

Discovering How You Are Wired (Part 2 of 6)¹

Discovering the Dominant Behavioral Style: Paul Acts 9:1-22

INTRODUCTION

A. Review of the goals of this series:

1. You will discover your personality style. (Advertise next DISC workshop.)
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.

B. Why are we doing this series?

1. Jesus told us to love others as ourselves (Matthew 22:34-40).
2. If we are going to be able to love others as ourselves, we must first understand our own needs (spiritual, physical, and emotional) and how we can have those needs met.
 - a. We must first love ourselves enough to understand what we need and how those needs can be met.
 - b. Then, we are to take the same care in understanding and meeting the needs of others.
 - c. Servants meet the needs of others and we are supposed to be servants.
3. The goal of this series is NOT to label people.
 - a. This should not be used to typecast or label others or to excuse negative behavior.
 - b. This is intended to clarify, not confine

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 © 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.

TRANSITION

A. Introducing the Dominant (High D) Behavioral Style

1. “How would you feel if you were given the assignment of leading a small, ill-equipped army that had been inactive for forty years? What would be your response if you were ordered to march that army against an enemy who possessed greater strength and the advantage of fighting on familiar territory? What may create panic in and seem hopeless to most of us is well suited for some people—those persons with the Dominant (High D) personality style.”²
2. “Do you have a goal that seems unobtainable? A task with insurmountable obstacles? Does a mountain you want to climb seem too high? Does a river look too wide to cross? The person with the Dominant personality style is the one you want to lead the way. That behavioral style is willing to accept challenges, create action, and obtain results. High D’s can climb that mountain and cross that river.”³
3. “After he has accepted the challenge, expect a High D to become focused on specific tasks and authoritatively manage trouble and solve problems. High D’s are driven to overcome opposition in order to accomplish results. They possess an unusual ability to thrive in negative environments. Challenges give them the chance to create something better than was there before.”
4. A High D loves challenges, and it only inspires him to action when others suggest, “It cannot be done.”
5. They focus principally on goals and tasks.
6. Frequently, they see people only as a means to accomplish a goal.
7. They are motivated by directness.
8. A High D is afraid of being taken advantage of.
9. Only 10-15% of people are High D’s.

² From *Understanding How Others Misunderstand You* (In His Grace, Inc., Houston, TX © 2005), p. 79.

³ Ibid.

B. Characteristics of the Dominant (High D) behavioral style:

1. High self-confidence
2. High sense of personal worth
3. Initiating
4. Decisive
5. Authoritative
6. Courageous
7. Task-oriented
8. Results-oriented
9. Commanding
10. Competitive
11. Forceful
12. Change-agent
13. Direct, straight-forward

C. The High D indicator statements:

1. *[Read over the indicator statements in your bulletin and check the ones that you identify with. The more you check off, the more likely you are to be a High D.]*

D. What we're going to discover about the Dominant (High D) behavioral style today:

1. We'll see how a High D handles conflict and how we should handle conflict with a High D.
2. We'll look at a negative biblical example of a High D personality.
3. We'll look at a positive biblical example of a High D personality.
4. We'll look at how to love a High D.

I. THE HIGH D AND CONFLICT**A. Needs issues for the High D:**

1. Being in control
2. Accomplishing personal goals

B. A High D begins to encounter stress when:

1. He has to submit to a higher authority or lose control.
2. He has his personal goals blocked or threatened.
 - a. This makes him decide to either submit to the higher authority, or
 - b. Escalate the degree of the confrontation.

II. **NEGATIVE BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF A HIGH D: PHARAOH (Exodus 5:1-6:11)**

A. **The High D being challenged to submit.**

1. Moses was asking Pharaoh to submit to God's authority.
2. The typical High D response to this would be to reject it initially
 - a. God knew this would happen and prepared Moses for it (see 3:19-20).
3. "Once a High D personalizes a goal, he normally expends all his energy into meeting that goal. Typically, he eliminates any obstacle in his path with whatever works the quickest and best. If the barrier persists, the High D builds up great amounts of energy, which is usually released in the form of expressing anger... When an individual becomes the obstruction, the High D sees to it that life is extremely unpleasant for that person, even to the point of bringing emotional or physical pain upon him."⁴

B. **The High D losing control.**

1. Pharaoh was being asked to give up his labor force, which was busy building monuments to him.
 - a. One can expect the High D to disagree with any plan that is contrary to his goals or does not allow him to remain in control.
2. Because the conflict of personal preferences continued, Pharaoh lashed out to remain in control.

