

The Best-selling Classic on Who You Are and Who You Can Become

Spirit-Controlled Temperament

TIM LAHAYE

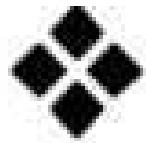


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Tyndale House
Publishers, Inc.
Carol Stream, Illinois

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Spirit-Controlled Temperament

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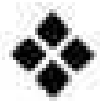
Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

LaHaye, Tim F.
Spirit-controlled temperament / Tim LaHaye. –Rev. ed.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references.
ISBN-13: 978-0-8423-6220-7
ISBN-10: 0-8423-6220-7
1. Temperament—Religious aspects—Christianity. 2. Holy Spirit.
I. Title.
BV4509.5.L328 1993
248.4—dc20 93-17269

Printed in the United States of America

10 09 08 07 06 05
23 22 21 20 19 18 17 16

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CHAPTER I

Spirit-Modified Temperaments

Introduction



There is nothing more fascinating about people than their inherited temperament! It is temperament that provides each human being with the distinguishing qualities that make each as individually unique as the differing designs God has given to snowflakes. Temperament is the unseen force underlying human action, it force that can destroy it normal and productive human being unless it is disciplined and directed.

Temperament provides both our strengths and weaknesses. Although we like to think only of our strengths, everyone has weaknesses!

God has given Christians the Holy Spirit, who is able to improve our natural strengths and overcome our weaknesses- as we cooperate with him. That's the basic message of this hook, first published twenty-six years ago.



The Making of a Best-Seller

No one was more surprised than I when Spirit-Controlled 7rm/Jerament, my first book, became it best-seller. It has now

sold more than one million copies-just in English. It has also been translated into more than twenty languages, for which I am particularly grateful. It is a special privilege to he a writer, as the written word allows you to minister to people you have never met-all over the world.

Actually, I originally had no intention of this material being published as it book. It started out as printed notes of a series of Sunday night sermons delivered in 1966 to my congregation in San Diego. The series was designed to help them see how the Holy Spirit could strengthen their natural weaknesses.

Well, it was one of the most practical and best received sermon series that I delivered in my twentyfive years at that church. Many parishioners testified that God used it to transform their lives. I had noticed that the attendance was better when I printed my messages, and for this series-one of my first-we broke all previous attendance records.

In the providence of God, John Lindscott, the manager of the Campus Crusade bookstore in Arrowhead Springs and a former member of our church, "happened" to he in San Diego and hear the last of these sermons. Looking over the eleven messages, he said, "Why don't you put these together and put a cover on it so I can try selling them in our bookstore"

Wondering if anyone outside our church would read them, I asked, "How many should I send?"

"Three hundred," he said.

Well, my high-school children collated the printed notes and glued covers on them. Then I took them to a printer to cut them properly.

Three days later John called and said he wanted twelve hundred more! It seems lie had given one to Hal Lindsey, teaching for Campus Crusade at the time, and asked him to recommend it. Hal crawled into bed that night and read it before he went to sleep. The next morning he held it up in class and said, "I just read the neatest little book. You ought to read it." The first three hundred were gone in one afternoon. Thus the call for twelve hundred more. My second "private" printing was for three thousand, which I assumed would last the rest of my life.

About that time I preached this series in Phoenix. It had the same effect on those people as it had had on my congregation. The hundred copies of the book I took with one quickly sold out. About the time we needed a third printing, our children were getting tired of collating "Dad's books."

One day as my wife, Beverly, dropped me off at the airport to fly to Chicago, where I was to speak at it Suinday-school convention, we stopped and prayed that God would raise up a publisher for this little book. Little did we know that he had already prepared the ground.

John Lindscott had given Bob Hawkins, the marketing genius of Ken Taylor's The Living Bible, it copy and said, "Bob, you ought to publish this hook." It seems that Bob had put it in his briefcase and hadn't read it until his wife, Shirley, had got hold of it and said, "Bob, Tyndale House ought to publish this hook."

With those recommendations-from John Lindscott and Shirley-Bob came to hear me speak in Chicago. Afterward he introduced himself and invited me out for dinner to the famed Jim Diamond's Steak House. What he said that night changed my life: "'Tyndale House is going to branch out into book-as opposed to Bible-publishing, and we would like to make Spirit-Controlled 7vmpercament our first book."

And that is how my first hook became the first book published by Tyndale House.

I n it vital sense S'ph t-Controlled Temperament, with its downto-earth practical message on how we can strengthen our weaknesses through the Holy Spirit, reflects God's gracious, strengthening work in these three principal parties. Now, twentyfive years later, Tyndale House is a major Christian publisher with one of' the most complete lines of helpful biblically based materials in the country; Bob Hawkins has founded Harvest House, publisher of' hundreds of good books; while I have written thirty hooks to date with more than 9 million copies in print worldwide.

When I first wrote Spirit-Controlled Teinjperantent, I was excited about its potential for helping people who yearned for a more consistent Christian life. Its concepts had already changed my life, and through my extensive counseling ministry I was witnessing similar transformations in the lives of many others.

From the thousands of letters and personal testimonials I have received in response to my teaching this material in more than eight hundred Family Life Seminars around the world, I have become even more convinced of its relevance. So when Tyndale House asked me to revise the book, I gladly accepted the challenge.



A Brief History of the Four Temperaments

The theory of the finer temperaments is not perfect; no theory of human behavior is. However, it is the oldest on record, going back more than three thousand years: In Proverbs 30:11-14 the wise man saw finer kinds of people. About five hundred years later, the four were given names by Hippocrates, said to be the father of modern medicine. Galen, a Greek doctor, came up with a detailed list of the strengths and weaknesses of the four around A.U. 200. This has remained pretty much intact throughout history and is still the prevailing position in Europe.

Unfortunately, Sigmund Freud and his unscientific theories that based human behavior on environment and background rather than on inherited tendencies became the predominant view in America.

Shortly after it was published in English, I read Tempera-ntent and the Christian Faith by the Norwegian theologian Ole I Iallesbv. This book about the four temperaments gave me dif=ferent by sets of weaknesses. Hallesbv suggested that we receive beset seemed people different why into insight new our natural tendencies for good and bad from our temper-antents.



My Contributions to the Study of the Four Temperaments

,Spirit-Controlled 7'mperamenl was the first book on the subject of'temperament written in English and for Christians. Since then I have written Trans/ormed /emperaments, a biblical study of Peter the Sanguine, I'atil the Choleric, Moses the Melancholy, and Abraham the Phlegmatic. My wife, Beverly, has written two books on the subject, .Spirit-Controlled Wonsan and How to Develop }oar-Child's Temperament. Between us we have been privileged to popularize this ancient concept in the Christian cont►nunity.

It is said that copying is the highest form of'praise. Several others have since written on this subject, evidencing that it is it

helpful tool. Some have presented it as personality traits, others in terms of animal traits, and still others have developed personality tests based on the theory. This wealth of material only testifies to the enduring nature of the theory as a people-helping tool.

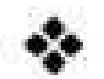
In the twenty-six years since I wrote this material, the concept has been confirmed hundreds of times in the counseling room, through administering the LaHave Temperament Analv'sis test to more than twenty-seven thousand people, including mane counselors who in turn ttse it ill their work.

While I didn't originate the idea of' the four temperaments, I have made three contributions to the field.

1. Temperament Mends. Sonia people reject the theory because they observe at least two temperaments in people. I acknowledge such "primary" and "secondary" temperaments. This new edition contains a whole chapter on twelve blends of temperament.

2. The enemies of anger and fear. All of us have one of two primary emotional enemies that if left unchecked will seriously limit our lives: anger or fear. (Some people, because of their mixture of temperaments, have both problems.) The good news is that the Holy Spirit is able to give Christians victory over these life-limiting emotional problems.

3. Opposite temperaments attract in marriage-but that's not the end of the story. If used properly, this can be a great advantage. If not used properly, it can turn love into hate. I discuss this idea thoroughly in I Love You, but Why Are We So Uijferent? One of the most exciting discoveries I have made as a pastor-counselor is this: In the nine fruit of the Spiritfilled life as described in Galatians 5:22-23, there is a strength for every weakness. Whatever our backgrounds, temperament combinations, or habit patterns, Jesus Christ by his Holy Spirit can give us victory over "the sin which so easily ensnares us [causes us to stumble] " (Heb. 12:1).



A Theory That Works

The temperament theory is not the final answer to human behavior, and for these and other reasons it may not prove satisfactory to everyone. But of all behavior theories ever devised, it has served me as the most helpful explanation of why people act the way they do and what their principal weaknesses are.

Since the original publication of this hook, I have seen nothing that has shaken my confidence in this old theory. On the contrary, I have had many experiences that confirmed my conviction that it is the best explanation of human behavior available today. And while it is not specifically taught in the Scriptures, when used with the Scriptures to show the power

available to us in the indwelling Holy Spirit, it is the best tool for helping people ever devised.

I have found the four temperaments to he a tool to help people reach their maximum potential. Among the many different behavior theories-from Transactional Analysis and Freudian theory to the Myers-Briggs sixteen types-1 consider it the best and the easiest to understand and use for self-improvement.

After examining the Myers-Briggs system of sixteen categories, I prefer the temperament theory for three reasons. (1) It is easier. With temperaments you have to learn only four names that are descriptive of the action they represent. The twelve blends are mixtures of the four temperament names. (2) The Myers-Briggs system, like the Taylor Johnson test, offers no remedial help. As we shall see, the temperament theory lends itself to effective change by the ministry of the Holy Spirit. (3) The twelve blends of temperament are true to life. It isn't perfect, no human system is, but it does not contradict Scripture, it parallels several scriptural principles, and it has a track record of helping many people, to the glory of' God.

Some think the temperament theory is "too simplistic," but that may be part of the key to its popularity; people can understand it. Still others have tried unsuccessfully to tie it to the ancient signs of the zodiac and the horoscope. In so doing they make it drastic miscalculation-of nine months! Howl The horoscope is based on one's day of birth, which in reality has

nothing to do with temperament. As we shall see, your temperament was determined at conception by the combination of the genes of your parents. And temperament characteristics illustrate the biblical truth that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps. 139:14) -"made" or "created" with both strengths or talents, which God wants to use, and weaknesses, which he wants to strengthen by the Holy Spirit.

My intent in this book is to help you understand how the Holy Spirit can enable you to overcome your weaknesses. It is not automatic! You must cooperate with the Spirit of God to effect lasting change in your life.

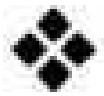


Credit Where Credit Is Due

I am in debt to many people in the writing of this hook. I have combined my extensive reading on the temperaments and in psychology in general with my observations of people-observations made as pastor and counselor for more than thirty-three years. I've gleaned much from the speaking ministry of the biblically based Christian psychologist Henry Brandt. I also drew extensively from Temperament and the Christian Faith by the late Norwegian theologian Dr. Ole Hallesby.

C H A P T E R I

You're Born with It!



"Why is it that I can't control myself? I know what's right and wrong. I just don't seem to he able to do what's right!" This frustrated plea cane from a fine young businessman who had come to me for counseling. It wasn't the first time I had heard that plaint in one Form or another; in tact, it is it very conuuon experience.

The apostle Paul no doubt felt that same way when he said, To will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now ii' l do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me" (Rom. 7:18-20).

Note that Paul differentiated between himself and that uncontrollable force within by saying, "It is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me." The "I" is Paul's person, the soul, will, and the human mind. The "sin" that resided in him resulted fro►n the natural weaknesses that he, like all ht►man beings, received from his parents.

At the moment of' our conception we all inherited a basic genetic temperament that contains both our strengths and our weaknesses. This temperament is called several things in the Bible: "the natural man," "the flesh," "the old man," and "corruptible flesh," to name a few. It is the basic impulse of our being that seeks to satisfy our wants. To properly understand the temperament's control of our actions and reactions, we should define three terms and carefully distinguish among them: temperament, character; and personality.



Temperament

Temperament is the combination of inborn traits that subconsciously affects all our behavior. These traits, which are passed on by our genes, are based on hereditary factors and arranged at the time of conception. Six people contribute through the gene pool to the makeup of every baby: two parents and four grandparents. Some authorities suggest that we may get more genes from our grandparents than our parents. That could account for the greater resemblance of some children to their grandparents than to their parents. The alignment of temperament traits, though unseen, is just as predictable as the color of eyes, hair, or size of body.

It is a person's temperament that makes that person outgoing and extrovertish or shy and introvertish. Doubtless you know both kinds of people who are siblings-born to the same

parents. Similarly, it is temperament that makes some people art or music enthusiasts, while others are sports or industry minded. In fact, I have met outstanding musicians whose brothers or sisters were tone-deaf. I think of one professional football player whose brother has never watched him play a game because, as he tells it, he "just can't stand to watch violence."



Character

Character is the real you. The Bible refers to it as "the hidden person of the heart" (1 Pet. 3:4). It is the result of' your natural temperament modified by childhood training, education, and basic attitudes, beliefs, principles, and motivations. It is sometimes referred to as "the soul" of a person, which is made up of the mind, emotions, and will.

Character combines your temperament, training, moral values, beliefs, and habit patterns. It is indeed the net result of all the influences and religious commitment on your life. It is what you really are when there is no one else around. What you do when you have the freedom to do what you want to do is an expression of yourself.



Personality

Personality is the outward expression of oneself, which may or may not he the sane as a person's character, depending on how genuine that person is.

Often personality is it pleasing facade for an unpleasant or weak character. Many are acting a part today on the basis of what they think they should he as a person, rather than what they really are. This is a formula for mental and spiritual chaos. It is caused by following the human formula for acceptable conduct. The Bible tells its, "Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7), and, "Out of it [the heart] spring the issues of'life" (Pros'. 4:23). The place to change behavior is inside man, not outside.



Summary

In summary, temperament is the combination of traits we were born with; character is our "civilized" temperament; and personality is the "face" we show to others.

Since temperament traits are inherited genetically from our parents, we should keep in mind some of the natural factors that influence them.

Certain temperaments tend to follow certain gene pools. While on a missionary tour to Mexico, I noticed the vast differences in the tribes that I observed. The Sapotaco Indians

impressed me greatly. Many tribes had been shiftless, indifferent, and careless in their mode of life. The Sapotacos, however, were a very industrious and often ingeniously capable tribe. In one city we visited, they actively pursued the technical trade of weaving, and their sense of responsibility was in sharp contrast to anything we had observed in other tribesmen. The skills were learned, but the adaptability and desire to learn them were so universal throughout the tribe that it could only be an inherited trait.

A person's gender will also affect his or her temperament, particularly in the realm of the emotions. Women often tend to be more emotionally expressive than men. Even the hardest of women will weep at times, while some men never weep. Men and women may have the same temperament, but the extent of emotional expression may vary.

Temperament traits, whether controlled or uncontrolled, last throughout life. The older we get, however, the softer and more mellow our harsh and hard traits tend to become. People learn that if they are to live at peace with their neighbors, it is best to emphasize their natural strengths and subdue their weaknesses.

Many successfully develop their characters and improve their personalities, but it is doubtful that any are able to change basic temperament. Yet it is possible to modify it to such a degree that it almost seems to have changed-as we shall see in the next chapter.



Study Questions



For group study, see questions at the end of chapter 2.

C H A P T E R 2

Temperament Can Be Modified!



For several decades we have heard a lot about behavior modification-various attempts aimed at changing human behavior (for the better I would hope). Some attempts are good and some are bad. The one I find most helpful, without negative side effects, is the change that takes place when someone accepts Christ and allows the Holy Spirit to change his or her life.

Sonic Christians erroneously think that their temperaments have changed, but that is impossible. As we have already seen, we are born with them. The Holy Spirit can, however, modify our temperaments so that they appear to have been changed.

The truth is, extroverts are extroverts-all their lives. But when a hard-driving, demanding, angry person becomes gracious and tenderhearted, that person seems at first glance to have had a change of temperament. Actually, God has strengthened that person's weaknesses. Similarly, when fearful, timid

individuals who limit God's use of their lives by unbelief become more trusting and venturesome, we think they have had a change of temperament. The truth is, God has strengthened their weaknesses. And he sure of this, we all need that kind of modification.

