

NATURALIST **Loving God** **out of doors**

ACTIVITIES

- **Take your Bible outside and consider Psalm 84 while feasting your eyes and spirit of natural beauty**
- **Rest**
- **Worship as the dawn breaks**
- **Go for a walk**



NATURALIST

Loving God

out of doors



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1. Where and when do you feel closest to God?**
- 2. How is worship different for you when you are inside listening to speakers, etc. and outside enjoying nature?**
- 3. What could you do (where could you go) that would help you worship more deeply on a regular basis?**
- 4. How do you balance the need for natural beauty and quiet with the command to be in community? What kinds of community activities are satisfying to you spiritually and emotionally?**
- 5. What changes would you like to see in the worship services at our church that would make worship a more satisfying experience for you?**

SENSATE: Loving God with the senses

- 1. Consider Psalm 84. As you do so produce a drawing to enhance your meditation and worship**
- 2. Listen to worship-producing music**
- 3. Absorb worship-producing art**
- 4. Sing scripture**
- 5. Create a worship space for yourself: Light a candle, set out meaningful articles, e.g. a cross**
- 6. Use a "pocket piece" i.e. An object as a symbol to remind you to pray e.g. a nail to remind you of Christ's sacrifice**
- 7. Enter into a scripture passage. Be one of the characters. Experience the passage**
- 8. Vary prayer posture: stand, sit, kneel, lie prostrate**



SENSATE: Loving God with the senses

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

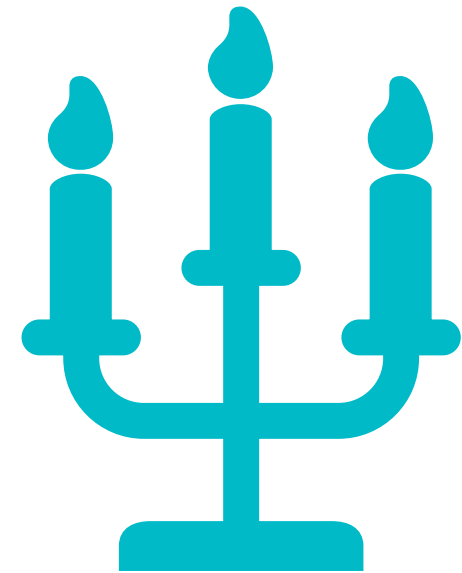
1. How do you feel when you are worshipping in a plain, unadorned church? How does it affect your ability to focus on God?
2. How does having something to touch, smell, look at or listen to affect your personal worship time?
3. How do you react to the statement. "We must take care that our worship of God doesn't become worship of the worship experience alone"?
4. What changes would you like to see in the worship services at your church that would make worship a more satisfying experience for you?



TRADITIONALIST: Loving God through ritual and symbol

Activities

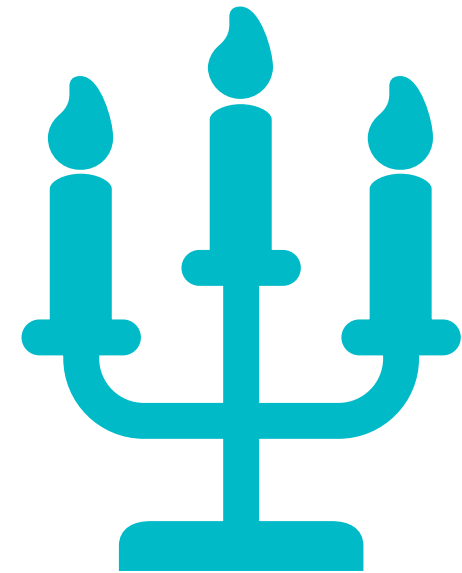
1. Consider Psalm 84 and write a prayer to use each day. Create a list of prayer requests and think about how to bring them to God throughout the day.
2. Consider how you could include God in your day e.g. set your alarm on your phone to remind you to pray at set times throughout the day.
3. Read Scripture aloud.
4. Select a Psalm to say every morning and one each evening.
5. Follow the Church calendar and celebrate significant days, e.g. Pentecost, Advent
6. Develop meaningful rituals: Make plentiful use of symbols or ritualized gestures



