

Discovering How You Are Wired (Part 1 of 6)¹

Why You Need to Discover How You Are Wired

Matthew 22:34-40

INTRODUCTION

A. Illustration: Introducing the Johnson Family

1. It is 7:30 AM Sunday morning in the Johnson household. The family begins its weekly routine of getting ready for church. Each member understands that getting to Sunday school on time requires leaving the house by 9:00 AM, but how they respond to that information differs a good deal.
2. Dad hops right out of bed, does his exercises, showers, dresses, and goes directly downstairs, where he sits peacefully, sipping a cup of coffee as he reads the morning paper.
3. Jack, the teenage son, doesn't stir. He lies in bed, getting the last minute of shut-eye from staying up late Saturday night. When Dad shouts upstairs for him to get up and get dressed, he says that he will be ready when it's time.
4. His sister, Suzie, is already up. Soon she had her bed made and is busily fixing her hair putting on the outfit she picked out the night before.
5. In the master bedroom, Mom is having a tough time deciding on what to wear. Add to this the fact that on Saturday she said she would make a nice breakfast for the family—but now she realizes that she won't have time for that. She knows, too, that Dad is downstairs expecting her at any minute to come down to prepare the bacon and eggs she promised. She hollers, "I don't think I'm going to be able to fix breakfast. Can you guys get something on your own? Then we can go out for a nice lunch after church. Will

¹ This series is based in large part on the studies of Ken Voges and Ron Braund as discovered in their book and workbook entitled *Understanding How Others Misunderstand You* (In His Grace, Inc., Houston, TX (c) 2005); www.inhisgraceinc.com. A huge debt of gratitude goes to Ken Voges for spending time with me going over his 17 years of study on this topic.

that be okay?” Without waiting for an answer, she goes back to the task of trying to look her best.

6. It's now 9:05 AM. Dad and Suzie are already in the car and have backed it out of the garage and halfway down the driveway. Jack yells, “Mom, they're in the car. We better go.” He pulls on his shoes as he heads out the door. Mom is right behind him, but she has to run back into the house to get her Bible. Now they are on their way. It is 9:09 AM.
7. After a few moments, Dad says matter-of-factly, “I hate walking into our Sunday school class late every week. Don't you think that just once you could be ready to leave on time?”
8. Mom responds, “The class doesn't begin on time anyway, so why should we be there early?”
9. Then Suzie says softly from the backseat, “But my class begins on time and I go in late every Sunday. I would rather not go at all than to have to be late. Everyone looks at me, and I don't like that.”
10. Finally Jack speaks up. “Hey, I like it just the way we're doing it. You only need to be there for the last 15 minutes. I don't like hearing that Sunday school teacher go on and on anyway.” As he speaks the car pulls up into the church parking lot. So begins another worship experience for the Johnson family.

B. Does any of that seem familiar?

1. With whom do you identify the most?
 - a. Mom, Dad, Suzie or Jack?
2. They are all upset with each other based on their different expectations of each other.
 - a. No one deliberately set out to upset the others, but the way each person responded to the task made it likely that a tense environment rather than a loving one would develop.

C. Conflicts develop when the natural preferences of one person clash with the natural preferences of another.

1. But that does not mean that conflict will necessarily result when individuals with different preferences are together.
2. No, we can improve our awareness and acceptance of differences, and we can learn to respond to others in a positive rather than a negative way.

TRANSITION

A. Let's first consider our perceptual differences.

1. Colors – red or black?
 - a. If a color-blind person and a person with fully functional eyesight were looking at buying a new car and the salesperson shows you a shiny red car, what would you see?
 - b. A black car and the other person would see a shiny red car.
 - c. Who is right?
 - d. In terms of perspective, both of you are right, but the difference here is based on physiology.
2. A glass of water – half-empty or half-full?
 - a. Show a glass filled up halfway with water and ask: Is this glass half-full, half-empty, neither, or don't care?
 - b. Who is right?
 - c. No one, because this question is asked based on a person's initial response to a glass—not an actual fact.
3. So how we perceive things in life will affect the way we act and react to certain situations.