The apostle Paul put into words the heart-cry of despair felt by all sincere people who lament their weaknesses of' temperament: "O wretched man that I am! NN7ho will deliver me from this body of death" (Rom. 7:24). His answer is electrifying, "I thank God-through,Jesus Christ our Lord!" (v. 25).

Yes, temperament weaknesses can he strengthened! This is clearly seen from 2 Corinthians 5:17, where Paul says, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." Since temperament is our "old nature," what we need is a "new nature." That "new nature" is imparted to us when we receive Jesus Christ into our lives by faith.

The apostle Peter could speak on this subject from personal experience, for his temperament was vastly improved by receiving the "new nature." In 2 Peter 1:4 he refers to those who have been "born again" by faith as having become "partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." The "divine nature" that comes through Jesus Christ is the only escape from the control of our natural temperament, for only through him are we made

"new creatures."

There have been unusually self-controlled individuals who have seemed to change part of their temperament and much of their conduct, but that has not cured all of their weaknesses. Even they have had their besetting sins. Satan knows our major temperament weaknesses, and you can he sure he will use his power to defeat its. His greatest delight in regard to Christians is to see them defeated by their own weaknesses. Victory, however, is available through Jesus Christ, whose Spirit can strengthen all our weaknesses.

I)r. Henry Brandt, one of the first Christian psychologists to place confidence in biblical principles above psychologi cal theories, once stated to a group of ministers that if his patients would not accept Jesus Christ, he could not help them. IIe knew of no cure in the realm of psychology for all of humanity's behavior problems, but in Jesus Christ he had found the answer.

To further illustrate his absolute confidence in the power of Jesus Christ, Dr. Brandt once stated: "You can use your background as an excuse for present behavior only until you receive,Jestts Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. After that von have it new power within you that is able to change your conduct."

As it pastor-counselor I have been thrilled to see the Spirit of God take it weak, depraved temperament and transform it

into a living example of the power of Jesus Christ.

Admittedly, all Christians do not experience this transforming power. Just ask a convert's husband or wife or, ill some cases, children! In fact, I'm sorry to have to admit that the majority of Christians do not see a complete transformation of, their temperaments. The reason is abundantly clear: 'I'hev do not regularly experience the power of' the Spiritfilled life (see Eph. 5:18-21).

But that does not change the fact that the moment we receive Jesus Christ, we receive the "new nature" that is able to cause old things "to pass away" and all things to "become new." This change or modification of behavior is not auto-ntatic; we must cooperate with the Spirit of God within its to experience that change. We shall see that the filling of the I loly Spirit is not only commanded by God for every Christian (see Eph. 5:18), but this filling results in the Holy Spirit so controlling our natures that we actually live the life of Christ.

Before we come to that subject, however, let's examine the basic types of temperament, so we know what to expect the I loly Spirit to do with its.



Study Questions



These questions cover the material presented in chapters 1 and 2.

1. What is temperament, and where does it originate?

2. If temperament is God-given, is basic temperament, aside from the influence of original sin, "good" or "bad"?

3. What is character and how does it differ from temperament?

4. Is character God-given?

5. How can character be changed?

6. What is the influence of original sin on character?

7. What is personality?

8. Some people put on a "face" that repels other people. Why might such a personality develop?

9. Discuss the possibility of someone changing personality without changing character. Why would someone do this?

10, What takes place when someone is born again?

Discuss this question in light of these three passages: (a) Romans 6:1-7; (b) 2 Corinthians 5:17; (c) 2 Peter 1:4.

11. What part of a person is most affected by the conversion experience-one's temperament, character, personality? Explain.

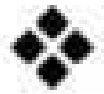
12. If the Holy Spirit can transform the weaknesses of our temperament, why aren't all Christians transformed?

13. Read John 15:1-14, considering the meaning of "abide in me." What does it mean to abide in Christ?

14. Finally, read Ephesians 5:18. What further light does Ephesians give to the idea of abiding in Christ?

C H A P T E R 3

Meet the Four Basic Temperaments



Nearly four hundred years before Christ, Hippocrates, the brilliant Greek physician and philosopher, propounded the theory that there are basically four types of' temperament. He erroneously thought these four types were the result of, four liquids that predominated in the human body: blood; "choler or "yellow bile"'; " ►nelaucholy" or "black bile"; and phlegm.

Hippocrates named the temperaments in correspondence with the liquids he thought were the cause. The Sanguine, he thought, is characterized by rich, warm blood. Cholerics must have too much yellow bile. Melancholies he saw as having black or dark blood-black bile. Phlegmatics he saw as having thick blood, which he called phlegm. To him, these suggested the lively (Sanguine), active (Choleric), black (Melancholy), and slow (Phlegmatic) temperaments.

With the advance of' modern medical science, the idea that temperament is determined by body liquid was discarded, but

the fourfold names for the classifications are still widely used.

Modern psychology has given many new suggestions for classification of temperaments, but none has found more acceptance among Christians than this oldest theory of human behavior.

Perhaps the best known of the new classifications is the twofold separation of extrovert and introvert. But these two types do not provide enough clarity, as they don't distinguish, for example, between the warm, happy, loving extrovert and the hard-driving, bossy, "take-charge" extrovert. Acknowledging four basic temperament types is more realistic.

Bear in mind that the fourfold temperaments are basic temperament classifications. No person is a single-temperament type. We have four grandparents, all of whom make some contribution through the genes to our temperaments. As we shall study further in chapter 4, all people are a mixture of temperaments, although usually one predominates above the rest.

There is a danger in presenting these four types of temperaments. Some will be tempted to analyze their friends and think of them in the framework of What type are they? This is a demoralizing and precarious practice. This temperament theory is not a club with which to bludgeon friends.

Our study of temperaments should be for self-analysis only,

except to make us more understanding of both the strengths and natural weaknesses or shortcomings of others. It is easier to accept a person's weaknesses or peculiarities if we realize they stem from temperament. In some instances we can learn to anticipate behavior and try to avoid unnecessary conflicts.

As for that self-analysis, the temperament categories shouldn't be seen as an excuse to indulge negative behavior. But an understanding of them can be particularly helpful to analytical persons who tend to exaggerate and dwell on their own weaknesses. Here's the good word: Everybody has it temperament; everybody has weaknesses.

An understanding of the temperaments is also particularly helpful for those who have difficulty assessing their own strengths or weaknesses. You can begin that assessment in this chapter, but well look at it in greater depth in chapters [and 6.

Remember that no one temperament is better than another. Each contains strengths and richness, vet each is fraught with its own weaknesses and dangers.

Please understand, these four temperaments are applicable to both genders. Btu as I explain to my seminar audiences, being it man I introduce them from it masculine point of view-maybe because I basically am it coward; I would rather take on the men than the women.

Now I would like to have you meet ...



Sparky Sanguine

Sparky Sanguine is the warm, buoyant, lively, and fun-loving temperament. I-Ie is receptive by nature, and external impressions easily find their way to his heart, where they readily cause an outburst of* response. Feelings rather than reflective thoughts predominate to form his decisions.

Sparky Sanguine has an unusual capacity to enjoy himself and usually passes on his hearty outgoing nature. When he comes into it room of people, he has it tendency to lift the spirits of everyone present by his exuberant flow of conversation. He is it thrilling storyteller because his warn, emotional nature almost makes him relive the experience in the very telling of it.

Sparks Sanguine never lacks for friends. In 7~m/wrn►m eitl and the (;h►i.stian Faith, Dr. Hallesbv said, "His naive, spontaneous, genial nature opens doors and hearts to hill)." He can genuinely feel the joys and sorrows of the person he meets and has the capacity to make that person feel important, as though the new acquaintance were a very special friend, which he or she is-until Sparky meets the next person, who then receives the same attention.

Sparky Sanguine



Without any malice, Sparky might forget his resolutions, appointments, and obligations. He's on to the next exciting adventure, which makes him seem unstable.

Sparky does not like solitude but enjoys people and is at his best surrounded by friends, where he is the life of the party. He has an endless repertoire of interesting stories that he tells dramatically, making him a favorite with children as well as adults and usually gaining him admission at the best parties or social gatherings.

The Sanguine is never at a loss for words, though he often speaks without thinking. His open sincerity, however, has it disarming effect on many of his listeners, causing them to respond to his mood. His free-wheeling, seemingly exciting, extrovertish way of life makes him the envy of the more timid temperament types.

Habits of Temperament

Temperament affects basic habits of living-the way we drive, keep the yard, and eat, for example. Driving habits of Sangtiines? In a word, erratic. Sometimes they speed, then for no apparent reason they lose interest in driving fastand slow down. Riding in the backseat of 'a Sanguine's car can be downright dangerous. They are so people-oriented that they want to look you-the passenger-in the face while driving. Being super talkers, they spend very little time watching where they are going.

As for yard care, Sparky Sanguine gets up early Saturday morning to fix his yard. With great gusto he lines up all his tools (he has every gadget known to man because he totally lacks sales resistance) and prepares to cut, trim, shear, and prune. But within thirty minutes his wife can't hear it sound outside. Looking down the street, she sees him chatting with a neighbor. Before the day is over, he orders his son to "put my tools away" and decides to fix the yard next week. Sparky is clearly one of the world's great procrastinators.

Eating habits? Sanguines eat everything in sight-and usually look it. Incidentally, in restaurants they almost never look at the menu until the waitress arrives; they've been enjoying the conversation too much.

Balancing a checkbook? Sanguines can rarely find theirs and don't always remember to write amounts in the right place or balance the accounts. I have never met a Sanguine accountant.

A Biblical Sanguine

The apostle Peter was a Sanguine. Every time he appeared in the Gospels, he was talking. In fact, I read through the Gospels one time to verify my suspicion and found that Simon Peter the Sanguine talked more than all the other disciples put together. As my minister friend Ken Poure says, "A Sanguine enters a room mouth first." And like most Sanguines, Ken Poure is loved by everyone.

Their noisy, blustering, friendly ways make Sanguines appear more confident than they really are, but their energy and lovable disposition get them by the rough spots of life. People have a way of excusing their weaknesses by saying, "That's just the way they are."

As for the apostle Peter: Everything he said in the Gospels was "wrong" except his great confession of Christ's deity (see Matt. 16:16). His sinful betrayal and easy repentance "with tears" is typically Sanguine. They always feel bad for wrongdoing-after they get caught. But that is not the end of the story! Peter became the strong, resolute leader of the early church. In the Acts of the Apostles, everything he said was right-because he was filled with the Holy Spirit.

Career Bests

'File world is enriched by these cheerful Sanguines with their natural charisma. They usually nuke excellent salespe()- pie and more than other groups seem attracted to that pu)- fession. \int have (loubtless heard this cliche: "He could sell refrigerators to the Eskimos." That's Sparks. If you ever want to watch Mr. Sanguine in action, lust visit your local used-car dealer. About two-thir(ls ()f, Ills salesreps seem to he Sanguines.

In addition to being good at sales, Sanguines make excel-1ent actors, entertainers, and preachers (particularly (vangelists). They are outstanding masters of, ceremonies, auctioneers, and so►netinles leaders (if properly blended with

another temperament). Because of our mass media today, they are increasingly in demand within the political arena, where nattural charisma has prayed advantageous.

In the area of helping people, Sanguines excel as hospital workers. Most sick people respond to Nurse Sanguine's "I low are you today?" by saving, "Fine," while Nurse Melancholy asking the same question would probably receive the sell=pitying lament, "Miserable." situ may he on the verge of death, as white as the sheet you are lying on when Dr. Sanguine bubbles into your room; but befO>re the doctor leaves, your spirits will be lifted. This doctor's obvious compassion in response to your tale of woe will almost make paying his exorbitant bill easy. (Sanguines are never moderate about anything.)

Sanguines should choose careers that allow them extensive exposure to people. I think their chief contribution to life lies in making other people happy. Certainly someone should be assigned that task in these uncertain times.

Now meet the second temperament type... .



Rocky Choleric

Rocky Choleric is the hot, quick, active, practical, and strong-willed temperament. He is often self-sufficient and very independent. He tends to be decisive and opinionated, finding

it easy to make decisions for himself as well as for others.

Rocky Choleric



Rocky Choleric thrives on activity. In fact, to him, "life is activity." He does not need to be stimulated by his environment. No, he stimulates the environment with his endless ideas, plans, and ambitions. His is not an aimless activity, for he has it practical, keen mind, capable of making sound, instant decisions or planning worthwhile, longrange projects. He does not vacillate under pressure of what others think. He takes a definite stand on issues and can often be found crusading against social injustice or unhealthy situations.

Ile is not frightened by adversities; in fact, they tend to encourage him. He has dogged determination and often succeeds where others fail-not because his plans are better than others, but because he is still "pushing ahead" after others have become discouraged and quit. If there is any truth in the adage "Leaders are born, not made," then the Choleric is a born leader. He always lands on his feet.

Rocky Choleric's emotional nature is the least developed part of his temperament. He does not sympathize easily with others, nor does he naturally show or express compassion. He is often embarrassed or disgusted by the tears of others. He has little appreciation for the fine arts; his primary interest is in the utilitarian values of life. He is so optimistic, rarely anticipating failure, that he seldom fails-except at home. Love is not usually high on his priority list.

He is quick to recognize opportunities and equally as quick at diagnosing the best way to make use of them. He has a well-organized mind, though details usually bore him. He is not given to analysis but to quick, almost intuitive appraisal; that means he tends to look at the goal toward which he is working without seeing the potential pitfalls and obstacles in the path. Once he has started toward a goal, he may run roughshod over individuals that stand in his way. He tends to be domineering and bossy and does not hesitate to use people to accomplish his ends. He is often considered an opportunist.

The Choleric's attitude of self-sufficiency and willfulness makes him difficult to reach for Christ in adulthood. For this reason I urge Sundayschool teachers, "Never let a fifthgrade Choleric out of your class until that child has found Christ as Lord and Savior." That is also good advice for parents. The more Choleric your children's temperaments, the more intense should be your prayers for their conversion between third and fifth grade, while they still retain sensitivity to spiritual things.

Habits of Temperament

Let's look at the same habits we considered for the Sanguine. Behind the wheel, Cholerics are daring speed demons who dart in and out of traffic constantly. They always try to get more accomplished in a given period of time than is humanly possible and attempt to make up time by driving furiously between appointments. Strangely enough, they rarely get tickets-not because they don't deserve them, but because they

are crafty enough to keep an eye on the rearview mirror to watch for the local "black and white."

Rocky Choleric hates yard work. When he does it at all, it is with a vengeance. He is not mechanical by nature and detests repairs or pruning because, quite frankly, he is not very good at it. When he does take on the yard, he works at a frenzied pace to get the job done, but neatness is not his hallmark. In fact, the family of a Choleric should never let him prune bushes, trees, or hedges, for he has only one idea in mind-"If you have to do it, you might as well do it once for the whole year!" One can usually spot the Choleric's yard while driving through the neighborhood. Just look for miniature hedges and dwarf trees.

Cholerics are stereotyped eaters-their menu seldom varies from one day to the next, and when their food arrives, they bolt it down in big chunks, often talking while chewing. Frequently they are the first ones finished.

Balancing a checkbooks Cholerics hate details, so they assign or hire someone else to take care of it or carry two accounts-using one for six months, then shifting to the other so they don't bounce any checks.

Career Bests

Cholerics might consider careers that require leadership, motivation, and productivity, provided they do not require too

much attention to details and analytical planning. Committee meetings and longrange planning bore the Choleric-a doer. Rarely will you find a predominant Choleric as it surgeon, dentist, philosopher, inventor, or watchmaker. Although not usually craFsrnen (requiring a degree of perfection and efficiency usually beyond their capability), Cholerics often supervise craftsmen. They usually enjoy construction work, because it is so productive, and will frequently end up being foremen or project supervisors.

Rocky Choleric is a developer by nature. When he drives through the countryside, he cannot share his passenger's enjoyment of the "beautiful rolling hillsides," for he envisions road graders carving out streets and builders constructing homes, schools, and shopping centers.

