

# What's Your Connection?

September 11, 2005  
Special Speaker: Josh Kelley

Connecting with God has been a long-standing struggle for me. By “connecting” I mean something different than growing closer to Him and becoming a better model of Jesus.

- For that, the Bible teaches us to read the Bible, pray, fellowship, worship, and obey Him.

Connection goes from growing to enjoying. It means to enjoy my relationship with God and be mindful of His presence.

- It's like my wife says, “We need to connect.”

Growing up in Pentecostal churches, I've always thought that the purpose of worship was to connect with God. The problem for me is that during worship, I get distracted – by everything.

- More than once, I've spent more time critiquing the song that connecting with God.

All the while, I'd feel guilty, unspiritual. But a book I read showed me that I was making a fundamental mistake.

**Q:** Can you see my mistake?

**A:** I expected every Christian to connect with God the same way.

God delights in making us different and He values the unique connection we each have with Him. We have our own personality and background, which drive how we best connect with God.

I am going to give you the four primary ways we can connect with God, along with a “personal evaluation” to help you discover your unique way of connecting with God.

- If, like me, you've undervalued your primary connection style, learning it may forever change your time with God.

## 1) THE FEELING CONNECTION

Some believers' primary connection with God comes from feeling near Him, having an emotional connection.



**Q:** Can you guess their favorite tool for worship?

**A:** Their heart.

- They feel closest to God when they are experiencing enthusiastic or moving worship.

**PERSONAL EVALUATION** (Scale of 1-5, 1 “not at all” and 5 “completely”):

Q: I feel closest to God when worshipping.

Q: In-depth Bible study drains me...now be honest!

Q: I would enjoy attending a worship conference – so long as we spent more time worshipping than talking about worshipping!

Q: Words like celebration, passion, and spirit-filled appeal to me.

- If this is your main connection, this will resonate with you:

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. *Psalm 100:1-2 NIV*

## 2) THE BEING CONNECTION

- “Being” what? If you have to ask, this probably isn’t you. Just being with God.

Some believers’ primary connection with God comes from waiting in His presence.



Q: Can you guess their favorite tool for worship?

A: Time alone with God.

- They feel closest to God when they’re quiet and still before Him.

**PERSONAL EVALUATION** (Scale of 1-5, 1 “not at all” and 5 “completely”):

Q: I feel closest to God in times of silence, simply enjoying His presence.

Q: A full schedule drains me.

Q: I would enjoy attending a retreat or simply sitting in the great outdoors, just quietly being with God.

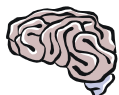
Q: Words like *meditation*, *intimacy*, and *reflection* appeal to me.

- If this is your primary connection, you’ll relate to this:

Be still, and know that I am God... *Psalm 46:10 NIV*

## 3) THE THINKING CONNECTION

Some believers’ primary connection with God comes from thinking about Him.



Q: Can you guess their favorite tool for worship?

A: Their mind.

- They feel closest to God when they are exploring new insights into His character.

**PERSONAL EVALUATION** (Scale of 1-5, 1 “not at all” and 5 “completely”):

**Q:** I feel closest to God when I learn something new about Him.

**Q:** Lack of intellectual stimulation drains me; I need something to “chew on.”

**Q:** I would enjoy a class on apologetics or an in-depth Bible study.

**Q:** Words like *examine*, *truth*, and *debate* appeal to me.

- If this is your primary connection, this verse excite you:

It is the glory of God to conceal a matter; to search out a matter is the glory of kings.  
*Proverbs 25:2 NIV*

#### 4) THE DOING CONNECTION

Some believers’ primary connection with God comes from doing things for Him.



**Q:** Can you guess their favorite tool for worship?

**A:** Their hands.

- They feel closest to God when they are serving others or advancing the kingdom of God.

**PERSONAL EVALUATION** (Scale of 1-5, 1 “not at all” and 5 “completely”):

**Q:** I feel closest to God when I am busy serving others.

**Q:** Inactivity or solitude drains me.

**Q:** I would enjoy volunteering for various service projects, e.g. building a church in Mexico or working at the Friendship House.

**Q:** Words like *action*, *compassion*, and *service* appeal to me.

- If this is your primary connection, this motivates you:

Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ...The King will reply, "I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me."  
*Matthew 25:37, 40 NIV*

Now look at your scores and you’ll have a good idea of your primary way(s) of connecting with God.

- These connections also help explain the difference between denominations.

## ENJOY AND EXPLORE

There are two main points to this message:

- 1) Enjoy your connection style.

Learn to connect to God as He designed you. It is okay if it isn't the same as everyone else.

- 2) Explore other connection styles.

There is an inherent danger in teaching about the different ways of connecting with God.

**Q:** Can you see what it is?

"The most important [commandment]," answered Jesus, "is this: ... Love the Lord your God with all your **HEART** and with all your **SOUL** and with all your **MIND** and with all your **STRENGTH**." *Mark 12:29-30 NIV*

We must relate to God with our whole being, not just the part that suites us best. We can't ignore any area because it's not our style.

- I'm not a "car guy," and that's okay, but it doesn't excuse me from checking my oil.

Even though you may be naturally drawn to one or two of these connections, any of them can be unhealthy, even dangerous, if not balanced by the others. They have their strengths and weaknesses.

The strength of the "feeling connection" is **PASSION**, enthusiasm about God and a genuine love for Him. Its weakness is the instability of emotions and is balanced by "thinking."

The strength of the "thinking connection" is **FOUNDATION**, a love of truth that restrains falsehood. Its weakness is being emotionless, more cerebral than heart. It's balanced by "feeling."

The strength of the "being connection" is **DEVOTION**, a focus to knowing God. Its weakness is detachment from the world we are called to save and is balanced by "doing."

The strength of the "doing connection" is **COMPASSION**, being the hand of God to the world. Its weakness is being so busy that there is no time left for God and is balanced by "being."

## PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

How do you put this into practice? Find new ways to connect with God according to your connection style. See how enjoyable it can be to worship God the way He designed you to.

- If you're like me, it may relieve some guilt, too!

And at the same time, learn to value and maybe even explore other connections. You'll be richer for it!