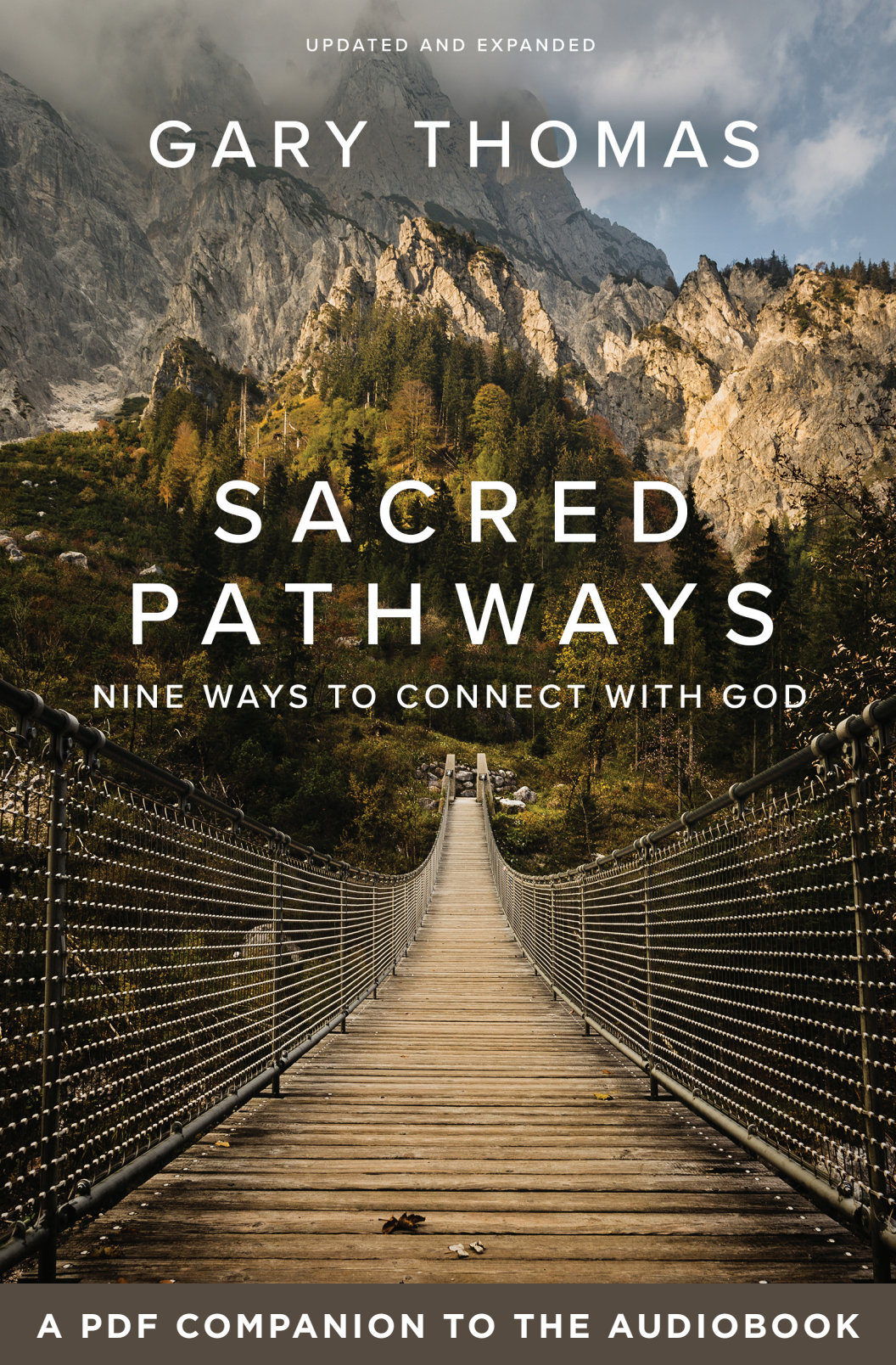




UPDATED AND EXPANDED

GARY THOMAS

SACRED
PATHWAYS

NINE WAYS TO CONNECT WITH GOD

A PDF COMPANION TO THE AUDIOBOOK

CHAPTER 3

NATURALISTS

Loving God Outdoors

ARE YOU A NATURALIST?

