

Part Three:
Caregivers, Enthusiasts,
Contemplatives and Intellectuals

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Spiritual PPP

Last week, how have did you experience the ...

1. *Presents* of God - provisions, gifts, blessings
2. *Presence* of God - companionship, comfort, strength, assistance
3. *Plans* of God - answered prayer, God's movement, transition, fulfillment

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Content from all three sessions can be found here:
<https://www.chrisaltrrock.com/spiritual-practices/>

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PASSION WEEK
THREE TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES
FEB. 14-APRIL 4, 2021

RELENTLESS
Becoming people of
unstoppable passion

Be Brave
FINDING FEARLESSNESS
IN THE FINAL WEEK OF CHRIST

CORE STRENGTH
A NEW LOOK AT THE
SEVEN DEADLY SINS

Stamford
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

The graphic features three interconnected boxes: 'RELENTLESS' (top left), 'Be Brave' (top right), and 'CORE STRENGTH' (bottom center), all connected by a dark red line. The background is black with white and gold text.

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27 God made the nations so they would seek him, perhaps even reach out to him and find him. In fact, God isn't far away from any of us. (Acts 17:27 CEB)

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Spirituality model #1

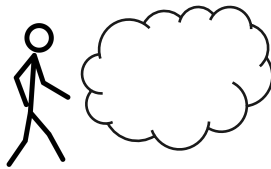
God is away, so I must advance.
(and there is only one way to advance)



94

Spirituality model #2

God is adjacent, so I must awaken.
(and there are many ways to awaken)



95

The 9 pathways are avenues for awakening:



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The Caregiver



97



1 When he came down from the mountain, great crowds followed him. 2 And behold, a leper came to him and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, if you will, you can make me clean." 3 And Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him, saying, "I will; be clean." And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. (Matt. 8:1-3)

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"For caregivers, giving care isn't a chore but a form of worship." (see Thomas page 147)

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"Caregivers can look to two people in particular as they seek to understand their calling and temperament: Mordecai and Jesus." (see Thomas pages 147-152):
1- "The portrait painted of Mordecai in the book of Esther is that of a man who deeply and profoundly cares about others and freely pours out his energy to help them."

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"Caregivers can look to two people in particular as they seek to understand their calling and temperament: Mordecai and Jesus." (see Thomas pages 147-152):
2-"Because he was the only truly whole man who ever lived, Jesus displayed all the spiritual temperaments in this book ... He is the one among religious leaders known for associating love for God with love for others."

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Caregivers as Prophets (see Thomas pages 157-159) "Caring for others is a prophetic activity ... Christians who demonstrate compassion because they are passionately in love with God will thus speak prophetically to a selfish culture--and, sometimes, a selfish church."

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Spiritual Practices for Caregivers:

1-Service - a way of offering resources, time, treasure, influence and expertise for the care, protection, justice, and nurture of others. Includes mentoring, gifts of mercy and helps.

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Spiritual Practices for Caregivers:

2-Hospitality - creates a safe, open space where a friend or stranger can enter and experience the welcoming spirit of Christ in another. It includes sharing your home, food, resources, car and all that you call your own so that another might experience the reality of God's welcoming heart.

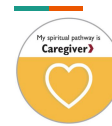
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Spiritual Practices for Caregivers:

3-Mentoring - Building authentic relationships that provide support, encouragement and help in specific areas.

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Assessment for Caregivers:

Score the following on a scale of 1 to 5: 1 = not true at all and 5 = very true.

- 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. A book titled "99 Ways to Help Your Neighbor" would be very appealing to me.
- 6. I would rather nurse someone to health or help repair someone's 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

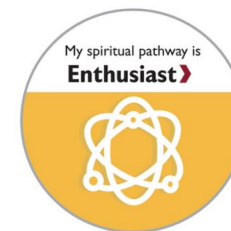
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Consider the following:

1. How can I take advantage of this pathway if it is most "natural" to me?
2. In what ways is God inviting me to stretch into this pathway if it is less "natural" to me?
3. How do I respond to other people/ groups who emphasize a pathway different from mine?

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The Enthusiast



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Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary; praise him in his mighty heavens! 2 Praise him for his mighty deeds; praise him according to his excellent greatness! 3 Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! 4 Praise him with tambourine and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! 5 Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals! 6 Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord! (Psalm 150)

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Mystery and celebration are two words that help us understand what feeds this type of Christians (see Thomas page 165).

