



HOW DO WE CONNECT WITH GOD?

Quick Spiritual Pathways Assessment

Following is a simple checklist that can help identify your spiritual pathway, using the 7 pathways described in John Ortberg's book, **"God is Closer Than You Think"**. On a scale of 0 to 4, with zero being 'Not at all/never true of me' and 4 being 'Consistently/Definitely true of me', label the following points in each group. Add up your scores and see which pathways you score highest in. These may be your preferred spiritual pathways. **Note that you may have more than one.**

A. Relational

- I love to pray with other believers and feel God's presence more with others.
- I would rather do Bible study, discussion, and journal with others than alone.
- I love worshipping alongside others.

B. Intellectual

- I worship best in response to theological truth clearly explained.
- Give me an intellectually stimulating book any time!
- I love research and study to help me work through a problem.

C. Musical Worship

- God touches me when I am singing to Him.
- Putting on worship music adds life to my devotional times with God.
- I love worship times in the church services; that is when I feel I touch God.

D. Activist

- I feel close to God when I am engaged in ministry at a fast pace.
- I thrive spiritually in a highly challenging environment.
- I connect with God best when I'm using every ounce of energy to serve Him!

E. Contemplative

- I love to spend time in solitude, and busyness drains me.
- I have a large capacity for prayer and for private worship.
- I am a deep thinker; there is usually a lot going on inside me!

F. Serving

- I feel closest to God when I am serving behind the scenes.
- I am most aware of God's presence when I am doing something for Him.
- I experience God's presence as I counsel someone who is struggling.

G. Creation

- I feel most connected to God when I am surrounded by natural beauty.
- Being outdoors helps me make a decision or draws me closer to God.
- Things in nature often teach me valuable lessons about God.



Spiritual Pathway Assessment

HOW DO WE CONNECT WITH GOD?

1. Respond to each statement below according to the following scale:

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

Put the number in the blank before each statement

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 the 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 the 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 the 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 or 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 some who is struggling or in trouble.
- ☐ 49. When I see natural beauty, something wonderful stirs in me that is difficult to describe.



Spiritual Pathway Assessment Scoring

HOW DO WE CONNECT WITH GOD?

Transfer the numbers from the assessment to this grid, and 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

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



Spiritual Pathways Descriptions

HOW DO WE CONNECT WITH GOD?

RELATIONAL (A)

CHARACTERISTICS:

- Spiritual growth comes most naturally when you're involved in significant relationships.
- Small groups and other community life experiences are key.
- Your life is an open book.
- Being alone can drive you crazy.
- In key times of growth, God will often speak to you through people.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLE: The Apostle Peter

OTHER EXAMPLE: _____

STRENGTHS:

- You need a relationally rich life.
- Use your spiritual gift to serve others.
- Pray with others in community.
- Learn in a class with other people or in a small group.
- Use your network of contacts to further God's kingdom.

CAUTIONS:

- Guard against superficiality.
- You can grow dependent on others and become a spiritual chameleon.

WAYS TO STRETCH:

- Develop a capacity for silence.
- Keep some of your experiences with God secret so you don't get addicted to what other people think.
- Study Scripture for yourself so you are grounded in God's Word rather than in other's opinions.
- Invite close friends to speak truth to you so that your relationship is more than just social.

INTELLECTUAL (B)

CHARACTERISTICS:

- You draw close to God as you're able to learn more about him.
- The study of Scripture and theology comes naturally.
- You have little patience for emotional approaches to faith.
- You are a thinker.
- When you face problems or spiritual challenges, you go into problem-solving mode.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLE: The Apostle Paul

OTHER EXAMPLE: _____

STRENGTHS:

- Read great books that challenge you.
- Expose yourself to lots of teaching.
- Find like-minded people with whom you can learn.

CAUTIONS:

- Guard against becoming all head and no heart.
- Don't confuse being smart with being spiritually mature.

WAYS TO STRETCH:

- Devote yourself to corporate worship and to private adoration and prayer.
- Your learning needs to lead to worship; otherwise it will get dangerous.
- Engage in self-examination to assess whether or not you are being loving.
- *Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up* (1 Corinthians 8:1b).

WORSHIP (C)

CHARACTERISTICS:

- You have a deep love of corporate praise and a natural inclination toward celebration.
- In difficult periods of life, worship is one of the most healing activities you engage in.
- In worship, your heart opens up, and you come alive and enthusiastically participate.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLE: King David

OTHER EXAMPLE: _____

STRENGTHS:

- Experience great worship on a regular basis.
- Use worship tapes or CDs and make your car a private sanctuary.
- Learn about other worship traditions, and incorporate what you learn into your personal worship time.

