

A Spiritual Tune-up



EAST MG Retreat
3-5 January 2018





Making and nurturing disciples of Jesus Christ with informed minds, hearts on fire, and contemplative in actions



- MIND
- HEART
- HANDS

Making and nurturing disciples of Jesus Christ with informed minds, hearts on fire, and contemplative in actions

Luke 8:15, NAS

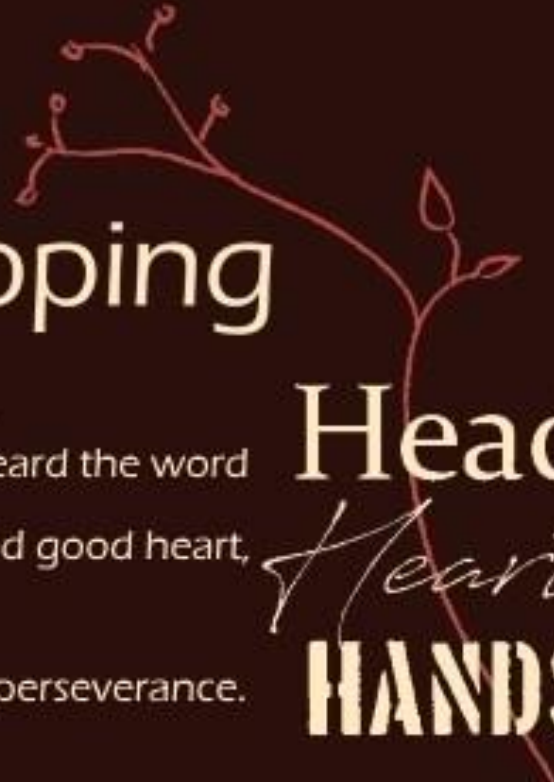
Developing

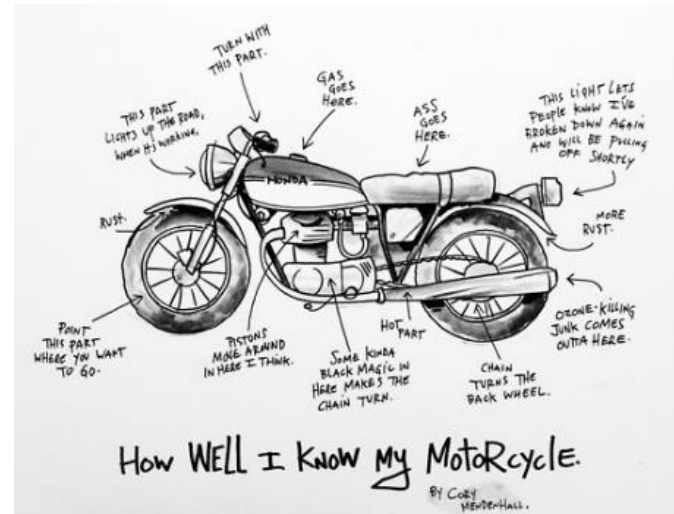
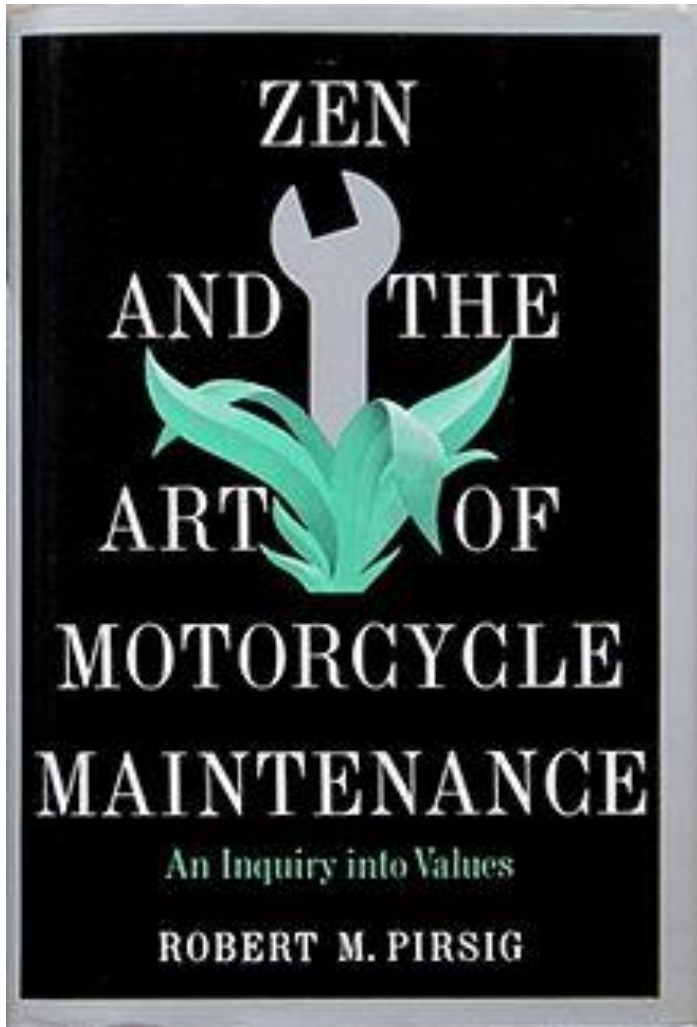
But the seed in the good soil,
these are the ones who have heard the word
in an honest and good heart,
and hold it fast,
and bear fruit with perseverance.

Head

Heart

HANDS





Romantic thinking
Rational thinking

What is your temperature?

Session 1

950 900 850 800 750 700 650 600 550 500 450 400

Egypt Assyria Babylon Persia

N. & S. Kingdoms Judah Alone Exile Post-Exile

△ Solomon dies
△ Israel falls
△ Judah falls
△ Captives return

Haggai

Mene, Mene,
Tekel, Upharsin
(Dan. 5)



540 535 530 525 520 515

Ezra 1-6

△ Babylon (Belshazzar) falls to Persia (Cyrus)
△ 1st captives return, work on rebuilding temple started
△ King Artaxerxes halts work
King Darius permits work △
Temple completed △

Haggai 1:1–6 (NIV2011)

1 In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jozadak, the high priest:

2 This is what the LORD Almighty says: “These people say, ‘The time has not yet come to rebuild the LORD’s house.’ ”

3 Then the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai: **4** “Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?”

Haggai 1:1–6 (NIV2011)

⁵ Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: “Give **careful thought to** your ways.

⁶ You have planted much, but harvested little.

You eat, but never have enough.

You drink, but never have your fill.

You put on clothes, but are not warm.

You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it.”

..the LORD Almighty says: “Give **careful thought** to your ways...”



Four Messages from Haggai (give careful thought to...)

1. Wrong priorities in building (in spiritual growth)

What is spiritual growth?

Growing in Christ

Spiritual development

Discipleship

Maturing in the faith

Renovation of the soul

Spiritual formation

What is spiritual growth?



2 Cor.3:18 (NIV 2011)

**And we, who with unveiled faces all
reflect the Lord's glory,
are being transformed into his likeness
with ever-increasing glory,
which comes from the Lord, who is the
Spirit.**

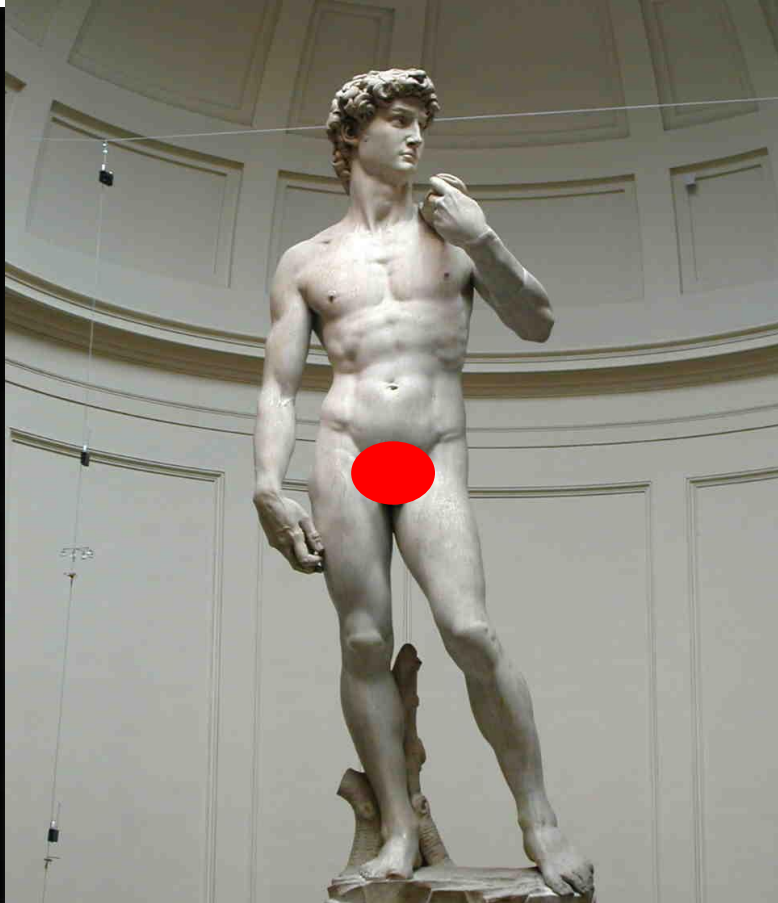
Michelangelo (1475-1564)