⁴ Ibid., p. 108

- a. His plan was to discredit Moses and Aaron and make them appear an enemy—a common High D strategy. (v. 21)

C. What happened to this High D?

1. Because he operated solely out of his instincts and did not properly submit to authority, he was punished and eventually killed.

III. POSITIVE BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF A HIGH D: PAUL (Acts 9:1-22)

A. Imagine Paul as a child...

1. “Picture him at age six—demanding to get his own way, unable to take no for an answer, wearing down his parents with his constant demands and desire to be in control. The probably echoed the lament I’ve heard from parents of kids like that: ‘I know that these qualities may serve him well in the future. But right now he’s driving me crazy!’”⁵

B. Paul as an Pharisee

1. He was committed to become the best among his peers and did whatever it took to advance his career. [READ Acts 22:3].
2. He was from the tribe of Benjamin, bilingual in Hebrew and Greek, a Roman citizen, attended rabbinical school under Gamaliel—the most respected teacher of the law.
3. Paul had all the qualifications to ascend to the top—possibly even seeking the position of High Priest.
4. However, on his path to success, a new group emerged as competition—the followers of Jesus Christ.

C. Paul’s story (Acts 9:1-22)

1. Before he became a Christian, as a High D, Paul was dogmatic, determined, decisive, and demanding. He was a doer on a mission to stamp out Christianity.

⁵ *Different Children, Different Needs: Understanding the Unique Personality of Your Child*, Dr. Charles F. Boyd (Multnomah Publishers, © 2004), p. 57.

2. After his conversion, Paul's behavioral style didn't change one bit—God simply gave him a new mission.
 - a. During the next few decades, Paul became one of the greatest, most dynamic leaders of the new church.

IV. HOW TO LOVE A HIGH D

Since Jesus' command to us was to love others as ourselves, we must do all we can to show this "agape" love to every behavioral style.

A. How to respond to a High D

1. Be firm and direct
2. Focus on actions and goals
3. Caring confrontation may be necessary to get his attention
 - a. *Do you see how Jesus responded to Paul?*

B. How to relate to a High D

1. Be brief and to the point,
2. Explain 'how to achieve goals' using logic with an action plan
3. Don't expect agreement; allow time for him to consider your ideas
 - a. *Do you see how Jesus related to Paul?*

C. How to reinforce a High D

1. Repeat the plan of action, focusing on goals, objectives, and results
2. Give bottom-line instructions
3. Get out of the way
 - a. *Do you see how Jesus reinforced Paul's behavioral style?*

CONCLUSION

- A. **When Paul was converted, his negative drives were transformed into a positive force.**

1. Paul's submission to the higher authority helped evangelize the world for Christ.
2. Without his obedience and commitment to follow through on the challenge, we might not have had the opportunity to trust Christ ourselves.
3. High D's have an important place in God's plan.

B. Today's invitation is twofold:

1. I invite all people who are not High Ds to repent of how they have had unrealistic expectations of High Ds.
 - a. God wired them to have high self-confidence, a high sense of personal worth, be initiating, decisive, authoritative, courageous, task-oriented, results-oriented, commanding, competitive, forceful, change-agents, direct, and straight-forward.
 - b. It is not up to us to place unrealistic expectations on them to be otherwise.
2. I invite all the high D's among us to repent of misusing the way God wired you to abuse people and be mean and disrespectful to others.
 - a. While God wired you to be a High D, it is not an excuse to run roughshod over others.
 - b. Stop acting like Pharaoh and start acting like Paul.