

# Discovering How You Are Wired (Part 4 of 6)<sup>1</sup>

## Discovering the Steadiness Behavioral Style: Abraham

### *Genesis 13:5-12; 22:1-10*

#### 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).
  - 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 is NOT to label people.

#### TRANSITION

##### **A. Introducing the Steadiness (High S) Behavioral Style**

1. "Did you ever stop to think about the axles of an automobile?  
Certainly the engine gives the car its power, and the wheels move it down the road. Engines can be big and powerful, and wheels can

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<sup>1</sup> 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](http://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.

be sporty. However the car is not going to move safely without the strong support of the axles. Every automobile needs axles.”<sup>2</sup>

*Illustration: I once looked at buying an old VW Beetle, but didn't buy it because the right rear axle was bent.*

2. “Or consider, if you will, the anchor of a ship. No matter how magnificent the ship, in a stormy sea it is destined for destruction upon the rocks unless the anchor holds firm beneath the surface, keeping it connected to the solid ground far below. The world needs anchors and axles. The Dominance personality is a hard charger who seizes authority and gets the job done no matter what it takes. The Influencer, on the other hand, is a motivator, an encourager, and a spokesperson who is often the center of attention. In their ways they both shape the environment around them. But the world also needs people who have the ability to keep both feet on the ground—people with a Steadiness (High S) personality style. High S people are team players with a desire to please and maintain peace and stability in a group, even if it means sacrificing their own personal goals. Like the anchor and the axle, they usually do not stand out in a crowd, but they are noticed over time because of their consistent, steady work habits.”<sup>3</sup>
3. 30-35% of people are High S's, representing the largest percentage of behavioral styles.

**B. Characteristics of the Steadiness (High S) behavioral style:**

1. Steadfast
2. Team Player
3. Prefer Familiarity
4. Render Service
5. Humble
6. Committed to People
7. Pragmatic

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<sup>2</sup> From *Understanding How Others Misunderstand You* (In His Grace, Inc., Houston, TX © 2005), p. 165.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

8. Supportive
9. Sensitive
10. Steady
11. Dependable
12. Consistent
13. Fearful of Change

**C. The High S 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 S.]*

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

1. We'll see what causes conflict and stress in the life of a High S.
2. We'll look at some negative biblical examples of High S personalities.
3. We'll look at a positive biblical example of a High S personality.
4. We'll look at how to love a High S.

**I. THE CAUSES OF STRESS & CONFLICT FOR HIGH S's**

**A. Needs issues for the High S:**

1. Maintaining an environment that is free of conflict—especially in the home.
2. Harmony and security.

**B. A High S begins to encounter stress when:**

1. Routine action does not create the expected results.
2. When another person (family or work) takes an aggressive strategy in dealing with him or her.
  - a. When this occurs, the High S will have to decide between standing up to fight,
  - b. Implementing a passive-aggressive response, or
  - c. Shutting down.

## II. NEGATIVE BIBLICAL EXAMPLES OF HIGH S's

### A. Jacob (Genesis 25)

1. Jacob's name actually meant "deceiver" or "trickster."
  - a. Jacob was a Mama's boy and he knew that he was number two in his father's eyes next to his twin brother, Esau. (vv. 27-28)
  - b. This caused some inevitable tension for Jacob.
2. In typical High S fashion, in his tension he acted out through passive aggression in stealing his brother's birthright. (vv. 29-34)
  - a. And later he even tricked his father into granting him the blessing that should have been given to his brother.

### B. Isaac (Genesis 26)

1. Isaac was Jacob's father.
2. Isaac's wife was Rebekah—who was very beautiful.
  - a. In typical High S fashion attempting to avoid conflict with the men of Gerar, Isaac lied about Rebekah and told them that she was his wife. (v. 7)

### C. Abraham (Genesis 12 & 20)

1. Abraham was the father of Isaac, the grandfather of Jacob.
2. Wonder where Isaac learned to lie about his wife?
  - a. Abraham lied about Sarah being his sister in order to avoid conflict.
    - i. *He lied to Pharaoh of Egypt about it. (12:11-13)*
    - ii. *He lied to Abimilech, King of Gerar. (20:1-2)*
3. "But I thought you said that Abraham was a good example of a High S?"

