



Relating to God

A Study of Spiritual Temperaments



Gen. 3:8-10 NIV

8 Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. 9 But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” 10 He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.”



God is a Relational God

- Adam and Eve heard God moving through the garden in the cool of the day
 - Adam and Eve hid themselves
 - God asks Adam, “WHERE ARE YOU?”
 - This was not a question of geographic or physical location, but rather a heart proximity and disposition
 - He’s saying Adam, I created you to be CLOSE! I created you.
 - Adam I created you for relationship with Me, and yet now you hide.



Consider the Question!

- With the one act, death entered the world
- With this one act, what Jesus already knew would happen was set in motion
- With that one act, pain and sweat, and difficult labor entered the world
- Despite all of this, God didn't say "ADAM, YOU MESSED UP!" or "ADAM WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?".. No it was "ADAM WHERE ARE YOU?"



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

GOD WAS NOT ASKING FOR INFORMATION...

...HE WAS MAKING A PROCLAMATION..

GOD IS A RELATIONAL GOD.



SO HOW DO YOU RELATE TO GOD?

- 3 Ways to Live:
 - The First Way (Cultures Way)
 - Does not prioritize or value relating to God
 - The Second Way (Churches Way)
 - Prescriptive, often pushed as the only way
 - The Third Way (King's Way)
 - Authentic, distinct, and unique



As Father..

- 3 Girls
 - Unique and distinct personalities
 - Unique and very distinctly different relationships with them all
 - As a father, I would never want them to feel that they have to be like the other to spend time with me.
- As a son, I was and still am very introverted often quiet, while my sister was extroverted, outgoing and vocal.
 - We never felt pressure to be like the other to be accepted and loved by our mother.



God has Uniquely Created You

- God has intentionally and uniquely created you. There is no one else like you in all the world.
- God created you to be in relationship with you!
 - No the version of you that looks, acts, sounds, or moves like another.
- WHERE ARE YOU?



So what does this all mean?

- The things you do to relate to God may be different.
 - If you are an early riser, and enjoys the quiet of the morning, it may be perfect for personal time with God
 - If you are the type that enjoys nature and taking daily walks outside to feel the breeze, that may be perfect for your personal time with God.
 - God has created you, your personality, and expects you to show up to Him as He created you!



Biblical Examples

- **Abraham the Altar Builder**

- Genesis tells us that Abraham met with God and built altars to Him. Everywhere he met God, he built another altar.
- We don't see anyone else in scripture building altars the way Abraham did to God



Biblical Examples

- **David won Battles, Solomon the Built Temple**
 - David was God's Warrior
 - He took instruction and strategy from God to defeat enemies
 - Before going to battle, he inquired of God
 - Although David was a natural, God-created warrior, later he decided that he wanted to build a Temple for the Lord
 - God told David, you are a Warrior, but your son Solomon... He's a Builder



Biblical Examples

- **Lazarus, Mary, and Martha**

- All we know of Lazarus is that HE SPENT TIME RECLINING with Jesus
- Mary spent time WORSHIPING and LISTENING at the feet of Jesus
- Martha valued her time SERVING Jesus
- They each as siblings, had very unique and distinctly different ways of relating to Jesus.



In Summary

- We see throughout scripture these are all unique ways of individuals worshiping and relating to God.
- They were different but they all had a way!
- You too, have a way to relate to God.
- Next, we will discuss 9 different Spiritual Temperaments



Spiritual Temperaments

- 9 Spiritual Temperament
 1. Naturalists
 2. Intellectuals
 3. Caregivers
 4. Sensates
 5. Ascetics
 6. Activists
 7. Contemplatives
 8. Traditionalists
 9. Enthusiasts



OT and NT Worship

- The interesting things about the NT Worship, as important as it is, there is almost nothing in the NT that tells you HOW!
- Old Testament is filled with prescriptions of Worship
 - Contents of Sacred places and things
 - Materials and Measurements
 - Kind and condition of sacrifices
 - Who is able to partake of certain functions and who is not
 - When and when not



What does that Mean For Us?