Score the following statements on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being not true at all and 5 being very true. Record your answer in the space provided.

Are you a naturalist?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when I'm surrounded by what he has made—the mountains, the forests, or the ocean.
- _____ 2. I feel cut off if I have to spend too much time indoors, just listening to speakers or singing songs. Nothing makes me feel closer to God than being outside.
- _____ 3. I would rather worship God by spending an hour beside a small brook than by participating in a group service.
- _____ 4. If I could escape to a garden to pray on a cold day, walk through a meadow on a warm day, and take a trip by myself to the mountains on another day, I would be very happy.

- _____ 5. Again, on a scale of 0 to 5, how much does the statement describing the heart's cry of the naturalist resonate with you in comparison with the others?
- **Naturalist: let me be outdoors.**
 - Sensate: let me experience.
 - Traditionalist: let me remember.
 - Ascetic: let me be alone.
 - Activist: let me conquer.
 - Caregiver: let me care.
 - Enthusiast: let me celebrate.
 - Contemplative: let me feel.
 - Intellectual: let me think.
- _____ 6. 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.

Total of all your answers: _____

The highest number of points possible is 30. The higher your score, the stronger the dominance of this spiritual temperament is in your life. But remember, most of us have more than one spiritual temperament. Any score of 15 or higher indicates a tendency toward this temperament.

Please take a moment to register this score in a notebook or journal. Once you have reviewed all the spiritual temperaments and noted all your scores on the same page in a journal or notebook, you will have a composite picture of your soul's path to God.

CHAPTER 4

SENSATES

Loving God with the Senses

ARE YOU A SENSATE?

Score the following statements on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being not true at all and 5 being very true. Record your answer in the space before the paragraph.

Are you a sensate?

- _____ 1. 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.
- _____ 2. I enjoy attending a “high church” service with incense and formal Communion or Eucharist.
- _____ 3. I'd have a difficult time worshiping in a church building that is plain and lacks a sense of awe or majesty. Beauty is very important to me, and I have a difficult time worshiping through second-rate Christian art or music.
- _____ 4. Again, on a scale of 0 to 5, how much does the statement describing the heart's cry of the sensate resonate with you in comparison with the others?
 - Naturalist: let me be outdoors.

- **Sensate: let me experience.**
- Traditionalist: let me remember.
- Ascetic: let me be alone.
- Activist: let me conquer.
- Caregiver: let me care.
- Enthusiast: let me celebrate.
- Contemplative: let me feel.
- Intellectual: let me think.

- _____ 5. I'm naturally drawn to museums and concerts more than I'm inclined to take a walk in the woods, work in a soup kitchen, or read a book by myself.
- _____ 6. I would really enjoy using drawing exercises, icons, or classical music playing in the background to improve my prayer life.

Total of all your answers: _____

Again, the highest number of possible points is 30, but few, if any, will score that high, since none of us relate to God in one exclusive way. Any score of 15 or higher indicates a tendency toward this spiritual temperament.

Please take a moment to register this score in a notebook or journal. Once you have reviewed all the spiritual temperaments and noted all your scores on the same page in a notebook or journal, you will have a composite picture of your soul's path to God.

CHAPTER 5

TRADITIONALISTS

Loving God through Ritual and Symbol

ARE YOU A TRADITIONALIST?

Score the series of statements below on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being not true at all and 5 being very true. Record your answer in the space provided.

Are you a traditionalist?

