

Sacred

THUMBprint

What is God doing to get your attention?

T.H.U.M.B. Profiles

Rick Carlson

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the
Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey
everything I have commanded you. And surely I am
with you always, to the very end of the age.*

Matthew 28:19-20

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Introduction

The following THUMB profiles are an accompaniment to 7-Day Devotionals provided each week with the sermon series, Sacred Thumbprint.

Each profile is intended to describe the tendencies and current experience that a person is experiencing in their relationship with God. Unlike typical personality profiles, the THUMB profiles are fluid, meaning an individual's experience with God may change many times throughout their life. In fact, it is possible that we may be aware of God acting to get our attention in more than one way at a time.

The purpose of creating these profiles is to encourage you in your faith. All of the profiles move us toward a living awareness that God is tapping us on the shoulder and whispering in our ears. They awaken us to the fact that God desires to have a close relationship with us in every time and season of life. The unfortunate reality is that we are not always aware of God's actions and do not always recognize his voice. My prayer is that the devotionals and these profiles will help you to increase your awareness of God's presence and that you will respond fully to his promptings.

The six THUMBPRINT profiles are based on the acronym T.H.U.M.B. plus O. Here is how the individual profiles correspond to the letters in the acronym:

T.H.U.M.B.

Profile	Letter	Description
Pilgrim	T	Thirst: Thirsty for God, longing for the truth
Philosopher	H	Hunger: Hungry for meaning and significance in life
Warrior	U	Undercurrent: Up against unseen forces in life, undercurrents that threaten to carry you away
Prophet	M	Mystery: Curiosity about the mysterious, the awesome works and actions of God
Saint	B	Brokenness: God gets our attention through illness, disappointments, devastation, pain and grief
Observer	O	Observer: Low or no awareness of God's presence in the circumstances of life but you are watching and waiting

Every Blessing,

Pastor Rick

Pilgrim

Thumb

THIRSTY for the eternal

Description

The Pilgrim longs and yearns for spiritual fulfillment. The Pilgrim is thirsty for God. You know what it is like to experience the presence of God and long for those feelings and experiences. You know the contrast of what it is like to be unaware of God's presence and also what it is like to know he is with you. Your longing could be best described as thirst. Your thirst for God is as powerful and essential as water is to living creatures.

Another aspect of the Pilgrim profile is that you deeply long for heaven. You think about the joy of eternity and live for the future. The realities of any difficulties, pain, and suffering that you face in life are small compared to the hope that is in you.

Biblical Markers

There are many people in the Bible who bear the Pilgrim profile. Mary, the sister of Martha and Lazarus, is a good example. When Jesus came for dinner to the sisters' home, Martha was busy working in the kitchen preparing the meal while Mary ignored her sister's appeals for help. Mary sat and listened to what Jesus had to say. She demonstrated an internal "thirst" for God. She adjusted everything, even her kitchen chores and obligations, in order to drink in the wisdom, truth and presence of Jesus.

(Luke 10:38-42)

John the Baptist is another good example of someone who was thirsty for God. He was an eccentric, and by all accounts, a strange man because doing the will of God consumed him. He did not care about what he looked like, how he dressed, or frankly, what people thought of him. He cared only about what God thought. John the Baptist had taken a Nazarite vow which meant that throughout his life, in order to please God, he would not drink any alcohol nor would he cut his hair. He was consumed by the thirst to please God. In spite of his appearance, people flocked to the desert to see, hear and be baptized by John because they knew he was close to God. (*Mark 1:1-8*)

The most obvious Biblical person who was thirsty for God was the Samaritan woman who Jesus met by the well. In this story, Jesus unwrapped what it means to be "thirsty for God." The woman, whose name we don't know, did not understand at first what Jesus was talking about until she realized that he had divine insight into her life. It was then that she realized she was "thirsty for the living water of God." (*John 4:1-42*)

Philosopher

tHumb

HUNGRY for significance and meaning

Description

The Philosopher searches for meaning and significance in life. You think deeply about how circumstances in life impact your thinking, values and actions. You desire to make a difference in the world. Whenever you are engaged in activities that are contrary to your values you feel it deeply and seek to make a change. Your quest for meaning and significance drives you to apply yourself to difficult and challenging pursuits. You prefer being respected over being loved. You are unsettled when you cannot connect the dots of how you fit into spiritual matters. You are intrigued by people who have a deep, living faith but for you, belief in God has to be both logical and real.

Biblical Markers

It is easy to identify Biblical philosophers by the fact that they ask probing and personal questions.

Thomas is the perfect example. As the only remaining disciple who had not personally encountered the risen Jesus, Thomas declared that he would not believe unless he could prove with his own eyes and touch with his hands that Jesus was, in fact, alive. (*John 20:24-29*)

Nicodemus was a man of prominence in 1st century Jewish society. He had everything to lose by approaching Jesus with his questions. Although scripture doesn't tell us much about him, we know that Nicodemus continued to put his career

and reputation on the line because of his love and respect for Jesus. (*John 3:1-21*)

Moses, Zacchaeus, the Apostle Paul and many others are people who desperately needed to understand and long for meaning and significance in their lives.

Warrior

thUmb

UNSEEN UNDERCURRENT (FORCES)

Description

The Warrior is a person who is fighting and struggling against unseen forces and powerful undercurrents on the inside and outside. As a Warrior you do not easily give into forces and currents you are up against but you are very aware that you are pushing against or even fighting with something. These forces may be inside urges like addictions or compulsive thinking or behavior. They may also be outside forces like the pressure people put on you to say and do things that are opposed to your values and your sense of right and wrong.

