

# Class 101

# **A Heart for God**

What is my Spiritual Style?

Facilitator Script  
Heather Thalheimer

HSA-UWC  
January 16, 2011

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES FOR THIS SESSION

As the facilitator, you will help each participant to:

Understand they are a unique person with a unique personal relationship with God.

Identify their strongest spiritual style.

Group discussion and Pair Share about possible activities to nurture spiritual life through their unique style.

Identify three things they can do to benefit their spiritual life.

## MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT YOU WILL NEED:

LCD Projector

Laptop Computer hooked up to the LCD

Flip Chart

Colored flip chart Markers

Masking Tape for hanging charts

Round tables for participants to sit in groups of 5 – 8, or forward facing rows if round tables are not available.

Pens for participants

Spiritual Goal Card for each participant

One page handout for each participant

(Optional: put together a small pamphlet describing the styles.)

## TRAINING TIME NEEDED:

Two Hours (TBD)

1-2	Welcome
3	<p>Introduction</p> <p>“101 – A Heart For God”</p> <p>Introduce the presentation</p>
4	<p><b>Pair share:</b></p> <p>Describe a time you felt especially close to God.</p> <p>What were the circumstances surrounding that connection?</p> <p>[Give them time to break into pairs, discuss, come up with answers. Tell them in advance that you will have a few present their answers to the class.]</p> <p>Get their input.</p> <p>Heaven has implanted in us a nature such that if we place our ultimate purpose of life in the material world we will eventually come to feel a great void and emptiness in our heart. Something tells us that we should not set the ultimate purpose of life in the material world. That’s when we start our journey to find God.</p>
5	<p>Let’s take a look at where today’s leg of your journey is going to go.</p> <p>First of all: What is “a Heart for God”? Maybe we can get at that by considering, what is a heart when it’s NOT for God? Then a “heart <i>for</i> God” must be the opposite.</p> <p>Ask for a few comments, write the “heart <u>not</u> for God word” – such as “closed,” and then ask people to come up with its opposite, in this case, “open.” That’s the heart <u>for</u> God. Review the list of characteristics of a heart for God.</p>
6	<p>This class, A Heart for God, is designed to assist you in your spiritual growth and relationship with our Heavenly Parent. We will not be able to give you a magic wand (sorry), but we hope you will discover some things about yourself and your</p>

	<p>relationship with God that you can build on.</p> <p>Through this course you will be able to:</p> <p>Understand each person is <b><u>unique</u></b> and has a unique relationship to God</p> <p>Gain <b><u>insight</u></b> into your preferred Spiritual Styles</p> <p>Recognize that there is <b><u>no “right” or “wrong”</u></b> way to relate to God</p> <p>Work up spiritual activities that fit your <b><u>strongest spiritual style</u></b></p> <p>Identify three things you can do to <b><u>improve your spiritual life.</u></b></p> <p>We will talk more about the three things later.</p> <p>The purpose is to encourage you on the journey to become the unique and beautiful person our Heavenly Parent created you to be and find your way of connecting to God.</p>
7	<p>“We can’t simply meet God as others meet Him, because God will only meet us in the ‘authentic place’—that place within ourselves that is unprocessed, candid and sincere.” (James Houston)</p>
8	<p>To help us find that authentic place, I’d like to share a few insights about God’s nature from the Divine Principle.</p> <p>First of all, God has both male and female characteristics. These are reflected in us being men and women, and also in the fact that all individuals have both masculine and feminine traits. So we can relate to God through both the feminine and the masculine in ourselves, in each other and creation. Second, God has an internal nature and external form, just as we have a mind, which is the invisible “me,” and a body, which is the visible “me.” So a full relationship with God is as fully physical as it is spiritual. Your mind and body both are partners of God. In order to perfect your character, your mind and body need to become one with God as their center.</p> <p>Deeper than that, God has intellect, emotion and will, which are reflected in you and in the entire universe. Your intellect seeks the truth, your emotion seeks beauty, and your will seeks goodness. But most deeply, God is love and God loves you as His child. God is your ultimate Parent, who has a vision for your life. But God does not control; God gives you freedom, for love is given and received only when you really want it, when you totally give yourself to it.</p>

