

February 12, 2023

Five
Forks
Church

Is the
"Contemplative"
Pathway for
you?

CURRENT SERMON SERIES

Pathways



Each week you will have an opportunity to take the pathway survey and determine if the given pathway is for you. Take a few minutes to answer the following questions, using a scale of 0-5; with 0 being not true at all and 5 being very true. Record your total score at the bottom, out of a possible 30 points. At the end of the series you will have 9 of these surveys and be able to determine which pathways connect best with you.

_____1.

I feel most connected to God when I feel emotionally connected to Him...in personal conversation with him, during worship songs that speak of His love and goodness, reading passages of Scripture that talk about God's love and goodness.

_____2.

One of the most challenging aspects of Christian faith for me, is that I can't see God's physical presence...this makes it hard to experience His presence with me as a reality in my life. I wish we (God and I) could sit "face to face" and talk.

_____3.

Words like friend, lover, closeness, intimacy, personal, heart, are appealing to me as I think about my relationship to God.

_____4.

The idea of "loving God with all of my heart" is appealing to me. I enjoy conversation with God or even writing love letters to God, where I can express my love for him and simply thank him for his love, goodness, patience, grace, forgiveness.

_____5.

On a scale of 0-5, how much does the statement describing the heart's cry of the contemplative pathway resonate with you in comparison with the others?

- Naturalist: Let Me Be Outdoors
- Sensate: Let Me Experience
- Ascetic: Let Me Be Alone
- Traditionalist: Let Me Remember
- Activist: Let Me Conquer
- Caregiver: Let Me Care
- Enthusiast: Let Me Celebrate
- Contemplative: Let Me Feel**
- Intellectual: Let Me Think

_____6.

I would rather BE in God's presence, than DO something for God. I would rather be "alone with God" contemplating his love and goodness, than serving in the food pantry, clothes closet or participating in a formal liturgy or actively confronting injustice in our world.

Total all of your answers: _____

**The above questionnaire is adapted from Gary Thomas' book, Sacred Pathways (pg. 185-186).*

One Way to Practice the Contemplative Pathway:

*Below is a suggestion for one way you could intentionally practice the contemplative pathway...which simply means, how can you spend time adoring God this week? Don't get stuck trying to follow this plan perfectly, instead, be creative. Adapt it to suit your schedule and personality.

1. **Read** - Isaiah 43:1-13; Psalm 36; Psalm 42; Psalm 63; Romans 8; Ephesians 3; Matthew 6:1-18; I John 2-3

2. **Connect with God through adoration:**

-Copy the following passage of Scripture from Isaiah 43 onto a notecard. Carry this notecard with you throughout the day and refer to it frequently:

I have summoned you by name; you are mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze. 3 For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior...4 Since you are precious and honored in my sight, and because I love you.

-Do something for someone in your life this week, anonymously...only you and God will know about it.

-Write a love letter to God, expressing your thankfulness for His love and goodness

-Select a passage of Scripture (describing God's love) or one of your favorite worship songs (describing God's love) and contemplate the significance of the words as they relate to you personally.

-As you pray this week, take time to describe all the attributes about God that you appreciate and admire.

-Connect this pathway (of adoration), with one of your other primary pathways. (*I.e. If the naturalist pathway was primary for you, then take time to adore God in nature this week.*)

3. **Consider** these two reflection questions:

-How does my experience of "adoring God" connect to the Scriptures I read above or to any other Scriptures?

-What does my experience of adoration teach me about God, about myself and about my relationship to God?

4. **Prayer** - Talk to God about your experience of adoration.