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"Enthusiasts long to preserve the mystery of faith. They understand that there are certain things about God and Christianity that we simply can't fully understand." (see Thomas page 166).

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3 ways mystery has become part of faith: (see Thomas pages 167-175)

1. **Dreams** ("One of the ways that God has moved and continues to move in mystery is through dreams.")
2. **Expectancy** ("We expected God to do something, and he often met that expectancy and then some.")
3. **Prayer** (Is there anything more mysterious than prayer?)

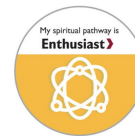
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3 Ways of Celebrating (see Thomas pages 175-180)

1. **Enthusiastic Worship** (The type of exuberant worship we see in the Psalms and in Revelation)
2. **Creating** ("Whether it's building a business, writing a poem, painting a picture, or planting a garden, creating something can be a profoundly holy experience.")
3. **Getting Together** ("Enthusiasts, in general, will want to spend more time with others than without.")

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Spiritual Practices for Enthusiasts:

1. **Celebration** - a way of engaging in actions that orient the spirit toward worship, praise and thanksgiving. It includes spending time with others, sharing meals, working, serving, worshipping, laughing, listening to music, dancing.
2. **Conversational Prayer** - includes attending prayer meetings and praying spontaneously with others around specific topics as they come to mind

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Spiritual Practices for Enthusiasts:

- 3 **Worship** - This includes offering my body as a "spiritual act of worship" and regularly engaging with a worshipping community.

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Enthusiast Assessment

Score the following on a scale of 1 to 5: 1 = not true at all and 5 = very true.

- 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. God is an exciting God, and we should be excited about worshipping Him. I don't understand how some Christians can say they love God, and then act like they're going to a funeral whenever they walk into church.
- 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. I would enjoy reading the book *The Mystery and Excitement of Walking With God*.
- 6. I spend more money on music and worship downloads than on books.
- Total of all your answers

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The Contemplative



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18 And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart. 20 And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.(Lk 2:18-19)

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"Contemplatives seek to gaze lovingly into God's face and be caught up in the rapture of a lover's experience. They are marked by adoration." (see Thomas page 188)

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7 Acts of Contemplatives (see Thomas pages 193-200)

1 - **The Jesus Prayer** (Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.)

2 - **Secret Acts of Devotion** (... "something you do--giving an anonymous gift, helping someone out "behind the scenes," sending a card--without letting anyone, even the person who benefits, know you had anything to do with it.")

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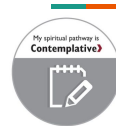


7 Acts of Contemplatives (see Thomas pages 193-200)

3 - **Dancing Prayer** ("allowing God to lead in prayer" "Lord, I don't know how to pray or what to pray about. I'm placing myself before you. What should we discuss?")

Centering Prayer ("...simply resting in the presence of God.")

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7 Acts of Contemplatives (see Thomas pages 193-200)

4 - **Centering Prayer** ("...simply resting in the presence of God.")

5 - **Prayer of the Heart** (considering what we are feeling as we pray.)

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7 Acts of Contemplatives (see Thomas pages 193-200)

6 - **Stations of the Cross** (praying through the various events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion)

7 - **Meditative Prayer** (prayerful reflection on a biblical text)

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Contemplative Assessment

Score the following on a scale of 1 to 5: 1 = not true at all and 5 = very true.

- 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 for me 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 30 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. I would enjoy reading The Transforming Friendship.
- 6. When I think of God, I think of love, friendship and adoration more than anything.
- Total of all your answers

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The Intellectual



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Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. 2 And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, 3 explaining and proving that it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ." (Acts 17:1-3)

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The Disciplines (see Thomas pages 215-223) "Intellectuals can aim to broaden their faith by gaining an understanding of the basic disciplines of theological training."
Church History, Biblical Studies, Systematic Theology, Ethics, Apologetics, Creeds

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Spiritual Practices for Intellectuals

1. **Bible study** - engaging the mind and focusing attention on Scripture in an attempt to understand and apply truth to every part of my life.
2. **Memorization** - includes memorizing Scripture, hymns, poems, quotes, etc.
3. **Witness** - modeling and telling of the difference Jesus has made in one's life.

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Intellectual Assessment

Score the following on a scale of 1 to 5: 1 = not true at all and 5 = very true.

- 1. I feel closer 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 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 a discussion with a small group.
- 5. A book on church history would be appealing to me.
- 6. I spend more money on books than music.
- Total of all your answers

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