Most of today's cities and suburbs were first envisioned by a Choleric. You can be sure, however, that he hired a Melancholy as the architect with the analytical and creative ability to draw the plans he outlined. He can't fully understand why it few lines on the back of an envelope aren't sufficient to gain the city planning department's approval. No one fights city hall harder than it Choleric, who bitterly laments, "Why all this business of detailed plans, anyway? I've built enough projects to know that the best plans have to be modified during construction, so why not make up your mind as you go along on the little issues? I know what I want to accomplish!"

So a wise Choleric hires a Melancholy assistant or goes into

business partnership with a Melancholy. Together they make an unbeatable team. Of course, since everyone has both a primary and secondary temperament, occasionally you might meet a person with both traits.

Most entrepreneurs are Cholerics. They formulate the ideas and are venturesome enough to launch out in new directions. They don't limit themselves to their own ideas either but sometimes overhear a creative idea from someone not sufficiently adventurous to initiate a new business or project. Once Cholerics start a new business, however, they are likely to get bored soon after its success.

There are two reasons for this. First, as the business grows it creates more detail work. But since Cholerics are not by nature good delegators of responsibility (although with proper training they can learn) and like to see the fruits of their own productive and capable industry, they tend to evaluate negatively the efforts of others. Consequently, they end up trying to do everything themselves.

Second, when Cholerics discover that they are "just too busy," they look for someone to buy their businesses. So the average Choleric can be expected to start four to ten businesses or organizations in a lifetime.

Once Cholerics learn to delegate responsibility to others and discover that they are able to accomplish more through other people, they can complete an amazing amount of work. Other people cannot believe that Cholerics can be involved in so

many things and keep their sanity.

Well, here's how they do it. Since they are completely performance-conscious and have no perfectionist hang-tips, they reason, 1 d rather get a number of things 70 to 80 percent finished than a few things 100 percent completed.

Rocky Choleric is a natural motivator of other people. He oozes self-confidence, is extremely goal-conscious, and can inspire others to envision his goals. Consequently, associates may find themselves more productive by following the Choleric's lead. His primary weakness as a leader is that he is hard to please and tends to run roughshod over other people. If he only knew how others look to him for approval and encouragement, he would spend more time patting them on the hack, which would generate even greater dedication from them. But the Choleric subconsciously thinks that approval and encouragement will lead to complacency; he assumes that an employee's productivity will fall off if he is too complimentary. So he resorts to criticism in the hope that this will inspire greater effort. (Unfortunately it doesn't.)

Cholerics have a built-in promotional ability and do well in sales, teaching (hut always practical subjects), politics, military service, sports, and many other endeavors.

Like the Sanguine, Rocky Choleric makes a good preacher, although he is much less emotional. I have noticed that many of the most successful churches in the country are led by

Choleric preachers-dynamic Bible teachers with organization and promotional abilities and strong leadership gifts. They're not afraid to launch into projects and, with proper motivation and the blessing of God, usually enjoy a successful ministry.

Western civilization has henefitted much from its Rocky Cholerics. But it has suffered much from them also. The world's greatest generals, dictators, and gangsters have been predominantly Choleric. What made the difference? Their moral values and motivations. If there is such a thing as a "success tendency," Cholerics have it. That doesn't mean they are smarter than other people, as is often assumed, but that their strong will and determination drive them to succeed where other, more gifted, people are prone to give up.

A Biblical Choleric

The apostle Paul had no small degree of Choleric tern-perament. He was a prime persecutor of the early church"Breathing threats and murder" (Acts 9:1)-before he was saved. He later pushed himself relentlessly until he had preached the gospel around the then known world. Who but it Choleric would crawl out from under a rock pile and the next day walk twelve miles to preach the gospel? Yet when filled with the Holy Spirit, Paul exhibited a gentleness and compassion that was contrary to his natural temperament. Yes, the Holy Spirit can control even Cholerics, who seem to find it hardest to realize what Christ meant when he said, "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). There is no limit to what the Choleric can do when he learns to walk in the Spirit and to

abide in Christ.

Now I would like to have you meet the third temperament type....



Maestro Melancholy

Maestro Melancholy is often referred to as the "black" or "dark" temperament. Actually he is the richest of all the temperaments, for he is an analytical, self-sacrificing, gifted, perfectionist type, with a very sensitive emotional nature. No one gets more enjoyment from the fine arts than the Melancholy.

By nature Maestro is prone to he an introvert, but since his feelings predominate, he is given over to a variety of moods. Sometimes his moods will lift him to heights of ecstasy that cause him to act more extrovertish. However, at other times he will be gloomy and depressed; during these periods he is withdrawn and can be quite antagonistic.

Maestro Melancholy is a very faithful friend, but, unlike the Sanguine, he does not make friends easily. He will not push himself forward to meet people but lets people come to him. He is perhaps the most dependable of all the temperaments, for his perfectionist tendencies do not permit him to be a shirker or let others down. His natural reticence to put himself forward is not an indication that he doesn't like people. He not only likes

others, but he also has a strong desire to be loved by them. Since disappointing experiences make him reluctant to take people at face value, he is prone to be suspicious when others seek him out or shower him with attention.

Maestro Melancholy



His exceptional analytical ability causes him to diagnose accurately the obstacles and dangers of any project he has a part in planning. This is in sharp contrast to the Choleric, who rarely anticipates problems or difficulties but is confident he is able to cope with whatever problems arise. This characteristic often finds the Melancholy reticent to initiate some new project or in conflict with those who wish to. Occasionally, when he is in one of his great moods of inspiration, he may produce some great work of art or genius. These accomplishments are often followed by periods of great depression.

Melancholies usually find their greatest meaning in life through personal sacrifice. They seem to have a desire to make themselves suffer and will often choose a difficult life vocation, involving great personal sacrifice. They tend to be very thorough and persistent in their pursuit of a chosen goal, and they are more than likely to accomplish great good.

As a general rule, no other temperament has a higher IQ or more creativity or imagination than a Melancholy, and no one else is as capable of such high-quality "perfect" work.

Habits of Temperament

When Melancholy motorists leave home, they've prepared for the trip well in advance. They study the map and know the best route from A to Z. Of all the temperaments, they are the most likely to keep it complete log of' their driving history, including gas and oil consumption and car repairs. Legalists by

nature, they rarely speed and may even drive one mile under the speed limit in the left-hand lane of' the freeway, with sadistic glee forcing faster drivers to jockey through traffic to pass them. If'they get it ticket, it is usually f<Or refusing to yield the left lane to faster-moving traffic. At this point these Melancholvs' reaction is one of,great indignation. After all, weren't they observing the speed limit?

As for the yard, Maestro Melancholy has a natural aptitude I<)r growing things and usually maintains the best yard in the neighborhood. lie is one who talks to and babies his plants, and on almost any weekend you'll find him on hands and knees, "manicuring" his lawn and hedges.

Melancholies are very picky eaters. It takes them f<n-e•ver to make up their minds about what to order, but once their f6od arrives they savor every bite.

The checkbook? Melancholies usually put everything on it computer, keep it rigid budget, and know exactly what everything cost them and whether it has been profitable.

Career Bests

Most of the world's great composers, artists, musicians, inventors, philosophers, theoreticians, theologians, scientists, and dedicated educators have been predominantly '.Melancholies. Name it famous artist, composer, or orchestra leader, and you have identified another genius (and often

eccentric) Melancholy. Consider Renrbrandt, Van Gogh, Beethoven, Mozart, Wagner, and it host of others.

Almost every true musician has some Melancholy temperament, whether he is it composer, choral conductor, performing artist, or soloist. This often accounts I'Or the !Melancholy's lament that seems to find its way into so much of our music-both in and out of, the church. Just yesterday my wife and I were driving to the airport when it c'ountry-western time was crooned (or warbled, depending on your point of view) over the radio. We looked at each other and laughed as the wail of the Melancholy was so apparent-and that song is one of today's top tunes.

The influence of temperament on a person's musical ability was apparent several years ago as our church evaluated a gifted minister of music and his piano-playing wife, obviously a Choleric. On the way home I remarked to my wife that I couldn't understand how a Choleric could be such a good pianist. Beverly replied, "She is a mechanical musician-by strong willpower she forced herself to learn to play the piano well, but she doesn't feel her music." As it turned out, the fantastic arrangement she used that night had been written by her husband, a Melancholy. Although he was not a pianist, he could "feel" music.

One vocation that seems to attract the Melancholy, surprisingly enough, is acting, even though we tend to identify this profession with extroverts. On stage the Melancholy can

adopt another personality, no matter how much extroversion it requires, but as soon as the play is over, he reverts back to his own more introvertish personality.

All Melancholies, of course, do not enter the professions or arts, many become craftsmen of a high quality-finish carpenters, bricklayers, plumbers, plasterers, scientists, horticulturalists, mechanics, engineers, and members of almost every profession that provides a meaningful service to humanity.

Almost any humanitarian vocation will attract Melancholies to its staff. For years I have watched doctors, and almost every doctor I know is either predominantly or at least secondarily a Melancholy. It would almost require a Melancholy's mind to get through the rigors of medical school, for a doctor has to be a perfectionist, an analytical specialist, and a humanitarian propelled by a heart that yearns to help other people.

Any vocation that requires perfection, self-sacrifice, and creativity is open to Melancholies. But they tend to place self-imposed limitations on their potential by underestimating themselves and exaggerating obstacles.

In the building trades, the Melancholy may want to supervise construction. But he would be better off hiring a project supervisor who works better with people-and then spend his own time on the drawing board. He becomes frustrated by ordinary personnel problems and, with his

unrealistic perfectionist demands, adds to them.

Biblical Melancholies

No temperament has as much natural potential when energized by the Ilol' Spirit as the Melancholy. Many outstanding Bible characters had strong Melancholy tendencies; all the prophets were Melancholy, as was Solomon and the apostle John.

And then there was Moses-a gifted introvert filled with self-doubt who eventually trusted God to make him one of the greatest leaders in all history. Yet Moses never had victory over his anger, which limited God's use of his life and resulted in his dying without entering the Promised Land.

Now I would have you examine the fourth temperament type... .



Flip Phlegmatic

Flip Phlegmatic gets his name from what Hippocrates thought was the body fluid that produced it calm, cool, slow, easygoing, we11-balanced temperament. Life for Flip is a happy, unexcited, pleasant experience in which he avoids as mach involvement as possible.

Calm, easygoing Flip Phlegmatic never seems to get ruffled, no matter what the circumstances. He has it very high boiling

point and seldom explodes in anger or laughter but keeps his emotions under control. This is the one temperament type that is consistent every time you see this person. You see, Flip Phlegmatic is usually kindhearted and sympathetic but seldom conveys his true feelings. He feels much more emotion than appears on the surface and has a good capacity to appreciate the fine arts and the "finer things" of life.

Flip Phlegmatic



Phlegrnatics do not lack for friends because they enjoy people and have a naturally dry sense of humor that others enjoy. These people can have a crowd "in stitches" and never crack a smile. They have the unique capability of seeing something humorous in others and the things they do. They have a retentive mind and are often quite capable of being good imitators. One of their great sources of delight is "needling" or poking fun at the other temperament types. They are annoyed by-and often confront-the aimless, restless enthusiasm of the Sanguine. They are disgusted by-and prone to ridicule-the gloomy moods of the Melancholy. They take great delight in throwing ice water on the bubbling plans and ambitions of the Choleric.

Phlegmatics tend to be spectators in life, and they try not to get too involved with the activities of others. In fact, it is difficult for them to be motivated to move beyond their daily routine. This does not mean that they cannot appreciate the need for action and the difficulties of others. A Phlegmatic and it Choleric may see the same social injustice, but the two will have entirely different responses. The crusading spirit of the Choleric will cause him to say, "Let's get a committee organized and campaign to do something about this!" The Phlegmatic would be more likely to respond, "These conditions are terrible! Why doesn't someone do something about this?"

But beneath the cool, reticent, almost timid Phlegmatic is a very capable combination of abilities. When once aroused to

action, he proves to be a most competent and efficient person. Phlegmatics tend not to take leadership on their own, but when it is thrust upon them, they can be good leaders. I've labeled them "reluctant leaders."

Secretly, a Phlegmatic may aspire for a promotion on the job, but it would be against his nature to volunteer. Instead, he may patiently wait until more discordant and inept personalities make a mess out of things and then assume the responsibility only after it is forced upon him. Unfortunately, in many instances Phlegmatics wait their lives away and opportunity never knocks-because, although employers appreciate their capabilities, they don't envision them as leaders. Consequently, both the company and the employees lose.

The world has benefitted greatly from the gracious nature of Phlegmatics. They have a conciliating effect on others and are natural peacemakers. In their quiet way, they have proven to be fulfillers of the dreams of others. They are masters at anything that requires meticulous patience and daily routine.

Habits of Temperament

Flip Phlegmatic is the slowest driver of all. The last one to leave an intersection, he rarely changes lanes and is an indecisive danger when joining the flow of freeway traffic from an entrance ramp. He invariably stops when he should be moving with the flow of traffic. He is a poky "Sunday driver" seven days a week. He gets few tickets and rarely has

accidents-but he can be a road hazard.

The Phlegmatic's lawn usually suggests that its owner is still in the house late Saturday morning, sipping his third cup of coffee-because he is. Capable of superior lawn care, Flip will scrupulously attend to "the old plantation" because his desire to rest is overcome by his drive to do the accepted thing. Much depends, of course, on whether he has been taking Geritol and wheat germ regularly.

Phlegmatics are the most deliberate eaters of all and are invariably the last ones finished. That is the main reason they rarely gain weight. Weight specialists advise obese patients to eat slowly, for it takes twenty minutes for food passing into the mouth to shut off hunger pangs.

Again, the checkbook: Phlegmatics are accurate bookkeepers, keep excellent records, and are able to balance to the penny.

Career Bests

Phlegmatics seem drawn to the field of education. Most elementary-school teachers are Phlegmatics. Who but it Phlegmatic could have the patience necessary to teach it group of first graders to read.-, A Sanguine would spend the entire class period telling stories to the children. A Melancholy would so criticize them that they would be afraid to read aloud. And I can't even imagine a Choleric as a firstgrade teacher-the

students would leap out the windows! The gentle nature of the Phlegmatic assures the ideal atmos-phcrc for such learning. This is not only true on the elementary level but in both high school and college, particularly in math, physics, grammar, literature, and languages. It is not uncommon to find Phlegmatics as school administrators, librarians, counselors, and college department heads.

Another field that appeals to Phlegmatics is engineering. Attracted to planning and calculation, they make good structural engineers, sanitation experts, chemical engineers, draftsmen, mechanical and civil engineers, and statisticians. Most Phlegmatics have excellent mechanical aptitude, making good mechanics, tool-and-die specialists, craftsmen, carpenters, electricians, plasterers, glassblowers, and watch and camera repairers.

Currently the biggest problem faced by industry pertains to personnel. With wages for many jobs skyrocketing, disharmony in it department can so demotivate employees that the employer may lose millions of dollars in productivity. In recent years management has discovered that experienced Phlegmatics often make excellent foremen, supervisors, and managers. Because they are diplomatic and unabrasive, they work well with people. When given positions of leadership, they seem to bring order out of chaos and produce a working harmony conducive to increased productivity. They are well organized, never come to a meeting unprepared or late, tend to work well under pressure, and are extremely dependable.

Phlegmatics are definitely not risk takers. They often stay with one company for their entire working career.

Rarely do Phlegmatics either live up to their full capabilities or fail in life. Because they tend to struggle with the problem of personal insecurity, they may take a job with retirement or security benefits in mind. Therefore, civil service, the military, local government, or some other "good security risk" will attract them. Rarely will they launch out on a business venture of their own, although they are eminently qualified to do so. Instead, they usually enhance the earning power of someone else and are quite content with a simple lifestyle.

A Biblical Example

Abraham is a good example of a Phlegmatic. He is a classic example of how God can transform a person's natural weakness into a strength. Abraham's fear, worry, and indecision became resolution, courage, and action to the point that more space is given to Abraham in the New Testament than any other Old Testament character.