TRADITIONALIST: Loving God through ritual and symbol

REFLECTIONS QUESTIONS

1. In what ways did men and women in the Bible and in church history use ritual to embody spiritual truth?
2. What rituals, symbols, etc. would you like to incorporate into your life? How do you think they would affect your personal worship time? What would you like them to do for you?
3. What rituals are necessary for you to be able to worship easily?
4. What changes would you like to see in the worship services at your church that would make worship a more satisfying experience for you?



ASCETIC: Loving God in solitude and simplicity

- Activities
 - Consider Psalm 84. You may want to find a quiet place alone to avoid distractions and become still with God.
 - Worship in the quiet of the night; Rise in the early morning for prayer and worship
 - Practice silence - attend a silent retreat, participate in a silent meal
 - Fast; do physical labour as an act of worship
 - Practice obedience - ask God to reveal any rebellious attitudes
 - Simplify your life - clean a closet, have a yard sale, cull your books and papers
 - Look for ways and places to include others in your life and make it a point to worship regularly in a fellowship of believers



ASCETIC: Loving God in solitude and simplicity

- REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What does "solitude" mean to you? Can you find this even when you are with a group of people? Explain how you do that.
2. What does "austerity" mean to you? How do you incorporate it into your life?
3. What does "discipline" look like in your life? In what ways does it satisfy you? Where would you like to experience more of it?
4. What are ways you connect with those around you? How satisfying are those connections? Would you like to improve/increase them? Why or why not? How might you change your interactions to make them more satisfactory?
5. What changes would you like to see in the worship services at your church that would make worship a more satisfying experience for you?





ACTIVIST: Loving God through confrontation

- Activities
 - Consider Psalm 84 and how God's courts are the only true place of justice
 - Consider God's faithfulness in spite of so much that is undone in the world. Consider His patience. He is working even when we see no evidence of it. Don't give up.
 - Ponder 2 Peter 2:21-23. What is the ultimate way God confronts injustice?
 - Invest energy in: producing and transmitting literature; social reform; "marches"; prayer walks, food pantries; crisis pregnancy centre. Be creative.
 - Thoroughly research any activity before joining it. Ask God for wisdom first. Seek counsel, confirmation and accountability.
 - Develop your ability for self-examination and contemplation of God



ACTIVIST: Loving God through confrontation

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 that other Christians don't seem interested in enough to help with? Are you able to resolve these feelings? How do you do this? What other things might you do?
5. What changes would you like to see in the worship services at your church that would make worship a more satisfying experience for you?



CAREGIVER: Loving God by loving others

Activities

1. Consider Psalm 84 and how God cares for us. Think about how you can use your gifting as an act of worship.
2. "Adopt" someone - a prisoner, neighbourhood child or elderly person; Open your home to students,, neighbourhood kids
3. Help a friend through a crisis, counsel at a crisis pregnancy centre
4. Help someone battling substance abuse
5. Volunteer on a rescue squad, work in a soup kitchen.



