

## Reflect

1. Which column is more intuitive and comfortable for you personally?
2. If you're honest, deep down, which column are you more concerned about your church neglecting?

| WORD                                                                | SPIRIT                                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Centrality of Sermon                                                | Centrality of Worship                                        |
| Predictability                                                      | Spontaneity                                                  |
| Principles                                                          | Power                                                        |
| Prizes knowledge                                                    | Prizes experience                                            |
| Focus on the Intellect                                              | Focus on the Affections                                      |
| The Bible: emphasis on meaning                                      | The Bible: emphasis on significance                          |
| Process oriented                                                    | Event oriented                                               |
| Christian life is the progressive outworking of an original deposit | Christian life is the repetitive experience of a fresh power |
| Reformation                                                         | Revival                                                      |
| Biblically informed wisdom                                          | Spiritually imparted discernment                             |
| Observation                                                         | Intuition                                                    |
| Guidance: confidence in objective principles                        | Guidance: confidence in subjective promptings                |
| Focus on the "Not Yet"                                              | Focus on the "Already"                                       |
| Tendency to embrace suffering                                       | Tendency to expect healing                                   |
| Mundance                                                            | Miraculous                                                   |
| The seen                                                            | The unseen                                                   |
| God has spoken                                                      | God is speaking                                              |
| Prayer is monologue                                                 | Prayer is dialogue                                           |
| Reliance on natural talents                                         | Reliance on spiritual gifts                                  |
| Lack of appreciation for the supernatural and surprising            | Lack of appreciation for the natural and routine             |
| If a natural explanation is possible, it's probable                 | If a supernatural explanation is possible, it's probable     |
| Tendency to be skeptical                                            | Tendency to be gullible                                      |
| Proclamation evangelism                                             | Power evangelism                                             |
| Worship = proclamation of biblical truth                            | Worship = personal encounter with God                        |
| Worship: focus on understanding God (worship is theological)        | Worship: focus on enjoying God (worship is relational)       |
| Worship: concern with form                                          | Worship: focus on freedom                                    |
| Worship: sing about God                                             | Worship: sing to God                                         |
| Emphasis: "Instrumentality"                                         | Emphasis: "Immediacy"                                        |
| Faith in God                                                        | Love for God                                                 |
| Obedience to God                                                    | Intimacy with God                                            |
| Focus on Justification                                              | Focus on Sanctification                                      |

# The Soil of American Evangelicalism

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## Questions

1. Over the course of your life, which of these four have you been most affected by, or experienced most first-hand?
2. Which of these four has sabotaged your own spiritual formation the most?

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## Polarization

- ✓ Playing head and heart off against each other, and failing to inhabit the tension. The lie that you have to pick between a sharp mind and a warm heart.
- ✓ In the words of one eighteenth-century Methodist leader, “If you can do but one, let your studies alone. I would throw [away] all the libraries of the world rather than be guilty of the loss of one soul.”

## Pietism

- ✓ Divorcing doctrine from religious experience.
- ✓ Relatively anti-institutional. “Church happens in small groups” versus elders setting doctrine, and lay leadership matters more than elder rule.
- ✓ A kind of conversion-ism that comes very close to teaching that we are justified by faith *and* our emotions.

## Primitivism

- ✓ The seemingly good but seriously misguided attempt to “get back to the primitive or originally pure Church.”
- ✓ Impatient with anything difficult, intolerant of complexity, and a poor appreciator of anything long-term that requires discipline.
- ✓ Beginnings are always pure, and a return is always possible. So history is just the boring and unredeemable story of corruption, decline, and drift from that purity.

## Populism

- ✓ Vitality of mass democratic movements and prominence of popular religious leaders in both religious and democratic movements.
- ✓ Often opposed to history, structure, organization, tradition, class, hierarchy, education... and even doctrine.
- ✓ Under the rallying cry “No creed but the Bible,” each man or woman becomes his or her own interpreter.