	<p>When you freely give and take love with God, in your mind and body, the Divine Principle says that you will experience the Heart of God as if it were your own. You will understand His purposes for you and live fully attuned to them. When you reach this state of perfection, God is totally blissed-out. And when you bliss out with another person in blessed marriage, the whole reason God created the universe is fulfilled.</p> <p>So I hope that gives you some sense of the value of finding your spiritual style.</p>
9	<p><b>BLACK SLIDE</b></p> <p>Here are a few ground rules to help make this a successful seminar for everyone.</p> <p>Speak loud enough for everyone to hear you      Feel free to ask a question at any time. There are no bad questions.      Success for this seminar depends on you.      The more you invest – the more you will get out of it      Be open to learning.</p> <p>We are each on a journey. The beginning point is to discover how God designed you to best connect with the Divine.</p>
10	<p>To do so, we will look at nine different spiritual styles that express some of the most common and significant paths that we as human beings can take on our journey to develop a relationship with God and discover who God created us to be.</p> <p>Everyone relates to God in some way... so here's a picture of everyone.</p>
11	<p>There are groups of people who relates to God similarly.</p> <p>Here's a scientific capture of a group that YOU might be part of.</p> <p>A, B, C, D and so forth represent nine spiritual styles that human beings have displayed over the centuries. You each have numbers beside each letter. Some are higher numbers—that means that you have that style. Some are lower, which means that you don't display that style.</p> <p>And of course you will have clusters of higher and lower numbers. Maybe two or three styles got the same number. That combination makes leads to your...</p>
12	<p><b>UNIQUENESS.</b></p>

	<p>Each of the nine styles . . . shows a different pathway or entry point to creating a relationship. Of course these include generalizations, but they are useful and can give you a deep insight into how you may best relate to our Heavenly Parent. Look at these categories as a means to understand what practices will work for you to stretch and build your spiritual muscles.</p>
13	<p>Through this class, you have the opportunity to learn something about your relationship with God, your God language, and also something about yourself and what you can do to have God become more real in your life.</p>
14	<p>You are one of a kind, and you have a unique SPIRITUAL STYLE that you bring into your relationship with God.</p> <p>By deepening your personal relationship with God, you also...</p> <p><b><u>Center yourself</u></b> – begin to focus your attention internally</p> <p><b><u>Know yourself</u></b> – who you really are, your strengths and weaknesses</p> <p><b><u>Love yourself</u></b> – appreciate deeply who we are created to be. Jesus’ second great commandment is, “Love your neighbor as <b>yourself</b>.” If you don’t love your self, it is difficult to love your neighbors.</p> <p><b><u>Challenge yourself</u></b> – to live connected to God and your conscience, contributing to the good of others and growing according to God’s design and intention for your life.</p> <p><b><u>Become your authentic self</u></b> – you will become the most happy, fulfilled, and satisfied if you can discover who God created you to be and overcome the internal and external obstacles to realizing your Parent’s ideal for you.</p> <p>Are there any questions?</p> <p>Now we are going to hand out the surveys.</p>
15	<p><b>BLACK SLIDE -- Hand out the Surveys</b></p>
16	<p>The first step today on your path of discovery will be to take the Spiritual Styles</p>