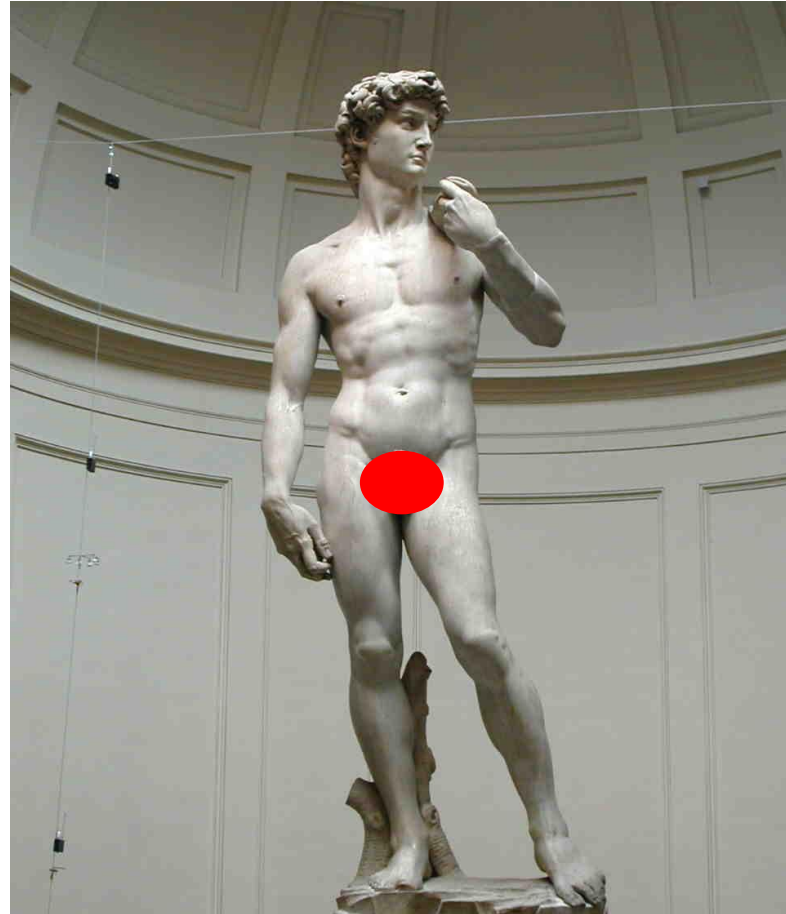
**“The best artist has
that thought alone
Which is contained
within the marble shell;
The sculptor's hand can
only break the spell
To free the figures
slumbering in the
stone.”**

1501-1504





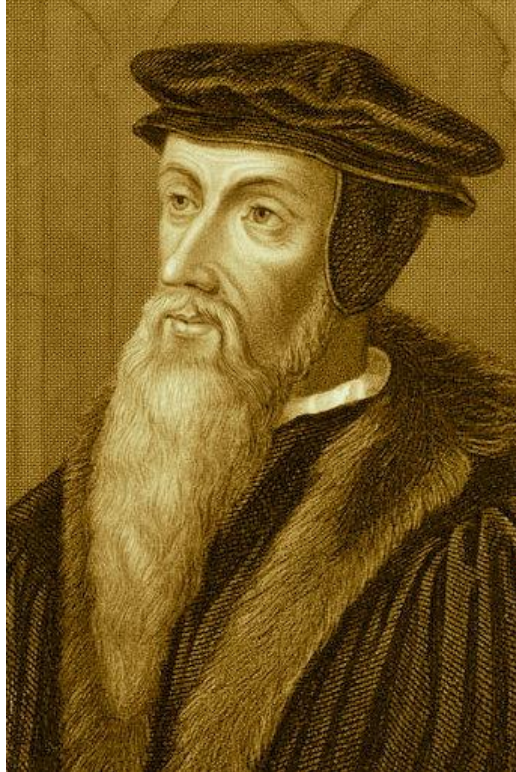
2 Cor.3:18 And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.



2 Corinthians 3:18 (NIV84)

¹⁸ And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

- Individual and communities transformed to Christlikeness
- Ongoing process
- Holy Spirit is involved
- God's glory is restored



“in the Christian life we are paradoxically becoming what we are ...Christians strive from this identity, and not unto it.”

'Sometimes I consider myself there as a stone before the carver, whereof he is to make a statue; presenting myself before God, I desire Him to form His perfect image in my soul, and make me entirely like Himself.'

Brother Lawrence, *Practicing the Presence of God*.

Spiritual growth

- More of unlearning and relearning than just learning
- Why often called 'conversion' or 'repentance'
- Real self is 'hidden in God' (Col. 3:3)
- True religion is participating actively rather than passive receptive

What is spiritual formation or spiritual growth?



Defining spiritual formation

Christian spiritual formation or spiritual growth is the **intentional** and **ongoing process** of **inner transformation** to become **like Jesus Christ** himself, to become with others a communal **people of God**, and to become **an agent** for God's redemptive purposes.

Spiritual formation and sanctification

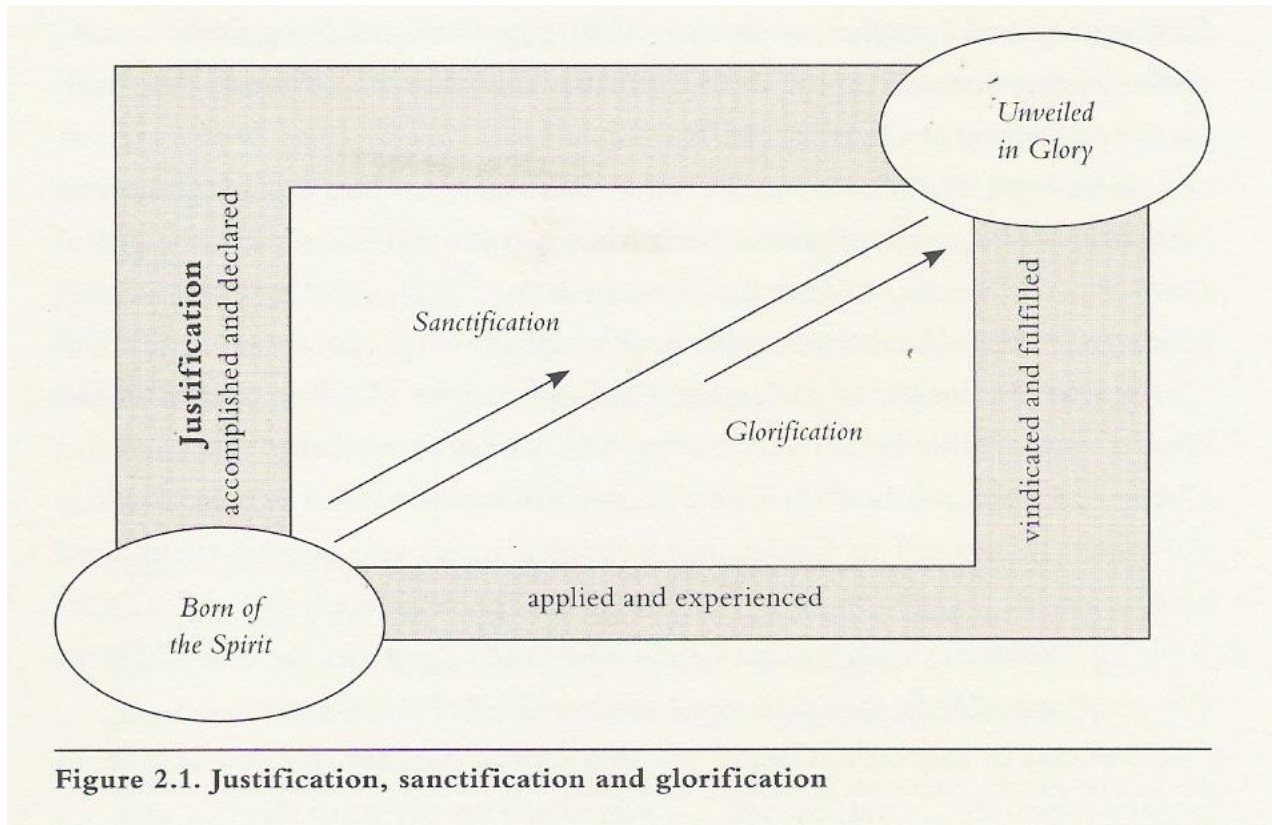


Figure 2.1. Justification, sanctification and glorification

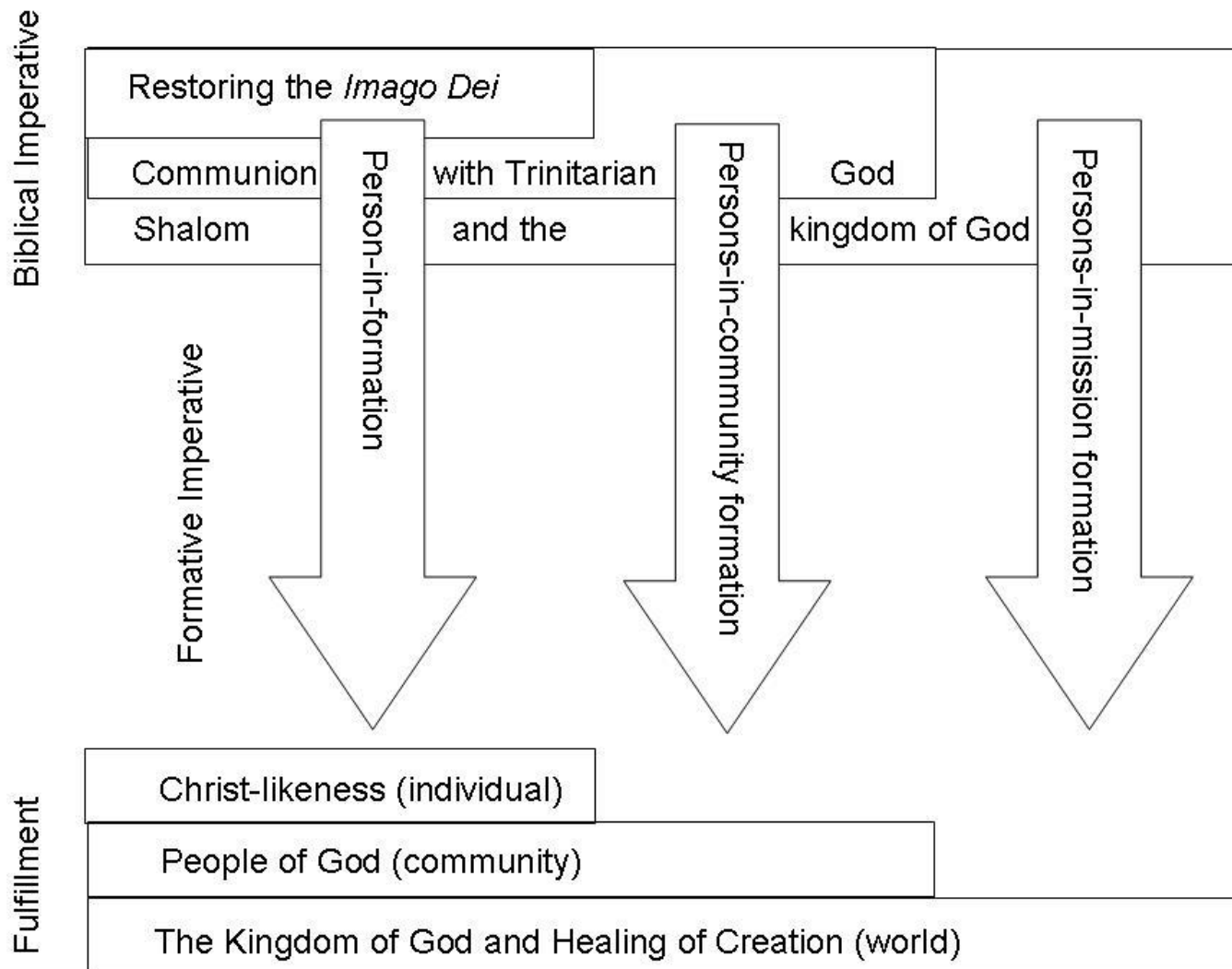
Doctrine of Double Knowledge by Augustine of Hippo and John Calvin

