

Caregivers

Offering God's compassion to those the hurting or struggling
Loving God by loving others

I feel closest to God when...

I'm caring for someone who is hurting.

To be spiritually renewed I need to...

Feel his compassion flow through me to another

It's especially helpful for me to connect with God through...

Supporting a friend who is going through a hard time.

I benefit especially from speakers and authors who help me to...

Become more effective in caring for people who are struggling.

Solitude

Asceticism and Contemplative Prayer



...

Community

Caregiving and Social Justice

Seeing Caregivers in the Bible

Can you think of Bible characters or incidences which show this pathway.

Can you think of Christians you admire who fit this pathway?

About this Pathway

- 1. Obedience & Service** - It is not a chore but a form of worship
- 2. We care for others because God cares for us** - demonstrating God's love through action
- 3. See Christ in others, serve Christ in others** -

Acts of the Caregivers

Caring for others, volunteering with life-line, helping someone with their IT, counselling, lending money, fixing someone's car,

The Temptations of Caregivers – read & encourage discussion

1. Judging others as not being loving enough, doing enough
2. Self-serving – feeling validated by our actions & sacrifices
3. Holding Narrow Definitions – defining care in such a way as to exclude long-term action that creates long-term change
4. Neglecting those closest to us. Our families for instance 1 Tim 5:8

Consider – perhaps in discussion groups

1. Which aspects of the caregivers path to connecting with God seem most helpful or intriguing to you? Which aspects seem least interesting?
2. Jesus, the consummate caregiver, was unique among religious leaders in his call to care for the poor and needy. In his first sermon as he launches his public ministry, Jesus quotes a messianic prophecy from Isaiah. Read Luke 4:16-21. How closely does Jesus' ministry focus reflect the church's emphasis today? How could adopting Jesus' mind—set help us build closer lives of intimacy with our heavenly Father?
3. Is there any difference between loving others as an act of obedience, and loving others as an act of worship toward God?
4. Read Matthew 25:31-46. These verses call us to see Jesus in the people around us, and to treat them with the care and concern we would feel if Jesus were in that needy place. How would your interactions with the needs around you change if you truly embraced this mind-set/heart-set?
5. Have you ever met a true caregiver—someone who seems dedicated to loving God by loving others? What impressed you about this person?
6. How can you enlarge the view that restricts worship to singing, broadening it to include art: you might do, such as giving care? Why do you think worship is often primarily known as simply singing songs?
7. Do you relate to any of the temptations of the caregiver? If so, describe and explore how caregivers can guard themselves against these failings.
8. Design a caregiving opportunity this week that is all about worship - loving God by loving others. Describe the situation and your sense of God's presence as you perform this act.

For everyone:

Consider these Spiritual Disciplines

<https://www.soulshpherd.org/spiritual-disciplines-list/>

Solitude, Silence, Fasting, Sabbath, Secrecy, Submission

Bible reading, Worship, Prayer, Fellowship, Personal reflection, Service

Read (to be challenged, comforted, provoked to argument, helped to grow ...)

Richard Foster's Celebration of Discipline

Brother Lawrence's The Practice of The Presence of God

Joel McKerrow's Woven (an artist remaking the faith he almost lost)

Brian McLaren's Generous Orthodoxy (or for more controversy the more recent A New Kind of Christian)

Henri Nouwen's In the House Of The Lord (an amazing unpacking of a short passage of scripture, you can do a whole term of Home Group studies from this little gem!)

<https://www.follow.org.au> for contemplation in a busy world