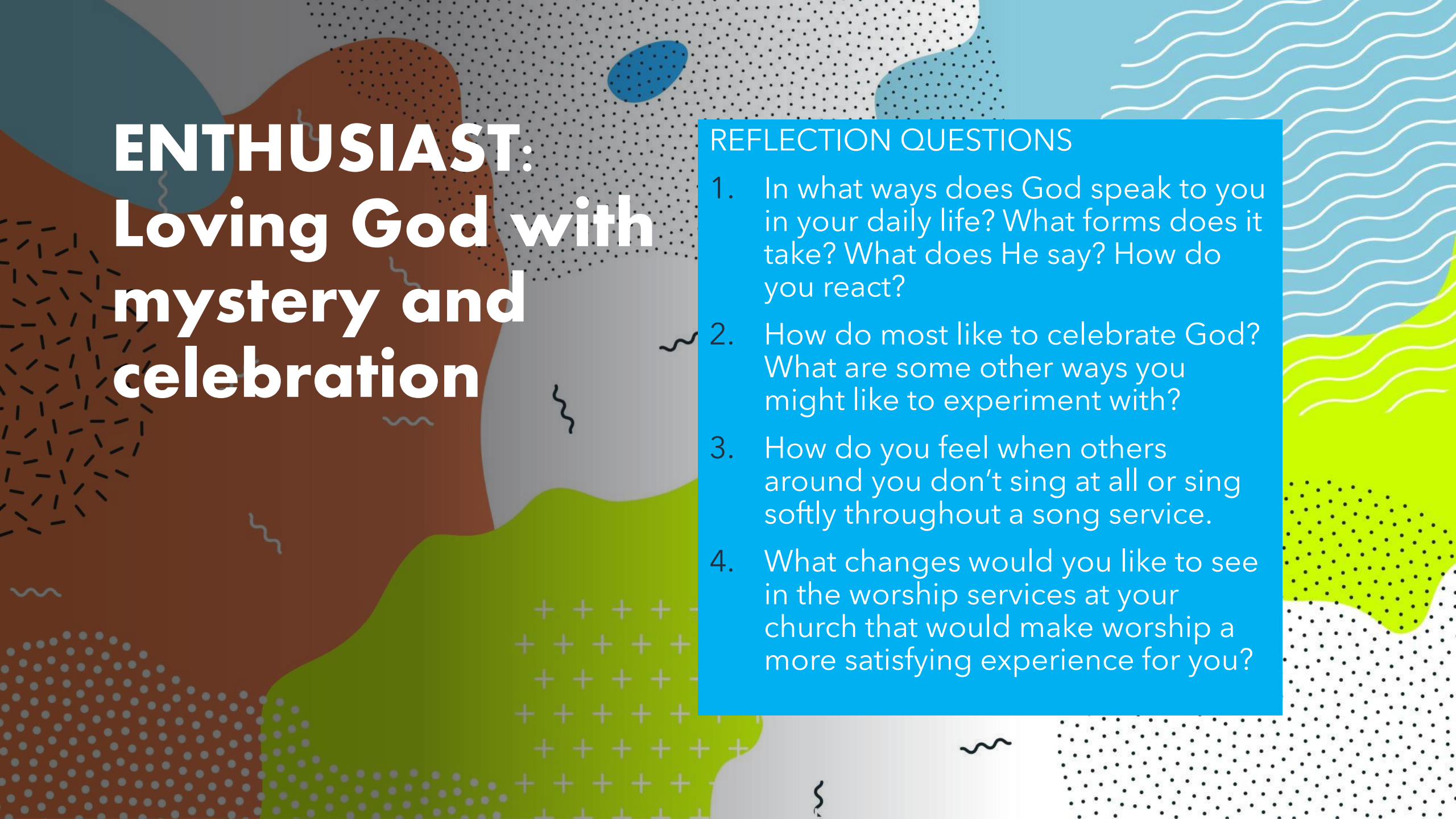
CAREGIVER: Loving God by loving others

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the ways in which you have served others? What motivated you to help them?
2. What "return" (positive or negative) do you receive when you help others? These can be spiritual, emotional, etc.
3. How do you feel about people who are not actively ministering to the poor, sick, etc.?
4. Do you ever minister to others out of your own need? Or because you feel you have to? Or don't know how to say, "no"? Contrast that experience with a time when you freely helped someone out of a desire to minister to him/her.
5. Think about your relationships. Do you have relationships with people who do not "need" you? If not, how might you begin to develop friendships outside your circle of ministry?
6. What changes would you like to see in the worship services at your church that would make worship a more satisfying experience for you?