- _____ 1. 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 more than anything else.
- _____ 2. I begin to feel closest to God when I lay something on the altar, sacrificing it for him.
- _____ 3. The words *tradition* and *history* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. Participating in a formal liturgy or "prayer book" service, developing symbols that I can place in my car, home, or office, and developing a Christian calendar for our family to follow are activities I would enjoy.

_____ 5. Again, on a scale of 0 to 5, how much does the statement describing the heart's cry of the traditionalist resonate with you in comparison with the others?

- Naturalist: let me be outdoors.
- Sensate: let me experience.
- **Traditionalist: let me remember.**
- Ascetic: let me be alone.
- Activist: let me conquer.
- Caregiver: let me care.
- Enthusiast: let me celebrate.
- Contemplative: let me feel.
- Intellectual: let me think.

_____ 6. I would really enjoy developing a personal rule (or ritual) of prayer.

Total of all your answers: _____

Any score of 15 or higher indicates a preference for this spiritual temperament. Please take a moment to register this score in a notebook or journal so you will have a composite picture of your soul's path to God.

CHAPTER 6

ASCETICS

Loving God in Solitude and Simplicity

ARE YOU AN ASCETIC?

Score the following statements on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being not true at all and 5 being very true. Record your answer in the space provided.

Are you an ascetic?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when I am alone and there is nothing to distract me from focusing on his presence.
- _____ 2. I would describe my faith as more “internal” than “external.”
- _____ 3. The words *silence*, *solitude*, and *discipline* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. Taking an overnight retreat by myself at a monastery where I could spend large amounts of time alone in a small room, praying, studying God’s Word, and fasting for one or more days are all activities I would enjoy.
- _____ 5. Again, on a scale of 0 to 5, how much does the statement describing the heart’s cry of the ascetic resonate with you in comparison with the others?

- Naturalist: let me be outdoors.
- Sensate: let me experience.
- Traditionalist: let me remember.
- **Ascetic: let me be alone.**
- Activist: let me conquer.
- Caregiver: let me care.
- Enthusiast: let me celebrate.
- Contemplative: let me feel.
- Intellectual: let me think.

_____ 6. I believe I would particularly benefit from acts such as a night watch, taking a short vow of silence, or simplifying my life.

Total of all your answers: _____

Any score of 15 or higher indicates a preference for this spiritual temperament. Please take a moment to register this score in a notebook or journal so you will have a composite picture of your soul's path to God.

CHAPTER 7

ACTIVISTS

Loving God through Confrontation

ARE YOU AN ACTIVIST?

Score the following statements on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being not true at all and 5 being very true. Record your answer in the space provided.

Are you an activist?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when I am cooperating with him in standing up for his justice: writing letters to government officials and newspaper editors, picketing at a place of injustice, urging people to vote, or becoming informed about current issues.
- _____ 2. 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.
- _____ 3. The terms *courageous confrontation* and *social activism* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. Activities such as confronting a social evil, attending a meeting of the local school board to challenge the new curriculum, and volunteering on a political campaign are important to me.

_____ 5. Again, on a scale of 0 to 5, how much does the statement describing the heart's cry of the activist resonate with you in comparison with the others?

- Naturalist: let me be outdoors.
- Sensate: let me experience.
- Traditionalist: let me remember.
- Ascetic: let me be alone.
- **Activist: let me conquer.**
- Caregiver: let me care.
- Enthusiast: let me celebrate.
- Contemplative: let me feel.
- Intellectual: let me think.

_____ 6. I would rather stand in the rain for an hour to confront an evil than sit in a room by myself for an hour and pray, take a walk through the woods, or spend an hour reading a book.

Total of all your answers: _____

Any score of 15 or higher indicates a preference for this spiritual temperament. Please take a moment to register this score in a notebook or journal so you will have a composite picture of your soul's path to God.

CHAPTER 8

CAREGIVERS

Loving God by Loving Others

ARE YOU A CAREGIVER?

Score the following statements on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being not true at all and 5 being very true. Record your answer in the space provided.