CAUTIONS:

- Be careful not to judge those who aren't as expressive in worship.
- Guard against an experience-based spirituality that always has you looking for the next worship 'high'. This is what C.S. Lewis called "the fatal sin of saying 'encore'!"

WAYS TO STRETCH:

- Engage in the discipline of study.
- Serve God in concrete ways as an extension of your worship.
- Remain committed to your church even when worship isn't all you would like it to be.

ACTIVIST (D)

CHARACTERISTICS:

- You have a single-minded zeal and a very strong sense of vision.
- You have a passion to build the church and to work for justice.
- Challenges don't discourage you.
- You do everything you can to bring out the potential God has placed in other people.
- You love a fast-paced, problem-filled, complex, strenuous way of life.
- Prayer and action go hand in hand for you.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLE: Nehemiah

OTHER EXAMPLE: _____

STRENGTHS:

- Create a sense of challenge in your life by immersing yourself in tasks that call out the best you have to offer.
- Find a team of people you can invest in and work with to accomplish big goals.

CAUTIONS:

- You may run over people or use them because you get so focused on achieving the goal.
- Guard against going too long without pausing to reflect on what you're doing.
- You can end up not even knowing your own motives, spiritual condition, or emotional state.

WAYS TO STRETCH:

- Spend time in solitude and silence.
- Cultivate a reflective discipline like journaling.
- Develop close spiritual friendships with one or two other people. Invite them to ask you questions; to speak to you about what God is doing *in* you, not just *through* you. Those relationships must be focused on you, not on tasks.

CONTEMPLATIVE (E)

CHARACTERISTICS:

- You love uninterrupted time alone.
- Reflection comes naturally to you.
- You have a large capacity for prayer.
- If you get busy or spend a lot of time with people, you feel drained and yearn for times of solitude.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLE: Mary, Martha's sister (Luke 10:38-42)

OTHER EXAMPLE: _____

STRENGTHS:

- You need regular, protected, intense times of solitude and stillness.
- Faithfully follow the intuitions and leadings that come in your times alone with God.
- Act on what you hear from God in the silence.

CAUTIONS:

- You have a tendency to avoid the demands of the real world because it doesn't live up to your ideals.
- Be careful not to retreat to your inner world when friends, family, or society disappoint you.
- Resist the temptation to consider your times of private prayer and solitude as less important than the more public acts of ministry performed by others.

WAYS TO STRETCH:

- Choose a regular place of active service.
- Stay relationally connected, even when those relationships become difficult or challenging.
- Connect with those who have an activist pathway. Pray for them. Consider getting involved in some aspect of their ministry activities.

SERVING (F)

CHARACTERISTICS:

- God's presence seems most tangible when you're involved in helping others.
- You're often uncomfortable in a setting where you don't have a role. If you have a role, then you sense God's presence and delight.
- You constantly look for acts of service you can engage in and often don't even need to be asked.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLE: Dorcas in the Book of Acts

OTHER EXAMPLE: _____

STRENGTHS:

- Get plugged into a community so you have opportunities for meaningful service to offer God.
- Look for glimpses of God's presence in the people you serve and in the execution of your tasks.
- Prepare to serve first by praying so your service is genuinely spiritual service.

CAUTIONS:

- Be careful not to resent other people who don't serve as much as you do.
- Remember that God loves you, not because you are so faithful in serving him, but because you are his child.
- Don't confuse serving with earning God's love.

WAYS TO STRETCH:

- Balance your service with small group and community life.
- Learn how to receive love even when you're not being productive.
- Practice expressing love through words as well as actions.

CREATION (G)

CHARACTERISTICS:

- You respond deeply to God through your experience of nature.
- Being outdoors replenishes you.
- You're highly aware of your physical senses, and often art, or symbols, or ritual will help you grow.
- You tend to be creative.

BIBLICAL EXAMPLE: Jesus

OTHER EXAMPLE: _____

STRENGTHS:

- Spend time outdoors.
- Find a location for getaways.
- Make beauty a part of your spiritual life.

CAUTIONS:

- You may be tempted to use beauty or nature to escape.
- You will find that people are sometimes disappointing.
- Guard against the temptation to avoid church because you think to yourself, "I can worship God in nature, on my own."

WAYS TO STRETCH:

- Stay involved in a worshipping community.
- Be willing to help out in less-than-beautiful settings.
- Take Scripture with you into nature, and meditate on God's Word as you enjoy his creation.