1. **Consider Psalm 84. What God is saying to you personally? Respond to God out loud or by writing or with praise.**
2. **Find a passage that talks about God and pray it out loud, moving around the room.**
3. **Incorporate worship music into your daily time with God**
4. **Spend time just listening to God. Write down what you hear Him saying.**
5. **Cultivate the mystery of expectancy: ask God to bring someone in your path to whom you can minister; start a conversation with a stranger.**
6. **Use your imagination to put yourself into the scene when you are reading Bible passages. Try to understand how the participants were feeling, thinking, acting.**

ENTHUSIAST: Loving God with mystery and celebration

The background features a collage of abstract shapes and patterns. On the left, there's a large brown shape with a dashed pattern. Below it is a green shape with a plus sign pattern. To the right, there's a blue shape with a wavy pattern and a yellow-green shape with a dotted pattern. The overall aesthetic is modern and artistic.

ENTHUSIAST: Loving God with mystery and celebration

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. In what ways does God speak to you in your daily life? What forms does it take? What does He say? How do you react?
2. How do most like to celebrate God? What are some other ways you might like to experiment with?
3. How do you feel when others around you don't sing at all or sing softly throughout a song service.
4. What changes would you like to see in the worship services at your church that would make worship a more satisfying experience for you?

Activities:

- 1. Consider Psalm 84. Take time to pour out your love to God. What love response do you want to offer Him? (a poem, letter, or act of secret giving to another)**
- 2. Practice secret acts of devotion - something you do for someone else without letting anyone else know about it.**
- 3. Carry a pocket piece - something tactile to remind you who you serve, e.g. a small cross.**
- 4. Prayer of the Heart - "focuses on emotional attachment to, or adoration of, God. Its aim is to love God, to have our hearts enlarged so that God owns more and more of us."**
- 5. Meditative Prayer - this is prayerful reflection of a biblical text or theme, use of something you can see, taste, touch, hear or smell.**

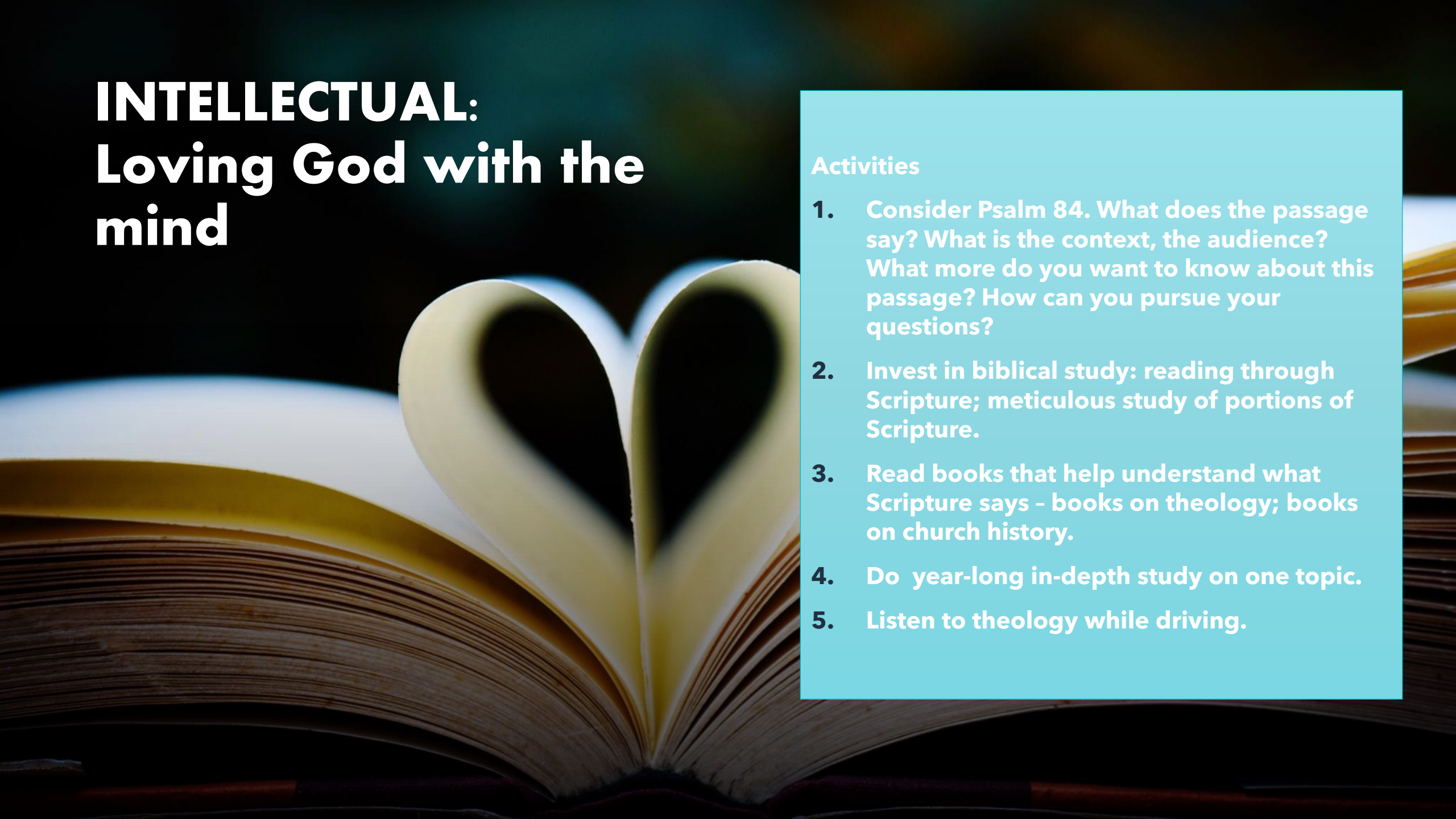
COMTEMPLATIVE: Loving God through adoration