Are you a caregiver?

- _____ 1. 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 sitting quietly by the bed of someone who is lonely or ill or when I am taking a meal to someone in need. You can count on me to offer a ride or to volunteer for helping activities.
- _____ 2. 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.
- _____ 3. The words *service* and *compassion* are very appealing to me.

- _____ 4. 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 in Mexico.
- _____ 5. Again, on a scale of 0 to 5, how much does the statement describing the heart's cry of the caregiver resonate with you in comparison with the others?
- Naturalist: let me be outdoors.
 - Sensate: let me experience.
 - Traditionalist: let me remember.
 - Ascetic: let me be alone.
 - Activist: let me conquer.
 - **Caregiver: let me care.**
 - Enthusiast: let me celebrate.
 - Contemplative: let me feel.
 - Intellectual: let me think.
- _____ 6. I would rather nurse someone 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.

Total of all your answers: _____

Any score of 15 or higher indicates a preference for this spiritual temperament. Please take a moment to register this score in a notebook or journal so you will have a composite picture of your soul's path to God.

CHAPTER 9

ENTHUSIASTS

Loving God with Mystery and Celebration

ARE YOU AN ENTHUSIAST?

Score the following statements on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being not true at all and 5 being very true. Record your answer in the space provided.

Are you an enthusiast?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when my heart is sent soaring and I feel like I want to burst, worship God all day long, and shout out his name. Celebrating God and his love is my favorite form of worship.
- _____ 2. I feel most energized when I take a spiritual risk on behalf of God or see God move in a supernatural way. Tradition and ritual put me to sleep; I serve a supernatural God and am excited to see him move in unexpected ways.
- _____ 3. The words *celebration* and *joy* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. I would enjoy attending a workshop on learning to worship through dance or a worship session with

contemporary music. I expect that God is going to move in some unexpected ways.

- _____ 5. Again, on a scale of 0 to 5, how much does the statement describing the heart's cry of the enthusiast resonate with you in comparison with the others?
- Naturalist: let me be outdoors.
 - Sensate: let me experience.
 - Traditionalist: let me remember.
 - Ascetic: let me be alone.
 - Activist: let me conquer.
 - Caregiver: let me care.
 - **Enthusiast: let me celebrate.**
 - Contemplative: let me feel.
 - Intellectual: let me think.
- _____ 6. I spend more money on music and worship downloads than on books.

Total of all your answers: _____

Any score of 15 or higher indicates a preference for this spiritual temperament. Please take a moment to register this score in a notebook or journal so you will have a composite picture of your soul's path to God.

CHAPTER 10

CONTEMPLATIVES

Loving God through Adoration

ARE YOU A CONTEMPLATIVE?

Score the following statements on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being not true at all and 5 being very true. Record your answer in the space provided.

Are you a contemplative?

- _____ 1. 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 would rather be alone with God contemplating his love than participating in a formal liturgy or being distracted by a walk outside.
- _____ 2. The most difficult times in my faith are when I can't feel God's presence within me.
- _____ 3. The words *lover*, *intimacy*, and *heart* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. I really enjoy having thirty minutes of uninterrupted time each day to sit in quiet prayer and "hold hands" with God, writing love letters to him and enjoying his presence.

_____ 5. Again, on a scale of 0 to 5, how much does the statement describing the heart's cry of the contemplative resonate with you in comparison with the others?

- Naturalist: let me be outdoors.
- Sensate: let me experience.
- Traditionalist: let me remember.
- Ascetic: let me be alone.
- Activist: let me conquer.
- Caregiver: let me care.
- Enthusiast: let me celebrate.
- **Contemplative: let me feel.**
- Intellectual: let me think.

_____ 6. When I think of God, I think of love, friendship, and adoration more than anything else.

Total of all your answers: _____

Any score of 15 or higher indicates a preference for this spiritual temperament. Please take a moment to register this score in a notebook or journal so you will have a composite picture of your soul's path to God.

