Have you recognized that people connect with God in different ways? A book, Sacred Pathways, written by Gary Thomas, provides nine labels for some of these ways, and shows you the value as well as the dangers that are involved with each.

Why these labels are helpful...

This information can help you engage in deeper relationship with God. By understanding the way(s) you connect most with God, you can engage more clearly as well as avoid potential dangers. This self examination also helps point out the ways we don’t connect with God so that we may grow in those areas. Just because a way to worship God is not something we gravitate to, does not mean we should not embrace it and grow.

A very important overall goal...

While this self examination will help us to grow and become more effective in our connection and relationship with God, it is not just for our own benefit. This is an exercise to help us become better at connecting to God personally so we can become better at connecting with each other as a church.

How it works.

Take the assessment. The assessment will ask you to score 5 statements for each category. The score you create allows you to see which categories are your strengths and which are your weaknesses. Next, use the descriptions of the 9 ways people connect (worship) God so that you understand how the author has come to define them. With a deeper understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of each category, the assessment will help a person become more effective at growing in faith.

Online assessment — [https://groupleaders.org/spiritual-pathways-assessment](https://groupleaders.org/spiritual-pathways-assessment)

Much of this information is copied or altered from the Chi Alpha Discipleship Tool, a online PDF found at; [https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/2988a589/files/uploaded/sacred-pathways.pdf](https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/2988a589/files/uploaded/sacred-pathways.pdf)
Pathway Assessment

Score each statement on the scale from 1 to 5. 5 = very true for you and 1 = not true at all for you. Tip: Try to avoid scoring a statement with a 3 if possible. A 3 is fine, but think carefully and see if you can see the statement as a 2 or a 4 if possible.

Naturalist

I feel closest to God when I'm surrounded by what He has made — the forest, the lake, the mountains or the ocean.
1  2  3  4  5

I feel cut off if I spend too much time indoors, even if it’s listening to sermons and singing worship. Being outside helps me connect with God.
1  2  3  4  5

I would prefer to worship God by spending time beside a brook rather than by participating in a church service.
1  2  3  4  5

If I could escape to a garden to pray, walk through a park, or take a trip by myself to the mountains, I would be happy.
1  2  3  4  5

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.
1  2  3  4  5

Add all scores for your total score __________.

Sensate (The 5 senses)

I enjoy attending a high church service with incense and formal communion.
1  2  3  4  5

I have difficulty worshiping in a church building that is plain and lacks grandeur and majesty. I have difficulty worshiping through second-rate Christian art or music.
1  2  3  4  5

The words “sensuous”, “colorful”, and “aromatic” appeal to me.
1  2  3  4  5

I would enjoy using drawing, exercise, or art to improve my prayer life.
1  2  3  4  5

I feel closest to God when I’m in an environment that allows my senses to come alive - when I can see, smell and hear His majesty.
1  2  3  4  5

Add all scores for your total score __________.
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**Traditionalist**

I would enjoy participating in a formal liturgy or payer book service, developing symbols that I can place in my car, home or office, and developing a Christian calendar for my family to follow.

1 2 3 4 5

The words tradition and history appeal to me.

1 2 3 4 5

I would enjoy developing a personal rule (or ritual) of prayer.

1 2 3 4 5

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.

1 2 3 4 5

Christianity is a corporate (group) faith. Most of our worship should have a corporate gathering.

1 2 3 4 5

Add all scores for your total score __________.

**Ascetic (Solitude & Simplicity)**

I would enjoy taking an overnight retreat by myself at a monastery where I could spend time alone in a small room, or praying to God and studying His word.

1 2 3 4 5

I would enjoy taking a short vow of silence or simplifying my life.

1 2 3 4 5

I feel closest to God when I am alone and there is nothing to distract me from focusing on His presence.

1 2 3 4 5

I would describe my faith as more internal than external.

1 2 3 4 5

The words silence, solitude and discipline appeal to me.

1 2 3 4 5

Add all scores for your total score __________.
Pathway Assessment

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Activist
I get frustrated when I see Christians not being active. I wish I could help the church overcome its’ apathy.
1 2 3 4 5
I connect with God best when cooperating with Him in standing up for His justice by writing to government officials, urging people to vote, or becoming familiar with current events.
1 2 3 4 5
I would rather stand in the rain for an hour to confront evil than sit in a room by myself to pray, take a walk through the woods, or study.
1 2 3 4 5
The words courageous, confrontation, and social activism appeal to me.
1 2 3 4 5
Activities like confronting social evil or volunteering for a political campaign are important to me.
1 2 3 4 5
Add all scores for your total score __________.

Caregiver
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 able to serve others.
1 2 3 4 5
I am bothered by Christians that spend time singing songs while a sick neighbor goes without a hot meal or a family in need doesn’t get help fixing their car.
1 2 3 4 5
The words service and compassion appeal to me.
1 2 3 4 5
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.
1 2 3 4 5
I would rather nurse someone back 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.
1 2 3 4 5
Add all scores for your total score __________.
Pathway Assessment

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Enthusiast
The words celebration and joy appeal to me.
1 2 3 4 5
God is exciting. We should be excited about worshiping Him. I don’t understand how some Christians say they love God and then act like being at Church is like being at a funeral.
1 2 3 4 5
I would enjoy attending a workshop on learning to worship through dance or attending several worship sessions with contemporary music. I expect God moves in unexpected ways when we worship Him.
1 2 3 4 5
I connect with God best when I am able to worship God all day long and shout out His name. Celebrating God and His love is my favorite form of worship.
1 2 3 4 5
I spend more money on Christian music than on books.
1 2 3 4 5
Add all scores for your total score __________.

Contemplatives (Reflective)
The words love, intimacy, and heart appeal to me.
1 2 3 4 5
I enjoy having thirty minutes of uninterrupted time each day to sit in quiet prayer and enjoy God’s presence.
1 2 3 4 5
When I think of God I think of love, friendship and adoration.
1 2 3 4 5
I would rather be alone with God contemplating who He is than participating in a formal ritual or being distracted by a walk outside.
1 2 3 4 5
The most difficult times in my faith are when I can’t feel God’s presence.
1 2 3 4 5
Add all scores for your total score __________.
Pathway Assessment

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Intellectual

I spend more money on Christian books than music.

1 2 3 4 5

I feel closest to God when I participate in hours of uninterrupted study time, reading God’s word or Christian books.

1 2 3 4 5

I connect with God best when I learn something new about Him. My mind needs to be stimulated. It’s very important to me that I know exactly what I believe.

1 2 3 4 5

I get frustrated when the church focuses too much on feelings and spiritual experience. I want to understand the Christian faith and have proper doctrine.

1 2 3 4 5

The words concept and truth appeal to me.

1 2 3 4 5

Add all scores for your total score __________.

Write in your highest to lowest score to clarify your strengths and weaknesses.

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