

Spiritual Pathways: How to Experience God and Understand Others

How do you sense God's leading in your life? What does authentic worship look like? Which activities give you the greatest joy and which activities contribute the most to your spiritual growth? The answer to each of these questions reflects your own distinct spiritual pathway. This workshop is designed to help you identify not only the unique way you will grow in your relationship with God, but it will also help you to be more appreciative of the spiritual pathways preferred and practiced by others. While we might all agree that the Lord God is awesome, gracious, loving, wonderful, and good, we are likely not all going to agree on how to best know Him, serve Him, and love Him. Participants in this workshop will walk away with a better appreciation of their own unique spiritual profile, as well as the great diversity within the body of Christ.

Lynn McAdam has served in a church consulting and leadership development role with OC International throughout Germany and Austria since 1985. A broad sample of his teaching and writing materials is available at www.kompass-ev.net. He is also an enthusiastic sportsman and athletic coach, and is always looking for ways to combine sport and faith. Lynn recently completed his doctoral degree at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School researching and writing on "The Feasability of Partnerships between Local German Churches and Sport Clubs for Evangelism and Discipleship." Now that the McAdams' five children are living on their own, Lynn and Karen have transitioned back to the USA to be closer to their aging parents. They will divide their time and ministry involvement between the U.S. and Europe for the foreseeable future.

TYPE	CHARACTERISTICS	OBSERVATIONS
<p><u>The naturalist</u></p> <p>Experiences God in & thru nature</p> <p>Ps. 19</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prefers “the great outdoors” to a church setting - Impressed by the creativity, power, beauty of God 	<p>Romans 1,19-21</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - it’s possible to worship the creation rather than the Creator
<p><u>The sensualist</u></p> <p>experiences God thru 5 senses</p> <p>Hes. 1,1 - 3,15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - attracted to liturgical surroundings - music, art, ??? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - sensual appeal can also distract - is the goal to satisfy the senses?

<p><u>The traditionist</u></p> <p>One's relationship to God is related to a place or rite</p> <p>Is. 1,11-13</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - role of rites, symbols, sacraments - liturgical "rhythm" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - rites are a means to an end - Jesus criticised hypocrisy, not tradition / form
<p><u>The ascetic</u></p> <p>God is there for me</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - prefers solitude, quiet, simplicity - focus= the inner life 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - balance between law & grace - typically "disciplined"; often "uncomfortable"
<p><u>The activist</u></p> <p>Out to change the world for God</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - struggle against unrighteousness (John 2:14-16) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - activism vs. impatience
<p><u>The caregiver</u></p> <p>sees, loves, serves Jesus in others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - serving God = serving others - activist vs. caregiver 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the 2 Commandments (Mk 12)

<p><u>The enthusiast</u></p> <p>God works in & through me</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - loves excitement, mystery - inspired by joyous celebration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - feelings & fantasy play a big role - the role of the supernatural
<p><u>The contemplative</u></p> <p>Mt 26,6-13</p> <p>Deut 6,5</p> <p>Ps 73,25</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - role of meditation & “practicing the presence” - pure devotion; radiant love 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - secular vs. sacred - less “head focused”, more emotion-based
<p><u>The intellectual</u></p> <p>God is the source of truth</p> <p>Hosea 4,6</p> <p>2 Tim 2,15;</p> <p>Phil 3,14</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - faith is to be understood - 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - inspired by books, discussion - faith can become academic, lifeless

Who do I know, for whom this spiritual profile might be most fitting?

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|--------------------------|-------------------------|
| The naturalist _____ | The sensualist _____ |
| The traditionalist _____ | The ascetic _____ |
| The activist _____ | The caregiver _____ |
| The enthusiast _____ | The contemplative _____ |
| The intellectual _____ | |

Which of these profiles might be my primary type? Which profiles might be my secondary types?

[Gary Thomas: *Sacred Pathways: Discover Your Soul's Path to God* (Zondervan), 272 pp.]