CHAPTER 11

INTELLECTUALS

Loving God with the Mind

ARE YOU AN INTELLECTUAL?

Score the following statements on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 being not true at all and 5 being very true. Record your answer in the space provided.

Are you an intellectual?

- _____ 1. I feel closest to God when I learn something new about him that I didn't understand before. My mind needs to be stimulated. It's very important to me that I know exactly what I believe.
- _____ 2. I get frustrated when the church focuses too much on feelings and spiritual experience. Of far more importance is the need to understand the Christian faith and to have proper doctrine.
- _____ 3. The words *concepts* and *truth* are very appealing to me.
- _____ 4. I feel close to God when I participate in a time of uninterrupted study—reading God's Word or good Christian books and then perhaps having an opportunity to teach or participate in a discussion with a small group.

_____ 5. Again, on a scale of 0 to 5, how much does the statement describing the heart's cry of the intellectual resonate with you in comparison with the others?

- Naturalist: let me be outdoors.
- Sensate: let me experience.
- Traditionalist: let me remember.
- Ascetic: let me be alone.
- Activist: let me conquer.
- Caregiver: let me care.
- Enthusiast: let me celebrate.
- Contemplative: let me feel.
- **Intellectual: let me think.**

_____ 6. I spend more money on books than music.

Total of all your answers: _____

Any score of 15 or higher indicates a preference for this spiritual temperament. Please take a moment to register this score in a notebook or journal so you will have a composite picture of your soul's path to God.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

Compiled by Gary Thomas and
Lynette Marie Galisewski

Chapter 1: Loving God

1. Were you taught about a “quiet time” (daily devotional time alone with God, studying the Bible, and praying) early on in your faith experience? If so, how was it described? Has it proven helpful?
2. Have your devotional times evolved as you’ve gotten older? Have they become an increasingly important part of your life, or are they slowly fading away?
3. How has your church background affected the way you spend time alone with God? What have been the positives and negatives of this influence?
4. Before reading further, what would you guess are your primary pathways? Have you ever thought of them in this light before?

Chapter 2: Where Is Your Gethsemane?

1. Were you able to identify your own “Gethsemane,” a place or an activity that has been consistently rich and helpful in building intimacy with God on a daily basis? Describe it.
2. Are you more prone to prioritize service over prayer, or prayer over service? How has your choice affected your spiritual walk? Do you think you need to make a change? If so, what might it involve?
3. Describe a time when you felt as though you were in a devotional rut. What helped you get out of it?
4. How does Gary’s idea of being “married” to God instead of “dating” him provide guidance for building a long-term life of devotion?

Chapter 3: Naturalists

1. Which aspects of the naturalist’s path to connecting with God seem most helpful or intriguing to you? Which aspects seem least interesting?
2. Do you consider the outdoors primarily a place of spiritual wonder, a place of recreation, or a place you’d rather escape to from the indoors? Discuss some of your favorite times outside.
3. Read Psalms 8 and 23. How does being out in nature trigger David’s awareness of and appreciation for God?
4. Talk about some of the lessons you’ve learned from spending time outdoors. Was being outside simply a place where you could hear God’s voice, or did God use something natural (the shape of a tree, an ant colony’s

movement, the color of a rainbow) to inspire or instruct or challenge you? What might help you become more open to this in the future?

5. Are there any temptations naturalists may face other than the ones Gary mentioned? If so, what might they be?
6. How would you counsel someone who isn't particularly inclined toward being a naturalist to explore using the outdoors for his or her personal devotions?

Chapter 4: Sensates

1. Which aspects of the sensate's path to connecting with God seem most helpful or intriguing to you? Which aspects seem least interesting?
2. Have you ever had a "Henri Nouwen" moment when God used a stunning painting, photograph, or song to open up your heart to him in a new way? If so, describe it.
3. As you read Ezekiel 1:4–28; 3:1–3, consider each of these senses:
 - sight
 - sound
 - touch
 - smell
 - taste

How does Ezekiel's vision of God in heaven incorporate each sense? As you read this, are your senses stimulated to draw you into God's presence more fully? If so, describe.