	<p>survey.          You each should have received a handout titled, Spiritual Style Survey.          Does everyone have one? Good!          This survey is a tool. This tool can begin to give you insight into your personal way of relating to God, the way that is most natural for you.</p>
17	<p>Let's look at the survey          Read each statement and rate how much it applies to you on a scale of 1 to 5.          1 means it is the least true about you and 5 the most true.          The first answer that comes into your mind is usually the best.          Go with your gut.</p> <p>After you finish the survey, fill in the Survey Tally Chart and total up the results in each column. Then we'll take a break, after which we will discuss each of the spiritual styles and understand what it all means.</p>
18	<p>Are there any questions? Okay, let's take about 10 minutes and enjoy taking the survey.</p> <p>AFTER TEN MINUTES...</p>
19	<p>Explain how to add up the numbers and do the totals at the bottom, beside the letters A, B, C, D and so forth.</p> <p>There is not just one way to develop a relationship with our Heavenly Parent; there are as many ways as there are people. So God is interested in you, as He can unfold a new part of Himself through His relationship with you. He put something in you that is in no one else, and it is up to you to develop that and realize God's dream.</p> <p>This survey will not tell you everything you need to do to develop a deep and meaningful relationship with God, but it can show you a few things about yourself that will aid you along the path.</p> <p>So let's look at what these styles are.</p>
20	<p><b>A</b> represents the "naturalist." Naturalists experience God through nature, the outdoors in the natural world of the sky, mountains and valleys, rivers and oceans, flowers and trees, insects and animals.</p> <p>They would rather take a walk in the park than be at a basketball game or in a</p>

	<p>coffee shop. If you are a naturalist, your spirituality allows you to feel God through the beauty and order of the things He created. You find peace and comfort in God’s creation. It’s the place where your heart opens up to God and you find yourself communicating with God through nature.</p>
21	<p><b>B</b> is the Sensor, the person who feels God in the beauty she or he feels around them. The Sensor experiences their Heavenly Parent through the senses. If you are a Sensor, you may feel God deeply in the incense and candles of an ornate cathedral or quiet grotto, or in a masterpiece painting depicting a scene from the Bible. Sometimes music will touch you to the core of your soul and confront you with the blinding truth that “there is a God.” You relish the beautiful works of art, of architecture, of design that were created by God’s creative sons and daughters.</p>
22	<p><b>C</b> is the Traditionalist, who experiences God in tradition. The Traditionalist finds God in the venerable, generations-old core of beliefs, rituals and symbols. You are attracted to the sacred and the experience of the holy found in ritual. You may be a new believer who is tapping with joy and exaltation into an ancient way that is not your own. In either case, you take comfort in rituals, in the age-old patterns of birth, life, death and new life that reside within God’s eternity.</p>
23	<p><b>D</b> The Ascetic experiences God in simplicity. He or she longs to deepen their relationship with God one-on-one, alone in their Heavenly Parent’s presence, which they access by spiritual disciplines, especially of self-renunciation. If you enjoy and need solitude to connect to God, and tend to appreciate self-discipline, spiritual practices, self-sacrifice and endurance, this could be you. You seek the inner life through meditation, fasting, aloneness, and quiet time. You consider many material things and excesses to be distractions from the highest quest, which is to know God. You also are deeply committed to discovering your own true identity, your original “I.” Monks, hermits and yogis have a natural inclination toward this style.</p>
24	<p><b>E</b> represents the “activist.” The conscience is where the Activist first feels the tug of God. She or he feels close to their Heavenly Parent when they are confronting evil and injustice. They are moved by a sense of God’s aching heart over the suffering of the people of this world, the abuse of power and oppression of the poor. If you are an Activist, you feel God when your conscience is burning and calling you to a struggle for a cause. You may be shy, but God compels you to express your passionate beliefs about how to rectify wrongs.</p>