- NT enables FREEDOM for the WHERE, WHEN and HOW.
- The focus is on the WHO and WHAT.
 - If God began the CHURCH without the same level of prescription of the OT, why should we set hard and fast rules?
 - This is not to say that the way you worship is unimportant but there is GRACE for GROWTH.
 - We have the freedom to explore the HOW as opposed to forcing ourselves and others into a box.



What do I mean and why is this important?

- I heard this professor teaching on Spiritual Formation once give an example of a Pastor that decides to go on a weekend prayer and fasting retreat
 - No TVs, no phone, no distractions
 - Prayer time doesn't quite go as expected
 - Felt defeated
- Never thought to consider his personality and way of relating to God.
 - Does God care that you pray better in groups versus alone, or while walking outdoors instead of on the side of your bed, etc. or that you PRAY?!
 - The second way (churches way) would specify a time and place, but the King's way would say AS OFTEN AS YOU PRAY, PRAY IN THIS MANNER...



Find Your Own Spiritual Temperament!

- The desire is to help us all to embrace devotion in our lives more deeply and full of desire through discovering your own temperament or what Dr. Thomas Gary calls “Sacred Pathways”.
- When it is something you love, you don’t have to force yourself into a discipline of doing it. You do it because you love it. Any program to get you to do something else is most often temporary. Why? Because you don’t find fulfillment in it!



THE NATURALIST



The Naturalists

³When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers,
The moon and the stars, which You have ordained,
⁴What is man that You are mindful of him,
And the son of man that You visit him?

Psalm 8:3-4 NKJV

- Naturalists are ones who worships best outdoors.
 - In their bedroom, a physical closet, or basement on their knees is a remedy for discouragement in prayer.
 - These individuals focus and connect with God better perhaps while going on a walk. This may remind them of who God is and they can Embrace Him.



Charles Spurgeon said this:

“Surely everything that comes from the hand of such a Master-artist as God has something in it of himself! There are lovely spots on this fair globe which ought to make even a blasphemer devout. I have said, among the mountains, ‘He who sees no God here is mad.’ There are things that God has made which overwhelm with a sense of his omnipotence: how can men see them, and doubt the existence of his deity?”



THE INTELLECTUAL



The Intellectuals

- These are believers who really don't open up to God until their mind is engaged.
 - Not as moved by the songs of love of God. If we are the singer or one exhorting and calling out all the wonderful accolades of God, we can often times look at people and wonder why they don't want to "Worship".
 - They could be captured by the words and even wondering, where is something like this talked about in scripture?
 - I find myself in this space even at times when the three streams in me collide (Engineer, Pastor, and Musician)



The Intellectuals

- Don't look at this temperament as one on for smart people. This temperament is not IQ driven.
 - Example, you ever unknowingly meet a famous person, maybe in a casual conversation. You find out that they are famous or even the child of someone famous, what happens? You immediately begin looking at them differently.
 - Honor and respect immediately show up where is previously was not so elevated.
 - This is what it is like when these individuals discover God through information.



The Intellectuals

- Don't downplay the role of the Mind in Worship! When these individuals understand a theological truth about God, it's life shifting or altering

Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.

Mark 12:30



THE CAREGIVER



The Caregivers

- The Caregivers are the ones who love God primarily through loving others. It is when they love on others, is when God becomes even more real to them.
- Example of this person is Mother Teresa in Calcutta
- Jesus called us to care for others. Love your neighbor as yourselves! Jesus' ministry revealed this temperament. He cared for the sick and demon-possessed, or even having compassion as He looked at people.
- God makes Himself known and real to the caregiver as they aid and care for others



THE SENSATE



The Sensates

- The Sensate is awakened to God primarily through the 5 senses.
- They need to engage God through what they see, taste, hear, smell, touch.
- The Prophet Ezekiel is a perfect biblical example of a Sensate as he describes seeing Visions of God.

4 Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

Ezekiel 1:4



Loving God in Solitude and Simplicity

THE ASCETIC



The Ascetics

- The Ascetics temperament gravitates towards simplicity. Think of the concept of a monk or a nun. They are individuals that like to get away.
 - Unlike a Naturalist that is taking in the nature or a Sensate that may take in a museum, an Ascetic gets close to God by turning things off.
 - Stimulation distracts them from God rather than turning to God.
 - Embrace scriptures such as to mourn, or the serious/solemn characteristics of our faith.