Comparing Two Work Environments

Recently I had an experience that graphically portrayed the differences of temperament. While speaking at a summer camp for high-school students, I needed to go out and find a fax

machine. In the small town nearby, the only fax available was in the education center. When I arrived by appointment, I found nine people hard at work. The calm, orderly, and efficient surroundings made me realize that this environment was peopled predominantly by Melancholies or Phlegmatics.

This was later confirmed when the superintendent carehilly computed my bill and refused to take my money because it was against the rules. Instead, he took me to the meticulous treasurer, who took me to the bookkeeper, who in turn relayed me to the cashier, who finally arranged for nie to give my $1.44 to the switchboard operator, who kept the petty cash. The clincher was the petty-cash box, which clearly revealed the touch of the perfectionist. Her change had been carefully stacked i>i neat piles of quarters, dimes, and nickels.

As I surveyed the environment and noted the employees' calm but definite concern for this minor problem, I silently laughed, remembering the scene of another office-the sales office where I bought an overhead projector. There the sales staff, chief executive, and all the employees were predominantly of the extrovertish Choleric or Sanguine temperaments. The place was a disorganized mess! Papers strewn everywhere, telephones and desks unattended, the office was a hubbub of noisy activity.

Finally, above the din of voices I heard the sales manager say to the staff, with it look of desperation, "One of these days we are going to get organized around here!" These two scenes

show the natural contrast of the inherited traits that produce human temperament.

They also point out the fact that all four of the basic temperaments are needed to give variety and purposefulness in this world.

Now that you have met the four temperaments, you no doubt realize why "people are individuals." Not only are there four distinct types of temperaments that produce these differences, but the combinations, mixtures, and degrees of temperament multiply the possible differences. In spite of that, however, most people reveal a pattern of behavior that indicates they lean toward one basic temperament.



Study Questions



1. What was the main error of Hippocrates' original theory of four temperaments?

2. Discuss and review the characteristics of Sparky Sanguine. As a group, pool your Bible knowledge and name as many Sanguine Bible characters as you can.

Briefly relate Bible stories that reinforce your point. How did God use-or want to use-each cited Bible character?

3. Discuss and review the characteristics of Rocky Choleric. As a group, pool your Bible knowledge and name as many Choleric Bible characters as you can. Briefly relate Bible stories that reinforce your point. How did God use-or want to use--each cited Bible character?

4. Discuss and review the characteristics of Maestro Melancholy. As a group, pool your Bible knowledge and name as many Melancholy Bible characters as you can. Briefly relate Bible stories that reinforce your point. How did God use-or want to use-each cited Bible character?

5. Discuss and review the characteristics of Flip Phlegmatic. As a group, pool your Bible knowledge and name as many Phlegmatic Bible characters as you can. Briefly relate Bible stories that reinforce your point. How did God use-or want to use-each cited Bible character?

6. Compare the habits of temperament for the four types. What might the study habits of the four groups be like? What hobbies might each enjoy?

7. If you see yourself in one of the four temperaments, thank God for one aspect of your temperament that you are happy to have. (It may be easier to do this after reading chapter 4.)

C H A P T E R 4

The Twelve Blends of Temperament



One of the chief objections to the theory of the four temperaments is that it boxes everyone in to one of the temperaments. That just is not true!

We are all a blend of at least two temperaments: One predominates; the other is secondary. The "smaller" our world becomes-the more various gene pools intermarrythe more "blended" the temperament of succeeding generations.

Some people I have tested reflected three temperaments-one dominant and two secondary. I have tested only one person who came out equal in all four temperaments. I was suspicious that she knew the temperament theory so well that she was not objective about herself but answered the questions on the basis of what she wanted her temperament to be.

In an attempt to make the temperament theory more practical and true to life, we shall briefly examine the twelve primary

blends of temperament. In all probability, it will be easier for you to identify yourself in one of the blends than it was to identify yourself in one of the four basic temperaments.

In most cases identifying your primary temperament is extremely helpful, but even more so if you know your secondary. For example, the behavior of the hot Sanguine-Choleric will burn most people on contact; the Sanguine-Phlegmatic mix will be perceived as cooler and easier to get along with.



Varying Degrees of Blends

Another factor should be kept in mind when considering blends: There are varying degrees of temperament within any blend. For example, a person who is 60 percent Sanguine and 40 percent Choleric will be somewhat different from the person who is 80 percent Sanguine and 20 percent Choleric.

For clarity's sake, I will not attempt to break the temperaments down into more than twelve blends, and I have arbitrarily chosen to discuss a sixty-forty blend: 60 percent for the predominant temperament and 40 percent for the secondary temperament. Though it is impossible to determine exact ratios and blends, you may want to try to make farther realignment of proportions for yourself. But for our purposes here and now, that is not as important as your determining your predominant

and secondary temperament types. Enjoy the adventure!



Skeptical? Consider This Story

In case you are skeptical about the idea of twelve temperament blends, consider this story: Several years ago my wife and I had the privilege of traveling to forty-four countries around the world to hold Family Life Seminars for missionaries and other English-speaking people.

When we got to Sydney, Australia, I found that a Christian psychiatrist had made arrangements in advance to take me to lunch. There he explained that he used the temperament theory in his practice. It seems he had gone to London on two occasions to take special training in the Luckier Color technique for diagnosing personalities. There he'd found that there are twelve types of behavior styles, all based on f nir temperaments. I Ie described that he had an array of' colors for his patients to choose from. When he studied their choices, he could diagnose their temperaments that corresponded with the twelve blends of temperament I first presented in my book Understanding the I%I(11P IPmprerament, now out of print.

Then he pulled it dog-eared copy of tlic hook out of his case and showed me how he would turn to the temperament blend that he had matched to the individual's color selections and read the passage to the patient. Almost invariably the

individual would be astonished at how accurately it described his or her behavior. At that point I had never heard of the Lucher (:olor testing system. But we had both independently come to the conclusion that there were twelve blends of temperament based on the four basic tern-perantents.



The SanChlor

The strongest extrovert of all the blends is the SanChlor-a mix of' the two extrovertish temperaments. The happy charisma of the Sanguine makes this person it people-oriented, enthusiastic sales type. But the Choleric nature will provide the resolution and character traits necessary to fashion it person more organized and productive: than the pure Sanguine.

Vocationally, San(:hlors often start out in sales or promotion and end up as corporate sales managers. Almost any people-oriented field is open to them, but, to sustain their interest, it job must offer variety, activity, and excitement. Male SanChlors are invariably sports enthusiasts. Ordinarily such individuals are financially successful if properly trained and motivated and loved by their families-and not controlled by their weaknesses.

The potential weaknesses of a SanChlor are usually apparent. Customarily they talk too much, spilling out words before they know all the facts. To be honest, no one has more mouth trouble! We were amused when a nationally known

SanChlor evangelist visited our city and was dubbed by the newspaper as "the fastest lip in the West."

SanChlors' giant egos so dominate their conversations that they often destroy the good first impression they make and do not "wear well." If they sense that people resist them, they may come on even stronger and make matters worse. If they are the life of the party, they are lovable, but if they feel threatened or insecure, they can become obnoxious. Their leading emotional problem is anger, which can catapult them into action at the slightest provocation.

SanChlors can be complimentary when it suits their purpose, but cross them and they may cut you down to smaller than life-size. Since they combine the easy forgetfulness of the Sanguine and the "end justifies the means" mind-set of the Choleric, they may not have a very active conscience and tend to justify their actions.

In chapter 3 we described Simon Peter, the self=appointed leader of the twelve apostles, as a Sanguine. In this further breakdown of categories, he is probably the best New Testament example of a SanChlor. He was egotistical, weak-willed, and carnal throughout the Gospels. In Acts, however, he was a remarkably transformed man-resolute, effective, and productive. What made the difference? He was filled with the Spirit.



The SanMel

SanMels are highly emotional people who fluctuate drastically. They can laugh hysterically one minute and burst into tears the next. It is almost impossible for them to hear it sad tale, observe the tragic plight of another person, or listen to sad music without weeping profusely. They genuinely feel the griefs of others.

SanMel doctors, for instance, always display the best bedside manner. Ordinarily they make fantastic teachers and are easily the most popular professors on campus.

SanMels should always work with people. Being admired by others is so important to them that it tends to drive them to it consistent level of performance. They might consider public speaking, acting, music, and the fine arts. Of all Sanguine public speakers, SanMels will be most accurate in their use of statistics.

Yet SanMels reflect an uninhibited perfectionism that often alienates them because they verbalize their criticisms. They are usually people-oriented individuals who have sufficient substance to make it contribution to others-if, their egos and arrogance don't make them so obnoxious that others become hostile.

Since Sanguines and Melancholies are both dreamers, one of

the crucial weaknesses of this temperament blend prevails in the person's thought life. Since they are mentally creative, they can mull over insults or injuries until they are down on themselves. Both of these temperaments suffer front insecurity, being afraid to reach toward their potential. In addition, SanMels can have a problem with anger.

But they have a great ability to commune with God. King David seems to be an example of the SanMel temperament. An extremely likable man who attracted both men and women with his charisma, he was colorful, dramatic, and emotional. He was it musician and poet, and he made many decisions on impulse. Unfortunately, like many SanMels, he fouled up his life by a series of disastrous and costly mistakes before he gained self-discipline. Not all SanMels are able to pick up the pieces of their lives and start over, as David did. Weakness of will almost did him in. It is far better for SanMels to walk in the Spirit on a consistent daily basis and avoid such mistakes.



The SanPhleg

The easiest person to like is a SanPhleg. The overpowering and often obnoxious tendencies of a Sanguine are offset by the gracious, easygoing Phlegmatic. SanPhlegs are happygo-lucky people whose carefree spirit and good humor make them lighthearted entertainers. Helping people is their regular business, along with various forms of sales. The least

extrovertish of the Sanguines, they often react to their environment and circumstances rather than being proactive and self motivated.

SanPhlegs are usually good to their families, lavishing their spouses and children with lots of love. Unfortunately, unless restricted by strong moral convictions, they may extend that love to everyone else.

The SanPhlegs' greatest weakness is their lack of motivation and self-discipline. They would rather socialize than work, and they tend to take life too casually. Their employers often have mixed emotions about them-enjoying their presence but wishing they would he more industrious. As one executive remarked, "He is the nicest guy I ever fired."

SanPhlegs rarely get upset and tend to find the bright side of everything. They are the people most likely to walk into the house with a smile and say, "Look at this pink slip. I got fired today!" They have an endless repertoire of jokes and delight in making others laugh, often when the occasion calls for seriousness.

When Christ becomes the chief object of their love, they are transformed into more resolute, purposeful, and productive persons.

The first-century evangelist Apollos is about as close as we can cone to it New Testannent example of the SanPhleg. A

skilled orator who succeeded Paul and other church planters, he stirred those churches with his Spiritfilled preaching and teaching. Loved by all, followed devotedly by some, this pleasant and dedicated man apparently traveled a great (teal but did not found new works. Little more is known of him.



The ChlorSan

The second-strongest extrovert among the blends of temperament is the flip-ratio of' the strongest extrovert (the SanChlor)-the ChlorSan. ChlorSans are almost com-pletcly given over to activity. Most of their efforts are productive and purposeful, but watch out for their reactions; they can become volatile in a moment! They are natural promoters and can sell almost anything. And they have enough charisma to attract and get along well with others.

They are the best at motivating others and thrive on it challenge. They face every new venture with fearless and boundless energy. Their spouses often comment, "He has only two speeds: wide open and stop." ChlorSans make good courtroom attorneys who can charm the coldhearted judge and jury and are excellent fund-raisers who can get people to contribute what they intended to save. They are the people who never go anywhere unnoticed and attract friends with no effort.

As preachers they combine both practical Bible teaching and

church administration, and as politicians they can talk their state into changing its constitution so they call repre sent the people "one more time." Convincing debaters, what they lack in facts or arguments they make up in bluff or bravado. As teachers, they make excellent communicators, particularly in the social sciences; rarely are they drawn to math, science, or the abstract. Whatever their professional occupations, their brains are always in motion.

The chief weakness of this individual is hostility. ChlorSans combine the quick, explosive anger of the Sanguine (without the forgiveness) and the long-burning resentment of the Choleric. This is the one personality type that not only gets ulcers but also gives them to others. Impatient with those who do not share their drive and energy, they pride themselves on being brutally or sarcastically frank.

It is difficult for them to concentrate on just one thing at a time, which is why they often enlist others to finish what they start. They are opinionated, prejudiced, impetuous, and inclined doggedly to finish projects that probably should not have been started in the first place. If not controlled by God, they are apt to justify anything they do-and rarely hesitate to manipulate or walk over other people to accomplish their ends.

Most ChlorSans get so engrossed in their work that they neglect family and friends, even lashing out at them if they complain. A wife married to a ChlorSan becomes an emotionally shell-shocked woman who feels unneeded and unloved. She

usually admires him, fears him, and is resentful toward him. When the children grow tip, she may leave him because he has made her a nonperson. Once he comprehends the importance of his love and approval to his family, however, he can learn to love them as individuals and transform his entire household. ChlorSan wives often make preoccupied lovers who need to realize their husbands need their affection.

James, the author of the New Testament Epistle, could well have been ChlorSan-as evidenced in his writings. The main thrust of his book is that "faith without works is dead! "-a favored concept of work-loving Cholerics. James used the practical and logical reasoning of 'a Choleric, vet was obviously a highly esteemed nian of God. One human weakness he discussed-the fire of the tongue and how no one can control it (James 3)-relates directly to this temperament's most vulnerable characteristic, it razor-sharp, active tongue. A ChlorSan's victory over cruelty and sarcasm and evident productiveness in the cause of Christ is a significant example of'what Christ, through his Spirit, can do.



The ChlorMel

The person who is 60 percent Choleric and 40 percent Melancholy is extremely industrious and capable. The optimism and practicality of the Choleric overcomes the

moodiness of' the Melancholy, making the ChlorMel both goal-oriented and detailed. Such an individual usually does well in school, possesses a quick, analytical mind, yet is decisive. The ChlorMel develops into it capable leader, the kind you can always count on to do an extraordinary. job.

This person is the type of lawyer you would most want as it defense attorney. The ChlorMel makes an excellent debater and can remember most details with precision. In fact, never take on it ChlorMel in debate unless you are assured of'your facts! You'll walk out as mincemeat. (:hlorMels are extremely competitive and forceful. Their battle strategy Go f,0r the jugular vein! They are usually successful, no matter what kind of business they pursue. The brilliant chief surgeon of a great California hospital, it ChlorMel, is also an extremely capable Bible teacher. This temperament probably makes the best natural leader. General George S. Patton, the great commander of the U.S. Third Army in World Wa►. II who drove the German forces back to Berlin, was probably a ChlorMel.

Equally as great as their strengths are their weaknesses. ChlorMels are apt to he autocratic "dictators" who inspire admiration and hate simultaneously. They are opinionated and rarely hesitate to express what they think-whether you want to hear it or not. They love an argument, even arguing against their own position just to argue. They are usually quick-witted talkers whose sarcasm can devastate others. They not only wound people, they destroy them. They are natural-born crusaders whose work habits are irregular and long.

ChlorMels can harbor considerable hostility and resentment. Unless they enjoyed a good love relationship with their parents, they find interpersonal relationships difficult, particularly family relationships. ChlorMel parents can he overly strict disciplinarians. They combine the hard-toplease tendencies of the Choleric and the perfectionism of the Melancholy. One such father, a super salesman, ordered his fifteen-year-old son to spend all daylight hours in his room For an entire summer-for getting poor grades. Needless to say, that man "provoked his son to wrath" and ultimately drove him away from the family and God.

ChlorMels commonly suffer from bleeding ulcers without an organic cause, colitis, and high blood pressure. After fifty, they are prime candidates for heart attacks. When controlled by the Holy Spirit, however, their entire emotional life is transformed, and they make outstanding Christians.

There is little doubt in my mind that the apostle Paul, whom we described in chapter 3 as a Choleric, was more specifically a ChlorMel. Before his conversion he was hostile and cruel, persecuting and jailing Christians. Even after his conversion, his strong-willed determination turned to unreasonable bullheadedness, as evidenced when he went up to Jerusalem against the will and warning of God. His writings and ministry demonstrate the practical-analytical reasoning and self-sacrificing but extremely driving nature of 'a ChiorMel. He is a good example of God's transforming power in the life of a

ChlorMel completely dedicated to God's will.



