

Questions for further study ... May 9<sup>th</sup> '10

God's unbreakable promises

He promises us His presence

1. What do these verses teach us about the presence of Jesus?

Matthew 18:19,20; Matthew 28:20; Luke 24:36; John 14:16-18; Acts 2:28; 1 Thess 3:13; Jude 1:24,25.

Share your experience of Jesus' presence with you.

Think through an average day and how this would change if you became more aware of God's presence with you.

2. What was the effect of God's presence in these passages?

Ex 19:14-19; 1 Kings 8:10,11; John 1:29-34; Rev 1:12-18.

When the omnipotent (all-powerful), omniscient (all-knowing), omnipresent (present everywhere), eternal, infinite, holy, just, and loving God condescends to "come down" and touch weak and finite humans, what would you expect or predict might happen to the natural and normal order of things?

3. God through the Spiritual Pathway Assessment (Adapted from John Ortberg's "An ordinary day with Jesus.")

That highlights ways that we, as different individuals, are more likely to be aware of God and find we are freer to worship Him.

Share the results of this. What comes to you naturally, and what new way of encountering God could you try?

Pray together about situations where Jesus' transforming presence needs to be felt.

## Spiritual Pathway Assessment

Adapted from John Ortberg's "An ordinary day with Jesus."

We're all different, and the way we sense God's presence & how we're drawn to worship Him will be different, too. John Ortberg lists 7 "pathways" to experiencing God's presence. To find out which one is closest to what you're like, look at each statement and rate your response according to the following scale.

3= Consistently/definitely true of me 2= Often/usually true of me 1= Once in a while/sometimes true of me 0= Not at all/never true of me
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### THE RELATIONAL PATHWAY: Loving God by Loving Others

- When I have a problem, I'd rather pray with people than pray alone.
- It makes me feel better about myself to hang out with people I know and like.
- When I am alone too much, I tend to lose energy or get a little depressed.
- I feel the closest to God when I am in community with other people.
- I don't understand people who have a hard time revealing personal things about themselves.
- When I'm tired, there's nothing better than going out with friends to energize me.
- People who know me describe me as a people person.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score

### THE INTELLECTUAL PATHWAY: Loving God with Your Mind

- In a church service, I most look forward to the teaching.
- I don't understand people who don't like to study the bible in depth.
- People seek me out when they need answers to biblical questions.
- When I need to be energized, a stimulating book is just the thing I need.
- Sometimes I spend too much time learning about an issue rather than dealing with it.

I worship best in response to theological truth clearly explained.

I often read lots of books or articles to help me work through a problem.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score

### The SERVING PATHWAY: Loving God by Doing Tasks

- I get distracted in meetings or services if I notice details in my surroundings that have not been attended to.
- Helping others is easy for me, even when I have personal problems.
- I love being able to serve behind the scenes or completely out of the spotlight.
- People around me sometimes tell me they admire my compassion.
- Even when I'm tired, I find I have the energy and desire to care for people's problems.
- I am happiest when I find someone who really needs help and I step in and offer it.
- I experience God's presence as I counsel someone who is struggling or in trouble.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score

### THE CONTEMPLATIVE PATHWAY: Loving God through Solitude

- Spiritual reality sometimes feels more real to me than the physical world.
- I experience a deep inner joy when I am in a quiet place, free from distractions.
- I don't understand how Christians can be so busy and still think they can hear from God.
- My family and friends sometimes tease me about being such a hermit.
- When I face a difficulty, being alone feels most helpful.
- If the truth were told, I sometimes feel guilty for enjoying silence and solitude so much.
- Sometimes I spend too much time mulling over negative things people say about me.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score

### THE ACTIVIST PATHWAY: Loving God by Fighting a Cause

- \_\_\_ No matter how tired I get, I usually come alive when a challenge is placed before me.
- \_\_\_ People around me know how passionate I feel about the causes I'm involved in.
- \_\_\_ I sense the presence of God most when I am doing his work.
- \_\_\_ "When the going gets tough, the tough get going"—that's true about me.
- \_\_\_ I get tremendous satisfaction from seeing people working together to achieve a goal.
- \_\_\_ I get frustrated with people's apathy in the face of injustice.
- \_\_\_ I should probably take more time to slow down, but I really love what I do, especially ministry.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score

### THE NATURALIST PATHWAY: Loving God Out Of Doors

Psalm 19: 1 The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.  
Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities-- his eternal power and divine nature-- have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse.

- \_\_\_ A beautiful sunset can give me a spiritual high that temporarily blocks out everything that is bothering me.
- \_\_\_ When faced with a difficult decision, I am drawn to walk in the woods, on the beach, or in some other outdoor setting.
- \_\_\_ I experience God in nature so powerfully I'm sometimes tempted not to bother with going to church.
- \_\_\_ Things in nature often teach me valuable lessons about God.
- \_\_\_ God is so real when I'm in a beautiful, natural setting.
- \_\_\_ People who know me know that when I am not around, I'm most likely outside somewhere in a beautiful place.
- \_\_\_ When I see natural beauty, something wonderful stirs in me that is difficult to describe.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score

### THE WORSHIP PATHWAY: Loving God through Celebration

Psalm 96: 1 Sing to the Lord a new song; song to the Lord, all the earth.  
Psalm 103: 1 Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name."  
Psalm 150: 6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord.

- \_\_\_ People who know me would describe me as enthusiastic during worship.
- \_\_\_ God touches me every time I gather with other believers for praise and worship.
- \_\_\_ When I am tired, I look forward to going to a church service.
- \_\_\_ I am happiest when I praise God with other people.
- \_\_\_ I don't think there is a good excuse for missing a worship time or coming in late during the music.
- \_\_\_ I like how all the world's problems—including mine—seem unimportant when I am praising God.
- \_\_\_ When I get overwhelmed, listening to a great worship CD will energize me instantly.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score

Please write down your two primary Spiritual Pathways

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_

- Make an effort to spend time with God in the ways you've identified.
- Resist the temptation to compare your pathway to others' pathway or wish one were true about you.
- Develop an appreciation for all the pathways and what they can offer for you.