- Knowing God
- Knowing self

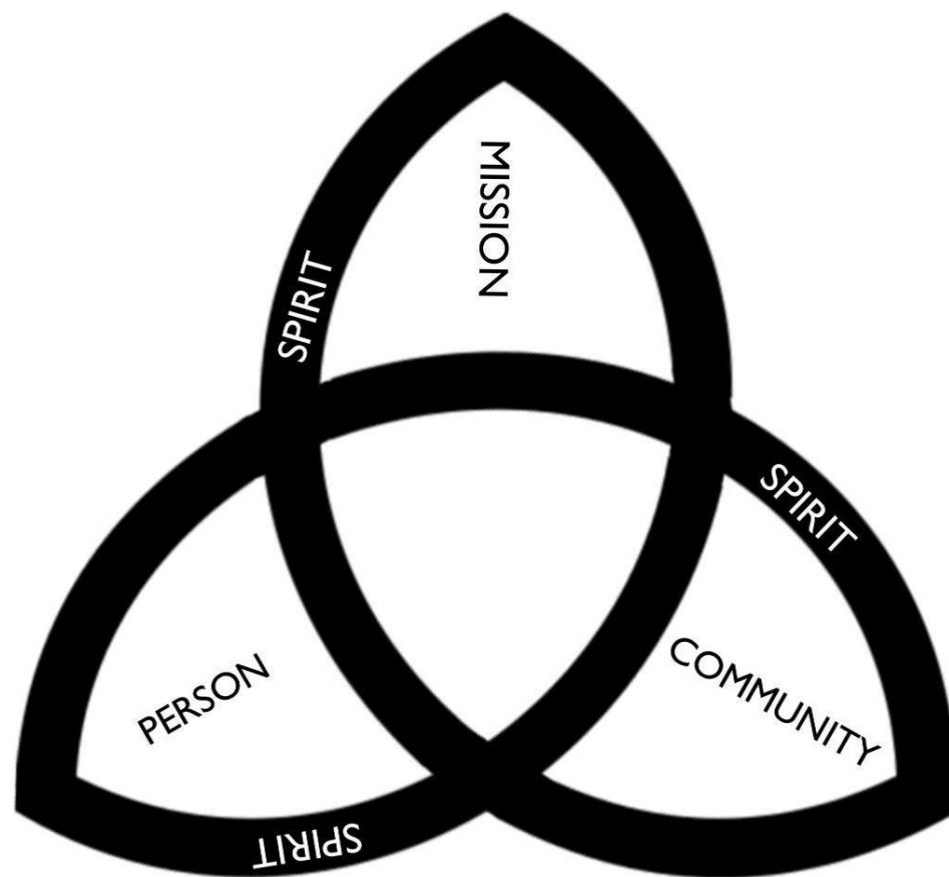
“Lord, let me know myself; let me know you.”

Augustine in *Confessions*

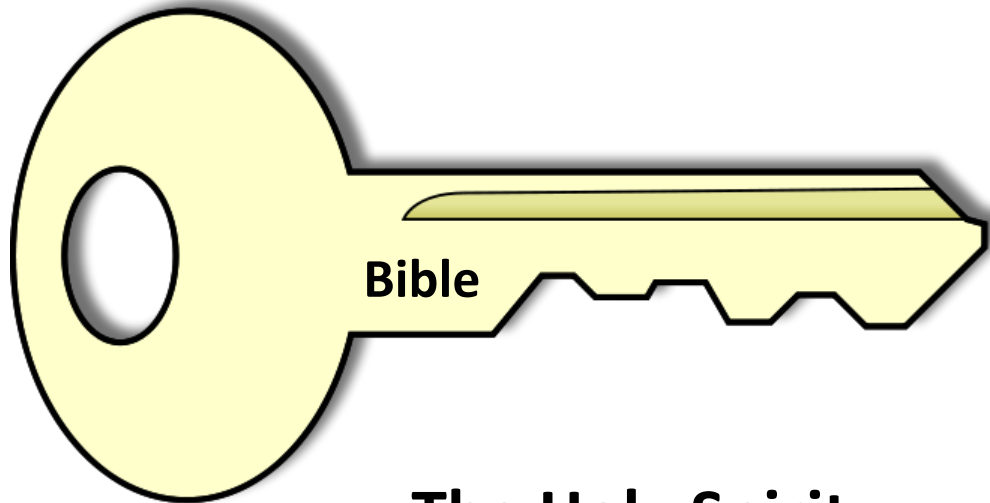
Biblical and theological foundations



Components of spiritual formation

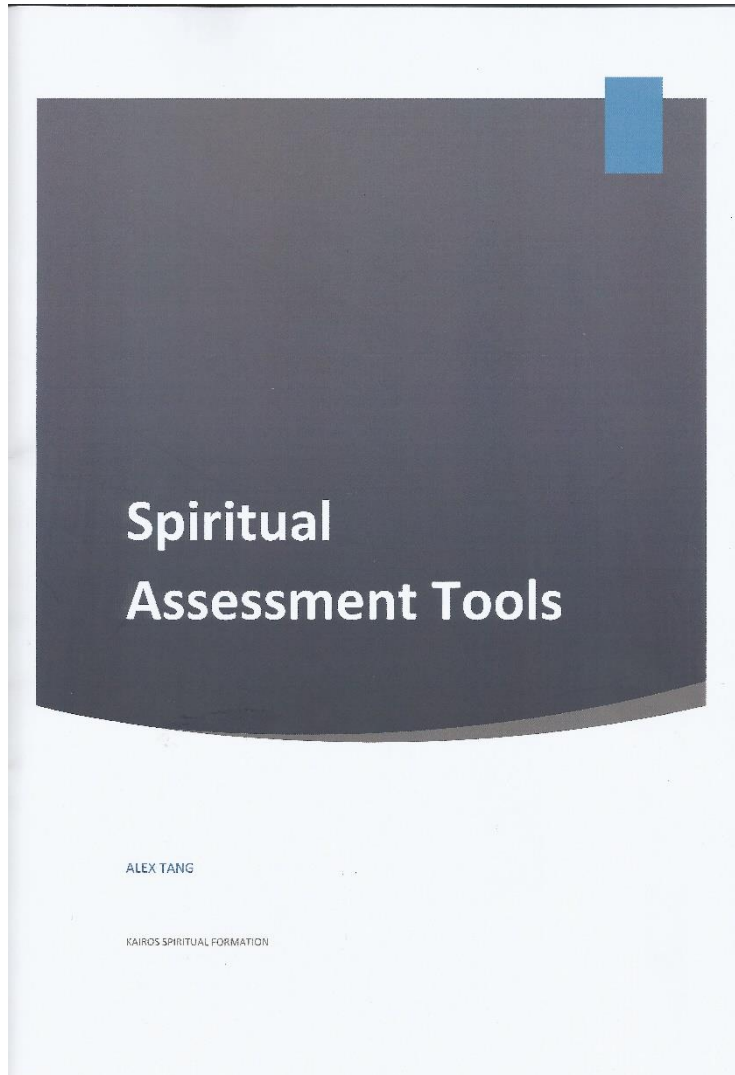


The Key to Spiritual Formation (Spiritual growth)



- The Holy Spirit
- The human volition (human will)

Preparation session two



Complete *Spiritual Pathways*

(p.6-13)

before next session



God of the moon and
stars

Tuning your Connections

Session 2

Haggai 1:7–11 (NIV2011)

⁷ This is what the Lord Almighty says: “Give careful thought to your ways. ⁸ Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build my house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored,” says the Lord.

Haggai 1:7–11 (NIV2011)

⁹ “You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?” declares the Lord Almighty. “Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with your own house.