The Chlor Phleg

The most subdued of all the extrovertish temperaments is the ChlorPhleg, it happy blend of the quick, active, and hot with the calm, cool, and unexcited. (,It lorPhlegs are not as apt to rush into things as quickly as the extroverts we've previously discussed in this chapter; they are more deliberate and subdued. Though they may not impress you that way at first, they are extremely capable in the long run.

They are well-organized people who combine careful planning and hard work. People usually enjoy working with and for ChlorPhlegs; the' know where they are going and have charted their course, usually in writing, yet they are not unduly severe with people. They have the ability to help others make the best use of their skills and rarely offend people or make them feel used.

They often get more accomplished than any other temperament because they have no inclination to do it all themselves and invariably think in terms of enlisting others in their work. Their motto? Why do the work of' ten when you can get ten to do the work?

A ChlorPhleg minister who organized one of'my Family Life

Seminars recently exemplified this quality. Because of 'a larger-than-expected attendance, we had to move hundreds of books to a larger meeting room. Instead of' furiously, carrying them all downstairs himself, he looked the crowd over and quietly asked ten people to help him. The whole process took four minutes, yet he carried only one load of books.

ChlorPhleg men are usually good husbands and fathers as well as excellent administrators in almost any field.

In spite of their obvious capabilities, ChlorPhlegs are not without a notable set of weaknesses. Although not as quicktempered as some temperaments, they are known to harbor resentment and bitterness. Some of the cutting edge of the Choleric's sarcasm is here offset by the gracious spirit of the Phlegmatic. Their barbs are tempered with cleverly disguised humor. You're never quite sure whether they are kidding or ridiculing.

No one can be more bullheadedly stubborn than ChlorPhlegs. Repentance or the acknowledgment of a mistake is not easy for them. Consequently, they try to "make it up" to those they have wronged without really facing their mistakes. The worrisome Phlegmatic traits may so curtail their adventurous tendencies that they never quite measure up to their capabilities.

Titus, the spiritual son of Paul and leader of the hundred or so churches on the Isle of Crete, may well have been a

ChlorPhleg. When filled with the Spirit, he was the kind of man on whom Paul could depend to teach faithfully the Word and administrate the churches capably. The letter Paul wrote to him makes ideal reading for any teacher, particularly a ChlorPhleg.



The MelSan

Now we turn to the predominantly introvertish temperaments. Each will look somewhat similar to one we have already examined, except that the two melded temperaments will be reversed in intensity.

MelSans make good scholars and are probably the best of all teachers, particularly for high-school and college stu dents. Their Melancholy nature will ferret out little-known facts and be exacting in the use ofdetail, while the Sanguine will communicate well with students. They usually major in the social sciences, theology, philosophy, literature, or the humanities.

Sometimes MelSans will go into sales-low-pressure selling that calls for the presentation of many facts and details, such as in computers, office machines, or textbooks. They make good lawyers and medical professionals.

Almost any craft or trade welcomes MelSans. Industry uses such individuals in production control and cost analysis. They often work their way up to supervisory positions.

Although extremely capable, they usually work fir someone else and rarely are venturesome enough to launch their own business or found an organization.

They are often loyal husbands or wives and are devoted parents-if' they learn to accept people and children as the' are and refuse to be too critical.

MelSans are usually gifted people, fully capable of being performing musicians who can steal the heart of an audience. Many great actors, opera stars, and country-western singers are MelSans. This temperament blend is responsible for most of the folk tunes and ballads of'our day. They make delightful emcees, and if they enter the ministry, they will usually wear well with their congregations. As artists, they not only draw or paint well but can sell their own work-if they are in the right mood.

MelSans show an interesting combination of mood swings. Be sure of this: They will be emotional creatures. When circumstances are pleasing to them, they can reflect it fantastically happy mood. But if things work out badly, or they feel rejected, insulted, or injured, they drop into such it mood that their Sanguine nature drowns in it sea of, sell=pity. Like any predominant Melancholy, they must guard their thinking process!

They are easily moved to tears, feel everything deeply, but

can be unreasonably critical and hard on others. They tend to be rigid and usually will not cooperate unless things go their way, which is often idealistic and impractical.

As students they get superior grades but may take five or six years to finish college because they change their majors so many times. It is not unlike them to abandon their education, which makes it difficult for them to measure up to their potential.

They are often fearful and insecure with a poor self-image that limits their potential. These people are much more capable than they realize, but they internalize so much that others often do not recognize their skills.

Many of the prophets were MelSans-John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, and others. They had a tremendous capacity to commune with God, were self-sacrificing people helpers who had enough charisma to attract a following, tended to be legalistic in their teachings and calls to repentance, exhibited a flair for the dramatic, and willingly died for their principles. But they also had times of self-doubt and bouts with depression.

As a counselor with a yen to help Melancholies overcome depression, I know what the power of God can do for MelSans!



The MelChlor

For MelChlors, the mood swings of the Melancholy are

somewhat stabilized by the Choleric's self-will and determination. There is almost nothing vocationally that these people cannot do-and do well. They are both perfectionists and drivers.

They make excellent attorneys, particularly in fields that demand research and accuracy. And because they prepare twice as hard for a case as anyone else, they seldom lose. As doctors, they know the latest word in medicine-and usually let you know that they know. Many great orchestra leaders and choral conductors are MelChlors.

They possess strong leadership capabilities, enjoy being "chairman of the hoard," and never come to a meeting unprepared. As educators, they often leave the classroom for administration.

They often go into politics; many of our founding fathers could well have been MelChlors. As for sports, many superstars (particularly baseball pitchers), some above-average quarterbacks, and it number of running backs are of this temperament.

Unlike the MelSan, they may found their own institutions or businesses and run them capably-not with noise and color but with efficiency. Numerous mission boards, colleges, and Christian organizations were founded by Spiritdedicated Mel(hlors.

The natural weaknesses of MelChlors are revealed in their minds, emotions, and mouths. They are extremely difficult to please. Once they start thinking negatively about something or someone (including themselves), they can he intolerable to live with. Their mood follows their thought processes. Although they do not remain in it depression as long as the other two blends of the Melancholy, they can lapse into it more quickly.

The Melancholy and the Choleric are the two basic temperaments haunted by self persecution, hostility, and criticism. Put those together in a MelChlor and look for this person to be under the pile as soon as things go wrong.

This person's favorite prayer? "Lord, why me?" It is not uncommon for MelChlors to get angry at God as well as their fellowman, and if such thoughts persist long enough, they may become manic-depressive. In extreme cases, they can become sadistic.

When confronted with their vile thinking patterns and angry, hitter spirits, they can explode. I knew an ulcer patient who had received thirty-four blood transfusions. When I gently confronted her with her selfpity and vile thought patterns directed toward her parents, husband, and children, she snapped, "If you had been treated the way I have, you would think the same way!"

Their penchant for detailed analysis and perfection can make them nitpickers who drive others up the wall. Unless they are

filled with God's Spirit or can maintain a positive frame of mind, they are not enjoyable company for long periods of time. No one is more painfully aware of this, of course, than their spouses and children. They not only "emote" disapproval, but also feel compelled to castigate others and correct their mistakes-in public as well as in private.

A MelChlor has been known to withhold sex from his wife for months because she didn't please him in the way she cooked, cleaned house, or handled the money. This person, by nature, desperately needs the love of God in his heart, and his family members need him to share it with them.

MelChors don't live up to their amazing potential because of their internalized spirit of anger and revenge. And yet many of the great men of the Bible show signs of a MelChlor temperament. These include Paul's tireless traveling companion Dr. Luke-the scholar-researcher who left the church the most detailed account of our Lord's life and the only record of the spread of the early church-and Moses, whom we examined in chapter 3.



The MelPhleg

The greatest scholars the world has ever known have been MelPhlegs. They are not nearly as prone to hostility as the two previously discussed Melancholies and usually get along well with others. These gifted introverts combine the analyt ical

perfectionism of the Melancholy with the organized efficiency of the Phlegmatic. They are usually good-natured humanitarians who blossom in a quiet solitary environment for study and research.

MelPhlegs are usually excellent spellers and good mathematicians. In addition to higher education, they excel in medicine, pharmacy, dentistry, architecture, decorating, literature, theology, and many other "cerebral" fields. They are highly respected writers, philosophers, and scientists, and masters in construction, music, and arts. Extremely detail-conscious and accurate, they make good accountants, bookkeepers, and CPAs. If they enter medicine or dentistry, it is not uncommon for them to become specialists.

Most of the world's significant inventions and medical discoveries have been made by MelPhlegs. One MelPhleg I know well is so gifted that I have often said, "He is the only man I know who is incapable of incompetence."

Despite these abilities, the MelPhleg, like the rest of us, has potential weaknesses. Unless controlled by God, MelPhlegs easily become discouraged and develop it negative thinking pattern.

MelPhlegs are unusually vulnerable to fear, anxiety, and it negative self=image. It has always amazed me that the people with the greatest talents and capabilities are often victimized by genuine feelings of poor self=worth.

Ordinarily quiet, they are capable of hostility caused by their tendency to be revengeful. In addition to enduring mood swings, they can be stubborn and rigid, even uncooperative.

But once they learn to turn from the sin of criticism and to rejoice evermore, their outlook on life can he trans-f6rmecl. I know two brilliant MelPhlegs with a number of similarities: Both are the best in their fields, highly competent, and well paid. Both are family men and active Christians, but there the comparison ends. One is loved and admired by his family and many friends. He is a self-taught Bible scholar. The other man is respected by his family, antisocial, disliked by others, and miserable. The difference? The second man became bitter years ago, and today it influences his entire life; in fact, it even shows on his face.

Their strong tendency to be conscientious allows MelPhlegs to let others pressure them into making commitments that drain their energy and creativity. Even though humanitarian concerns may sometimes cause MelPhlegs to spend too much time away from their families, these people, when filled with God's Spirit, are often loved and admired by their families because their personal self-discipline and dedication are exemplary. Unless they learn to pace themselves and enjoy diversions that help them relax, they often become early mortality statistics.

The most likely MelPhleg biblical candidate is the beloved apostle John. On one occasion he became so angry at some

people that he asked the Lord to call down on them fire from heaven. Yet sensitive by nature, he laid his head on Jesus' breast at the Lord's Supper. At the Crucifixion he was the lone disciple who devotedly stood at the cross. John was the one to whom Jesus entrusted his mother.

Later the disciple became a great church leader and left us five books in the New Testament, two of which, his Gospel and Revelation, particularly glorify Jesus Christ.



The PhlegSan

The easiest of the twelve temperament blends to get along with over the long haul are the PhlegSans. They are congenial, happy, cooperative, thoughtful, people-oriented, diplomatic, dependable, fun-loving, and humorous. They never display an abrasive personality and are neighborhood favorites-with adults and children.

Rarely do they take up a career in sales, although they could do it well if high-pressure selling were not required. Many go into education or do well in administration, accounting, mechanics, or engineering. Many are funeral directors, working scientists, statisticians, radio announcers, counselors, visitation ministers, veterinarians, farmers, bricklayers, or construction workers.

They are usually good family members who enjoy a quiet life and love their spouses and children. If they are committed Christians with good motivator-pastors, they probably take an active role in their churches.

The weaknesses of the PhlegSans are as gentle as their personality-unless you have to live with them all the time. Since they inherited the Phlegmatic lack of motivation and the Sanguine lack of discipline, it is common for these people to fall short of their true capabilities. They often quit school, pass up good opportunities, and avoid anything that involves "too much effort." They tend to putter around, enjoy solitude, and don't seem to mind that the years pass them by, and they don't go anywhere or accomplish very much.

Since opposites tend to attract each other in marriage, it female PhlegSan will often marry an aggressive man who carries her through life. When the man is a PhlegSan, it's a different ball game. A wife finds it difficult to carry her husband vocationally, and his passive ways often become it source of irritation to her. The PhlegSan's wife buys him every new self=improvement hook that hits the market, but he falls asleep reading them. One of the most common questions from wives in my seminars is, "How do I motivate my Phlegmatic husband?"

Fear and worry are additional problems that churn up unrealistic feelings of insecurity. With just it little more faith, = they could he transformed from their timidity and self defeating anxieties. However, they prefer to build a protective shell

around themselves and selfishly avoid the kind of involvement or commitment to activity that would bless them and their families.

In the Scripture Timothy most reminds me of' the PhlegSan-gentle, faithful, and good-natured, the favorite spiritual son of the apostle Paul. He was dependable and steady but timid and fearful. Paul told him to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Tim. 4:5) and repeatedly urged him to he more aggressive-God's challenge to any PhlegSan.



The PhlegChlor

The most active of all Phlegmatics are PhlegChlors. Predominantly Phlegmatic, these people will still never become balls of fire. Like other Phlegmatics, they are easy to get along with and may become excellent group leaders. If properly trained, they make good foremen, executive vice presidents, accountants, educators, planners, and laborers in almost any area of'construction. Phlegmatics-excellent listeners, genuinely interested in other people-have the potential to become good counselors. They have the patience of' Job and often are able to help those who have not found relief with other counselors. Their gentle spirit never makes people threatened.

Although PhlegChlors rarely offer their service to others, in their own organized offices where they exercise control, they

are usually first-rate professionals. Their advice will he practical, helpful, and-if they are Bible-taught Christiansquite trustworthy. They can be expected to do the right thing but rarely go beyond the norm.

The weaknesses of PhlegChlors are not readily apparent but gradually come to the surface, especially in the home. In addition to the lack of motivation and the fear problems of the other Phlegmatics, they can be determinedly stubborn and unyielding. They don't blow up at others but simply refuse to give in or cooperate.

They are not fighters or crusaders by nature but often let their inner anger and stubbornness reflect itself in silence. One such man with a fast-talking wife said, "I've finally learned how to handle that woman!" When I asked how, he replied, "Silence! Last week I didn't talk to her for five days-she can't stand it!" I warned him that he had just chosen the well-paved boulevard to ulcers. Little did I realize what a prophet I was, for he was rushed to the hospital twenty-eight days later with bleeding ulcers.

PhlegChlors often retreat alone to the "workshop" or "nest" or nightly immerse their minds in TV. The older they get, the more they selfishly indulge their sedentary tendency to become increasingly passive. Although they will probably live long and peaceful lives, they need to give themselves to the concerns and needs of their families and force themselves to become more active.

If the male PhlegChlor's wife can make an adjustment to his passiveness and reluctance to take the lead in the home, particularly in the discipline of their children, they can enjoy it long and happy marriage.

No biblical character epitomizes the PhlegChlor better than Abraham. In the early days, fear characterized everything he did: When God first called him, he was reluctant to leave the security of the pagan city of Ur; he even denied his wife on two occasions, palming her off as his sister. Finally, he surrendered completely to God and grew in his Spirit. Accordingly, his greatest weakness became his greatest strength. Instead of being known as fearful Abraham, he is called the man who "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness" (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3).



The PhlegMel

Of all the temperament blends, PhlegMels are the most gracious, gentle, and quiet. PhlegMels are rarely angry or hostile and almost never say anything for which they must apologize (mainly because they rarely say much). They never embarrass themselves or others, always do the proper thing, dress simply, and are dependable and exact.

They tend to have the gift of mercy and help. They respond to the needs of others-if they let themselves move out into the

stream of life and work with people where they are.

They are neat and organized in their working habits. They do well in photography, printing, inventory, analysis, layout, advertising, mechanics, education, pharmacy, dentistry, watchmaking, finish carpentry (almost never piecework or production, as they work slowly), glassblowing, wallpaper hanging, painting, or anything that involves intricate detail and great patience.

As Phlegmatics, they are handy around the house and, as energy permits, they keep their homes in good repair.

As for weaknesses, a PhlegMel father may neglect the discipline necessary to help prepare his children for a productive, self-disciplined life. Although seldom acknowledged, a passive father who lets his children grow up sassing and disobeying him and their mother is just as guilty of provoking his children to wrath (see Eph. 6:4) as the tyrant whose unreasonable discipline makes them bitter.