25	<p><b>F</b> is the Caregiver, who experiences God when helping those in need. It is in the act of caring that you experience God's heart the most and come to know God's love and feel God's compassion heart. If you are a Caregiver, your compassionate heart bursts with concern and energy to heal, uplift and encourage in those in need, representing God's parental love. When you are not with them, you will be praying for their healing and thinking about what you can do for them. Teachers, doctors, nurses, counselors, and all parents fit into this style as they care for students, the infirm and those in need of guidance and nurture. Those with the Compassionate Heart style are good listeners, with sensitivity to others' needs before their own.</p>
26	<p><b>G</b> is the Enthusiast, who experiences God in expressive and active devotion. If you are an Enthusiast, you like to worship God with bodily enthusiasm. When worship music touches your soul, you naturally and unselfconsciously express it physically and tears well up in your eyes. You probably love to hang out with others who find their Heavenly Parent in gatherings of celebration, song, preaching and sharing. You like to sing out to God and the larger the crowd, the more you feel God's presence and power.</p>
27	<p><b>H</b> is the Contemplative. You experience God with spiritual antennae that discern the eternity of God. You are a person of reflection and deep consideration in you love of our Heavenly Parent. As you adore the glory of the Creator, you will sometimes write moving poetry, passionate literature, or heartfelt songs or produce works of art. If you are a Contemplative, you thrive in the mystical relationship with God and express your communion with the Creator by fashioning your thoughts into form, as objects of truth revealing God. It could be art or music. Contemplatives often become writers of scripture or spiritual literature. This is different from an ascetic, who needs solitude and who is more focused on practicing the spiritual disciplines of their faith. The Contemplative forms new expressions of faith through processing their insights and using their creativity to express them.</p>
28	<p><b>I</b> is the Intellectual, who experiences God when he or she gains knowledge and understanding. The Intellectual discovers the spirit of God in theology, science and history. If you are an Intellectual, you tend to be intellectual and value research and analysis in your search for our Heavenly Parent. You appreciate</p>

	<p>proofs, thoroughness, criticism and clarifications. You probably have some concern about believers having a reasonable and sensible understanding of God's reality. Your spirit thrives on the deep and rich details of what scripture, theology, history and science have to say about God.</p>
29	<p><b>BLACK SLIDE</b></p> <p>We have given a brief overview of nine basic paths that people take in finding, creating and growing their relationship with God. By identifying one or several paths toward which you gravitate, you can begin to understand better the unique path that you personally have to explore and discover our Heavenly Parents' love for you.</p> <p>Your style is not something you create, but rather you discover it; it is something God has given to you and it is up to you to discover it and develop it.</p> <p>Then your love, your happiness, and your satisfaction in life will also increase.</p>
30	<p>Each of you took the survey. It can point you in a direction to begin finding your style and path to your Heavenly Parent.</p> <p>To give you a way to work with this, let's break into small groups (6-8 people), and share with each other about <b>what our strongest styles are</b> and then help each other identify some practices to <b>nurture ourselves spiritually</b> specific to each person's style.</p> <p>(After 15 minutes or so the presenter can invite a representative from each group to share their ideas. The recorder can group the ideas under the spiritual style categories. The presenter can add to the list following the final report out to fill in on some practices that can support people as they develop their relationship with God. Practices might include taking time in nature, meditating, reading inspirational books/quotes etc.)</p> <p>(Record findings on a flip chart and post on the wall.)</p> <p>(Have a whole group discussion on challenges to taking personal time with God and techniques for responding to those challenges.)</p>
31	<p>These are all great ideas but many times we fail to take this kind of initiative even though it's something that we want to do!</p> <p>We have to <b>overcome the inertia</b> that prevents us from taking <b>personal time with God</b> in prayer. You might tell yourself the devil and my negative mind will</p>

	<p>always exaggerate how tired I am. Desire alone is not enough. You need to make a decision and back it up with determination and discipline.</p> <p>To combat this:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Go to bed on time. Most people like to stay up late for no real reason.</li> <li>2. Get up immediately when you planned to. Don't think about it; just get up.</li> <li>3. Be aware of <i>quiet time robbers</i>—most happen the night before, especially late night TV.</li> <li>4. Walk during your prayer time.</li> <li>5. You can write something down if necessary during the prayer. Stay in physical shape.</li> </ol> <p>The old fashioned word for all of this is, self-discipline.</p>
32	<p>If you mess up and a prayer or study time you intended to do slips by, don't beat yourself up. Compare it to missing a meal. You would never say, "Oh no, I missed a meal. I'm never going to eat again."</p> <p>But human psychology is weird... if we really desire God, we will come back to His table. We'll have a second helping next time!</p>
33	<p>To Wrap Up we will do a final exercise called "Three Things." We are going to take about ten minutes and the goal is to write down:</p> <p>"What are three things that would bring the greatest benefit to my spiritual life, if done consistently, on a daily or weekly basis?"</p> <p>I know some of you could write down many things you could do, but narrow it down to three things that you think would be the best and most realistic for you to start today. Don't think of something that is impossible to do; be realistic.</p>
34	<p>With each of the three things, include a time period for how long you will take, everyday and also how many days (or weeks, if it's once a week).</p> <p>And set up an accountability partner, someone with whom you can talk about your experiences with it, and how it's going. It should be someone your trust and whom you know cares about you. It could be an older sibling, a mature friend, or a pastor or small group leader.</p> <p>And remember:</p> <p>Character is developed through habit, repetition, a customary practice. All of</p>