The Ascetics

- 3 Worlds to consider when we look at the Ascetics:
 - The world of Solitude: They get away, just them and the Lord
 - The world of Austerity: They prefer the simplistic environments
 - The world of Strictness: They cut all other things out of their lives

Late at night, when it's quiet and there is not much going on, this is when they look to connect with God. There is much time devoted to fasting.



Loving God in working for God

THE ACTIVISTS



The Activists

- These are individuals that are most open to God when they are involved in causes for God.
 - Evangelistic campaigns
 - Social Justice things like picketing, or petitions
- To them church is somewhat of a pitstop, where volunteers are gathered
- When they are engaged on God's behalf is when they feel the closest to Him.



The Activists

- Moses and Elijah two men who often seemed to be involved for God's sake.
 - Moses, engaged in freeing Israel
 - Elijah in turning the hearts of Israel back to God
- In this one it is important to make it a pathway to worship and not carnal things.
- This is not confrontation for the sake of confrontation



The Activists

John Wesley said this....

There is no holiness but social holiness... to turn Christianity into a solitary religion is to destroy it.

Forms of Activism

1. Literature
2. Social reform
3. Intercession
4. Evangelism



The Emotionally Ladened

THE CONTEMPLATIVE



The Contemplative

- The contemplative is one who has an emotionally laden relationship with God.
 - Desires to feel God
 - Desires to soak up God's presence
 - God is the beloved

Let the beloved of the Lord rest secure in Him, for He shields him all day long,
and the one the Lord loves rests between His shoulders.

Deuteronomy 33:12 NIV



The Contemplative

- David says it best....

1 O God, You are my God; Early will I seek You; My soul thirsts for You; My
flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water.
2 So I have looked for You in the sanctuary, To see Your power and Your glory.
3 Because Your lovingkindness is better than life, My lips shall praise You.

Psalm 63:1-3 NKJV

Even considering the desert places that David was intimately familiar with, the driest of places... God You are better to have close than water itself.

...Your lovingkindness is **BETTER THAN LIFE**. His relationship with God was more valuable than life itself.



The Contemplative

- Marks of a Contemplative
 - Desire
 - Relationship



Patterns of Worship

THE TRADITIONALIST



The Traditionalist

- Finding patterns of worship that can involve ritual and symbol have great meaning to the Traditionalist.
- The power of ritual is really the power of reinforced behavior. It is literally how God has wired our brains to function.
- For some repetition can become boring, but for the Traditionalist



The Traditionalist

- Celebrating the Christian holiday for the Traditionalist brings things alive.
- The repetition annually heightens the senses and brings a strong awareness...Advent, Easter, etc.
- The one that devotes and holds high the watches of prayer.
- Every year on the first morning of the school year, I would anoint my children, or for every new car I have it prayed over..
- The Traditionalist leans into the ritual of these things.



The Traditionalist

- Traditionalists also lean into symbolism.
- Traits of the Traditionalist and Symbology
 - Reminders of truth
 - Combats forgetfulness
- Other Symbols
 - The Communion Table
 - The Prayer Closet



Mystery and Celebration

THE ENTHUSIASTS



The Enthusiast

- The Enthusiast love and worships God with mystery and celebration.
 - Recognize that we serve a supernatural God
 - Celebrates God's unique mystery
 - Looks forward to seeing God do a new thing. They long to see the work of God in motion
 - Lord help me to come across someone today that I can share my faith and your love with!



The Enthusiast

- These live life with expectancy.

We do not have half the confidence in God that we ought to have – not even the best us. The Lord deserves our limitless belief, our unquestioning confidence, our undisturbed reliance.

~Charles Spurgeon

- This is worship that gets excited about what God might do! Not only about what He has done. Something new, something fresh.
- Prayer – focused, bring
- Celebratory – It is exciting to be a believer, God is worthy
- Creative – they recognize that they worship the creator by creating things themselves.



Spiritual Temperaments Notes