B. Second, let's look at our motivational differences.

1. Some facts about motivation:
 - a. You cannot motivate people.
 - b. However, all people are motivated.

- c. People become motivated to action for their own reasons—not the reasons others have for them.
 - d. The very best a motivator can do is to create a healthy environment that allows others to motivate themselves to action.
2. Too often we assume that the responsibility for creating changes in others is ours, when in fact, true change can only come from within each individual.
 - a. Bear Bryant was a master at taking players of differing degrees and bringing out their best effort. It was because he took the time to understand the needs of each player based on their perceptual and motivational differences.

C. In this series, you will discover how others may be misunderstanding you and you will discover how to understand your unique behavioral style relates to a positive biblical character.

1. You will discover your personality style. (Advertise Tuesday night session.)
2. You will discover how to grow and mature within that style.
3. You will discover how to be understanding of persons whose styles differ from yours.
4. You will discover how to create environments in which persons whose styles differ from yours can flourish.

D. Series schedule:

1. Today – ***“Why You Need to Discover How You Are Wired”***
2. August 7 – ***“Discovering the Dominant Behavioral Style (Paul)”***
3. August 14 – ***“Discovering the Influencing Behavioral Style (Peter)”***
4. August 21 – ***“Discovering the Steadiness Behavioral Style (Abraham)”***
5. August 28 – ***“Discovering the Compliance Behavioral Style (Moses)”***

6. September 4 – ***“Discovering the Behavioral Style of Jesus Christ”***

I. **WHY YOU NEED TO DISCOVER HOW YOU ARE WIRED**

A. **READ Matthew 22:34-40**

1. The Pharisees, who had classified over 600 laws, often tried to distinguish the more important from the less important.
 - a. So one of them, an “expert in the law,” asked Jesus to identify the most important law.
 - b. Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18.
 - c. By fulfilling these two commands, a person keeps all the others.
 - d. They summarize the Ten Commandments and the other Old Testament moral laws.
2. Jesus emphasized our two greatest needs:
 - a. A personal relationship with God as being the most important—our #1 need (whether we’re motivated to it or perceive it).
 - b. The relationships we have with others as being the next in importance—our #2 need (whether we’re motivated to it or perceive it).

B. **How do we love others as ourself?**

1. The word Jesus used for love in Greek was *agapao*.
 - a. *Agapao* refers to a level of love that is both self-sacrificing and attached to meeting the needs of others.
2. Jesus’ second command, “Love your neighbor as yourself,” expresses a great truth about human relationships.
 - a. If you sacrifice yourself without taking care of your own needs, you will have nothing of quality left to give others.
 - b. The only way we can ever love others in a self-sacrificial way is by first having a clear understanding of ourselves

and how to take care of our own needs (physical, emotional, and spiritual).

- c. When we have a grasp of those needs we will be capable of serving the needs of others.
3. This series is designed to help you get a better idea of what your own needs are and how they can best be met.
 - a. It will also help you understand the needs of others and what you can do to meet their needs.
 - b. “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” means meeting others’ needs in concert with meeting your own needs.

C. Personality differences often become barriers to accepting one another and living out the biblical command to show unconditional love.

1. Identifying and understanding diversity among personality profiles is a big step in learning how to cooperate with others instead of struggling with ineffective communication.

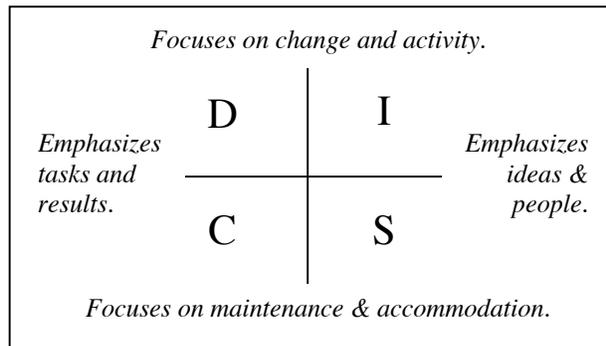
II. INTRODUCING THE BIBLICAL DISC BEHAVIORAL ASSESSMENT

A. In the 1920s and 1930s, a psychologist named William Martson developed the DISC model, a trait-based description of four behavioral styles into which he believed all persons fell.