The undercurrents are not necessarily bad either. You may feel a strong current to go a difficult direction in life like in education or a career movement. As a Warrior you are aware of the forces pushing and pulling at you. You are morally rooted in a belief system and will dig in to defend your ground and hold your position.

Biblical Markers

In the Old Testament we are introduced to a young man, Joseph, who was confronted with a number of unseen forces that he did not understand. He faced an undercurrent of family jealousy from his brothers who sold him as a slave to a passing caravan. He stood up against an unjust imprisonment because of the seduction and lies of Potiphar's wife. Though Joseph was not a soldier he was a warrior against unseen forces. (*Genesis 37-45*)

Joshua was both a soldier and a warrior against unseen forces. He and Caleb stood up against powerful forces of influence among the other Jewish spies by maintaining that with God's help they should enter Canaan in spite of there being giants in the land. He stood firmly in his faith in God's battle strategy against Jericho by obeying God and marching around the city rather than pursuing conventional war strategies. (*The book of Joshua*)

Stephen, Barnabas and Jonah were also good examples of Warrior profiles. They each faced unseen forces which they needed to overcome.

Prophet

thuMb MYSTERY

Description

The Prophet is drawn to the mysteries of life. Curiosity drives you to explore things you don't understand and seek answers to important questions that you have. You are a visionary with the resolve of a scientist. Where the Philosopher seeks meaning in their own life, you seek meaning in the universe. In many ways you are a mystic. You are sensitive to spiritual things. You are able to discern spiritual wisdom and truth that does not come from the knowledge of facts or gathering data.

You have a strong sense that you are being used by God to say things that he wants to communicate. Your observations allow you see the world differently because you are sensitive to spiritual influences. You are influenced by people who are devoted to their faith and motivated by noble ideals and unselfish goals.

Biblical Markers

The Prophets of the Old Testament are a good place to start when identifying the Prophet profile. Jonah, Miriam, Ezekiel, Debrah, Isaiah, Anna, Jeremiah, Elijah and all the rest each had their own unique personality and calling. But each of them had a particular message from God to proclaim to the people. Their stories are filled with drama and very real danger because of their obedience to God. The prophets of the Bible, Old and New Testaments, were often given special visions of God's work in the world and what the future held. They saw the reality of the spiritual realm and

even though they might not have always understood exactly what they saw, they faithfully passed along the incredible images and events that God allowed them to witness.

To get a good picture of the life and calling of a prophet, read about Samuel in 1 Samuel and 2 Samuel. You will see that even though Samuel regularly encountered the mysteries of God, he was also thoroughly engaged in the very real work of God in his time and culture. (*1 Samuel, 2 Samuel*)

Saint

thumB

BROKENNESS

Description

Saints are identified as those who engage with God through their own brokenness. You are a person who knows what it means to suffer, to experience profound loss, to be the victim of injustice or to be defeated by a formidable enemy. Your experiences have made you more transparent - you allow other people to see into your pain and join you on your journey. Your brokenness is not without meaning because even though you suffer and may experience all sorts of negative emotions, you sense that there is a bigger purpose behind your situation.

You may not understand why, but you suspect there is a "who" allowing or even causing your brokenness. You are not the same person you were. You may not know or understand who you are becoming because brokenness changes people. But through it all, you sense that there is a divine presence with you. You are not alone.

The truth is, the broken Saint should be, by far, the most common profile because everyone should recognize their brokenness before God.

Biblical Markers

The most obvious and famous Biblical person who embodies the characteristics of the broken saint is Job. Job was broken through the death of his family, the ruin of his wealth and the deterioration of his health. (*The book of Job*)

Many people in the Bible dealt with brokenness, in fact, it is the most common theme. Essentially everyone Jesus encountered demonstrated brokenness through either their words and/or actions. Whether their brokenness was physical, emotional, mental, cultural, political, relational, etc., these people of faith encountered the love, faithfulness, healing and wholeness of God.

Observer

thumb

WATCHING and WAITING

Description

As an observer, you watch very carefully what is going on around you. You are cautious about reacting to your observations and are reluctant to feel the weight of their impact. Although you may be aware of the cause and effect of various events, longings and forces in and around you, they do not rise to the level of having an impact on your self awareness. You may or may not consider yourself a spiritual person but your caution prevents you from getting emotionally involved in spiritual matters.

You prefer to remain distant from the action and tend to be neutral when there is conflict or chaos. This tendency does not, however, mean that God is absent in your spiritual journey. On the contrary, you need to be more vigilant than ever in your awareness because God is near.

Biblical Markers

The prophet Elijah was hiding out on the mountain of God, when he observed a spectacular display of a mighty wind, a ferocious fire, and a powerful earthquake, but God was not in them. Scripture says that when the loud and powerful events passed, God revealed himself to Elijah in a “still small voice...” a whisper, a gentle breath. Imperceptible yet, still present. (*1 Kings 19:9-18*)

You are not likely impacted by the loud, bright, powerful or spectacular spiritual happenings around you which means that you should be especially listening for the “still small

voice” of God. If you want to know what God is doing to get your attention, start by being quiet and still, like Elijah. God is with you but not necessarily in the wind, fire or earthquakes of your life.

The writer of Psalm 46 quoted God who said, "Be still and know that I am God." (*Psalm 46:10*)