

Welcome and Reminders

Welcome to any visitors and welcome back to the group members. It is important to remember that everything said and done in this group is confidential. The expectation is that there will not be discussion about our conversations to anyone outside of the group that is represented here and now. We understand that sometimes personal insights or information may be shared by someone who feels comfortable doing so in this group and not around others. Let's be respectful of that and carry our commitment to confidentiality as we leave this group. *(Pass out the confidentiality reminder to anyone who has not yet received one).*

Prayer and Praises

What is a Spiritual Type

I grew up in one very specific denomination with little experience in other styles of worship. The first time I entered an MCC church brought an assortment of traditions and worship styles that I had never known. I remember silently questioning the validity of some of the traditions. For me, the forms of worship I had always known were genuine and complete. So I reasoned that these other expressions could not possibly be the right way to experience God.

I will never forget the first time I heard Rev. Elder Ken Martin say, "God has a love affair with diversity." It completely changed the way I look at the differences of others. The fact of the matter is that God is such an amazing creator. The creation process did not stop when the first person was created – but continues every time a new soul is birthed. God creates, in each of us, individual and unique personalities, learning styles, thought processes, body shapes, skin tones, eye colors... and I could go on and on. So why would it be so hard for me to believe that God also created diversity in the way we seek, experience, and honor God?

No one, then, has the blue print on how to worship God or how to relate to God in our spiritual quest. Neither is it wrong if someone does not experience God in a way that is very real and genuine for you.

- *What are some of the ways you worship and/or connect with God?*
- *What are some of the ways you seek knowledge of and/or learn about God?*
- *What are some ways of seeking or worshiping that seem foreign to you?*

In the same way one might use an inventory like Myers-Briggs to determine their personality types, Corrine Ware developed a tool to help people understand different spiritual types and identify their own type. This framework describes four different types that determine how we most feel comfortable relating to, learning about, worshiping, serving and connecting with God. The key point is that while each worshipper is on a journey to seek after God serve God, each of one may take a different route to arrive at the destination.

The Spirituality Wheel

Before we discuss these spiritual types we will take a short inventory to discover our individual type(s). Take a copy of the Spiritual Selector Wheel (last page of the study). You will notice there are four quadrants in the wheel numbered 1, 2, 3, 4. As we read through the set of statements below select the one(s) that describe what you personally prefer as part of your spiritual experience. Match the chosen statement number with the quadrant number in the lower circle. In that quadrant, draw a spoke-line. If you've chosen two statements, draw two spokes, each in a different quadrant. The result is a portrait of your personal style.

THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

1. A carefully planned and orderly worship program is a glory to God.
2. A deeply moving and spontaneous meeting is a glory to God.
3. Simplicity and some silence are important elements needed for worship.
4. It is not a service, but an ordering ourselves to God's service that is important.

TIME

1. Stick to announced beginning and ending times of worship services.
2. It is important to extend the meeting time if one feels led to do so.
3. All time is God's time. A sense of timelessness is important.
4. Gather whenever and as long as you need to in order to accomplish the task.

PRAYER

1. Words express poetic praise; we ask for knowledge and guidance.
2. Let words and feelings evoke God's presence in the moment.
3. Empty the mind of distractions and simply BE in the presence of the Holy.
4. My life and my work are my prayer.

MUSIC

1. Music and lyrics express to God and belief about God.
2. Singing warms and unites us and expresses the soul's deepest heart.
3. Chant and tone bring the soul to quietness and union with God.
4. Songs can mobilize and inspire to greater effort and dedication.

PREACHING

1. The Word of God, rightly proclaimed, is the centerpiece of worship.

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2. The gospel movingly preached is the power of God to change lives.
3. Proclamation is heard when the Spirit of God speaks to the inward heart.
4. What we do is our “preaching” and speaks louder than anything we say.

EMPHASIS

1. A central purpose is that we fulfill our vocation (calling) in the world.
2. A central purpose is that we learn to walk in holiness with the Lord.
3. A central purpose is that we be one with the Creator.
4. A central purpose is that we obey God’s will completely.

SUPPORT OF CAUSES

(If necessary, circle the words that apply and select categories with the most circles.)

1. Support seminaries, publishing houses, scholarship, preaching to others.
2. Support evangelism, missions, spreading the word on television and radio.
3. Support places of retreat, spiritual direction, liturgical reform.
4. Support political action to establish justice in society and its institutions.

