

Ariana Waters

Augustine said, “Grant, Lord, that I may know myself that I may know thee.” This reflection on Spiritual gifts, Enneagram, and Emotionally Healthy Spirituality is a way of knowing God deeper as I know myself deeper. I tend to ignore why I do what I do and what motivates me. Most likely because I am afraid to see what is below the surface. I liked starting with the spiritual gifts assessment because it is rooted in gifts not problems. It is easier for me to start with seeing what I do have strength in first. For my Kodachrome assessment, my three highest gifts were hospitality, music, and encouragement. The meaning to me is that I use my music to create hospitable environments that encourage others to follow Christ. It was helpful because I think I can feel shame around my hospitality gifting because it’s not a common gifting for a male pastor which has been most of my leadership influences. As a young woman and pastor, I have had to really think through “How do I not hide my femininity?” and “Why do I think female is bad?”. Recently on my church retreat we discussed purpose, and my two-word purpose statement is “nurturing value”. I was initially upset because of the word nurture. It feels weak. But I was challenged to think of the ways God nurtures me.

I also valued the church growth spiritual gifts test. For that assessment, I scored the highest in shepherding, evangelism, and prophecy. The shepherding description mentioned “Jack of all and master of ONE” as it relates to the speaking gifts of evangelist, prophet, teacher, and exhorter (Church Growth, 4). It also mentioned being “expressive, composed, and sensitive” (Church Growth, 4). This gift of shepherding can lead to workaholicism as well as a lack of care for yourself. I wrote about that in my goal setting paper for my first spiritual formation class. I tend to overlook my needs for the people around me. This can lead to bitterness and resentment because my needs go unmet while I care for others. A growth edge for me is to learn to care for

myself with the same tenacity I would care for others. I felt the paragraph on knowing when to say no hit the nail on the head for my current leadership needs. It will do me well to learn how to hold people accountable and delegate. The prophet gifting description had one particular line that I want to marinate on for the next few weeks it said, “you tend to easily spot what is wrong and have to look to find something right” (Church Growth, 7).

My enneagram is the 7 with a wing 8. My tri-type for the enneagram is 7, 4, 8.

The 7 on the enneagram is the enthusiast. According to the 9 types website, they commonly struggle with the fear of being deprived which leads to numbingly seeking sensations in order to feel happy but that they never reach the feeling of content from the adventures they seek which leaves them feeling empty. I can see how in my first year in NYC during 2020 I would seek full days of adventure to numb the pain of missing home. I would come home so exhausted and not even realize the joy of the day. A spiritual practice that will help me grow as a 7 is to savor. Savoring is a gift from God because I can reflect on experiences instead of running to try something new and filling up the calendar from dawn to dusk. As I reflected with the Lord I can see how my propensity to overeat and over indulge in any good thing is out of a fear of not having access to it in the future. I think that practicing intentional fasting and prayer around trusting God as the daily bread will help me to grow as a ministry leader. The 7 is tempted to make their stomach and desires their god. It will be important for me to notice when I am numbing with excess. Slowing down to savor is a true spiritual discipline for the 7 one way to do this is my stopping myself from jumping into a new project and taking time to experience what I have already done. I will need to spend more time thinking about the 4 and 8 as I continue in my self-awareness journey.

The next assessment was the book Emotionally Healthy Spirituality. The first section to address was chapter 2 with the list of ten primary symptoms of emotionally unhealthy spirituality. The four most obvious emotionally unhealthy tendencies for me are ignoring anger, sadness, and fear; dying to the wrong things, doing for God instead of being with God, and living without limits. I began to address my ignoring these strong emotions in counseling last August. I have been meeting weekly with a counselor for seven months now. I began with a grief journal. I didn't realize how much I was ignoring. It manifested as body pain in my right side of my body. The Lord continues to ask me to slow down and be with Him. I think I don't slow down because I don't feel worthy of His attention, or I am afraid He would be angry at me for not doing enough. I know these are both lies but I don't know that in my depths yet. The Beaver System family model in Chapter 5 helped me to see that I am from a family between level 3 and level 4. This means that my family had rigid ways of thinking, a big threat of rejection, and a subtle level of manipulation. I have been unpacking this with my counselor. This helps me to grow as a ministry leader because I can begin to understand the places where I have learned dangerous and unhelpful behaviors from my family of origin. I can see where my rigid ways of thinking can be detrimental.

As I read Chapter 6, I identified the "wall" I hit was somewhere between getting married in 2019 and moving to NYC for a church plant from 2020-2022. I began to experience deep loss from 2019-2022, I left my home, then my hometown, then my singleness, then my state, then my culture, and then my job and friend groups. The layers of loss were immense. In Fall of 2021, I hit a dangerous place. I called my boss in my campus ministry job. I told him, "I don't even know what I believe anymore." He told me to take two weeks off to rest and see if God would reveal himself to me. It wasn't right away but in that radically dark place I began to push through

the wall. I am now in the journey inward stage mentioned in the stages of discipleship. It's the reason I am taking this class.

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