1. The system has gone through five generations of refinement, resulting in the development of a common language to describe normal human behavior.
2. The system is based on aligning behavior traits on four continuums:
 - a. D = Dominance
 - b. I = Influencing
 - c. S = Steadiness
 - d. C = Compliance

3. Various DISC suppliers have devised instruments that measure the intensity of individuals on these four DISC continuums.
 - a. I will be using the system developed by Ken Voges in his book *Understanding How Others Misunderstand You*.
 - b. Most of these sermon materials are based on his 17 years of study on the DISC assessment.
4. Each letter in DISC represents a behavioral style.
 - a. We will spend some time today helping you understand your style.
 - b. The next four weeks will outline four biblical case studies of positive biblical characters that display these four behavioral styles.

B. General overview of the DISC assessment:



1. “D” stands for Dominant and Decisive
 - a. D’s prefer environments that allow them to be in control and create results.
 - b. They tend to shape their environment by overcoming opposition to accomplish results.
 - c. D’s are our “Directors,” “Organizers,” “Motivators,” and “Pioneers.”
 - d. Paul was a “D.”
2. “I” stands for Influencing and Interactive
 - a. I’s prefer environments that allow for social interaction.

- b. They tend to shape their environment bringing others into alliance to accomplish results.
 - c. I's are our "Affiliators," "Persuaders," "Encouragers," and "Negotiators."
 - d. "Peter" was an "I."
3. "S" stands for Steadiness & Supportive
- a. S's prefer environments that are stable and secure.
 - b. They tend to cooperate with others to carry out a task, preferring to work as a team rather than alone.
 - c. S's are our "Persisters," "Investigators," "Advisors," and "Strategists."
 - d. Abraham was an "S."
4. "C" stands for Compliance and Cautious
- a. C's prefer environments that place a high value on being right and safe.
 - b. They tend to be driven by quality control and usually prefer structure and order.
 - c. C's are our "Perfectionists," "Analysts," "Cooperators," and "Adaptors."
 - d. Moses was a "C."

C. The goal of this series is not to label people.

- 1. This should not be used to typecast or label others or to excuse negative behavior.
- 2. This is intended to clarify, not confine.

III. EXPECTATIONS AND ENVIRONMENTS

A. Think back o the Johnson household.

- 1. Everyone had different expectations in the same environment.
 - a. The expectations we place on ourselves and those around us have a dramatic impact on our behavior.

2. Dad was a “C,” Mom was an “I,” Suzie was an “S,” and Jack was a “D.”
 - a. Each family member had different expectations for themselves and the other family members.
 - b. Each person expected the others to behave according to his or her own needs.
 - c. Because there were so many unmet expectations among the family, conflict resulted.

B. Criteria involved in understanding DISC expectations.

1. Dominance (High D)
 - a. Desires being in charge and setting own standards of achievement: Jack.
2. Influencing (High I)
 - a. Desires a friendly environment and the freedom and flexibility to make changes: Mom.
3. Steadiness (High S)
 - a. Works at being supportive and carrying out the expectations of others: Suzie.
4. Compliance (High C)
 - a. Desires being right, fulfilling commitments, and having control of quality: Dad.

C. Once we understand the expectation levels of the various personality styles, we can replace harsh judgments of others with acceptance.

1. Instead of trying to change one another, we need to seek better communication with others and a commitment to work together.

D. Summing up expectations.

1. High C's expect perfection both of themselves and others.
2. High S's are committed to doing things correctly but do not necessarily expect others to comply with their high standards.

3. High D's have realistic expectations as they apply to themselves but can impose higher standards on others in order to maintain control.
4. High I's have relatively low expectations of themselves and others. They prefer to focus on maintaining relationships rather than accomplishing tasks.

CONCLUSION

A. Because of varying expectations of self and others, it is normal for us to interpret information differently.

1. What is important to discover is that all of these perspectives are needed for balance to occur.
 - a. This is how God created us.
 - b. Unfortunately differences are commonly viewed as threats to our personal need systems, and conflicts often occur.
 - c. We "agree to disagree" and imbalance occurs.

B. If we are to take advantage of insights into personality differences, we must find a way to show that we respect contrasting views.

1. We can do that by creating the environments that give others the potential to share how they really feel.

C. Remember Jesus' commandments?

1. Love God with all you have.
2. Love others as yourself.
 - a. This series is dedicated to helping you achieve the agape love you are to have for others by first understanding your needs and then understanding the needs of others.