Haggai 1:7–11 (NIV2011)

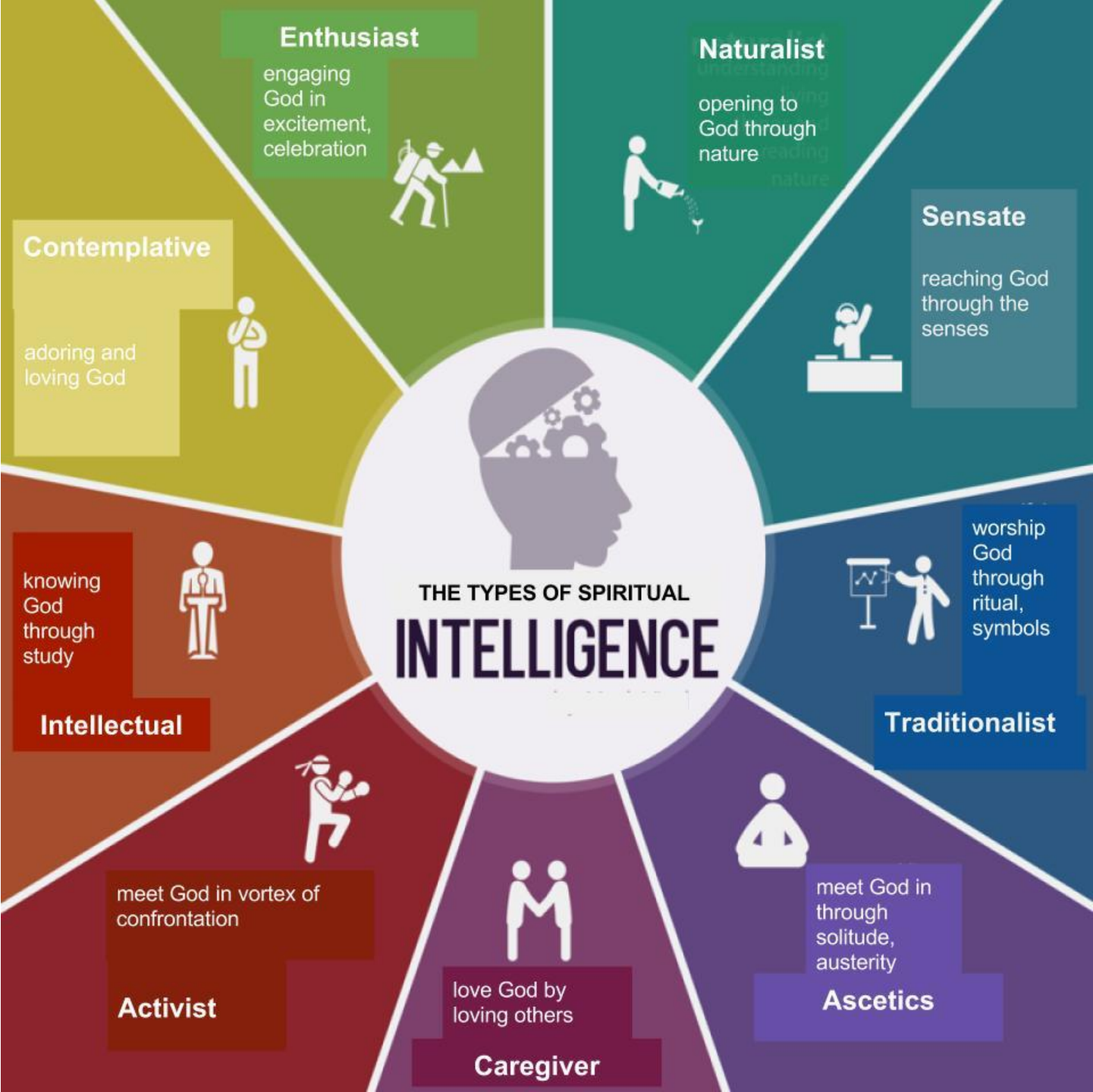
¹⁰ Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops. ¹¹ I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the olive oil and everything else the ground produces, on people and livestock, and on all the labor of your hands.”

Four Messages from Haggai (give careful thought to...)

1. Wrong priorities in building (in spiritual growth)
2. Promises of more of God's presence and glory (knowing God using)

Different ways we connect with God

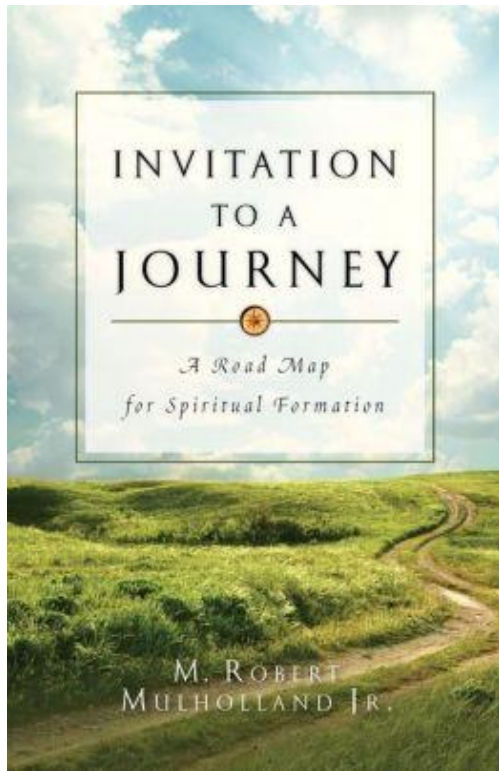




Finding our spiritual path



Finding and follow our spiritual path



...in order for our spiritual pilgrimage to be a balanced growth towards wholeness in the image of Christ for others, we need to have dynamics of spiritual life that will nurture both sides of our preference pattern (p. 68)

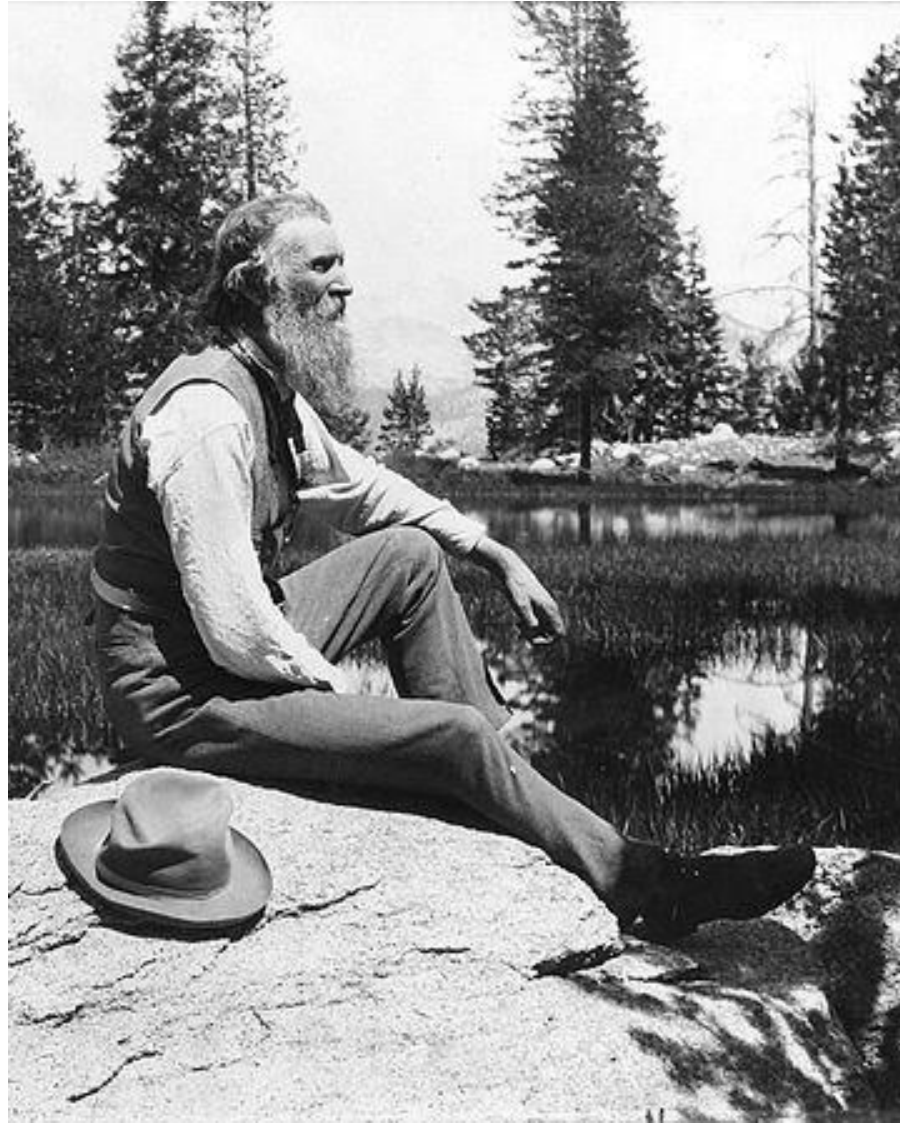
Sacred Pathways

1. Naturalists
2. Sensates
3. Traditionalists
4. Ascetics
5. Activists
6. Caregivers
7. Enthusiasts
8. Contemplatives
9. Intellectuals

Naturalists

- "NATURALISTS' hearts open up to God when they get outdoors
- God seems more real to them when they're hiking under a big expanse of sky or at least sitting under a tree

John Muir (1838 –1914)



