the need to understand the Christian faith and have proper doctrine.
- The words concepts and truth are very appealing to me.
- I feel close to God when I participate in several hours of uninterrupted study time- reading God's Word or good Christian books and then perhaps having an opportunity to teach (or participate in a discussion with) a small group.
- A book on church dogmatics would be appealing to me.
- I spend more money on books than on music tapes.
- The total of your answers

What were your scores for each spiritual temperaments?

- Naturalist
- Sensate
- Traditionalist
- Ascetic
- Activist
- Caregiver
- Enthusiast
- Contemplative
- Intellectual

SACRED PATHWAYS

I. The Journey of the Soul

A. Loving God

1. We don't use one medicine to treat all sickness
 - a. There are different medicines for different illnesses.
 - b. There are different pathways to God
 - c. AW Tozer "The whole transaction of religious conversion has been made mechanical and spiritless. We have almost forgotten that God is a person and, as such, can be cultivated as any person can
 - d. We all have struggles to find a new "spiritual prescription" as we go through transitions in our lives
2. Historic movements through church history
 - a. Roman Catholic- worship focused around the altar
 - b. Reformation- worship focused around a majestic-looking pulpit
 - c. Calvinist- stressed separation from world, transforming society through politics
 - d. Anabaptists- stressed the inner reality of the gospel, separatist, pacifists, stayed away from government, community of faith
 - e. Methodism- inward transformation, salvation, holiness
 - f. Pentecostalism- outward expression
 - g. Social gospel
3. Personality temperaments
 - a. Approach reality- extrovert or introvert
 - b. Register input- sensing (five sense) or intuitive (imagination)
 - c. Arrange data- thinking or feeling
 - d. Arrange outer reality- judging (orderly, managing) or perceptive (spontaneous, flexible)
4. Complete Christians- relate to God in all different ways
 - a. Mk 12:30 Heart, mind, soul, strength
5. Married to God- not just an outrageous date, but married- growing with Him through the ups and downs and the routine of life. How do we love God, day in and day out, through the seasons of life.