If the PhlegMel husband has a wife who recognizes his tendencies toward passivity but tactfully waits for him to take the lead in their home, they will have a good family life and marriage.

Other weaknesses of the PhlegMel person revolve around fear, selfishness, negativism, criticism, and lack of self-image. At one of our Family Life Seminars, a young painter recently acknowledged that my wife's talk on fear had made him acutely

aware of his reluctance to take advantage of a tremendous business opportunity. As he talked, I could see that he was a superbly qualified and dedicated PhlegMel who had been selling himself short.

Most PhlegMels have an obsession against involvement. They are so afraid of overextending themselves or getting overinvolved that they automatically refuse almost any kind of affiliation. Personally, I have never seen a PhlegMel overinvolved in anything-except in keeping from getting overinvolved. Since they are not internally motivated, they need to accept more responsibility than they think they can fulfill; that external stimulation will motivate them to greater achievement. All Phlegmatics work well under pressure, but it must come from outside.

These individuals should give special thought to keeping their bodies toned up, which can give them a whole new lease on life. Their greatest source of, motivation, of course, will be the power of the Holy Spirit.

Barnabas, the godly saint of the first-century church who accompanied Paul on his first missionary journey, was in all probability a PhlegMel. He was the man who gave half his goods to tl►e early church to feed the poor, the man who contended with Paul over providing John Mark, his nephew, with another chance to serve God by accompanying them on the second missionary journey. Ai ii may recall the contention became so sharp between them that Barnabas took his nephew

and they proceeded on their journey without Paul.

Paul later commended Mark, saying, "He is useful to me for ministry" (2 Tim. 4:11). Today we have the Gospel of Mark because faithful, dedicated, and gentle Barnabas was willing to help Mark over a hard place in his life.



Finding Where You Fit

Don't be discouraged if you find that you don't quite fit into any of the above twelve categories. No two human beings are exactly alike. Consider the following variables that might make your placement difficult:

1. Your percentages may be different from the sixty-forty I arbitrarily chose to present.

2. Different backgrounds and childhood training alter the expressions of identical temperament blends. For example, a SanPhleg raised by loving but firm parents will be much more disciplined than one raised by permissive parents. A MelPhleg brought up by cruel parents will be different from one raised by tender parents. Both will share the similar strengths and talents, but one may be overcome by hostility, depression, and self persecution, minimizing those inherent strengths unless empowered by the Holy Spirit.

3. You may not be looking at yourself objectively. Because

of this, you may wish to discuss your temperament with loved ones and friends. All of us tend to view ourselves through rose-colored glasses.

4. Education and IQ can influence temperament appraisal. For example, a MelSan with a very high IQ will appear somewhat different from one who is average or lower in intelligence. As a rule, an uneducated person takes longer than a well-educated person to mature. (Referring to "education," I include the trades.)

This is related to one's self-confidence. Someone who has mastered a skill is often more outgoing, confident, and expressive than that person might be otherwise.

5. Health and metabolism will influence temperament appraisal. A ChlorPhleg in top physical condition will be more aggressive than one with a faulty thyroid gland or other physical ailment. A nervous PhlegMel will be more active than one who is suffering from low blood pressure. High blood pressure often produces the "hyper" dimension to any temperament.

6. Motivation makes a difference! Out of' the heart springs the issues of life (see Prov. 4:23). With proper moti vation, behavior can change, regardless of temperament. Actually, that is why I have written this hook-so that those who are now improperly motivated will experience the power of God to completely transform their behavior.

7. Mature Christians whose temperaments have been modified by the Holy Spirit often find it difficult to analyze their temperamental makeup; they make the mistake of' examining the temperament theory in light of their present behavior. Temperament is based on the natural man; there is nothing spiritual about it. That is why we find it so much easier to diagnose and classify an unsaved person or a carnal Christian than a mature Christian. For self=analysis, a mature Christian should either concentrate only on personal strengths or consider his or her behavior before becoming a Spirit-controlled believer.



You Can Test Yourself

For more accurate self=analysis, you might want to take the LaHave Temperament Analysis test. Because of its carefully prepared questions, it accurately determines your temperament blend and quite accurately describes your vocational possibilities, best avenues of church service, and your ten primary weaknesses. It also gives many suggestions on strengthening your weaknesses.

A special discount certificate can he found on the last page of this book.



Study Questions



1. Imagine a church committee of twelve people-one from each temperament blend. Review the twelve blends by discussing what contribution each of the members could make to the committee.

2. At random, choose a blend of two temperaments, one from the Sanguine and Choleric (extrovertish) groups and one from the Melancholy and Phlegmatic (introvertish) groups. Imagine a committee of twelve people-all from this temperament blend. What would this committee be good at doing? In what ways would it fail? (You might think of the committee in terms of twelve people exhibiting the characteristics of the Bible character mentioned.)

3. Why do you think God has placed among us such a variety of temperament types? Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-31. Though this passage is referring to the gifts of the Spirit, how does the idea it presents relate to variety of temperaments?

4. What are the benefits and dangers of using your new understanding of the four temperaments and the twelve blends to "figure out" family and friends? (Review introductory paragraphs of chapter 3.)

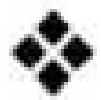
5. What are the benefits and dangers of using this understanding of the temperaments to "figure out" yourself? (Review introductory paragraphs of chapter 3.)

6. Read aloud the following Scripture passages. Discuss each as it relates to the formation of one's temperament. Scriptures: Job 31:14-15; Psalm 139:13-18; Isaiah 44:24; Galatians 1:15.

7. If you see yourself in one of the twelve temperament blends, thank God for one aspect of your temperament that you are happy to have.

CHAPTER 5

Temperament Strengths



Before we go on to describe exactly how the Holy Spirit can work in it person's life to transform temperament, let's briefly and systematically outline and review the natural strengths-and in chapter 6 the natural weaknesses-of the four basic temperaments. Again, we will first look at the two extrovertish temperaments and then continue with those more introvertish.



The Sanguine



Enjoying

No one enjoys life more than Sanguines!

These people never seem to lose their childlike curiosity for the things that surround them. Their emotions are so receptive to their environment that the unpleasant things of life can he forgotten by it change of' environment. Often they are early risers and usually wake in it lively mood. Then they whistle or sing their way through life because they usually can maintain happy thoughts. Bore dom is not a part of their makeup; when discouraged they can quickly turn to something that fascinates them.



Optimistic

In Temperament and the Christian Faith, Dr. Hallesby described the Sanguine's natural trait that produces both a hearty and optimistic disposition: "The Sanguine person has a God-given ability to live in the present."

Sanguines easily forget the past, so their minds are never befogged by the memory of heartaches or disappointments. Neither are they frustrated and fearful by the apprehension of future difficulties, for they just don't give the future that much thought. Sanguines live for the present; consequently they are naturally optimistic. They have the capacity to be fascinated by little things as well as big; consequently life is enjoyable today.

They are usually optimistic that tomorrow, whatever it holds,

will be as good as today or even better. They tend to let life unfold naturally without advance planning-which is why their lives are unnecessarily encumbered by the unexpected. Sanguines usually find that exciting, but it is often nerve-racking to their partners.

Sanguines are easily inspired to engage in new projects, and their boundless enthusiasm often carries others along with them. If yesterday's project has failed, they are optimistic that the one they are working on today will definitely succeed.



Friendly

The outgoing, handshaking, touching demeanor of the cheerful Sanguines stems basically from their genuine love for people. They enjoy being around others, sharing their joys and

sorrows, and making new friends. They are distressed to see individuals who aren't enjoying themselves at a party, and they'll frequently go out of their way to include such a person in the group. Their love for people and enthusiastic charisma is almost invariably returned.



Compassionate

Sanguines have tender, compassionate hearts; no one responds more genuinely to the needs of others. They are able to share the emotional experiences, both good and had, of others. They, by nature, find it easy to obey the scriptural injunction, "Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep" (Rom. 12:15).

The sincerity of Sanguines is often misunderstood by other

temperament types who are puzzled by the sudden changes of emotion when Sanguines genuinely respond to the joys and heartaches of others.

No one can love you more or forget you faster than Sanguines. But if' you're forgotten, it's not intentional. These people simply have the pleasant capacity to live in the present- and you may he a part of the past. The world is enriched by these cheerful, responsive people. They spread joy wherever they go with their infectious spirit.

❖

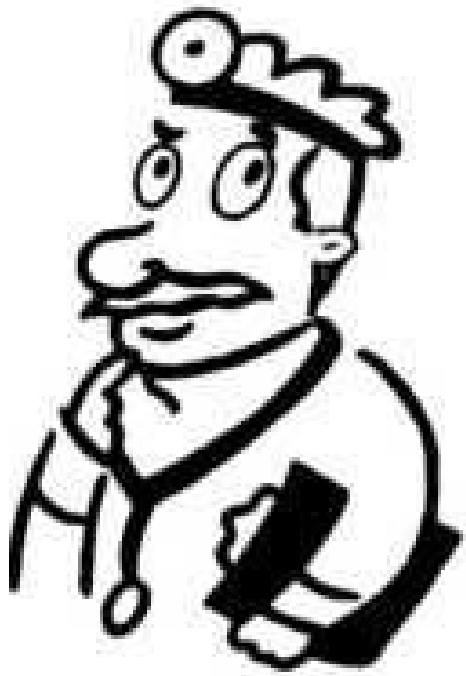
The Choleric



Strong-Willed

Cholerics are usually strong-willed and self-disciplined individuals with a powerful tendency toward self=determination. Cholerics are very confident in their own ability and very aggressive. They are continualmotion people, hut, unlike Sanguines, this activity is well planned and purposeful.

Once having embarked upon a project, they have a tena cious ability that keeps them on track and doggedly driving in one direction. Of them it could rightly be said, "This one thing I do" (see Phil. 3:13, KjV). Their singleness of purpose often results in accomplishment. They may think their methods or plans are better than others, but in reality their success is the result of determination and stick-to-itiveness rather than superiority of planning.



Practical

The Choleric temperament is given over almost exclusively to the practical aspects of life. Everything in life is considered in the light of its utilitarian purpose, and Cholerics are happiest when engaged in some worthwhile project. They possess a keen mind fir organization but find detail-work distressing. They can quickly appraise a situation and diagnose the most practical solution. Many of their decisions are reached by intuition more than analytical reasoning.



Leader

Cholerics have strong leadership tendencies. Their forceful wills tend to dominate a group; they make good judges of people; they are quick and bold in emergencies. They are not afraid of leadership and readily accept it when it is placed on them. If it isn't, they often volunteer for it. They are typically known as "take-charge" persons. If they don't become arrogant or bossy, others respond well to their practical direction and leadership.

Optimistic

The Choleric outlook on life is based on a natural self= confidence that makes them optimistic. They are adventuresome to the point that they often leave a secure position for the challenge of the unknown. They have a natural

pioneering spirit.

When appraising a new situation, they rarely see the pitfalls or potential problems but merely keep their eves on the goal. Somehow they have an unshakable confidence that no matter what difficulties arise, they will be able to solve them. Adversity does not discourage them; instead, it whets their appetites and makes them even more determined to achieve their objectives.

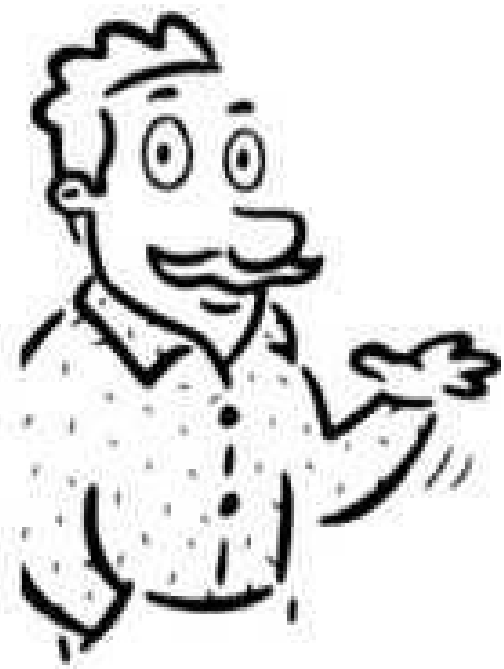
The Melancholy



Sensitive

Melancholies have by far the richest and most sensitive nature of all the temperaments. Usually they have high IQs and are quite creative and naturally gifted. Most of the world's great geniuses have Melancholy temperaments. They particularly excel in the fine arts with a vast appreciation for life's cultural values. They are emotionally responsive but, unlike the Sanguine, internalize their feelings and tend to let their emotions (often "dark") influence their thinking.

The Melancholy temperament is particularly adept at creative thinking and at high emotional peaks will often launch into an invention or creative production that is both worthwhile and helpful to others.



Perfectionist

Melancholies have strong perfectionist tendencies, and their standard of excellence usually exceeds others. Their requirements of acceptability in any field are often impossibly high for anyone to achieve-including themselves. 'I'hev tend to relive past events and decisions, thinking how much better they would do if only given another opportunity.

The analytical abilities of the Melancholy, combined with their perfectionistic tendencies, make them "hounds for detail." Whenever a project is suggested by a Choleric or Sanguine temperament, the Melancholy can analyze it in a few moments and pick out every potential problem. They often appear to be against things because of their-constant reference to potential problems. But to them that is "just being realistic"!



Faithful Friend

Those blessed with the Melancholy temperament do not have to strive to be faithful; with them it is a natural impulse. Melancholies usually do not attract a large number of friends, but they will keep those they attract and would literally lay down their lives for their friends.



Self-Sacrificing

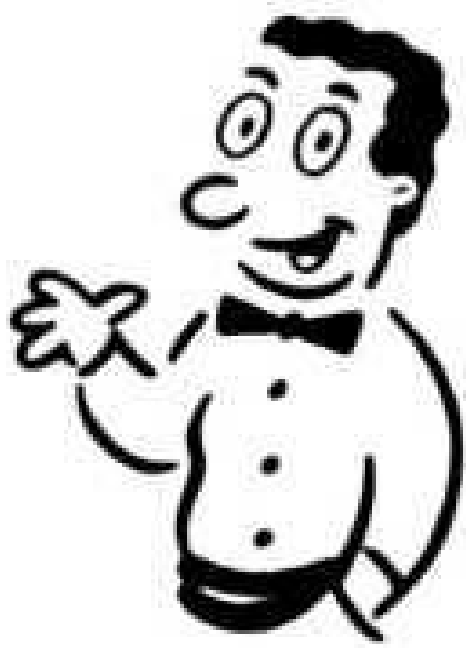
Melancholies can always be depended upon to finish a job in the prescribed time or carry their end of'a load.

They rarely seek to be in the limelight but prefer to do the behind-the-scenes tasks of life. They often choose a very sacrificial vocation and are frequently driven by it desire to give themselves to the betterment of mankind. Melancholies have the wonderful capacity of knowing their limitations and rarely take on more than they can do.

They are prone to he reserved and rarely volunteer their opinion or ideas. When asked, however, they almost always have an opinion, and, when offered, their opinions indicate they have analyzed the situation quite deeply. They do not waste words but are usually very precise in stating exactly what they mean.

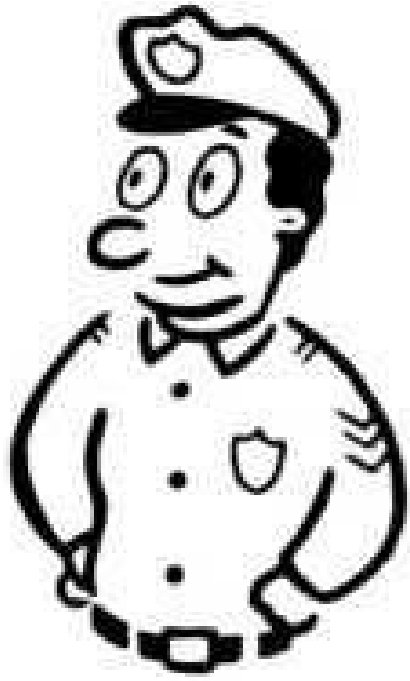


The Phlegmatic



witty

Phlegmatics have an unexcited good humor that keeps them from being intensely involved with life; they can often see humor in the most mundane experiences. Their dry sense of humor evokes peals of laughter from others. They seem to have a superb inborn sense of timing in the art of humor and stimulating imagination. Unlike the Sanguine, they don't tell an endless string of' old jokes. Instead they just say funny things. Most stand-up comics are Phlegmatics.



