

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

Discovering the Behavioral Style of Jesus Christ

Romans 12:2 & John 11:1-35

INTRODUCTION

A. Review of the goals of this series:

1. You should have discovered your personality style.
2. You should have discovered how to grow and mature within that style.
3. You should have discovered how to be understanding of persons whose styles differ from yours.
4. You should have discovered how to create environments in which persons whose styles differ from yours can flourish.

B. Why did we do this series?

1. Jesus told us to love others as ourselves (Matthew 22:34-40).
 - 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.
2. The goal of this series was NOT to label people.

C. The conclusion of this series:

1. Today we're going to look at the role of the Holy Spirit in transforming our behavioral weaknesses into strengths.
2. Then we will look at how Jesus Christ is our ultimate example as we try to figure out how we are wired.

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.

I. THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN BEHAVIORAL STYLES

A. No one personality or behavioral style is superior to another.

1. Each of the four styles we have discussed are normal when we understand them in the expression of basic needs.
 - a. High D's are directive, domineering, risk-takers.
 - b. High I's are persuasive, sociable, and confident.
 - c. High S's are patient, loyal team players.
 - d. High C's are accurate, restrained, and have high standards.
2. We can choose to understand more about those around us and strive to meet their needs, or we can choose to indulge in self-serving behavior that ends up draining our relationships of life and energy.
 - a. Have you ever known someone who was a “drain” on your relationship with him or her? That person probably had no desire to meet your needs and was only interested in meeting his.
 - b. As Christians, we should never be labeled as a “drain” in a relationship. Christianity is all about serving others—not self.

Illustration: “On Getting Along With People”²

The six most important words: “I admit I made a mistake.”

The five most important words: “You did a good job.”

The four most important words: “What do you think?”

The three most important words: “After you please.”

The two most important words: “Thank you.”

The one most important word: “We”

The least important word: “I”

² Source Unknown

3. Our strengths can become our weaknesses when taken to their extremes (by demonic or Satanic influence, void of the Holy Spirit)
 - a. Biblical characters such as Paul, Peter, Abraham, and Moses responded poorly in some situations.
 - b. Their actions were in accordance with the personality styles, but were not necessarily excusable.

B. As children of God, we need to go further in our spiritual and emotional growth.

1. It is our call to transcend our natural tendencies and do something supernatural (i.e. “Transformation”)
 - a. *Romans 12:2a – Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. (NIV)³*
 - b. *Romans 12:2 – Don’t become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking. Instead, fix your attention on God. You’ll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you. (MSG)⁴*
2. Before we came to Christ, the only resource for behavior modification was sheer willpower.
 - a. In Christ, we have the divine source for experiencing transformation—after all it is His ability, not our responsibility.

C. Paul’s transformation

1. Paul was a High D/C

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⁴ Scripture quotations marked (MSG) are taken from *The Message*. Copyright © 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, 2002. Used by permission of NavPress Publishing Group.

- a. He was an excellent debater; he was very strong-willed and displayed a classic High D behavioral style both before and after his conversion to Christianity.
 - b. Tim LaHaye wrote of Paul: “He is an excellent debater. In fact, never take him on in a debate unless you are assured of your facts, for he will make mincemeat of you, combining verbal aggressiveness and attendance to detail. This man is extremely competitive and forceful in all that he does. His battle plan is always the same: ‘Go for the jugular vein.’”⁵
2. Paul’s weakness—his thorn in the flesh.
 - a. Though it was possible for Paul to boast in his faithfulness through his severe trials in ministry, he did not.
 - b. READ 2 Corinthians 12:7-9
 - c. Paul’s **natural** High D style would have been to say, “Strength is made perfect in strength, brothers! Let there be no weaknesses among you.”
 3. Paul was **transformed** by the Holy Spirit.
 - a. The transformed Paul was able to release his need for control to the Lord.

D. Peter’s transformation

1. Peter was a High I.
 - a. When he was under pressure, his **natural** tendency would be to say things he would later regret (e.g. rebuking Jesus, denying Jesus, etc.).
 - b. In positive environments, Peter was an excellent speaker, but when they were negative he would clam up, avoid responsibility and shift blame.
2. Peter’s first major ministry—healing the lame man.

⁵ Tim LaHaye, *Understanding the Male Temperament* (Old Tappan, NJ: Revell, © 1977), p. 103.

- a. In Acts 3, Peter and John healed the beggar at the gate to the Temple. It caused such a ruckus that they were arrested.
 - b. When the 70 elders began to question them, Peter remained calm and confidently spoke when he previously would have responded defensively by denying any responsibility.
3. Peter was **transformed** by the Holy Spirit.
- a. Look at how the transformed Peter responded (READ Acts 4:8b-12)
 - b. Note v. 13, too.

