

## NINE SPIRITUAL PATHS—SERMON

- There are nine paths to sacred space, to an expanded view of the world
- Enneagram: *Ennea* = Greek for nine, *gram* = figure or graphic, so “figure of nine”
- A system that provides a roadmap to personal and spiritual development.
- Describes nine habits of attention = each looks at things a certain way
- The attention is narrow, responses are habitual = we’re captives of what we think we know
  - We think, feel, interpret, act to make sense of the world as we know it
  - In so doing we reinforce and sustain a worldview
- One worldview will be particularly central to each of you. Use it as a guideline to:
  - break free of the traps of normalcy
  - live yourself into new ways of thinking
- A more extensive handout will be available afterwards
- Now, to recognize your own worldview:
  - listen to understand
  - open your heart
  - feel it in your bones
    - which one drives your behavior?
    - keeps your focus narrow?
- Once you know your worldview, follow your path:
  - observe your habits of attention, *without judgment*;
  - stop, do something different;
  - observe how your worldview spontaneously expands

## ONES

- Highly principled, honest, idealistic, standards of excellence.
- Worldview: **I must correct what is wrong.**
- Typical One comments: “I shouldn’t be angry...” “I’ve never graded on the curve.”
  - overly focused on perfectionism

- when feels anger's justified—moral tirade.
- Typical feedback about Ones: “He means well, but if someone doesn't measure up to his standards he'll tell them, ‘That's trash!’”
- The One's path—*patience*: respond where personal intervention is required and acquiesce when letting go is appropriate.
- Self-aware Ones = Develop nuance and options.

### **TWOS:**

- Gift of making good things happen for people.
- Worldview: **I must take care of others' needs.**
- Too much attention to others' needs,
  - Feel you're owed because of all you've given
  - Giving to get
  - Create own burdens by never saying “No”
- Others' dependence can become a drag.
- Typical Two comment: “I feel I cut off pieces of myself and feed them to people.”
- Typical feedback about Twos: “Things fall between the cracks because she's trying to be everything to everyone.”
- The Two's path—*humility*: accept self, acknowledge own needs and realistic limitations.
- Self-aware Twos = Loving, giving without strings.

### **THREES:**

- *Persona* = ancient drama masks; Jung = roles we play
- Type Three—fine models, enjoy motivating others
- Worldview: **I must achieve and get results.**
- Typical Three = workaholic
  - dedicated to efficiency and results, no matter what the human cost.
  - “He's hung up on saying ‘I’ all the time.”
  - Competitive, status seeking, avoid failure.

- Drive for approval from others.
- The Three's path—*truthfulness*: express self without covering, exaggerating, or marketing an image or role.
- Self-aware Threes = Inner-directed, communal.

#### **FOURS:**

- Innovative, compassionate, deeply in touch with own emotions.
- Worldview: **I must regret what is missing in my life.**
- Nicholas Cage:
  - “I was the outsider, the weirdo, the kid who wasn't picked to go on the team.”
  - “Jim Morrison before his death had never done a song that conveyed pure happiness.”
  - “It was a cautionary warning, to not just stay on the dark side and be Angst Man.”
- Typical comment from a Four = “I had a club in a tree house, the Feelings Club, where you were allowed to cry and not be called on it.”
- The Four's path—*equanimity*: act on principles without exaggeration or dramatization.
- Self-aware Fours = Effective in external world.

#### **FIVES:**

- Often intelligent, delve into things in depth, test truth of assumptions.
- Worldview: **I must understand everything.**
- Stephen Hawking, *A Brief History of Time*.
  - Had Lou Gehrig's disease since early twenties, told “only a few years to live.”
  - He can move one finger, using computer technology has written book after book.
  - In a documentary his mother said “No one should suffer this debilitating disease, but if it had to be anyone it might as well be my son, because he has such a beautiful mind and lives there anyway.”
- Type Five: Lecture, convey disdain for emotions, restriction of needs, hoarding.
- The Five's path = *nonattachment*. engage with others for mutual enrichment without withholding.

- Self-aware Fives = Integrate thinking and action, become generous.

#### **SIXES:**

- Gifts = loyalty and commitment to the family, work team, community; great problem solvers, finely tuned antennae for what can go wrong.
- Worldview: **I must beware of potential problems/threats.**
- There's a drive to be part of the group:
  - rely too much on external allies, structures, or beliefs, doubt selves,
  - feel powerless, doubt those in power.
- Fear of fear, whistling in the dark.
  - Woody Allen: "It's not that I'm afraid to die. I just don't want to be there when it happens."
- Doubts can lead to self-opposition, "I'll do this! No! I'll do that!"
- The Six's path—*courage*: responsibility for own beliefs, decisions.
- Self-aware Sixes = Trust self and others; take action.

#### **SEVENS:**

- Type Seven—charming, lively, playful, curious, buoyant, and optimistic; friend lost job at 65, "depressed for about 20 minutes." Then started listing benefits.
- Worldview: **I must be positive, upbeat, look to the future.**
- Life holds both pain and pleasure, and we learn from both; determined cheerfulness disallows pain.
- Typical Seven glossed over his poverty-stricken childhood:
  - Was present to teammate's grief when her favorite sister died of leukemia.
  - Seven wrenched with tears, choked voice, "Such pain... such pain;" touching own pain so casually denied.
- Path—*renunciation* or *temperance*: sense of proportion—grieving = organic process that won't unfold if rushed too much; more fully with joy if also present to pain.
- Self-aware Sevens = Realistically enthusiastic, visionary.

## EIGHTS

- Charismatic, responsible, fiercely protective, strong.
- Worldview: **I must be in control.**
- Behind tough exterior is heart of internal child left behind; they protect soft heart by never showing vulnerability.
- Typical Eight: “My years as a mercenary ended when I was walking down a street with a woman and a kid reached out and pushed her. He was with a bunch of kids just goofing off, but without thinking, Whop! I hit him hard in the face. The woman with me didn’t realize what had happened because we kept on walking, but I know I left that kid with some broken bones. I don’t think I killed him. But that was the end of that life for me. I realized that something in me was being damaged.”
- The Eight’s path—*innocence*: to approach life with more child-like trust, without chip on shoulder.
- Self-aware Eights = Compassionate and just.

## NINES:

- Type Nine—safe harbor, easy to get along with, harmonious, modest, sometimes maddening.
- Worldview: **I must respond to others’ ideas and expectations.**
- A typical Nine liked the film *The Little Buddha* (about reincarnation of revered Tibetan teacher):
  - The acting was reserved, not much action or character development; why the appeal to her?
  - Her attraction to being buddha-like.
- Committed to keeping the peace, avoiding conflict → might nod head yes, then disappear, or become stubborn or passive-aggressive. The paradox = conflict is the only path to real relationship. Who are you dealing with if Nines:
  - agree with everything you say?
  - distract self from own agenda?
  - don’t set boundaries about what’s important to them?
- “Self-forgetting type” – difficulty knowing what they want, look to others for structure, discover what they *don’t* want.

- The Nine's path—*energy* or *active engagement*: actualize self by fully experiencing own wishes and emotions, acting upon own purpose without distraction.
- Self-aware Nines = Focused, initiating, inclusive.

#### **How do we open ourselves to sacred space?**

- Stand in the middle, accept new awareness, be neutral.
- Don't try to overcome or avoid.
- Practice *mindfulness* = **awareness, intention, readiness**:
  - *awareness* of habits of attention;
  - *intention* to invite unknown, disowned parts to come forth;
  - *readiness* to take specific actions that shift focus of attention:
    - stay present (vs. avoid, deny, project blame),
    - stop the habitual response,
    - do something different.