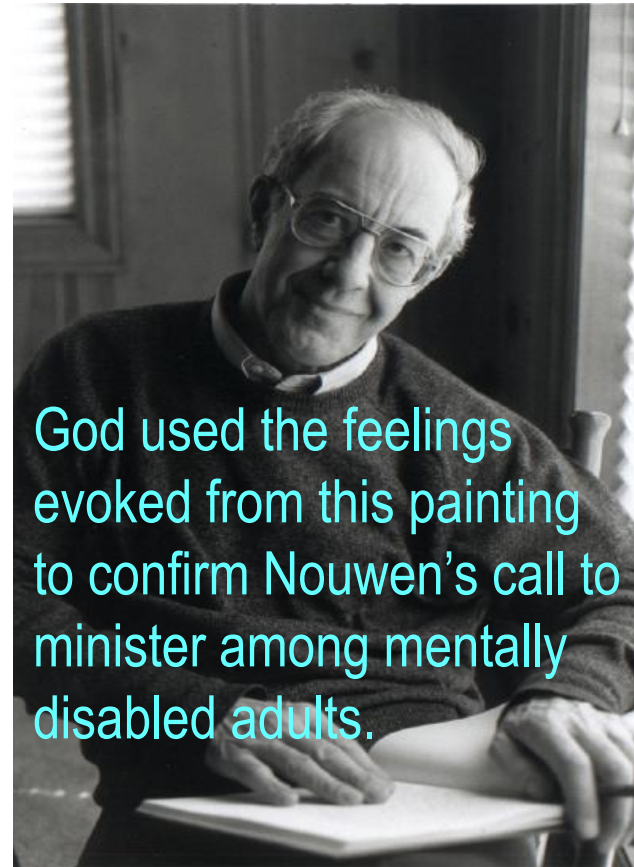
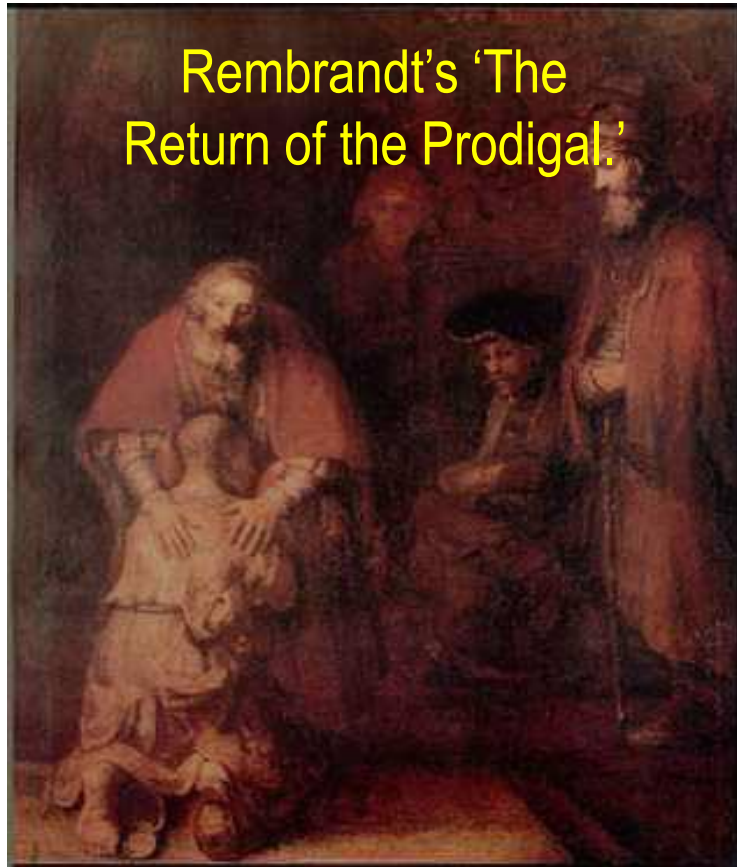
What are some of the ways naturalists connect with God?



Sensates

- SENSATES are more aesthetically inclined
- These are the artistic types, and they prefer creative and original music or even good architecture to open their hearts to God's presence
- Their worship is about seeing, hearing, feeling, touching and even tasting God's presence

Henri Nouwen, (1932 –1996)



Nouwen

“I felt drawn by the intimacy between the two figures, the warm red of the man’s cloak, the golden yellow of the boy’s tunic, and the mysterious light engulfing them both. But, most of all, it was the hands, the old man’s hands, as they touched the boy’s shoulders that reached me in a place where I have never been reached before.”



What are some of the ways
sensates can connect with God?



Traditionalists

- TRADITIONALISTS find great meaning by worshiping God according to set patterns — their own or historical ones
- They may organize their life around scheduled times of prayer and may even choose to carefully observe the Christian calendar, aligning themselves with centuries of faith
- Traditionalists often make good use of Christian symbols

Benedict of Nursa (480 – 543 or 547 AD)



Rule of
St Benedict

What are some of the ways traditionalists can connect with God?



Ascetics

- ASCETICS meet God internally
- They prefer to shut out the world and meet God in solitude and austerity
- For ascetics, the best environment for personal worship is a quiet place with a rather orderly environment, and they usually don't like the distractions of group worship
- They are often advocates of all-night prayer vigils and many of the classical disciplines, such as fasting and meditation

Anthony the Hermit (468 –520)





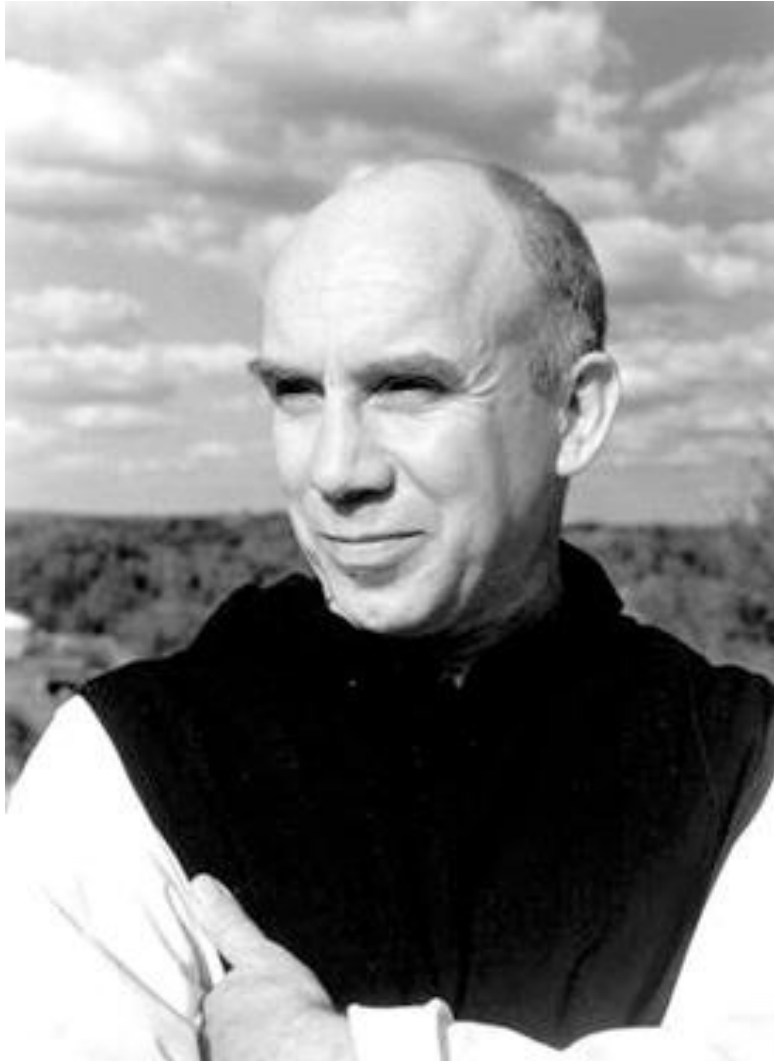
What are some of the ways ascetics can connect with God?



Activists

- ACTIVISTS meet God in the vortex of confrontation. They want to fight God's battles
- God becomes most real to them when they are standing up for justice or working on the frontlines to build God's kingdom

Thomas Merton (1915 – 1968)



What are some of the ways activists can connect with God?



BERSIH 5 19 Nov 2016
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Caregivers

- CAREGIVERS love God by loving others
- Providing care or meeting needs in Jesus' name spiritually energizes caregivers and draws them closer to the Lord

Mother Teresa (1910 –1997)



What are some of the ways caregivers can connect with God?



Enthusiasts

- ENTHUSIASTS like the excitement and celebration of group worship and church gatherings
- They feed off the enthusiasm of other believers and typically revel in God's mystery and supernatural power
- Their exuberance tends to lead them to embrace creative forms of worship.

Bernard of Clairvaux (1090 – 1153)



What are some of the ways
enthusiasts can connect with God?



Contemplatives

- CONTEMPLATIVES are marked by an emotional attachment and surrender to God
- They are God's lovers, and they want to spend their time in God's presence — adoring Him, listening to Him and enjoying Him
- They often find benefit in journal writing, where they can explore their heart's devotion

- Contemplatives are not so concerned with a prayer-list; they just want to adore God.
- Theresa of Avila spoke of 'divine marriage'
- John Climacus devoted his whole life to encounter a moment's 'union with God'
- Bernard of Clairvaux spoke of 4 degrees of love: (a) loving self for self's sake; (b) loving God for self's sake; (c) loving God for God's sake; (d) loving self for God's sake.

Teresa of Avila (1515 –1582)



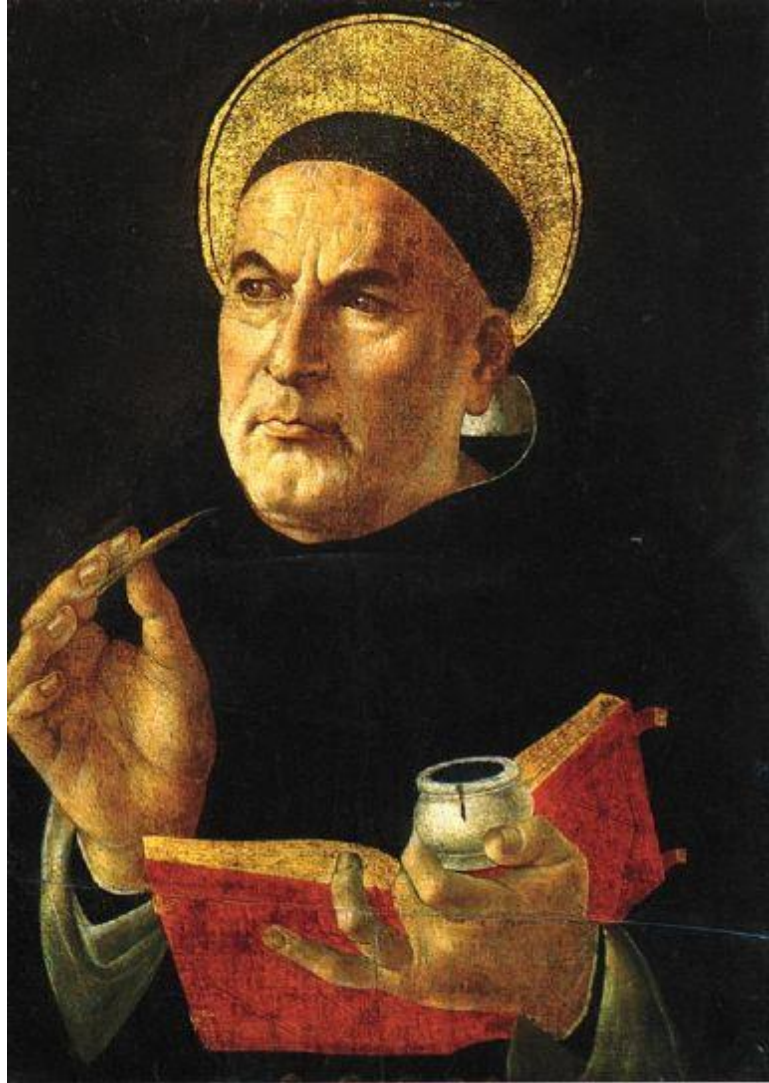
What are some of the ways
contemplatives can connect with God?