CRITICISM

1. Sometimes I am said to be too intellectual, dogmatic, and “dry.”
2. Sometimes I am said to be too emotional, dogmatic, antiintellectual.
3. Sometimes I am said to be escaping from the world and not realistic.
4. Sometimes I am said to have tunnel vision and to be too materialistic.

DOMINATING THEMES

(If necessary, circle the words that apply and select categories with the most circles.)

1. Discernment, discipline, knowledge, order, grace, justification.
2. Love, conversion, witness, spontaneity, sanctification.
3. Poverty, humility, wisdom, letting go, transcendence.
4. Simplicity, purity of heart, action, temperance, obedience, martyrdom.

MEMBERSHIP CRITERIA

(What you believe is necessary to be a member of the church/congregation/faithful)

1. Assent to a doctrine, baptism, endorsement by group.
2. A personal inward experience of God, baptism, public declaration.
3. All who face Godward are incorporated in the Holy.
4. Solidarity with humankind is membership in God’s kingdom/kingdom.

RITUAL AND LITURGY

1. Ritual and liturgy evoke memory and presence, teaching traditional truths.
2. Liturgy and ritual ceremonies are not of great importance.
3. Ritual and liturgy are ways in which God becomes present to us.
4. Ritual and liturgy are one way we make statements about inner conviction.

CONCEPT OF GOD

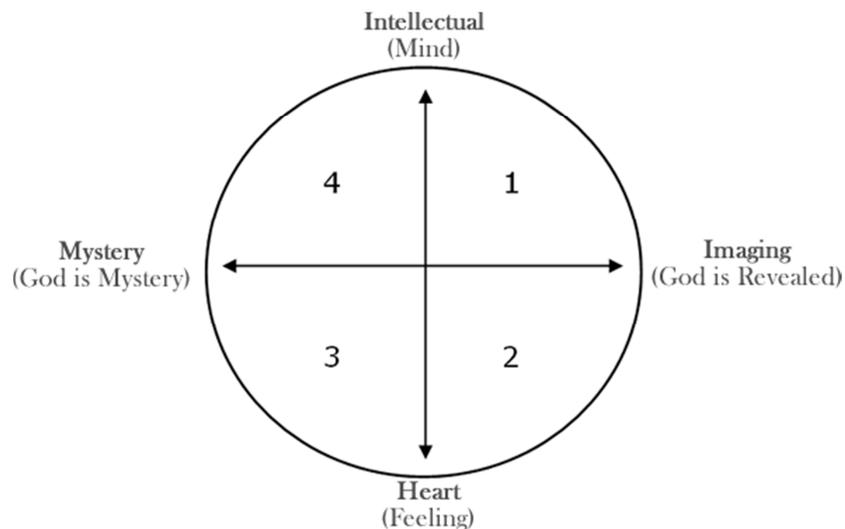
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1. God is revealed in scripture, sacrament, and in Jesus Christ and his cross.
2. I can feel that God is real and that Christ lives in my heart.
3. God is mystery and can be grasped for but not completely known.
4. We participate in the mystery of God when we become co-creators with God in the world.

Understanding Your Type

At this point you should have a wheel with very uneven spokes. You may have one very solid quadrant or a couple similarly filled quadrants. The quadrant with the most spokes will be your spiritual type. If you have another quadrant with quite a few spokes this will be your secondary spiritual type.

To complete the wheel let's fill in the blanks on the outside of the wheel. Fill in the lines on the sides of the wheel as indicated in the image below:



Leader's choice (based on time):

- a) Read each of these as a group and discuss how each person relates or does not relate to the specific types
- b) Have the different types group together and read their type; then rejoin and have a person from each group describe their type briefly
- c) Have each individual read their type(s) and then open up discussion allowing people to say what type they relate to how their type seeks to connect to, communicate about, and learn of God.

Characteristics of Type 1 Spirituality: Head Spirituality / Liturgical Traditions

This is an intellectual "thinking" spirituality that favors what it can see, touch, and vividly imagine.

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- Views God in concrete terms as Father and/or Mother
- Gravitates toward study groups, seeks guidance from scripture and sermons.
- Prayer is almost always language or word-based, whether silent or aloud.
- Content is primary with this group—eg. the words of our hymns must reflect our theology.
- While type 2 or 3 “experiences the Holy,” it is type 1 that undertakes to make sense of that experience and to name it.
- Type 1’s preserve the faith story from generation to generation.