4. Do you find that beauty (in any form) transports you into God's presence, or does it distract you from your focus on him? Why?

5. How can churches do a better job of incorporating all five senses into their worship services?
6. Design a “sensual” experience (using all five senses) to interface with God. What were your reactions to that experience? Did it add or detract from your sense of God’s presence?

Chapter 5: Traditionalists

1. Which aspects of the traditionalist’s path to connecting with God seem most helpful or intriguing to you? Which aspects seem least interesting?
2. How can developing the three elements of the traditionalist pathway enhance your awareness and worship of God?
 - ritual (or liturgical pattern)
 - symbol (or significant image)
 - sacrifice
3. Why do you think religion is usually thought of as a danger rather than as a pathway to intimate worship of God? What are the marks of a religion that is divorced from true faith?
4. Read Exodus 12:21–27. God was doing something momentous in the life of the Hebrew nation, freeing them from slavery in Egypt. He wanted them to memorialize this event as a true “God thing” in their history so that they would never forget his miraculous rescue.
 - What does he call them to do as a *ritual*? (See Exodus 12:1–14 as well.)
 - What *symbol(s)* does he initiate as triggers for remembrance?
 - What *sacrifice* was involved?

5. Read Luke 22:7–20. Jesus' last meal before going to the cross was the Passover celebration at which he instituted a new memorial for his followers. What do the bread and wine symbolize? What are the parallels between the Passover shedding of a lamb's blood and Jesus' shedding of his own blood (see Isaiah 53 as well)? How can Communion take on new meaning as you embrace the elements Jesus gave us in remembrance of him?
6. How could keeping a scheduled prayer time or adopting a rule of prayer help someone who has never learned how to pray? Are there any dangers in these two approaches to prayer? What are the potential benefits?
7. In this chapter, Gary discusses various temptations of the traditionalist. Do any of them resonate with you? If so, describe.
8. Create a traditionalist experience this week, such as attending a liturgical church service, praying according to a schedule or with a rule of prayer, or developing a few symbols that will be meaningful for you. Describe what you did and how it was helpful (or unhelpful).

Chapter 6: Ascetics

1. Which aspects of the ascetic's path to connecting with God seem most helpful or intriguing to you? Which aspects seem least interesting?
2. How might developing each of these three disciplines enhance your connection with God?
 - solitude
 - austerity
 - strictness

3. Read Matthew 4:1–11. Before Jesus launched his public ministry, he sought his Father in solitude, austerity, and strictness in the Judean wilderness. With what does Satan tempt him? How does Jesus respond? Satan promised Jesus things he would eventually get in God's perfect timing and way but tempted him to take the shortcut around the pain (especially the cross) to get to that point. As you think about some of the ways that Satan has tempted you, what can this incident in Jesus' life teach you about enduring the difficulty involved in your own fulfillment of God's purpose for your life?
4. Where was Amos when God called him (see Amos 1:1)? Ezekiel (see Ezekiel 1:1)? John the Baptist (see Luke 1:80)? How can the practices of the ascetics prepare us for ministry?
5. Which temptations of the ascetics are you most likely to fall prey to?
 - overemphasizing personal piety
 - seeking pain for its own sake
 - seeking to gain God's favor by your efforts
6. What do you think Dietrich Bonhoeffer meant when he wrote that if we do not have some element of the ascetic in us, we will find it difficult to follow Christ? Do you believe this statement to be true? Why or why not?
7. Create an ascetic experience this week by adopting one of the following: a night watch, a period of silence, a fast, a work for the Lord, a personal retreat, a hardship that you intentionally endure. Describe your experience.