Intellectuals

- INTELLECTUALS really like books and live in the world of ideas and concepts
- They want to come out of their devotional time with new understanding
- If their mind isn't engaged, their heart may feel cold.

Thomas Aquinas (1225 –1274)

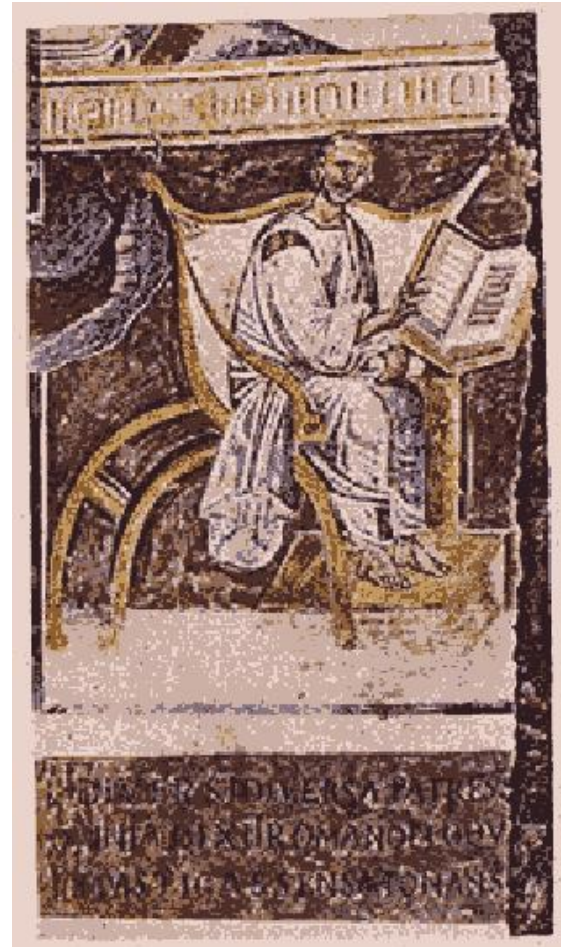


What are some of the ways
intellectuals can connect with God?



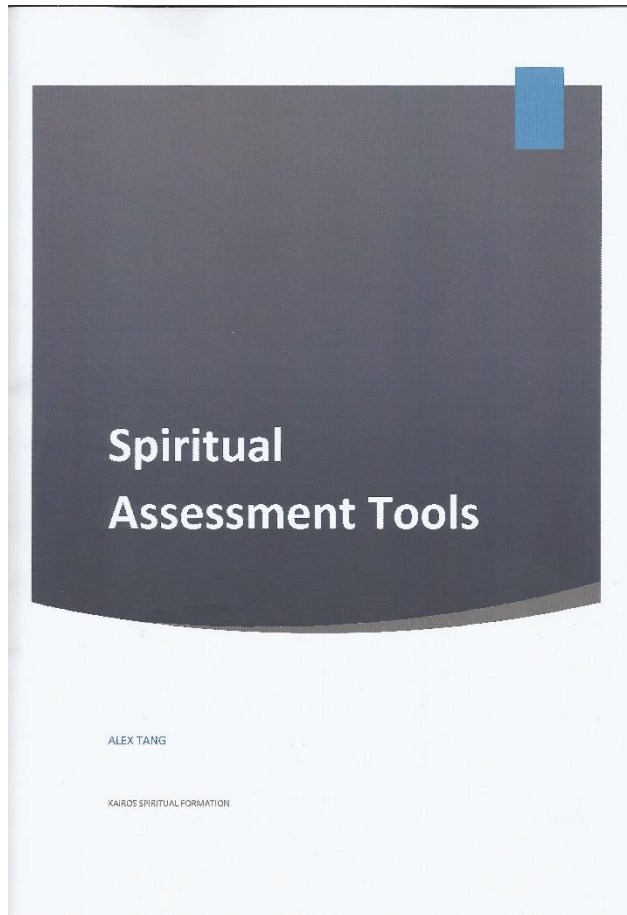
Augustine's Prayer

“Lord, show me the road I must travel that I may see You.”



*Oldest Surviving Portrait
of Augustine*

Personal Retreat



Complete *Spiritual
Temperature*

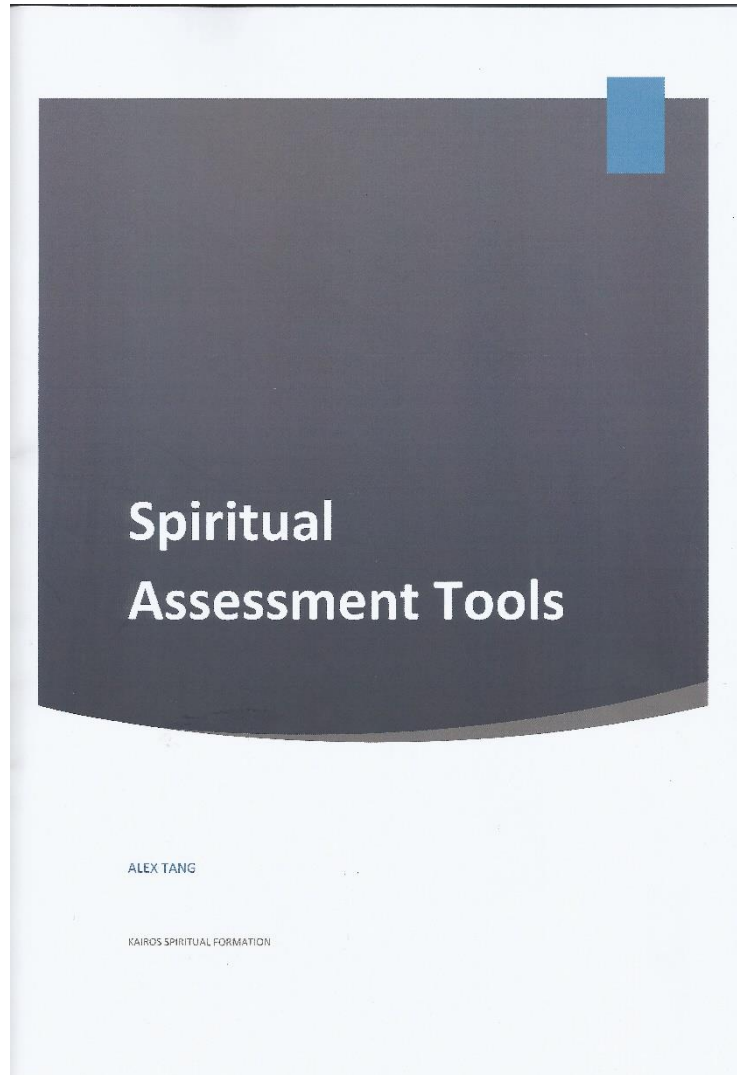
(p.3-5)

For this session

Healthy Spiritual Life					Unhealthy Spiritual Life
Fervent in prayer					Lethargic in prayer
Bible reading tasteful					Bible reading insipid
Fully trusting					Anxious and doubting
Loving God more than everything					Loving worldly things more than God
Resisting and hating sin					Compromising with sin
Giving God the glory in all things					Seeking self glory in everything
Fully at peace					Much worrying
Giving thanks in all					Much murmuring
Always happy and singing					Always sad and sighing
Peaceful and patient in trouble					Easily provoked to anger
Much consideration of others					Much consideration of self
Seeking God's in all things					Seeking men's pleasure in all things
Yearning for spiritual things in the heart					Coveting earthly things in the heart
Speaking words that edify others					Speaking words that criticise others
Happy to witness for Christ					No power to witness
Cheerful to give to God's work					Stingy and unwilling to give
Rejoicing in other's good success					Jealous of others' good success
A helping hand to those in trouble					Nonchalant at other's misfortune
Willing to forgive others					Not willing to forgive others
Character first					Clothing first
Happy to keep close to devout Christians					Happy in the company of worldly friends
Happy to hear faithful admonitions					Happy to hear words of flattery
Eagerly hoping for the Lord's return					No thought of things touching on the Lord's return

Healthy Spiritual Life					Unhealthy Spiritual Life
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Preparation session three



Complete ***Spiritual Formation Inventory***

(p.14-19)

before next session.

Do this in the afternoon and not during your personal retreat in the morning

Conducting a Spiritual Checkup

Session 3

Haggai 2:15–17 (NIV2011)

¹⁵ “ ‘Now give careful thought to this from this day on—consider how things were before one stone was laid on another in the LORD’s temple. ¹⁶ When anyone came to a heap of twenty measures, there were only ten. When anyone went to a wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were only twenty. ¹⁷ I struck all the work of your hands with blight, mildew and hail, yet you did not return to me,’ declares the LORD.

Four Messages from Haggai (give careful thought to...)