Spiritual Growth for this type includes:

- Reading and journaling.
- Specific forms of meditation, with a definite focus. (The Jesus Prayer)
- Stretching to sense their interior connection with God.

Excess of this type is rationalism. An over-intellectualization of one’s spiritual life, with a consequent loss of feeling, often perceived as dogmatic and dry.

Characteristics of Type 2 Spirituality: Heart Spirituality / Charismatic Traditions

Type 2’s share the same view of God as type 1’s, but they experience God differently. They experience God through feeling, not intellect. Type 2 is all heart, combined with some of the concreteness of type 1.

- Concrete understanding of God and scripture are central as in type 1, but type 2’s combine these with a charismatic spirituality whose aim is to achieve holiness in life.
- The transformational goal is one of personal renewal.
- They seek an emotionally moving experience in corporate worship.
- Emphasize evangelism, and they often use mass media, such as television and radio, often creating their own national networks.
- Music marks their corporate worship.
- Prayer is also with words, but is more extemporaneous.

Spiritual Growth for this type includes:

- Telling stories of faith. (Witness or testimony)
- Daily spiritual disciplines. (Prayer, Fasting, Devotional time)
- Stretching to risk new experiences and to trust that God is with them on their journeys as a nurturing rather than a punitive parent.

Excess of this type is “pietism.” Can lean toward fundamentalism, not acknowledging the spiritual experience of others. They believe a certain kind of spiritual experience must be duplicated in others if that experience is to be valid. Often criticized for being too emotional and anti-intellectual.

Characteristics of Type 3: Spirituality / Mystic Traditions

Type 3’s experience God through feeling, like type 2’s, but unlike 2’s, they view God as mystery.

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For type 3's hearing from God is more prominent than speaking to God.

- The aim of this spirituality is union with the Holy, which is never entirely achievable, but the focus is on the journey toward complete union.
- People attracted to this type are often by nature contemplative, introspective, intuitive, and focused on an inner world.
- God is unnamable—beyond words.
- Often type 3's do not feel like they fit in with traditional Western Christian traditions, and will gravitate toward more Eastern forms of religion.
- Contributions of this type of spirituality include inspirational writing. Type 3's provide the experiential fodder for much of the intellectual interpretation done by type 1's.

Spiritual Growth for this type includes:

- While type 2's need permission to be human, type 3's need permission to retreat and seek solitude.
- Type 3's may feel guilty or lazy for their desire and need for solitude and silence. Once they become comfortable with who they are, type 3's are more likely to laugh than any other group. (St. Francis of Assisi)
- Needs to stretch toward the balance of the other traditions and receive the blessing of interaction with others and the lessons provided by friction.

The spiritual extreme of type 3's is "quietism"—an exaggerated retreat/withdrawal from the world. Quietism tends toward spiritual passivity.

Characteristics of Type 4 Spirituality: Visionary-activist Spirituality / Social Justice Traditions

Type 4 shares a mystical view of God, but experiences God through the intellect (like type 1's). Type 4 is the smallest group and is more specific to individuals than congregations or denominations. They are single-minded with a deeply focused, almost crusading type of spirituality.

- Type 4's aim is to simply obey God and to witness to God's coming reign.
- They have a courageous idealism that takes responsibility for change—they have a passion for transforming society.
- While type 3 tends toward retreat, type 4's are inclined to be assertive, even aggressive, in their desire to implement a vision of the world as the realm of God on earth.
- They equate prayer with action—let them see what we do.
- They have a vision of the ideal and no one else's opinion will hardly matter, when placed along that driving vision.
- Their contribution is their leadership in difficult and embarrassing issues.

Spiritual Growth for type 4's include:

- A channeling, not a stifling of their spiritual energy.
- Receiving spiritual support from a trusted small-group.
- Embracing alternative forms of worship.

