

Series: Born to Be a Pilgrim

Lesson 2: The Different Paths

Lesson Objectives:

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to...

- Identify their primary and secondary personal and congregational spiritual type
- Explain the spiritual type wheel as a metaphor for a) the wholeness of the individual's spirituality, b) the wholeness of the church's spirituality, c) the wholeness of Christ's spirituality.
- Interact with each other on issues of congregational fit.

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Board and markers
- ☐ Copies of page A-28 to A-31 (Corrine Ware's *The Spirituality Wheel*)
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Index cards of two different colours
- ☐ I recommend you read Corrine Ware's book *Discover Your Spiritual Type* (Alban Institute) before you teach this lesson. This lesson is based on Dr. Ware's fine work and I think that reading the whole text will help you in teaching and in congregational life. I also thank the Alban Institute for permission to reprint parts of this work for you.

Warmer:

Here is this week's message from the writer. Read it to the students before doing the lead in together.

There are many routes and paths on the Camino de Santiago. There is the most popular route, the French route, which starts in...you guessed it...France! There are routes through the south of Spain, routes through Portugal, even a route from England! There are routes on land, routes by water, routes for walkers, routes for bikers, and even routes for horses! Yes, there are many ways to arrive in Santiago from many directions, but all roads lead pilgrims to the city of Santiago. Today you are going to look at several routes that all lead to the same destination, to a relationship with Jesus. Some routes make more sense to some people and others to other people, but they are all good routes to walk in the spiritual journey. I wonder which route you're on!

Lead In:

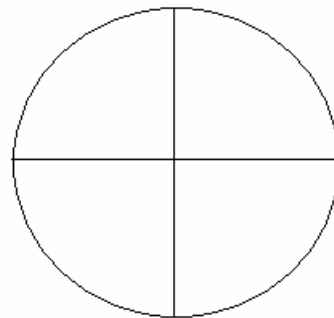
Ask the students if they have ever been in a church or worship service where they felt like they didn't fit in or the worship didn't make sense to them. Solicit some answers and examples and write them on a board. Here are some examples that I have heard from students before: "My church doesn't want us to move around. They want us to be still all the time." "What's with responsive reading? It's so boring and weird." "I don't like going to church very much but I feel close to God when I walk in the woods by myself." Offer these examples if they need help getting started. Also, at this stage, do not respond to the student's reactions; merely record them. There will be time later to guide them and help them process their reactions but at this stage you merely want to record their unprocessed reactions. When you are done, tell the students that you will refer back to this as you go. Leave it up for them to see and refer to.

Transition by saying something like, *Today we are going to explore these feelings and try to understand why you may have felt one way while your neighbour felt a very different way. I am going to give you a test which is very helpful for addressing these concerns.*

Test Taking:

Give every student a copy of Corrine Ware's *The Spirituality Wheel*, pages A-28 to A-31, but don't give them pens yet. They need to concentrate on the instructions, which are different than they are for other tests. Review page A-28 ahead of time to clarify the instructions in your own mind.

Draw a circle with two lines intersecting it, like the one on the right. Tell the students that you are going to do the first question together. Read the first set of statements out loud and answer it for yourself (which you prefer). Put a spoke in the appropriate quadrant on the board for each selection that you make. You can choose as many answers as you wish. Now repeat these instructions to reflect what your congregation prefers. Show the students where to record these answers, on page A-31.



Give students pens and enough time to complete the test (10 to 15 minutes). They should complete the whole test, personal and corporate, including the wheel (final score). They should count up their spokes and decide which is their primary and secondary personal quadrant and their primary congregational quadrant. Note that the language in the test is difficult so make yourself available to answer clarification questions and allow students to ask clarifying questions to each other too.

When this is done, give every student two index cards of different colours. Let's say a pink index card and a blue index card. Tell them to write the number of their personal

quadrant on the pink index card. This represents their primary personal quadrant. Then tell them to write the number of the church's quadrant on the blue card. This represents their primary congregational quadrant. Ask them to hang on to these; they are visual aids.

The Circle:

Add the following words and descriptions to your diagram of the circle, according to the model on page A-31. Tell the students that there will be a mini oral test on the material (see the next section).