1. Wrong priorities in building (in spiritual growth)
2. Promises of more of God's presence and glory (knowing God)
3. Rebuilding God's temple brings blessings (spiritual checkup)

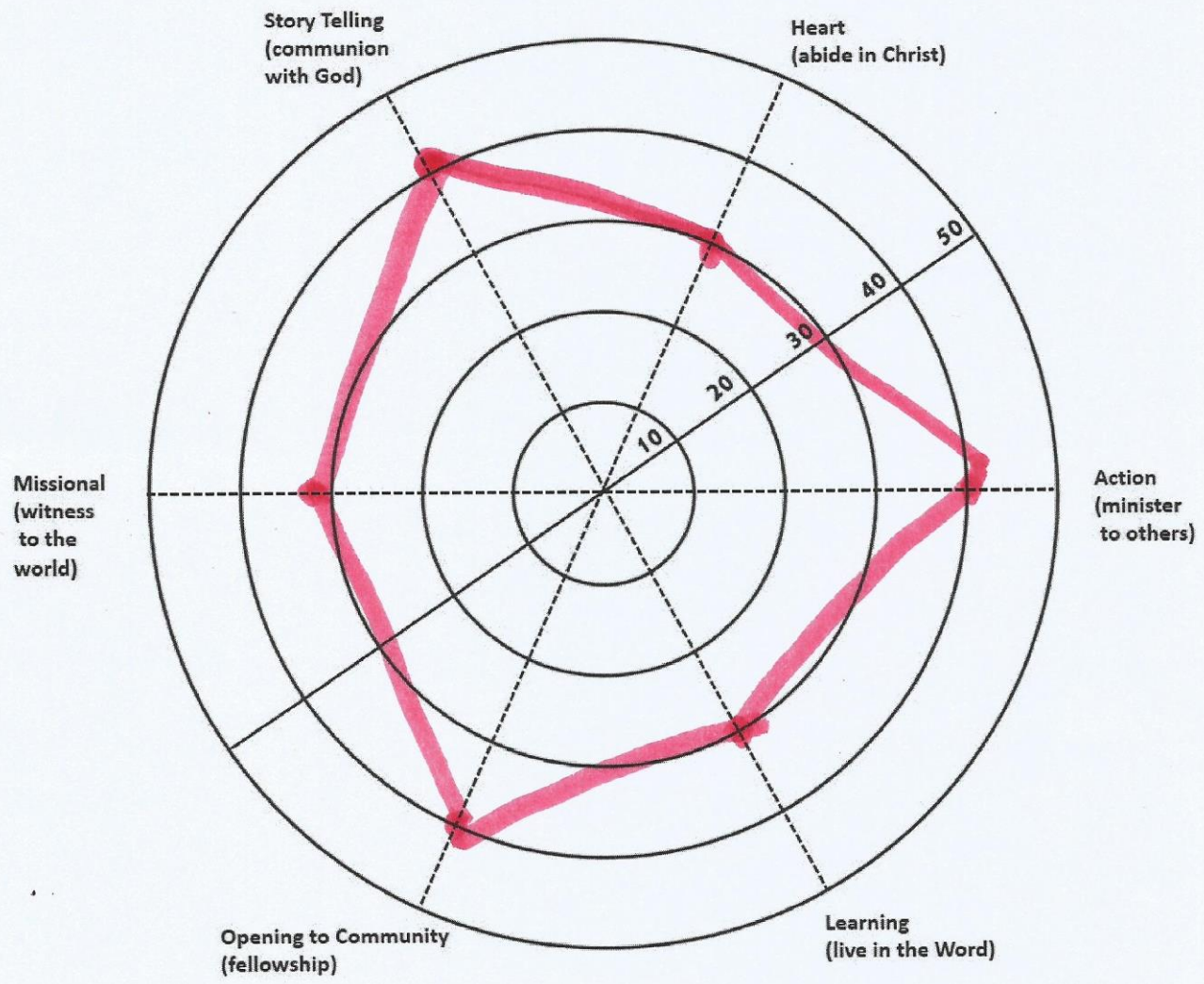
How balanced is our spiritual life?



Assessing our balancing act



Spiritual
formation
inventory



Experiencing God through the Spiritual Disciplines



Exercise unto godliness



- Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come (1 Timothy 4:7-8)
- helpful habits that will help us to develop holiness

Exercise unto godliness

- John Wesley - the spiritual disciplines as means of grace that enables the Holy Spirit to work on our lives.
- Richard Foster “Spiritual Discipline is an intentionally directed action by which we do what we can do in order to receive from God the ability (or power) to do what we cannot do by direct effort”

Richard FOSTER.1989.

Celebration of Discipline



Spiritual formation inventory



Story telling (Communion with God)

Fasting

Secrecy

Silence and Solitude

Journaling

Silence and solitude

- Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness for forty days (Matt. 4:1).
- He "withdrew ...to a deserted place by himself after learning of the beheading of his dear friend and cousin, John the Baptizer (Matt. 14:13).
- Following the incredible experience of feeding the five thousand, Jesus immediately "went up the mountain by himself to pray" (Matt. 14:23).
- When the disciples were exhausted from the demands of ministry, Jesus told them, "Come away to a deserted place all by yourselves and rest a while" (Mark 6:31).
- After Jesus' healing of a leper Luke seems to be describing more of a habitual practice than a single incident when he notes that Jesus "would withdraw to deserted places and pray" (Luke 5:16).

Silence and solitude



Monks' cells in the Wilderness (Wadi Qelt)

Silence and solitude

- Find a quiet place where you are safe and will not be disturb
- Close your eyes and calm your mind and body by slow deep breathing
- Picture a peaceful scene in your mind – it may be a beautiful lake you have visited, a photo you remember, or a simple room with two chairs
- Pray to God for his protection and invite Jesus to join you at this peaceful place.
- Wait for Jesus to join you there. Feel his presence in the calmness. You may want to talk to him or just sit with him in silence.
- You may also use this time to meditate on a bible passage, praying, singing worshipful songs or writing in your journal
- When it is time to leave, leave the peaceful scene (which is a special place in your heart) slowly (a timer app on your mobile is useful)
- Pray and gives thanks.
- Slowly open your eyes.

Silence and solitude



- Half day retreat
- Full day retreat
- Silent retreat
- Personal retreat
- Guided retreat
- Ignatian retreat

Heart (Abide in Christ)

Prayer

- verbal, meditative, contemplative, unitive

Submission

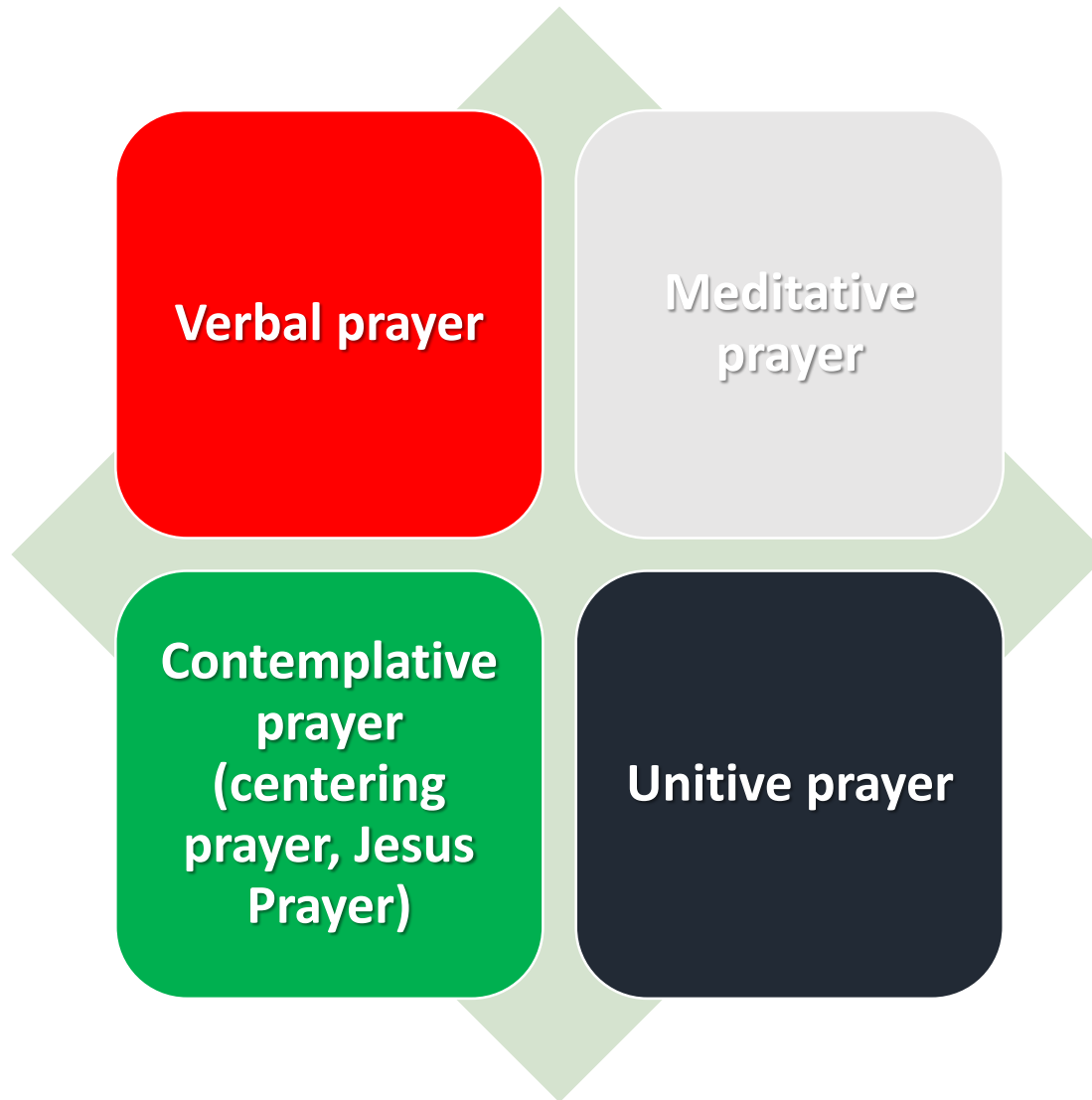
- obedience

Worship

Awareness

Suffering

prayer



Frequency of praying

The seven times for prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours are:

