

Discover Your Soul's  
Path to God

# SACRED PATHWAYS

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STUDY GUIDE

## A Study Guide for Sacred Pathways

"This study has been prepared by Adalee Lewis and is offered for your benefit. It has not been written by Gary Thomas, nor have the suggested books been compiled by him. It is a labor of love offered by a reader to those groups who might appreciate a headstart in their own effort to study Sacred Pathways in a group format."

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## Chapter Five

**ACTIVIST**

## Loving God Through Confrontation

**DESCRIPTION**

“Activists serve a God of justice, ...their favorite Scripture is often the account of Jesus cleansing the temple. They define worship as standing against evil and calling sinners to repentance.

Activists may adopt either social or evangelistic causes, but they find their home in the rough-and-tumble world of confrontation. They are energized more by interaction with others, even in conflict, than by being alone or in small groups.” (26)

“Activists...are spiritually nourished through the battle.” (121)

“The true activist lives for God and for His love alone.” (124)

**CAUTIONS**

Activists tend to see the world and its issues in ‘black and white’

“...There is only one kind of person who can fight the Lord’s battles in anywhere near a proper way, and that is the person who by nature is unbelligerant; at least it looks that way. The world must observe that, when we must differ with each other as true Christians, we do it not because we love the smell of the bullfight, but because we must for Christ’s sake.” (121)

“The church has frequently had an uneasy relationship with activists and prophets. We fondly remember those who have died, but often loathe those who are still living.” (132)

The ‘shadow-side’ to this temperament shows itself in acerbic tactlessness, running roughshod over others, not waiting for God or seeking discernment.

**WELL KNOWN ACTIVISTS**

Franky Schaeffer, Elizabeth Fry, Lord Shaftesbury, William Wilberforce, John Wesley, Tim and Beverly LaHaye, Charles Colson, Elijah, Peter, Habakkuk; Josh McDowell; Rush Limbaugh; James Dobson; Martin Luther King Jr.; Franklin Graham

**SCRIPTURES TO PONDER**

Psa. 7; 68; 10; Pr. 24:11-12; Ezek. 33:1-20;

**SONGS TO ENHANCE WORSHIP**

Be Thou My Vision  
 Blow, Oh Cleansing Wind  
 Come To Rest  
 Declare His Glory  
 Eternal Father, Whose Strong Arm  
 Faithful Men  
 Faithful One  
 Give Me an Undivided Heart  
 He Who Began a Good Work in You  
 If You But Trust in God to Guide You  
 It's Not By Might  
 My Life is in You, Lord  
 O, Breath of God  
 Take My Life  
 Trust His Heart  
 We Are An Offering  
 We Choose the Fear of the Lord

**SUGGESTIONS**

1. Consider God's faithfulness in the light of so much undone in the world. Consider His great patience. He is working even when we see no evidence of it. Don't give up.
2. Ponder John 4:34
3. Seek to develop tact, gentleness, persuasiveness, true love for others. Seek a mentor.
4. Invest energy in: producing and transmitting literature; social reform; "marches"; prayer walks; food pantries; crisis pregnancy center. Be creative.
5. Thoroughly research any activity before joining it. Ask God for wisdom first. Seek counsel, confirmation and accountability.
6. Be careful that intervention doesn't become accusation. Understand the difference between, "That's wrong!" and "I don't like that."
7. Remember that everything you say must be truth. But you don't have to say it just because it is true.
8. Consider carefully the outcomes you desire from your efforts.
9. Develop your ability for self-examination and contemplation of God.

## REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What issues make God angry?
  
2. Think of the last social or Christian cause you were involved in. Did it draw you closer to God? In what ways? Was there anything about it that pulled you or others away from God? Explain.
  
3. How do your activities fit into your worship of God?
  
4. How do you feel when you are working for a cause and other Christians don't seem interested in it, or, even when they are interested, don't do anything to help? Are you able to resolve these feelings? How do you do this? What other things might you do?
  
5. Is your current church involvement one in which you can use your activism? What would you like to see different? What would you like to try?
  
6. How does your desire to motivate and change affect your relationships with other people? Are there changes you would like to see in your interpersonal interactions, you're your approachability? What might these look like?

## RESOURCES

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