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1. When do you feel most loved by God? In what tangible ways does He show His love to you?**
- 2. Do you ever lose the sense of God's presence? What happens to you then - in your emotions? In your spirit? What do you do to restore that sense?**
- 3. What is your favourite way to picture God? Are there any images of God that you find difficult to contemplate? Why do you think that is? Ask God to show you something about that.**
- 4. What words come to mind when you think of God? Make a list of all the words and phrases you can think of to express your praise to Him.**
- 5. How do you usually approach God? Do you ever feel fear? What might that be about? Talk with the Father about it and write down His response.**
- 6. What changes would you like to see in the worship services at your church that would make worship a more satisfying experience for you?**

COMTEMPLATIVE: Loving God through adoration

INTELLECTUAL: Loving God with the mind

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, with the pages of the two facing pages curled inward to form a heart shape. The book is set against a dark, blurred background.

Activities

- 1. Consider Psalm 84. What does the passage say? What is the context, the audience? What more do you want to know about this passage? How can you pursue your questions?**
- 2. Invest in biblical study: reading through Scripture; meticulous study of portions of Scripture.**
- 3. Read books that help understand what Scripture says - books on theology; books on church history.**
- 4. Do year-long in-depth study on one topic.**
- 5. Listen to theology while driving.**

INTELLECTUAL: Loving God with the mind

An open book is shown from a top-down perspective, with the pages of the two facing pages curled inward to form a heart shape. The book is set against a dark, blurred background.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- 1. How thankful are you for your intellectual capacity? How do you express this and to whom?**
- 2. In what way have you applied your intellectual understanding of the Gospel to the service of others? In what other ways could you do so?**
- 3. What are some of the most exciting discoveries you have made about God recently? How have they influenced your worship times?**
- 4. What most annoys you about other styles of worship? Ask God for His perspective on this? What does He say to you?**
- 5. How do you react to the statement, "worship is God revealing Himself to You, not You discovering God"?**
- 6. What changes would you like to see in the worship services at your church that would make worship a more satisfying experience for you?**