Dependable

Phlegmatics are dependability personified. Always cheerful and good-natured, they also can he depended upon to fulfill their obligations and time schedules. They always do what is expected or "the proper thing." Like Melancholies, they are faithful friends; although they do not get too involved with others, they rarely are disloyal.

Phlegmatics are highly qualified by natter to he good counselors. Their slow, easygoing manner makes it easy for then to listen. They also have the ability to keep from identifying themselves with the person or injecting themselves into the depression and are usually very objective. "They do not blurt out advice but give thoughtful counsel well worth hearing.



Efficient

Phlegmatics are also practical, efficient, and well organized. Conserving their own energy by thinking and planning, they develop the capabilities early to analyze a situation before becoming involved. Since they are not emotionally stimulated to make sudden decisions, they find the practical way to accomplish an objective with the least amount of effort. They work well under pressure. In fact, they often do their best work under circumstances that would cause other temperaments to "crack."

Their work always hears the hallmark of neatness and efficiency. Although they are not perfectionists, they do have high standards of'accuracy and precision. The neatness of

their desk top in the midst of 'a great project is always a source of amazement to the more active temperaments. They have found that putting everything in its exact spot is much easier and less time consuming in the long run. Even as children they like neatness and order.



Summary

The variety of strengths provided by the four temperament types keeps the world functioning properly. No one temperament is more desirable than another. Each one has its vital strengths and makes its worthwhile contribution to life.

Someone facetiously pointed out this sequence of events involving the four temperaments: "The hard-driving Choleric produces the inventions of the genius-prone Melancholy, which are sold by the personable Sanguine and enjoyed by the easygoing Phlegmatic."

The strengths of the four temperaments make each of them attractive, and we can he grateful that we all possess some of these strengths. But there is more to the story!

Many people have determined their basic temperament based on their strengths presented here. They have changed their minds when confronted with their unpleasant weaknesses-presented in the next chapter.

A good rule of thumb is this: When you determine your temperament on the basis of your strengths, don't change your mind when we get to sour weaknesses. That may indicate it reluctance to be objective or honest with yourself.

Strengths carry corresponding weaknesses, so face them realistically, then let God do something to change them.



Study Questions



1. Under four headings-Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholy, and Phlegmatic-list the strengths of each temperament type. Review and discuss each strength.

2. How do the strengths of the different temperaments complement one another?

3. Especially in marriage, opposites seem to attract. How might this dynamic "work"-or lead to disaster?

4. What kind of Christian service might appeal to each temperament type?

5. Working alone, list your personal strengths. Number them in order of their dominance-as you perceive yourself. If half to two-thirds of them fall under the same temperament, that is probably your dominant type. Try to determine also your secondary temperament. Discuss your strengths with the group only if you are comfortable doing so.

6. Review the stories of biblical characters who exemplified each of the four temperaments. How did God use their strengths for his glory?

7. Read Matthew 25:14-30, the Parable of the Talents. How might this parable relate to each person being responsible for his or her own temperament strengths?

8. Read and discuss Romans 6:11-13 and Romans 12:1-2. Alone, and then as a group, present your strengths and talents to God.

C H A P T E R 6

Temperament oaknesses



As important as the temperament strengths are, even more important, for our purposes, are the temperament weaknesses. In this chapter we're going to contrast the strengths of' the temperaments with their weaknesses. Why? So von can diagnose your own weaknesses and develop it planned program for overcoming them.

Don't he afraid to he objective about yourself and face your weaknesses.



The Sanguine



Restless

When studied carefully, the boundless activity of the Sanguine temperament proves to he little more than restless movement. Sanguines are often impractical and disorganized. Their emotional nature can get them instantly excited. Before really analyzing the entire picture, they will be running off "half-cocked" in the wrong direction. They often are not good students because of this spirit of mental restlessness. This carries over into their spiritual lives, where they find it difficult to concentrate on reading the Word of God.

Their pattern of restless activity in the long run usually proves unproductive. They are often voted "most likely to succeed" in college, yet fail in life. They have a difficult time pulling their enormous talents together. Frequently they spend

their lives running from one tangent to another, and, unless disciplined, they are unproductive, failing to measure up to their potential.



Weak-Willed

Sanguines usually get by on the power of their dynamic personality. But that dynamic personality is often a facade that covers a weak character. Their greatest basic problem is that they are weak-willed and undisciplined. They have an enormous need to be loved and approved and frequently will make any kind of compromise necessary to gain that approval.

Sanguines are great at starting new things and never finishing them. If approached to teach a Sundayschool class or take a position in the church, their instant response is yes-

without thinking the matter through in the light of their time, abilities, and other responsibilities. They love to please. They do not know their limitations, and although they function well as "front men" or "platform personalities," without the stimulus of the group they find it difficult methodically to do the necessary preparatory work. Consequently, they spend a lot of time in public "flying by the seat of their pants" or just responding to the pressure of the situation.

Without meaning to do so, they easily forget their resolutions, appointments, and obligations. They usually cannot be depended upon to keep a time schedule or meet deadlines.

Perhaps the most dangerous result of their weak wills is that they are prone to modify their moral principles to their surroundings and contemporaries. They are not given to resolution or loyalty.

No temperament has a greater problem with lust than does the Sanguine. Since they are "touchers" who communicate charisma and charm, they often face sexual temptations, which they do not have the strength of will to decline. Their ability to live in the present is a danger here, since they tend to think more of the immediate temptation than of their families at home.

Sanguines need to heed the scriptural injunction to "flee ... youthful lusts" (2 Tim. 2:22) and "make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts" (Rom. 13:14).



Egotistical

Possessing the most charming of personalities, Sanguines frequently appear more mature in their youth than their contemporaries. This often lands them prominent positions earls' in life, which tends to magnify their natural egotism. They can go overboard and become obnoxious by interrupting and dominating a conversation. As they grow older, they tend to talk more and more about themselves and be preoccupied with things of interest to them, expecting others to be equally as interested.



Emotionally Unstable

In temperament and the Chnstian F(Iith, I)r. Halleshv wrote that a Sanguine "is never far from tears." This is true in spite of the fact that this is the "enjoying temperament." One Sanguine minister who was notorious for crying at his own stories blustered, "I'm so emo tional, I cry at laundry tags and telephone numbers." Sanguines discourage easily and can drift into a pattern of excusing their weaknesses or feeling sorry for themselves.

Their warm nature can produce spontaneous anger and cause them to "fly off the handle." The term "livid with anger" often applies to Sanguines. But after they have exploded, they forget all about it. You don't-but they do. This is the type of person who fits the cliche, "He never gets ulcers, he just gives

them to everyone else." This emotional instability makes Sanguines feel genuinely sorry for their explosive outburst, and they will readily apologize. In the spiritual realm Sanguines are often found repenting for the same thing over and over again.

Like the other three temperaments, the Sanguine's greatest need is the filling of the Holy Spirit. His best resource for self=discipline is a strong and vital spiritual life. His primary spiritual needs are to incorporate five of the nine fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians 5-temperance or self-control, longsuffering, faith, peace, and goodness.



The Choleric

The admirable characteristics of the Choleric temperament carry with them some serious weaknesses-most often tied to the hard, angry, impetuous, self-sufficient traits. By nature Cholerics have a serious emotional deficiency. Some Choleric males may never cry after early adolescence, and Choleric women may cry only when facing the most desperate circumstances.

Hot-Tempered

Much of the energy that propels Cholerics toward the attainment of their goals is generated from their hot-tempered disposition. They can become violently angry in a moment. Even after exploding in wrath, they often continue carrying a

grudge. They have been known to be revengeful, going to almost any lengths to repay an injustice.

This angry disposition causes them much discomfort and can make them uncfesiralIc to be around, particularly over it long period of time. The Bible teaches that we reap what we sow, and Cholerics often complain that they are "unloved." The thought doesn't occur to theist that you have to loge to be loved' Cholerics give and get ulcers. I'll ysical IN, they often get ulcers before they are forty years old, and spiritually they grieve the Holy Spirit through bitterness, wrath, and anger. The classic "type A personality." they often die you►tg, their body parts wearing out from the pressure they create.



Cruel

Christian compassion is foreign to the thick-skinned Choleric

nature that is unsympathetic to other people's dreams, accom plishments, and needs.

A strange streak of sheer cruelty in some Cholerics causes them to run roughshod over the feelings and rights of others in an effort to achieve a personal objective. Unless they are taught a strong moral standard in their youth, they will not hesitate to break the law or resort to crafty means to succeed. Cholerics are notorious for thinking that the end justifies the means. Many of, the world's most depraved criminals, dictators, and rulers have been Cholerics.

It is difficult fin' Cholerics to apologize or to show approval, and this causes heartache in marriages. Some Choleric men beat their wives into submission. Others strike their wives with the more devastating club of' disapproval. Women Cholerics have been known to strike their husbands in anger-though the husbands may be twice their size and strength. Others can wither their husbands with a cruel sarcastic tongue. Few people married to un-Spirit-filled Cholerics have a good self-image after ten years of marriage.





Impetuous

The ability to be decisive produces an impetuosity that gets Cholerics into trouble. They may launch programs that they

regret, but because they are so determined and proud, they stubbornly and tenaciously see the task through.

This impetuous nature can also prompt Cholerics to blurt out cruel, blunt, and sarcastic statements that are very hurtful.



Self-Sufficient

Self-confident Cholerics tend to be independent and self-sufficient. A few successes can make them proud, haughty, and domineering to the point where they become obnoxiously self-reliant. These characteristics become boring to other people, who tend to shun them. Those who are forced to work or live with them often become frustrated, feeling they can never please.

This spirit of self-sufficiency carries over into the spiritual

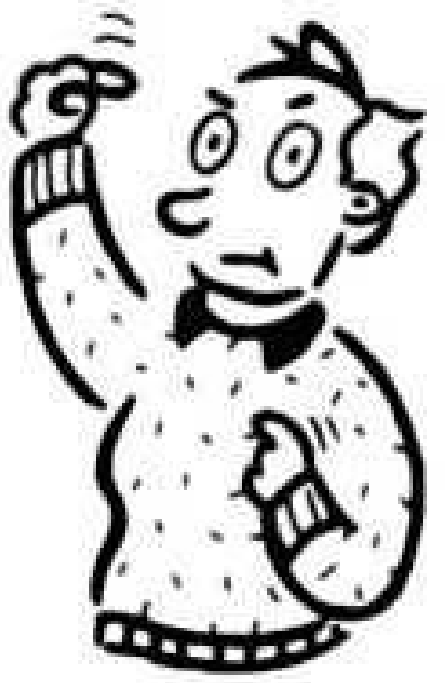
realm, causing them to feel that they don't need God. They tend to look at their accomplishments as good deeds that will more than outweigh their bad deeds on Judgment Day. Even after conversion to Christ-which is difficult after childhood-they have difficulty realizing that they must depend upon the Lord. They need to learn early that "'it is not by [Choleric] might ... but by My Spirit,' says the Lord" (Zech. 4:6).

When they to try to cultivate a spiritual life by reading the Bible and praying, their active minds easily leap to planning the day's activities, and they miss the spiritual blessing. If they aren't careful, they will recognize only the needs of others during Bible study. Many Cholerics look on a regular devotional lie as being it waste of' time.

Of all the tenmperanments, Cholerics especially need probably the greatest number-seven-of' the nine fruit of the Spirit: love,,joy, peace, gentleness, longsuffering, meekness, and goodness.



The Melancholy



Self-Centered

The self-centered traits ofthe Melancholy temperament are superbly described in Ur. I Iallesby's hook 7'nrperamenI and the Christian Faith:

He is surely more self-centered than any of the other temperaments. He is inclined to that kind ofself-examination, that kind ofself-contem- plation which paralyzes his will and energy. He is always dissecting himself and his own mental conditions, taking off layer after layer as an onion is peeled, until there Is nothing direct and artless left in his life,- there is only his erverla.sting.selfexamination. This selfexamination is not only unfortunate, it is harmful. Alelaticholie.s usually drift into morbid mental conditions. They are concerned not only about their spiritual state; they are also unduly concerned

about their physical condition. Lver,y-thing that touches a melancholic is of firime importance to him, hence no other type can so easily become a hypochondriac.

This self-centered trait can ruin a Melancholy's life. When compounded by it sensitive nature, this self-centered ness makes a Melancholy easily offended or insulted. He "carries his feelings on his sleeve." He is prone to be suspicious. If two people are talking in hushed tones, a Melancholy is almost certain to jump to the conclusion that they are talking about him. In severe cases this type of thinking can lead to a persecution complex.



Pessimistic

Perfectionistic and analytical Melancholies tend to be pessimistic. They see not only the ultimate end of a project, but also all of the problems that will have to be surmounted to achieve a goal. In their view these mental and (sometimes magnified) problems often far outweigh the good accomplished in the whole endeavor. Not only that, they are sure that the end result will not be nearly as good as promised, and since they have been "disappointed so many times in the past," they expect to be disappointed again. Such people are never thankful praisers but walk in selfpity.

This pessimistic outlook on life makes thetas fearful and indecisive; they don't want to be wrong and fall short of their own high standards or, even worse, make themselves vulnerable to the criticism of others.

No one is more critical than the Melancholy. With unrealistic expectations of others, they cannot happily accept less than the very best. Many perfectionists have ruined otherwise good marriages because their partners measured up to only 90 percent of their expectations. Instead of seeing all the good, these Melancholies fixate on and amplify the had. This spirit of criticism, if not spoken, is often conveyed through a proud, haughty attitude that sees others who do not share their high standards as being inferior. Melancholies are as critical of themselves as they are of other people. That may be one reason they have little joy in their natural makeup.

When it comes to marriage, Melancholies often have it

difficult time taking the "fatal plunge." They are prone to "idealize" potential mates from it distance, but upon deeper acduaintancc they find them to he "only huma"" with too marry weaknesses. Many times Melancholies will truly love someone in spite of' that person's weaknesses but still hesitate to marry because of, them.

Dr. Ilalleshy states, "A great many men are unmarried simply because they are Melancholic. They themselves ►nay think that they are Melancholy because they are bachelors." The uruth of the matter is they are probably bachelors because they are Melancholy. Many unmarried women will admit that they've had it number of marriage offers; it's just that "Mr. Perfect "ever came along."



Moody

No one manifests a greater mood fluctuation than does the Melancholy. On occasion Melancholies may be exuberant, acting almost like Sanguines. More often you will find the Melancholy "down in the dumps" or "dc-pressed"-for no given reason. It has always amazed me that the most capable and gifted people are those who most often get down on themselves. This depression is so common that Hippocrates thought Melancholies lutist have some „black" fluid in their systems.

This ntoocliness causes a vicious downward spiral. Friends become annoyed or disgusted whc", for seemingly no reason, it Melancholy gets depressed for cxtended periods. The sensitive Melancholy nature picks up on the friends' avoidance and plunges the Melancholy into even greater depths of' gloom. Such moodiness is often the result of the Melancholy's strong self-centered thinking pattern.

To escape their gloomy moods, Melancholies often start daydreaming. Being dissatisfied with the imperfect present, they think about memories-the further back, the more pleasant the old days seem. When they tire of memories, they dream of the future. This dangerous thought pattern not only paralyzes a person's will and energy, but it can also lead to schizophrenia.



Revengeful

Although Melancholies may be calm or quiet on the surface, they are often very angry and resentful-sometimes for insults that others think of little significance. They may never put their anger, hatred, or animosity into action, as would a Choleric or Sanguine, but they may harbor their desire for revenge for years. They have been known to build up so much resentment that they explode in a fit of rage or by doing something bizarre and totally out of character.

This unforgiving, revengeful spirit sometimes outweighs their brilliant deductive ability and causes them to make decisions on the basis of prejudice. Some have been known to destroy some worthy project merely because the person leading the project has offended them in the past.