- Apophatic (that means more inclined to mystery) versus Kataphatic (that means more concrete). You can use the words Mystery and Concrete instead.
- Speculative (that means more with your thoughts) and Affective (that means more with your emotions). You can use the words Thoughts and Emotions instead.
- Label the four quadrants Head, Heart, Ears, Hands and explain them as follows:
 - Head people (Q1) find it easy to love God with their minds. They like orderly worship with hymns, readings, and other traditional elements. They like theology and studying and the Bible. Many of our churches in the Baptist Convention are primarily Q1 churches.
 - Heart people (Q2) find it easy to love God with their hearts. They like to express the way they feel in worship. They are interested in having a close walk with Jesus. They are interested in the heartfelt testimonies of real human beings. They love music, which frees them to express how they feel.
 - Ears people (Q3) find it easy to love God with their souls, the deep part of their spiritual being that is so hard to express. They thrive in silence,

solitude, mediation, and prayer and can easily have deep and intimate relationships with God.

- Hands people (Q4) find it easy to love God with their strength. They are the doers in the kingdom of God. They work tirelessly in ministries that help the hurting and the poor. They aren't afraid to die for what they believe in or to work hard to achieve it.

Clarifying Questions:

Here is a set of three testing questions to test whether the students have understood the concepts behind the circle. Ask these of the whole group. I have provided sample answers in each case. The point of this is to clarify and correct the students' understanding of the material so it is more important to hear their answers than to jump in with the sample answers.

Question one. Imagine that a group of twelve people from Q1 (Q2, Q3, Q4) got together to start a church. What would it look like? Here are the kinds of answers you are looking for:

- If Q1 people formed a church it would probably have a traditional building and service, with responsive readings, biblical preaching, and an organ (think traditional Protestant church).
- If Q2 people formed a church it would probably be informal and have lots of singing and healing (think typical charismatic church).
- If Q3 people formed a church it would probably involve a lot of silence, thinking, and prayer and they might meet outdoors (think monastery).
- If Q3 people formed a church it might not be a church! It might be World Vision, Habitat for Humanity, Feed the Children, or the Salvation Army or it might be a church that crusades for social justice (think of the original Salvation Army church).

Question two. Why do you think that this test uses a circle as its main image? I think there are three reasons. Can you figure them out? Here are my own three replies:

1. The circle is like one person. People are whole and complex. Each person has elements of all four quadrants.
2. The circle is like the church. The church is a whole in which many people work together despite being different. All quadrants are of equal value and cooperate to do the work of the church.
3. The circle is like Jesus. Jesus was a whole person and a whole spiritual person who perfectly expressed all four types.

Question three. Can you remember an example of Jesus acting in each of the four quadrants? Here are some sample answers although there are many more possibilities:

- Q1, Jesus preached to the crowds and debated with the authorities
- Q2, Jesus wept over Lazarus's death
- Q3, Jesus spent forty days in the desert
- Q4, Jesus restored sight for the blind

Making it Personal:

This lesson concludes by allowing students to continue to reflect on their personal (individual and corporate) experience and feelings. Here you and the students can refer back to the initial answers on the board. The leader can mediate the conversation but it should be a conversation between all members of the group. Be a guide, a listener, and clarify if needed but don't be the primary speaker or actor in the group.

Begin by asking the students to hold up their index cards. Then ask these questions.

- *Who has the same numbers on their two cards? You are people whose primary spiritual type is the same as your church. What does that feel like to you?* Allow students to share their experiences with each other and with you.
- *Who has the same numbers on their two cards? You are people whose primary spiritual type is the same as your church. What does that feel like to you?* Allow students to share their experiences with each other and with you.
- *What choices do people have when they are in a church that is very different than they are?* Answers could be categorized into a) stay in the church and try to fit in, b) stay in the church but supplement with other experiences (read challenging books, go to a worship festival, go on a silent retreat, work in a soup kitchen), c) work to change, educate, or diversify your church, d) leave the church.
- *Which of these choices are the best choices do you think?* A variety of answers is possible.

Closing:

Conclude the lesson by praying for all to have guidance as they seek to follow God as a community of diverse people.