E. Abraham's transformation

1. Abraham was a High S.
 - a. He was very dedicated to his family and twice lied about his relationship with his wife to spare his own life.
 - b. Abraham avoided conflict at all costs.
2. Abraham's family conflict—Sarah vs. Hagar & Ishmael.
 - a. In Genesis 16, Abraham used a “flight” strategy and chose not to get involved with the dispute between Sarah and Hagar.
 - b. This is a completely **natural** reaction for Abraham's behavioral style.
3. Abraham was **transformed** by the Holy Spirit.
 - a. In Genesis 22, we see how Abraham completely and wholeheartedly obeyed God when He asked him to sacrifice his own son, Isaac.
 - b. Abraham should have felt totally distraught with the assignment, but instead he placed his faith in the Lord and followed instructions.

F. Moses' transformation

1. Moses was a High C

- a. He was very cautious and he preferred an environment that is controlled and structured; he didn't like being put in a position where he had to make decisions on his own.
2. Moses' burning bush experience
 - a. When God met him, there all Moses did was try to get out of it. (Exodus 3)
 - b. Even after he finally accepted the assignment, he often times asked God to kill him so he wouldn't have to worry about the Israelites.
3. Moses and the golden calf situation
 - a. When Moses returned from God with the Law and saw what the people had done, his **natural** reaction would have been to ask questions, get defensive, and take on a "poor me" attitude.
4. Moses was transformed by the Holy Spirit.
 - a. READ Exodus 32:30-32
 - b. Moses should have been terrified to do this, but he went alone and offered God his life for the lives of the Israelites.

G. God's love is not dependent upon our performance.

1. He is committed to growing us beyond our natural ability and into the likeness of Christ.

II. JESUS: THE GREAT EXAMPLE OF HOW BEHAVIORAL STYLES SHOULD WORK

A. Is this blasphemy to speak of Jesus Christ as having a personality style?

1. Jesus was fully God and fully man; therefore, as theologian John F. Walvoord states, "It is necessary to view Him as

having a complete human nature including body, soul, and spirit.”⁶

2. As human, Jesus exemplified each of the four behavioral styles found in the DISC model.
 - a. The big difference though, is that He displayed these styles not in accordance with His own “wiring” but according to the “wiring” of those around him.

B. Jesus with Mary and Martha (John 11:1-35)⁷

1. Martha was the active one; Mary was the passive one.
2. Martha was a High D; Mary was a High S.
3. Martha went out to meet Jesus; Mary stayed at home.
4. Martha said, “Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.” (v. 21); Mary said the same thing. (v. 32)

C. How did Jesus respond to Martha?

1. Jesus issued a simple statement that Lazarus would rise again (v. 23).
2. Martha thought Jesus was referring to final resurrection (v. 24).
3. Jesus responded to her concerns, reminding Martha that life and resurrection was wrapped up in Him (vv. 25-27).
4. The whole dialog with Martha was an intellectual, factual, theological basis.
5. Martha’s tones were aggressive and accusatory, and Jesus responded matter-of-factly, but He was not offended and His response comforted her.

D. How did Jesus respond to Mary?

1. When she heard that Jesus was looking for her, she went out to meet Him (vv. 29-32).

⁶ John F. Walvoord, *Jesus Christ Our Lord* (Chicago, Moody, © 1969), p. 111.

⁷ Description of this story adapted from Ken R. Voges and Mike Kempainen, *Discovering the Leadership Styles of Jesus* (Houston, TX: © 2001), pp. 155-157

2. Even though Mary used the same sentence as Martha, her tone was different.
3. When Jesus saw her weeping and those who had come with her, He was moved and simply asked, “where have you laid him?” (v. 34).
4. It is now that we read the shortest verse in the Bible: “Jesus wept.” (v. 35)
5. Even though both sisters used the same words, Jesus’ response was very different...each one behaviorally predictable.
 - a. To Martha’s High D approach, Jesus responded with facts and theology.
 - b. To Mary’s High S approach, Jesus responded with empathy.

CONCLUSION

A. The rest of the story is that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead.

1. Would you like to be raised from your dead position before God?
 - a. No matter who you are, Jesus has proven that He is able to meet your needs.
2. Matthew 11:28-30 – *“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”*
 - a. Life is easier and lighter taking the yoke of Jesus.
 - b. Modifying your behavior to meet everyone’s needs is impossible without the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.
3. The best way to live up to your greatest potential is to be willing for your weaknesses to be transformed into strengths by God’s Holy Spirit.