

The Enneagram Goes to Church Wisdom for Leadership, Worship, and Congregational Life

March 16, 2021 | \$18, 180 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4682-5

"More Christians are aware of and interested in the Enneagram than ever before, so it's time for the church to take notice. Todd Wilson provides a winsome and engaging exploration of how church leaders and church members can use the Enneagram to foster spiritual growth. Todd writes from his robust pastoral experience and is able to help Christians understand how the mysteries and wisdom of the Enneagram align beautifully with a sincere Christian faith."

—Hunter Mobley, Enneagram teacher and author of *Forty Days on Being a Two*

"Pastoring Is About People."

After months of sitting with the Enneagram and sharing in its insights, my mind turned from me, my marriage, and my family to another extremely important part of my life—my work as the pastor of a church.

What about the church? I remember thinking. Does the Enneagram have anything helpful to say about pastoring a congregation, working with a staff, or leading people? What about preaching, worship, or congregational care? Could the Enneagram help me think about all these churchly things?

My mind was abuzz with these thoughts. I couldn't help but think that the Enneagram had something unique—something essential—to add to the life and ministry of the church, to my ministry in the churches I was called to serve.

But what?

WISDOM ABOUT PEOPLE

When I was called to Calvary Memorial Church in the Autumn of 2008, I was the church's thirteenth pastor in its one-hundred-year history. I was only thirty-two at the time, and this was my first senior pastorate. Located in the heart of Oak Park, Calvary was the largest evangelical congregation in the area, drawing worshipers from many of the surrounding suburbs.

A quarter century earlier, world-famous evangelist Billy Graham had dedicated the church's new building, and then-president Jimmy Carter sent a congratulatory note that was read on the occasion. This was Calvary, no ordinary congregation.

When I received the call to serve Calvary, I was embracing a church brimming with pride, layered in tradition and, it must be said, quite demographically and socioeconomically complex, at least partly by virtue of being planted in the middle of the Village of Oak Park, an urban-suburban community right next to the city of Chicago.

At the time, I felt well prepared to take up this otherwise daunting responsibility. I was, thankfully, the beneficiary of a great theological education, wonderful pastoral mentors, and a number of fabulous church experiences. I had lots of friends rooting for me, and my wife and family were cheerfully by my side. What did I lack?

As it turns out, one very, very important thing—especially for pastors.

Wisdom.

I lacked wisdom about people—who they are and how they work.



Tara Burns, print and online publicity
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or tburns@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



EXCERPT



The Enneagram Goes to Church Wisdom for Leadership, Worship, and Congregational Life

March 16, 2021 | \$18, 180 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4682-5

Todd Wilson is the president and cofounder of the Center for Pastor Theologians and the former senior pastor of Calvary Memorial Church. He holds a PhD from University of Cambridge and is the author of *Mere Sexuality* and *Real Christian*, as well as coauthor of *The Pastor Theologian*.

Sure, I knew plenty about Greek and Hebrew, biblical exegesis, systematic theology, homiletics, leadership and organizational development, Christian education, small groups, missions, and spirituality. Indeed, I was a bona fide expert in the Bible, with degrees and publications to prove it.

But when it came to people—empathetically shepherding and sensitively engaging them in their manifold personalities and diverse ways of seeing the world, I was hardly an amateur. I had at best only a middle school understanding of who people are and how they work.

How I wish I would have known the Enneagram back then!

The Enneagram would have saved me from a thousand pastoral blunders and served me so well in guiding a complex congregation in the ways of Jesus. The Enneagram would have given me wisdom—just the kind of wisdom a pastor needs and yet just the kind one has such a hard time gleaning in seminary.

Don't misunderstand me. There really is no silver bullet for pastoral success. The Enneagram certainly isn't that. Pastoring a local church is not for the faint of heart, and the Enneagram is not a panacea for pastoral problems. Church work is always messy, often exhausting, usually tedious, and at times heartbreaking. Every pastor will tell you that. There's no getting around it.

