

# Sacred Pathways

Discovering your soul's path to God.

by Gary Thomas

This is a simple self-assessment of the pathways that I edited from the book, which offers a more detailed test at the end of each chapter. I recommend reading the book, but this may be useful until then. ~Mark Forstrom

For each of the five questions, score yourself as follows:

2 (really applies to me)

1 (somewhat applies)

0 (not me at all!)

Your pathway total scores will indicate your inclinations.

## Naturalists

- I often am made aware of spiritual truths by observing God's creation on display.
- A book called Nature's Sanctuaries: A Picturebook would be appealing to me.
- I feel closest to God when I'm surrounded by what he has made – the mountains, the forests, or the sea.
- If I could escape to a garden to pray, walk through a meadow, or take a trip to the mountains I would be very happy.
- I feel cut off if I have to spend too much time indoors. Nothing makes me feel closer to God than being outside.

## Sensates

- 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 would really enjoy using drawing exercises or art to improve my prayer life.
- The words *sensuous*, *colorful* and *aromatic* are very appealing to me.
- I'd have a difficult time worshiping in a church building that is plain and lacks a sense of awe or majesty.
- Beauty is important to me—I have a difficult time worshiping through second-rate Christian art or music.

## Traditionalists

- The words *tradition, history, symbols* and *anniversary* are very appealing to me.
- I enjoy church traditions celebrating Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas Eve, Lent, Passover, Easter, etc.
- I would enjoy reading biographies of telling the spiritual secrets of my Christian heroes and how they practiced their faith.
- I feel closest to God when I'm participating in a familiar form of worship that has memories dating back to my childhood. I get bothered when the church is too contemporary.
- I feel that Individualism within the church is a real danger. Christianity is a corporate faith which needs corporate expression rooted in tradition.

## Ascetics

- A meaningful worship experience for me could involve spending a whole night in prayer, fasting for one or more days, or giving away something that I had treasured.
- The words *silence, solitude, discipline, sacrifice and hardship* are very appealing to me.
- Adhering to strict personal goals characterizes my life.
- I am bothered by the materialism and addiction to comfort and the me-ism I see in America.
- I feel closest to God when I am alone in a small room and there is nothing to distract me from focusing on His presence.

## Activists

- I would like to awaken the church from its apathy.
- I feel closest to God when I'm standing up for His justice, writing letters, picketing, or urging people to vote.
- The book written by Frank Schaffer, *A Time for Anger*, would be an appealing book for me to read.
- The phrases "courageous confrontation" and "social activism" and "political action" appeal to me.
- 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.

## Enthusiasts

- People would say I am physically expressive in my worship.
- The words *celebration*, *joy*, and *excited* appeal to me.
- I spend more money on music and worship tapes than on books.
- I feel closest to God when my heart is sent soaring and I feel like I want to burst with joy. Celebrating God and His love is my favorite form of worship. I expect that God is going to move in some unexpected ways.
- God is an exciting God, and we should be excited about worshiping Him. I don't understand how some Christians can say they love God, and then act like they were "weaned on a dill pickle" whenever they walk into church.

## Contemplatives

- The most difficult times in my faith are when I can't feel God's presence within me.
- When I think of God, I think of love, friendship, delight, and adoration more than anything else.
- I would enjoy reading 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 really enjoy having thirty minutes of uninterrupted time a day to sit in quiet prayer and "hold hands" with God, writing love letters to Him and enjoying His presence.

## Intellectuals

- I feel closest to God when I learn something new about him that I didn't understand before. It's very important to me that I know exactly what I believe.
- The words *concepts* and *truth* are very appealing to me.
- I get frustrated when the church focuses too much on feelings and spiritual experience: the "dumbing down" of our faith. Of far more importance is the need to understand the Christian faith and have proper doctrine.
- I spend more money on books than music tapes.
- 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 group discussion.

# Caregivers

- I sense God's power when I am counseling a friend who has lost a job, preparing meals for someone, fixing a computer 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 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.
- I feel closest to God when I see Him in the needy, the poor, the sick and the imprisoned. You can count on me to offer to help someone in need
- The words *service* and *compassion* are very appealing to me.