	<p>what we do in life is habits. It’s easier to form good habits than get rid of bad ones, and the goal is to replace bad habits with good ones. We need to commit to the habits necessary for spiritual maturity.</p> <p>We can look at habits as personal traditions. Think about your personal traditions. Do you have a tradition that connects you with the divine, that which is holy and sacred to you?</p> <p>What are vices? Bad habits. End the lifestyle of bad habits by replacing it with a lifestyle of good habits. Create good traditions and the bad ones will fade away.</p> <p>It has to be voluntary. It cannot be forced <i>on</i> you but it needs to be powered <i>in</i> you.</p>
35	<p>And there is a spirituality of time periods. Growth takes time, so time represents growth. Time represents process. Time represents progress. We act and then we reflect on that action—that is a circular process in time. Traditions are actions repeated in time. The best of them become rituals—self-reinforcing acts of love that connect us to God.</p> <p>But tradition can be a problem when we fail to recognize the end of the time period. You might be wallowing in a tradition out of laziness, or because you gain a small benefit from it. Time periods come to an end, and when one is over, you have to be ready to use what you accomplished as a foundation for change. Every end of a time period is the beginning of a new one.</p> <p>In your journey with God, what is ending right now? What is beginning?</p>
36	<p>Our Senior Pastor has developed a set of purposes, Inspire, Empower, Connect, and Contribute, that naturally lead to spiritual growth because they lead us to live a life that is balanced and virtuous—a life worth living.</p> <p>As we engage in Inspire, Empower, Connect, and Contribute, we grow spiritually because we produce positive vitality elements that help God’s love and truth “land” in our heart. We get closer to God because we are acting in ways that promote our connection to God. This also is also affected by our spiritual style—the love language with which we converse with God. It is simple, but quite profound.</p> <p>So, at the bottom of the card, indicate which of the Lovin’ Life Spiritual Habits you think it fits into: Inspire, Empower, Connect, or Contribute.</p> <p>If your spiritual habit or discipline is internal, taking you into yourself or into your inner world (such as prayer), then it would fit with <b>Inspire</b>.</p>

	<p>If your spiritual habit or discipline has to do with ideas and knowledge (such as reading the Principle or scripture daily), then it would fit with <b><u>Empower</u></b>.</p> <p>If your spiritual habit or discipline brings you into a relationship with others (sharing weekly with a friend of faith about your experiences and insights), then it would fit with <b><u>Connect</u></b>.</p> <p>If your spiritual habit or discipline leads you to act for change (such as volunteering), then it would fit with <b><u>Contribute</u></b>.</p>
37	<p>And the culminating purpose of these spiritual disciplines, based on our spiritual styles, is that we <b><u>Inherit</u></b> the true love of God.</p> <p>Take this time to meditate, pray, think, analyze or whatever you like to do to pull your thoughts together. Share your three things with a friend or in your small group to help you be accountable.</p>
38	<p>If you remember from the beginning of this class we had some learning objectives. So let's see how we did.</p> <p>How many of you understand you are a unique person with a unique personal relationship with God. "All right – good job"</p> <p>Who can identify their strongest spiritual style?</p> <p>Who found some possible activities to nurture your spiritual life through your unique style?</p> <p>Who completed the Three Things they can do to benefit their spiritual life and strive for spiritual maturity?</p> <p>Fantastic – you are a great class!!!</p>
39	<p>Let's close in prayer (Choose one of the young adults to offer prayer)</p>

Hand out evaluation forms for the seminar