But here is the enlightening truth every seasoned pastor already knows. We human beings are magnificent, mysterious and, yes, maddening creatures. We are fascinating and frustrating. We are curious and complex. We are beautiful and baffling—all at the same time.

And let's face it, pastoring a church is, if nothing else, *an intensely people-oriented business*. The pastor is called, as chief among many responsibilities, to know and love and serve and support all these delightful puzzles we call "people" sitting in the pews on Sunday morning.

Of course, leading a church is about a lot of things. Yes, it's about ministry and missions, buildings and budgets, care and connections, God and the gospel. This is all gloriously and splendidly true. *But at its root, pastoring is about people.*

Central to pastoral ministry is the *ecclesia*, the church, what the ancient creeds know as the "communion of saints," and what the biblical witness refers to as "the body of Christ." Pastors are called to dirty their hands serving this Spirit-wrought gathering of God's people, precious ones made in God's image and redeemed by Christ's sacrifice.

Therefore I repeat myself. Pastoring is about people—shepherding, serving, leading, and loving people. Nothing less. Which is why I'm convinced that I would have been a much better pastor if I would have known the Enneagram—for the simple reason that this fascinating personality typing system is filled with insights into who people are and how they work—precisely what pastors need.

Because pastoring is about people.

—Taken from the Introduction, "Pastoring Is About People"

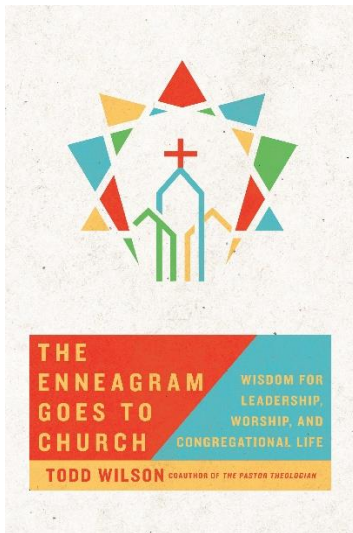


Tara Burns, print and online publicity
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or tburns@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



ivpress.com/media



The Enneagram Goes to Church Wisdom for Leadership, Worship, and Congregational Life

March 16, 2021 | \$18, 176 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4682-5

"When I encountered the Enneagram tool, my response was identical to Todd Wilson's—I wished I'd had this years ago when I led a team at church! These days I use the Enneagram in all my coaching relationships. Todd does an excellent job exploring how the Enneagram can practically make a profound difference in our self-awareness and in our everyday leadership!"

—**Nancy Beach**, leadership coach with the Slingshot Group and author of *Gifted to Lead: The Art of Leading as a Woman in the Church*

Accelerating Growth in Christ-Centered Directions

Why do you believe it is so important for churches, pastors in particular, to embrace the wisdom of the Enneagram?

Todd Wilson: Pastoring a church is about a lot of things. It's about ministry and missions and buildings and budgets and care and connections and God and the gospel. But at its root, pastoring is also about people—caring for, leading, loving, and serving people, in all their splendid similarities and differences. Most pastors, however, don't have much training in working with people. They may be able to read Greek and Hebrew, craft a compelling sermon, and officiate a wedding. But they may not know that much about people—who they are and how they work. The Enneagram can help pastors be better informed and wiser in the way they work with people—something pastors desperately need.

You acknowledge that some people are skeptical about the Enneagram. Why is it so important to transpose Enneagram insights into a "Christian key," especially for those who are skeptical?

Todd: If we're going to benefit from the Enneagram, and if we're going to share its wisdom with others in our churches, then we need to think about the Enneagram in a responsible way, which is to say, in a decidedly *Christian* way. Let's not forget that the Enneagram's origins are shrouded in mystery, and its contemporary development is heavily indebted to occultist thinkers. If we want to think Christianly about the Enneagram, then we need to transpose its insights into a Christian key. We need to frame everything it teaches in light of our reverence for God and let the lordship of Christ shape everything we think about human personality. This is the key. When we do this, the Enneagram can serve as a marvelous tool for spiritual formation and Christian discipleship and pastoral wisdom, not detracting from the Christian faith but accelerating our growth in Christ-centered directions.