Chapter 7: Activists

1. Which aspects of the activist's path to connecting with God seem most helpful or intriguing to you? Which aspects seem least interesting?
2. Read Isaiah 58:6–12. God is calling his people out of the complacency of merely seeking personal holiness (through fasting and religious obligations) and urging them to become deeply concerned about social injustices as well. In this passage, what issues most concern God? What actions does God call Israel to? What are the promised personal benefits that follow our obedience to God's agenda?
3. Gary constantly warns against becoming arrogant, jaded, or harsh in our efforts to bring about change in society for Jesus' sake. How would embracing the truth of Micah 6:8 help guard against this?
4. Can you think of a contemporary activist who inspires you? What is it about him or her that makes this person's faith contagious? Think about someone who turns you off. Is there something that makes his or her expression of faith unhealthy or problematic, or do you just not feel kindly toward activists? Has this chapter changed your view of activists in any way? If so, how?
5. For many of us, it's easier to fly under the radar of confrontation and enjoy the peace of our personal walk with God. In Luke 19:45–48, what got Jesus fired up enough to make an active issue of injustice and unrighteousness? What inspires you to become more active?

6. Discuss the difference between being an activist in *temperament* and an activist as *an occasional obligation*.
7. How can the church help activists to express their faith as a part of devotion, while avoiding the temptations Gary warns about in this chapter?
8. Given your area of concern, what one thing can you do this week to act on your conviction? Pray about it and ask God for the right wisdom, motivation, and attitude to honor him in your activism. Record your thoughts or discoveries here.

Chapter 8: Caregivers

1. Which aspects of the caregiver's path to connecting with God seem most helpful or intriguing to you? Which aspects seem least interesting?
2. Jesus, the consummate caregiver, was unique among religious leaders in his call to care for the poor and needy. In his first sermon as he launches his public ministry, Jesus quotes a messianic prophecy from Isaiah. Read Luke 4:16–21. How closely does Jesus' ministry focus reflect the church's emphasis today? How could adopting Jesus' mindset help us build closer lives of intimacy with our heavenly Father?
3. Is there any difference between loving others as an act of obedience, and loving others as an act of worship toward God?
4. Read Matthew 25:31–46. These verses call us to see Jesus in the people around us, and to treat them with the care and concern we would feel if Jesus were in that needy place. How would your interactions with the needs

around you change if you truly embraced this mindset/
heart-set?

5. Have you ever met a true caregiver—someone who seems dedicated to loving God by loving others? What impressed you about this person?
6. How can you enlarge the view that restricts worship to singing, broadening it to include *acts* you might do, such as giving care? Why do you think worship is often primarily known as simply singing songs?
7. Do you relate to any of the temptations of the caregiver in this chapter? If so, describe and explore how caregivers can guard themselves against these failings.
8. Design a caregiving opportunity this week that is all about worship—loving God by loving others. Describe the situation and your sense of God’s presence as you perform this act.

Chapter 9: Enthusiasts

1. Which aspects of the enthusiast’s path to connecting with God seem most helpful or intriguing to you? Which aspects seem least interesting?
2. Gary talks about “the mystery of faith.” What does he mean by this phrase, and how does this concept/experience feed the enthusiast’s walk with God?
3. Read Genesis 24:1–27. Abraham’s servant involved God in a mysterious way as he sought to find the right woman to marry Abraham’s son Isaac. Have you had similar “mysterious” or “coincidental” experiences that can only be attributed to God’s orchestration of your life? If so, describe.

