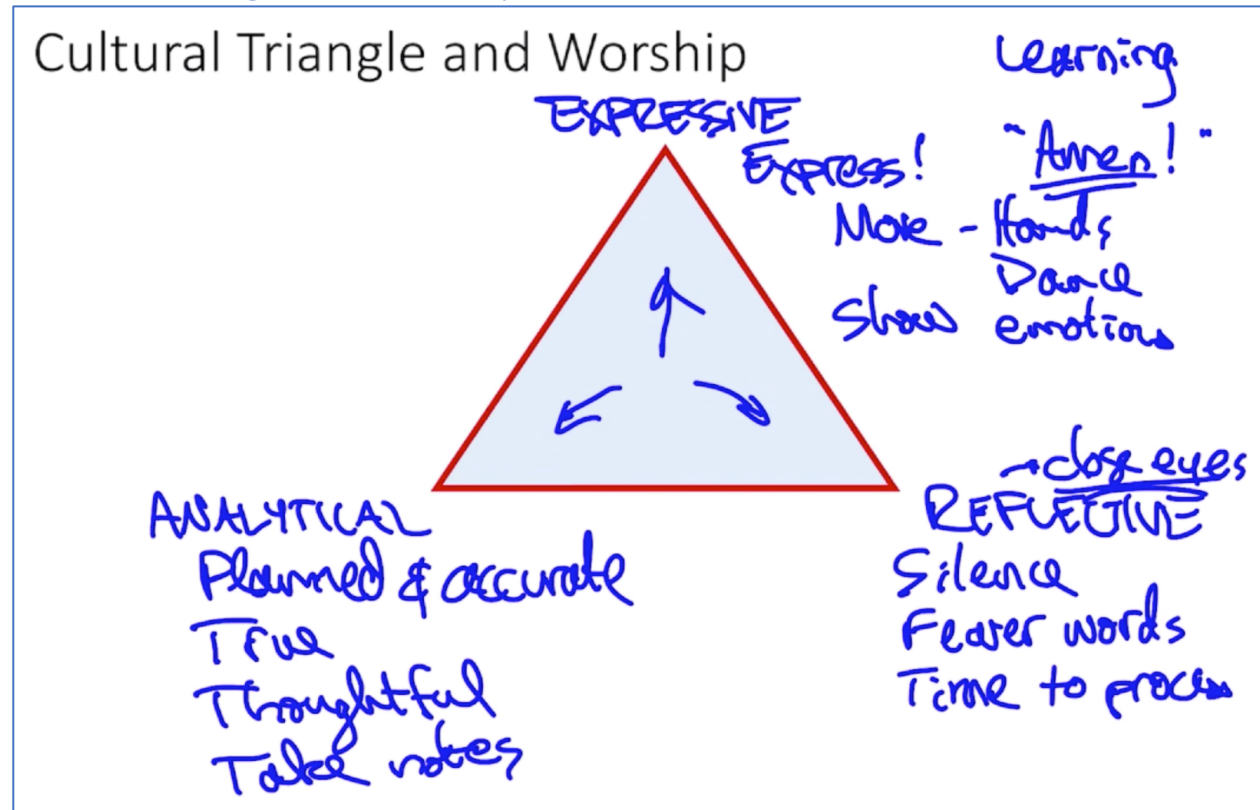


## Cultural Triangle and Worship



We want to apply the cultural triangle to our worship service. I first want to say that we believe we're still just in early stages of learning this. We have some idea, but I feel like there's much for us to grow in this. So I want to invite you into the conversation, to the exploration together.

As we looked at in our cultural triangle, we thought of some of us as people who are used to expressive cultures. Some of us are much more comfortable in reflective cultures. And some of us are much more comfortable in analytical cultures. I want to say again: nobody is purely any of these. We're all a mixture of these things.

So it's one of the thoughts just to say, in worship services, where are you most comfortable? And what is it that perhaps you're uncomfortable with? And it can turn out to be just a different cultural style.

So one of the things that we've seen and we've talked about together, is that, for expressive people in a worship service, they want to express. They want to be able to speak, to move, to engage. So movement can be a big deal, so that maybe they are more comfortable raising their hands. Maybe more comfortable dancing, and saying to others, "How can you just sit in place or stand still when we are singing and thinking about and praying about such important powerful things?" Expressive people are much more likely, it seems, in a worship service, to show emotions, whether that is by crying audibly or an expression of praise, of shouting out an "Amen!" Expressive people want to be involved, not just sit, not just to think.

Reflective people, as people have talked about, they're much more comfortable with silence. A key part of a worship service would be a time of silence, a time with fewer words, that it's okay for there to be a time just to let there be time to process. So instead of filling up all the time with new ideas, additional ideas, let's have an opportunity to reflect on things, to process what's been said. So an expression for reflective people just might be to close their eyes, to just simplify the input and say, "I just need to be in this internal world of experiencing, of processing the things that we are dealing with right now."

Analytical people, they are more likely to just want to focus on things that are planned and accurate. They want to know that things are true. They tend to want things to be very thoughtful. Where an expressive person might shout out, "Amen!" and a reflective person might close their eyes, an analytical person might take notes. Because this is a way to process these things in a way that fits who they are.

So there are reflective questions I'm encouraging you to take a look at below, and one is, "What kind of worship services have you been a part of, that you're very comfortable with, where you felt very natural, versus those that felt like they were stretching to you?"

One of the things that we're wanting to do in church is to have a worship service that creates at least some space for each of these areas. So it's possible for people to express, to speak up, to take action. to move. For people who want thoughtful engagement and taking notes and knowing things are planned. And for people to have time that is quiet. We want to find good ways to do all three of these, perhaps overlap in these, but to be sure that in our worship service we are creating space for people from different cultural perspectives, different cultural backgrounds, to be engaged with our God in worship.

### **Reflection Questions**

1. Describe a worship service that you have experienced, or perhaps an ideal worship service, where you would be very comfortable, where you would feel very natural?
2. Have you experienced worship services that made you more uncomfortable? Why? What was problematic for you? Were there things that perhaps were not wrong, they were just very unnatural for you?
3. In worship services that are very different from your normal experience, what is something attractive to you about those differences?