### III. POSITIVE BIBLICAL EXAMPLE OF A HIGH S: ABRAHAM (Genesis 13 & 22)

#### A. The first occasion where Abraham shows us the positive side of the High S behavioral style (Genesis 13):

1. He settled with his wife Sarah and his nephew Lot in the land of Bethel.
2. Both he and Lot were extremely wealthy and had large herds.
  - a. This made it difficult for the land to sustain both of their clans.
  - b. Their servants even began to get in arguments over who was supposed to be where. (v. 7)
3. Not wanting to cause conflict and desiring the best for his family, Abraham made a suggestion in order to keep peace. (vv. 8-12)
  - a. This is an excellent quality of High S's, because it reveals their devotion to family and their desire for peace.
  - b. This revealed his commitment to people, his pragmatic nature, his sensitivity to others, and the fact that he was a team player.

#### B. The second occasion where Abraham shows us the positive side of the High S behavioral style (Genesis 22):

1. After years of waiting patiently (High S characteristic!) for the promised son, Abraham finally receives Isaac. (Gen. 21:1-2)
2. But when Isaac was a young man, God did something odd: He requested of Abraham that he sacrifice Isaac on an altar to God. (v. 2)
  - a. The normal response of a High S would be to stay busy with other things, ignoring the message, hoping that it would eventually go away (all the while worrying about it!).

- b. If pushed on the issue, typically the High S would be likely to suggest a compromise, but would avoid making a decision.
3. This request of God threatened both of Abraham's basic needs:
- a. Maintaining an environment that is free of conflict—especially in the home.
  - b. Harmony and security.
    - i. *When it comes to his family, High S's don't want anything or anybody to rock the boat, and he surely doesn't want to take the boat into any storms.*
    - ii. *High S's have been known to have stress-related stomach problems due to their tendency to stuff their feelings when dealing with stress. (Hannah in 1 Samuel 1 is a good example of this occurrence.)*
4. But look at how Abraham responded—even though it was totally against the way God had wired him.
- a. He obeyed. (vv. 3-10)

**C. Abraham is an excellent example of:**

- 1. Strengths (i.e. family dedication, pragmatism, etc.) can become weaknesses if they cause us to depend upon ourselves.
  - a. Oswald Chambers said, *"Unguarded strength is double weakness. The Bible characters fell on their strong points, never on their weak ones."*
- 2. Weaknesses can become strengths when they help us to get out of our comfort zones and depend on God. [READ vv. 11-18]

#### IV. HOW TO LOVE A HIGH S

***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 S**

1. Be non-threatening and patient
2. Allow time to adjust to change
3. Make allowances for family
  - a. In Genesis 12 when God told Abraham to leave his family and country and move to the land of Canaan, God waited patiently for Abraham to fully obey. (Read about how Abraham took his whole clan and only went to Ur at first.)

##### **B. How to RELATE to a High S**

1. Use friendly tones when instructing
  - a. *God called Abraham His friend (Isaiah 41:8).*
2. Give personal, nonverbal assurances
  - a. When he and Lot separated, God painted a picture of the promise He made to Abraham (Genesis 13:14-18).
3. Allow time to process information
  - a. *It took Abraham a while to process the promise God had given him. But God allowed him time.*

##### **C. How to REINFORCE a High S**

1. Patiently repeat instructions
2. Provide hands-on reinforcement
3. Be patient, allowing time to take ownership

#### CONCLUSION

##### **A. Of all of the four behavioral styles, the Steadiness style is the hardest to see.**

1. These people are usually the quiet ones.
2. But, oh, how they work into the overall plan of God.

**B. Today's invitation:**

1. I invite everyone to embrace how God has wired you.
  - a. But remember that because you are a Christian, God doesn't accept anything less than His perfect standard.
  - b. Jesus is our standard.
    - i. *If you are not seeking to conform your life into the likeness of Jesus Christ, I invite you to repent and begin anew, allowing God's Holy Spirit to work in you.*
2. I invite High S's who have used their passive-aggressive tendencies against others to repent.
  - a. Remember that no matter how you are wired, it never excuses negative or sinful behavior.