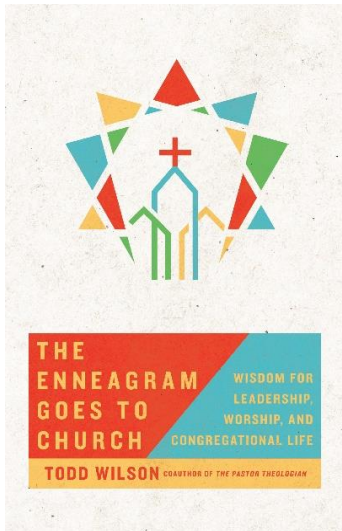
In what ways do you feel your book adds to the already vibrant Enneagram conversation?

Todd: As interest in the Enneagram has spread like wildfire in the last several years, I find many people wondering whether it has anything to say about the life and ministry of the church. "Should the Enneagram go to church?" they ask. This is where my book comes in. *The Enneagram Goes to Church* explores the ways in which the wisdom of the Enneagram can make us better pastors and church leaders so that we can serve the church more effectively. To my knowledge, no book like this has ever been written. And that's what gets me excited about this book: I'm convinced that it will be a huge help to the thousands of pastors and other church leaders who are drowning in information but starving for wisdom and insight.



Tara Burns, print and online publicity
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or tburns@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com



The Enneagram Goes to Church Wisdom for Leadership, Worship, and Congregational Life

March 16, 2021 | \$18, 176 pages, paperback | 978-0-8308-4682-5

"For those who remain dubious about the Enneagram—its origins, its misuse—Todd Wilson is a theologically reliable guide. His heart is wisely pastoral, helping readers see the value of self-knowledge for the glorious purpose of self-giving."

—*Jen Pollock Michel*, author of *Surprised by Paradox* and *Teach Us to Want*

What helped you develop the nine different types of pastors, preaching styles, listeners, and churches that you outlined in your book?

Todd Wilson: As I became more familiar with the nine Enneagram types, I began to see my friends and colleagues in ministry in light of their personality types. Once you know the difference between, say, an Eight and a Two, it's pretty hard to miss these personality types when you bump into them. I also found it was hugely helpful with my own pastoral staff team to have a shared language for talking about our differences in personality, which drive so much of who we are and how we minister and lead. I've learned a lot over the years from simply talking with other pastors about the way they see the world and how that impacts their approach to ministry: their strengths and their struggles. Finally, I've learned quite a bit from other Enneagram teachers about how our personality type impacts the way we see the world, yes, but also the way we speak and listen, or our communication style—something pastors would do well to know more about.

How does viewing the church, pastor and congregants alike, through the lens of the nine different Enneagram types help churches as a whole fulfill their mission more fully?

Todd Wilson: People are the mission of the church. The church exists to enfold people into a dynamic relationship with Jesus. If the church is going to be successful in this mission, then it needs to have a rich, robust understanding of people—who they are and how they work—and the Enneagram offers just that. It will make you wiser about yourself and others so that you can better lead, love, and serve people in the name of Jesus.

The book's title speaks directly to the Enneagram's use within church circles, but are there insights that are applicable beyond the church setting as well?

Todd Wilson: Yes, lots. In truth, very little in the book is applicable *only* to churches. The chapter on preaching is relevant for anyone who wants to communicate well. The chapter on leadership is relevant to anyone in whatever leadership role they find themselves in. The chapter on congregational care is relevant to anyone who wants to engage sympathetically and empathetically with others, regardless of the setting or the situation. The chapter on teamwork is relevant to anyone who works with others. And the chapter on churches being like families is relevant to anyone who works in any kind of organization because that organization will, like churches, have its own personality. So, yes, there are lots of points of relevance and insights that apply beyond the context of the church!



Tara Burns, print and online publicity
800.843.4587 ext. 4059 or tburns@ivpress.com

Krista Clayton, author interviews
800.843.4587 ext. 4013 or kclayton@ivpress.com