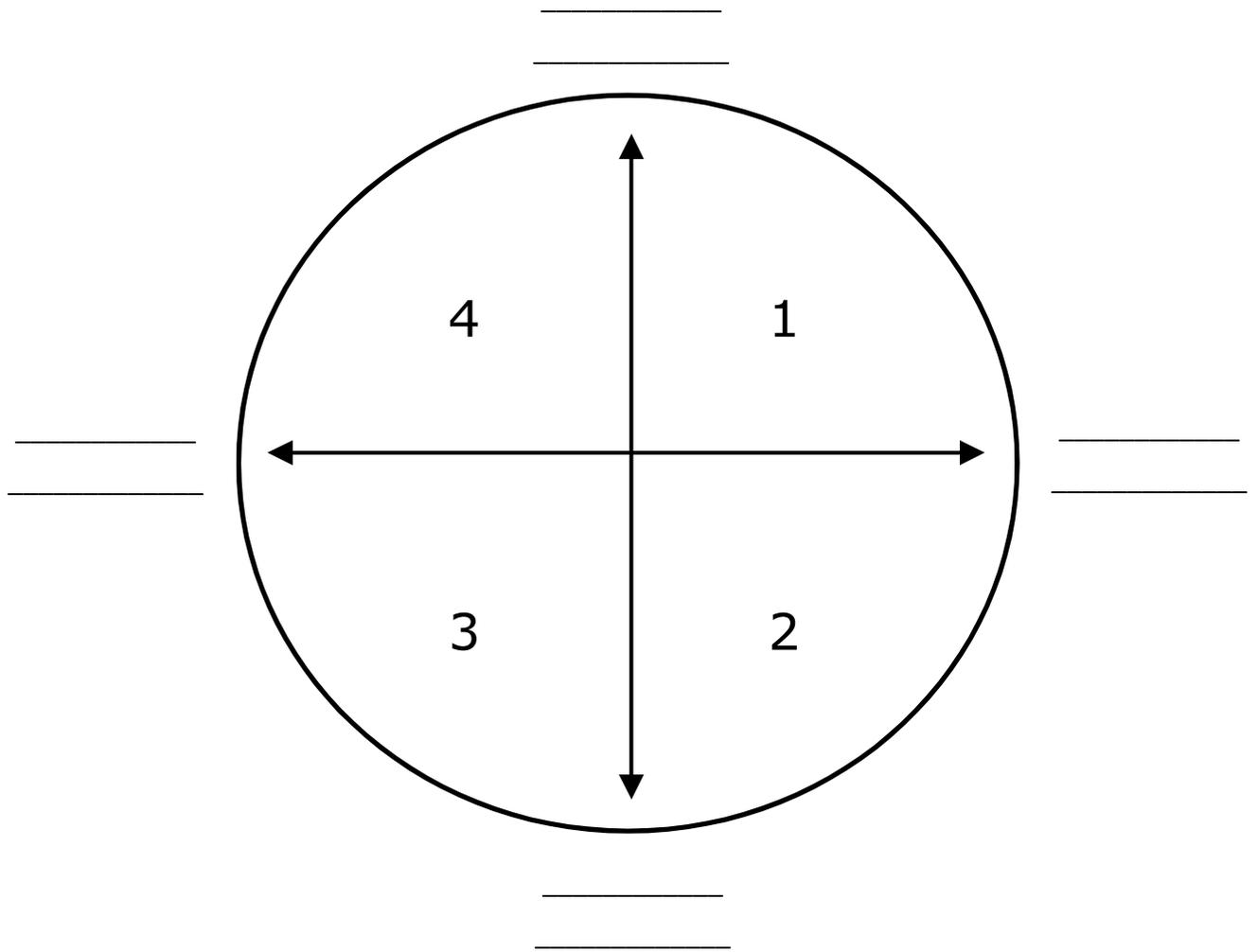
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- Stretching toward the belief that God has ultimate control—all will be well.

The excess of type 4 spirituality is “enocratism” or tunnel-vision. If you are not supporting the cause with the same selfless effort they are, you are not part of their world. In their single-mindedness, a type 4 may not notice others. Type 4’s can trouble our lives and make us feel guilty, but we find ourselves admiring that person for being willing to make a difference.

- *Did anyone learn anything about how they relate to and communicate with God? Share if you feel comfortable.*
- *Do you find more sense in some of the actions of others in their relationship with God? Explain.*
- *Are there practices of relating to God, in reading the other types, that you would like to try? If so what?*

The Spirituality Wheel



From Corinne Ware, D. Min., based on the spirituality typology by Urban T. Holmes