4. Has God ever spoken to you through a dream? How did you eventually determine that it was actually God communicating to you? What are the dangers of opening yourself up to this type of experience?
5. We all know people (or perhaps *are* people!) who act as if they have the inside scoop on everything that God is up to, not only in their own lives, but in everyone else's as well. What suggestions woven throughout the chapter can keep the enthusiast in balance in his or her walk with God?
6. Have you ever lived in a state of expectancy, making yourself available and waiting for God to use you in surprising or even mysterious ways? What was it like? How would you counsel someone who makes himself or herself available but nothing much ever seems to happen?
7. Read 2 Samuel 6:1–5, 12–23. What keeps you from celebrating God as David did? Why do you think Michal despised David for his actions? What lessons can you learn from this?
8. Have you ever sensed God's presence as you were in the act of creating something? What were you doing? How can you use hobbies or interests as regular acts of worship?
9. Create an opportunity this week to unleash the elements of mystery, celebration, creation, or deep worship. Write your experiences and discoveries here.

Chapter 10: Contemplatives

1. Which aspects of the contemplative's path to connecting with God seem most helpful or intriguing to you? Which aspects seem least interesting?

2. Sensing God's deep love for you isn't something you can demand or force. It is a gift from God, a breeze of awareness that blows on your soul. How can you hoist the sails of your heart to capture the breeze and let it propel you into his very presence?
3. Read Song of Songs 5:10–16—an almost embarrassing account of all the things this woman adores about her beloved. Falling in love with God is quickened by taking time to focus on all the things we love and appreciate about God. What does your “love list” for God look like? Write it out on a sheet of paper.
4. How might these “acts of contemplatives” help you grow in this path of adoring God more intentionally?
 - the Jesus prayer
 - secret acts of devotion
 - dancing prayer
 - centering prayer
 - prayer of the heart
 - stations of the cross
 - meditative prayer
5. What are the dangers of having a spiritual pathway that feeds off of feelings and spiritual experience? How can contemplatives guard against these dangers?
6. What can someone who doesn't enjoy being alone learn from the contemplatives? What can activists learn from them? Enthusiasts? Caregivers? What can contemplatives learn from the other temperaments?
7. Create some “alone time” with God this week to be still in his presence. Choose one of the acts of the contemplatives, and record your experience.

Chapter 11: Intellectuals

1. Which aspects of the intellectual's path to connecting with God seem most helpful or intriguing to you? Which aspects seem least interesting?
2. Has learning something new about someone ever completely changed the way you looked at them and thought about them? How might this same principle apply in the way you think about and worship God?
3. Solomon, considered one of the wisest men to have ever lived, wrote the book of Proverbs to instruct his sons in the ways of God. Read Proverbs 2:1–15. What does Solomon tell his sons to seek and acquire? What will wisdom and knowledge do for the person who truly seeks them? How are understanding, wisdom, and knowledge connected with loving and knowing God?
4. Seeking knowledge for the sake of accumulating more facts or winning an argument can be an exercise in pride and result in arrogance. How does God want to use intellectual growth and theological understanding to draw you closer to him? How can it help you become more like Christ?
5. Gary zeroes in on five classic disciplines of theological training. How could study in these areas help you grow in your walk with God?
 - church history (stories of faith)
 - biblical studies
 - systematic theology
 - ethics
 - apologetics
6. How might Christians who don't consider themselves particularly smart or academically inclined still operate as intellectuals, when it comes to their spiritual pathway?

7. Read Psalms 64:9; 111:1–2; Ecclesiastes 12:9–11. How do these verses direct us to use our minds to worship God? What special role can intellectuals play in service to Christ’s church?
8. Design an intellectual time of worship and write down what you learned from your experience—how your understanding of new concepts helped you worship God and enjoy his presence, expanded your heart, or led to new respect or affection toward your heavenly Father.

Chapter 12: Tending the Garden of the Soul

1. Think back to the analogy of the two vegetable gardens in this chapter. Which best describes the care that you give to your soul? How might understanding the sacred pathways help you to change (or maintain) that?
2. What are your top four pathways? Were you surprised by the results? List a couple of things you can do with each pathway to grow in your devotion in that area.

Pathway

How to Grow It

3. Do any of the other pathways intrigue you enough to want to explore and develop them? If so, which one(s)? What will help you to grow in that area?