- **Matins** (*office of Readings or Vigils, in the early morning hours*)
- **Lauds** (*Morning Prayer*)
- **Terce** (*9:00 a.m., Midmorning Prayer*)
- **Sext** (*12: noon, Midday Prayer*)
- **None** (*3:00 p.m., Midafternoon Prayer*)
- **Vespers** (*Evening Prayer*)
- **Compline** (*Night Prayer*)



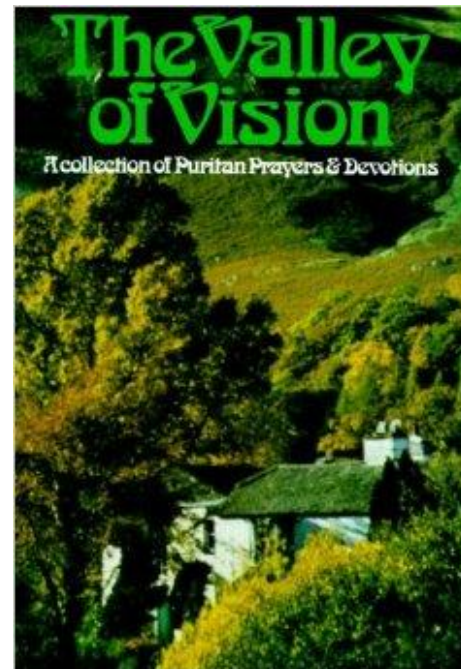
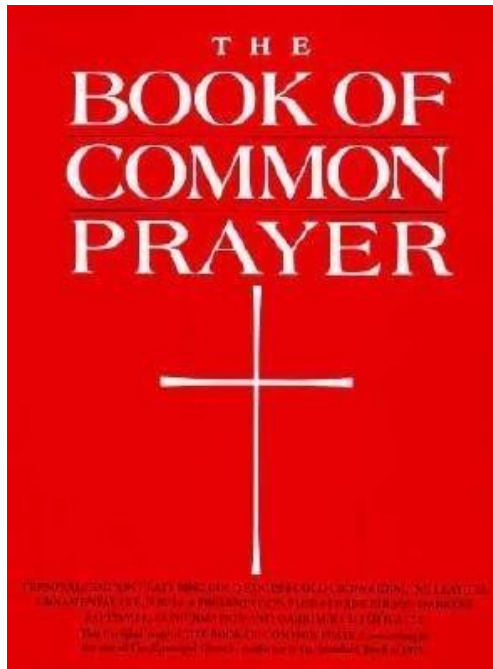
Centering prayer

- Choose a word as the symbol of your intention to consent to God's presence and action within.
- Sit comfortably and with eyes closed, settle briefly, and silently introduce the word as the symbol of your consent to God's presence and action within.
- Breathe slowly to slow down your body and mind.
- When you are aware of thoughts, return ever-so-gently to the word.
- At the end of the prayer period, remain in silence with eyes closed for a couple of minutes.



Using written prayers

Written Prayers



Action (Minister to others)

Chastity

Guidance

- **mentoring/spiritual direction**

Service

Learning (Live in the Word)

Study

Meditation

Writing

Opening to Community (Fellowship)

Celebration

Confession

Fellowship

Accountability

Missional (Witness to the world)

Sacrifice

Simplicity/frugality

- **Sabbath keeping**

Creation care

Developing a soulcare action plan

Session 4

Haggai 2:18–19 (NIV2011)

¹⁸ ‘From this day on, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, give careful thought to the day when the foundation of the LORD’s temple was laid. Give careful thought: ¹⁹ Is there yet any seed left in the barn? Until now, the vine and the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree have not borne fruit. “ ‘From this day on I will bless you.’ ”

Four Messages from Haggai (give careful thought to...)

1. Wrong priorities in building (in spiritual growth)
2. Promises of more of God's presence and glory (knowing God)
3. Rebuilding God's temple brings blessings (spiritual checkup)
4. Authority of the Messiah foreshadowed (soulcare action plan)

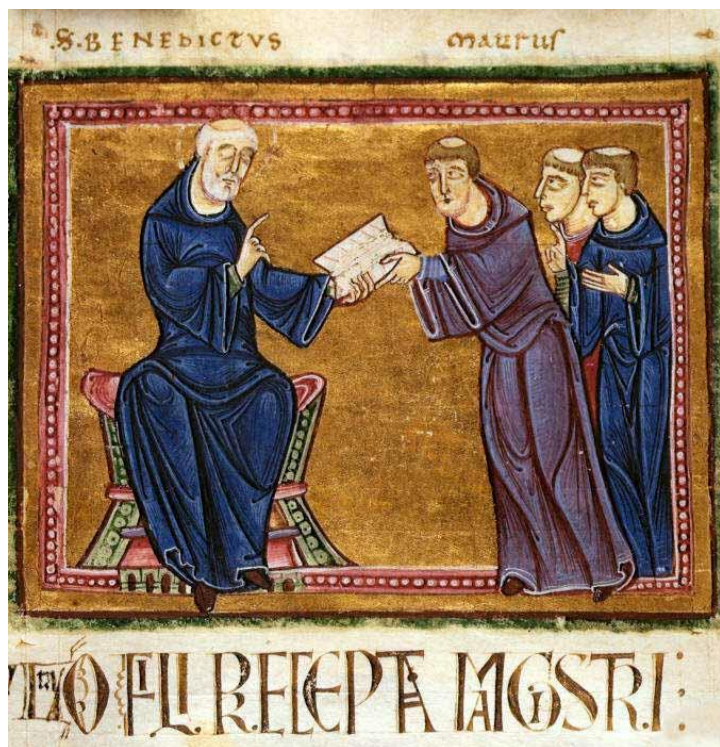
The Rule of Life

A disciplined spiritual life is a life empowered by the Holy Spirit, in Christ, for the Kingdom of God

The disciplined spiritual life consists of

- **Persistent pursuit for the presence of God**
 - knowing ourselves
 - spiritual pathways
- **Intentional formation and Holy Spirit transformation to Christlikeness through**
 - Participating in spiritual formation communities
 - SHALOM spiritual formation through the spiritual disciplines
- **Spiritual formation agenda for kingdom living**
 - Christ-centered living
 - Resurrection life

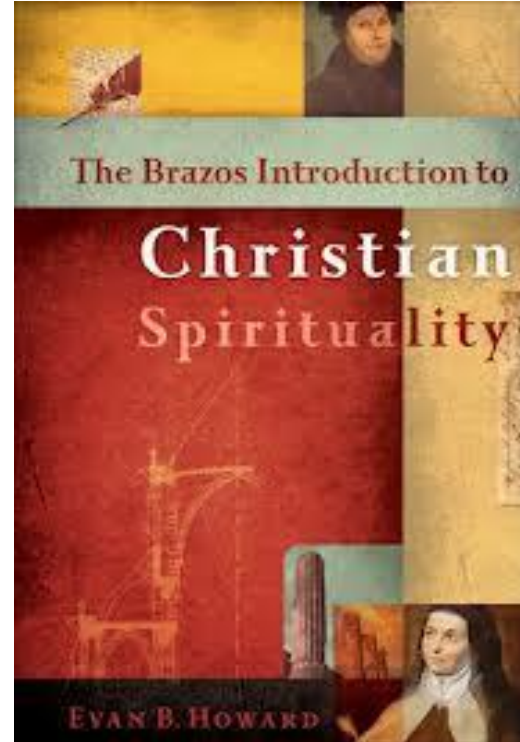
Rules of life



- Rule of St. Benedict
- Puritan divines spoke of "resolutions" or "covenants."
- Methodists spoke of "instituted and prudential means of grace."
- Western monastic communities spoke of "Rules."
- Spiritual formation initiative

Rules of life

- Pachomian Precepts (loose ordering, no formal divisions) (Egypt, @346)
- The Augustinian Praeceptum (North Africa; before 427)
- John Cassian's The Monastic Institutes (France; between 425 and 430 - a synthesis of monastic life as presented by one who visited the boundaries of the Roman Empire investigating monastic life)
- The Benedictine Rule (Monte Cassino, Italy; before 547)
- Rules of The Early Methodists: Society, Classes, Bands (summarized from "A Plain Account of the People Called Methodists" written by John Wesley, 1748; "Rules of the Band Societies" 1738; and "Directions Given to the Band-Societies" 1744)



What is a Spiritual Formation Initiative?

A Spiritual Formation Initiative is a written reflection of one's specific spiritual aims, which one promises to keep, and which are evaluated regularly, both individually and in the presence of a significant other.

- provides a unifying focus for life
- leads one toward spiritual development
- provides a setting of unthreatening accountability
- to take charge of our time

Example of spiritual formation initiative

- **General Statements of Intention** – (desire to love with sincerity, or to seek God . . .)
- **Prayer Life** – specific devotional practices (worship, intercession, meditation), times, places [To meditate on one Psalm daily S M T W Th F S]
- **Study** – reading, memorizing, research, listening, attitudes to take (diligence, openness) [personal study aside from assignment]
- **Family Life** – time spent, activities listed . . . [To spend quality time with my spouse 3 times a week (2 hr. block minimum)]
- **Fellowship or Relationships** – key relationships of focus, attitudes or actions to cultivate, meetings or activities in which to participate, letters to write . . . [Did I show Christian love to others this week]
- **Health** – exercise, diet . . .
- **Financial Life** – record of income and expenses, budgets, lifestyle choices, contributions . . .
- **Community Life** – read newspapers, write letters on social issues, volunteer at organizations...
- **Work** – work smart, balance, reevaluate goals