Now that we have seen both the strengths and weaknesses

of the Melancholy temperament, consider an interesting fact. The temperament with the greatest strengths and potential is also the temperament with what seems to be the greatest potential weaknesses. This may account for my personal observation that there are very few "average" Melancholies. That is, Melancholies tend to either accentuate the temperament's strengths and stand above their fellows or he so dominated by their weaknesses that they sink beneath the level of their abilities. In addition, they may give themselves over to being neurotic, disconsolate, or hypochondriac individuals who no longer enjoy life or others and wallow in self-hatred.

Melancholies should remember that many of the most outstanding people in the Bible were predominantly Melancholy. Faith in Christ lifts a person beyond natural temperament to the point that he or she lives the "new life in Christ Jesus."

One of the most dynamic illustrations of the power of the gospel is to see a gloomy, moody Melancholy transformed by God's grace and armed with the great commission-having a new and lofty purpose for living that directs his or her conscious thinking toward others rather than self.

The primary spiritual needs of the Melancholy are six of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, goodness, faith, and self-control. If you are a Melancholy, heed Paul's instruction of I Thessalonians 5:18, "In everything give thanks."

The Phlegmatic

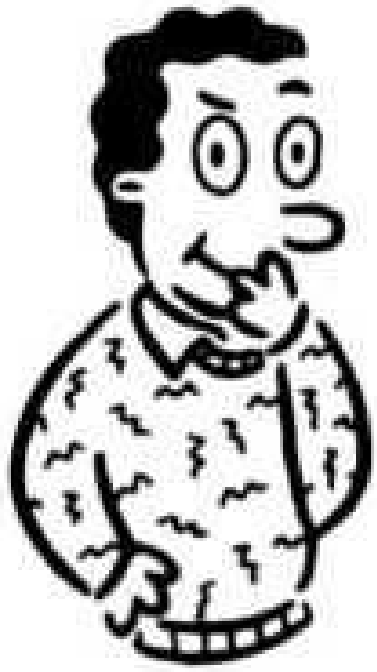


Slow & Lazy

Extremely likable by nature, even Phlegmatics have serious weaknesses. Chief among them is that they are prone to be slow and lazy. They're often accused of "dragging their feet." Why? Since they resent being stimulated to action against their will, they go along as slowly as they can.

Their lack of motivation tends to make then spectators in life; they're inclined to do as little as necessary. This characteristic keeps them from initiating many of the projects that they think up and are very capable of executing-if it only

didn't seem like "too much work." The restlessness of the Sanguines and the activity of the Choler ics often annoy Phlegmatics, who don't want to be "pushed" to work.



Tease

Because of their keen sense of humor and their ability to be detached observers, Phlegmatics often find it easy to tease others who annoy them or threaten to motivate them.

Dr. Hallesby has said in this regard:

> If a Sanguine person enters warm and enthusiastic, the Phlegmatic person becomes cold as ice. If the Melancholy comes along pessimistically lamenting the miseries of the world, the Phlegmatic becomes more optimistic than ever

and teases them beyond endurance. If a Choleric enters the room brimful with plans and projects, it is an exquisite pleasure for the Phlegmatic to throw cold water on their enthusiasm and with their level-headedness and keen understanding it is an easy matter for them to point out the weaknesses of the Choleric's proposition.

Frequently Phlegmatics use their humor and wit as a decisive tool to get others all stirred up and angry, while they never lose their composure or become excited.



Selfish & Stubborn

Phlegmatics are often quite selfish with their money, effort, or even emotions. They may love someone but rarely let that person know it. This trait often becomes more apparent over

time, as they learn to protect themselves from "overinvolvement."

Phlegmatics are generally stubborn, opposing change of any kind. (Change usually means work.) They are naturally conservative, particularly when it comes to conserving their own energies.

As they mature, they can learn to disguise their stubbornness through their easygoing good humor, while becoming even more stubborn. One thing about their stubbornness: They are nice about it. They never stamp their feet and say, "I won't do that!" They are more apt to smile and graciously not do it.

In extreme cases they can be quiet rebels. Each time they are forced by the activity of others into projects and activities that turn out poorly, they become even more resistive to future suggestions. This stubbornness and their natural selfishness combined tends to make them stingy. What is this going to cost me? they ask themselves. What will this take out of me? As we shall see, selfishness is a basic weakness of all four temperaments, but Phlegmatics may be cursed with the heaviest dose.



Indecisive

Phlegmatics often become more indecisive through the years, for several reasons. With their practical and analytical ability, they can usually find a "better way" to do something, but they come up with their plans slowly. By the time they're ready to present their proposals, someone else already has the group moving on an alternate plan. Knowing in their hearts that their "come lately" proposals are better than anything that's presented quickly, they only halfheartedly enter into the planning sessions, giving the least effort they feel is required.

They are also indecisive because of their desire to be people pleasers. They have a good sense of the best way to do something, but they think, But if I do it, I am sure to offend this person or that relative.

Then a third aspect of their indecisiveness is this: Even though they can analyze a situation and come to a practical method for achieving it, they often weigh the plan against whether or not they really want to get "involved." They vacillate between wanting to do something and not being willing to pay the price in time or effort. This indecisive practice can soon become a deep-rooted habit that outweighs their naturally practical mind-set.

The primary spiritual needs of the Phlegmatic are five fruit of the Spirit: love, goodness, meekness, faith, and temperance or self-control in terms of motivation.



Summary

This completes our outline of the basic weaknesses of the temperaments. I hope it wasn't too discouraging. Dr. Halleshy succinctly summarized the relational shortcomings of the four temperaments: "The Sanguine type enjoys people and then forgets them. The Melancholy is annoyed with people but lets them go their own crooked ways. The Choleric makes use of people for his own benefit; afterwards, he ignores them. The Phlegmatic studies people with supercilious indifference." This makes all the temperaments appear hopeless, but that is never the case when the ministry of the Holy Spirit is included.

My wife had an experience that graphically illustrates the contrast between two of these natural temperaments. She was

sitting in the back of a San Diego rapid transit bus. The bus stopped-for an unusually long time-to pick up a passenger. Several of the irritated riders craned their necks to see what was holding them up. Finally, about the time some tempers were ready to erupt, an elderly, handicapped woman came into view, paid her fare, then slowly and laboriously took her seat. She then turned around and, with the most disarming Sanguine smile, said with a loud, cheery voice, "Thank you so hutch for waiting for rue. I'm sorry I delayed you."

My wife was absolutely amazed at the transformation of attitude on the bus. Most of the grumpy passengers responded with a smile to Mrs. Sanguine's cheery greeting. This clear woman had that pleasant Sanguine capacity of being able to forget the unpleasant past and not fear the unpleasant future. She was able to enjoy the beautiful stunshine of' the present, and she made others respond to her mood.

The bus had scarcely gone two miles clown the road when it was delayed again. Believe it or not, another handicapped woman got on the bus and took the seat directly opposite Mrs. Sanguine. My wife couldn't determine from that distance whether the second lady was a Mrs. Choleric or Mrs. Melancholy, but there was no radiance, no smile, no joy, nothing but marks of bitterness, resentment, and misery etched deeply on her face.

The moment this woman was seated, Mrs. Sanguine got to work! Greeting her with a cheery smile, she laughed and joked

with her unhappy neighbor. Within a matter of minutes she had her companion beaming it smile the other passengers had not believed she was capable of.

This story illustrates many things, but I would like to use it to show that our circumstances do not have to determine our reactions. Our strengths or weaknesses of temperament prevail by our choice. To he sure, not all Sanguine handicapped people are cheerful and not all Melancholy handicapped folks are morose. Christians can overcome natural weaknesses and enhance their natural strengths through the supernatural filling of the Holy Spirit.

But before going on to chapter 7, where we examine your enormous potential f*()r change, understand that your natural temperament influences almost everything you do. It causes almost all of your actions and reactions. As we saw in chapter 3, the way you eat, drive a car, keep your bank balance, and pursue your hobbies is a reflection of your temperament.

That means you had better consistently direct your temperament into the best lifestyle for you and your family. Otherwise, your temperament will subconsciously direct you. But we can maximize our strengths and minimize our weaknesses only through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit.



Study Questions



1. Briefly review each temperament's strengths. (Read the list made in chapter 5 or make a new list.)

2. Under the four headings-the names of the temperaments-list the weaknesses of each temperament type. Discuss the weaknesses in contrast to the strengths.

3. For each temperament, list-and discuss-one or more spiritual stumbling blocks.

4. For each temperament, what would be the basic causes of an inconsistent or unproductive devotional life?

5. For each temperament, discuss some spiritual safeguards that could help a person overcome natural weaknesses.

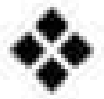
6. For the Christian, what is the function of freedom of choice in relation to temperamental strengths and weaknesses?

7. Read 2 Corinthians 12:9. What does this say about our weaknesses?

8. Working alone, make a note of one of the weaknesses of your predominant temperament type. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you accept these weaknesses as a challenge to overcome.

C H A P T E R 7

The Spirit Filled Temperament



> 7'he fruit of the ,Spirit is love, jay, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control.... (Gal. 5:22-2 3, KJ~')

Now that you have a better and more objective look at both your strengths and weaknesses, you should be able to look to the Holy Spirit For his filling-to become the kind of person God wants you to he.

The Holy Spiritfilled temperament does not have weaknesses; instead it has nine all-encompassing strengths. This is God's resource for the human weaknesses that result from the Fall in the Garden of Eden.

Anyone filled with the Holy Spirit, whether Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholy, or Phlegmatic, is going to manifest these time spiritual characteristics-called "the fruit of the Spirit" in Galatians 5:22. Spiritfilled Christians will have their own natural

strengths, maintaining their individuality, but they will not be dominated by their natural weaknesses. The nine characteristics of the Spirit can transform those weaknesses.

The Spirit-Filled Person



All of these characteristics-love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance or self-control-are illustrated in the life ofJesus Christ, the supreme example of the Spirit-controlled man. He of course had no weaknesses-only strengths-being God in human flesh. A fascinating study of the life of Christ would he to catalog these nine characteristics as they appear in the Gospels.

These characteristics represent what God wants each of his children to he. They are not the result of our own human effort but the supernatural result of the Holy Spirit controlling every area of life. Needless to say, anyone manifesting these characteristics is going to be a happy, well-adjusted, mature, and very fruitful human being. It is my conviction that every child of God longs to live this kind of life.



Love

The first characteristic in God's catalog of Spiritfilled traits is love-love for God and for our fellowmen. The Lord Jesus said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matt. 22:37), and he also said, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself' (Matt. 19:19).

Very honestly, this kind of'love is supernatural! As for love of God-we are greedy and selfish creatures. A love that causes someone to be more interested in the kingdom of God than in this material kingdom in which we live is supernatural.

As for love of neighbor-there are some people with strong humanitarian tendencies by nature who have expressed love in exemplary acts. But the love described here is not just for those who stir admiration or compassion in us. The Lord Jesus said, "Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you" (Matt. 5:44). This kind of'love is never generated humanly but can only he effected by God. In fact, one of the thrilling evidences of the supernatural in the Christian experience is to see two people who have "personality conflicts" (just another expression for temperament conflicts) grow to genuinely and easily love each another.

The twelve apostles represented all four of the temperament types previously studied, and the Lord Jesus said to them, "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for

one another" (John 13:35). Many a church heartache could have been avoided had the filling of the Holy Spirit been sought for this first fruit of the Spirit.

This supernatural love is not limited by temperament. True, a Choleric as a Christian may need to go to the Holy Spirit for love more frequently than does the Sanguine, but if the Spirit controls it person's life-any person's life-that individual will be compassionate, tenderhearted, and loving.

If you would like to test your love for God, try this simple method given by the Lord Jesus. He said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15). Just ask yourself, Am l obedient to his commandments as revealed in his Word ? If not, you are not filled with the Holy Spirit.



Joy

The second temperament characteristic of the Spiritfilled person is joy. In his com-mnentary on Galatians, R. C. H. Lenski, it great Lutheran theologian, gave this coinmerit concerning the gracious emotion of Joy:

> Yes, j(nV is one of the cardinal Christian virtues; it deserves a place next to love. Pessimism is a grave fault. This is not fatuous joy such as the world accepts; it is the enduring jcry that !rubbles up./1-ow all the grace of God in our possession, from the blessedness that is ours, that is undimmed In tribulation.

The ,joy provided by the Holy Spirit is not limited by circumstances. Many have the mistaken idea that they can he happy if' their circumstances work out properly. But they have confused happiness with joy. As my friend John Hunter of(;apernwrav, England, said, ..Happiness is something that just happens because of'the arrangement of'circumstances, but joy endures in spite of circumstances."

The,loy of the Spiritfilled life is characterized by looking not at circumstances but by "looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith" (Heb. 12:2). As we look to him, we see that "all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Rani. 5:28).

In the Scripture "joy" and "rejoicing" are frequently presented as expected forms of Christian behavior. They are not the result of' self-effort but are the work of the I loly Spirit. As you look to Christ, the Spirit allows you to "commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass" (Ps. 37:5). The psalmist's prayer refers to the spiritual person's experience: You [Lord] have put gladness in my heart, more than in the season that their grain and wine increased" (Ps. 4:7).

The apostle Pattl, writing from it prison dungeon, said, "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!" (Phil. 4:4). Why could he say that? Because he had learned to experience the Spiritfilled life. And from the same prison cell he said, "I have learned in whatever state I ant, to be content'. (Phil. 1:1 1). Anyone who can rejoice and be content while in prison has to have it supernatural source of power!

The Philippian jailer saw the genuine but supernatural loy reflected in the lives of Paul and Silas when thrown into jail for preaching the gospel. He heard their singing and praising the Lord and must have been deeply impressed.

This joy of the Spirit is woefully lacking in many Christians today, and the lack keeps them from being fruitful in winning people to Christ. To be attracted to Christ, the world must see some evidence of what he can do in the life of the believer.

This supernatural joy is available for any Christian

regardless of his basic or natural temperament. Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:11). He also stated in John 10:10, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly." That abundant life will reveal itself in the Christian through joy, even under adverse circumstances, but it is only possible as the Christian is filled with the Holy Spirit.

Martin Luther said:

> God does not like doubt and dejection. He hates dreary doctrine, gloomy and melancholy thought. God likes cheerful hearts. He did not send His Son to fill us with sadness, but to gladden our hearts. Christ says: "Rejoice for your names are written in heaven. "



Peace

The third temperament trait of the Spiritfilled life is peace. Since the Bible should always be interpreted in the light of its context, let's examine the context of the list of the fruit of the Spirit-the verses in Galatians 5 just preceding these nine characteristics. There Paul describes not only the works of the natural man without the Spirit, but also the natural emotions: hatred, contentions (strivings), jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, and envy (vv. 20-21) . We see that the farther we go from God, the less we know of peace.

The peace that is a characteristic of the Spiritfilled life is really twofold. Someone has described it as "peace with God" and the "peace of God." The Lord Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you" (John 14:27). The peace he "leaves with" us might be called "peace with God." This peace with God is the result of salvation by faith. Human beings outside of Jesus Christ know nothing of peace in relationship with God because their sin is ever before them; they know they are accountable before God at the judgment. This nagging fear robs a person of peace with God.

But when this individual takes Jesus Christ at his word and invites him into his or her life as Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ not only comes in as he promised (see Rev. 3:20), but he also immediately cleanses all that person's sin (see 1 John 1:7, 9). When the realization of God's forgiveness really grips it heart, that person has peace with God. As Romans 5:1 says, "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The Spiritfilled Christian has a second peace: the peace Christ "gives" us or "the peace of God"-the peace of an untroubled heart. Jesus said, "My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (John 14:27). The preceding verse describes the Holy Spirit as "the Comforter." So here our Lord said that the Holy Spirit would be the source of the "peace of God."

The peace of God, which is the antidote to worry, is not so

automatically possessed by Christians as the peace with God. The "peace of God"-peace untroubled in the face of difficult circumstances-is illustrated by the Lord Jesus who was sound asleep in the lower part of the ship, while the twelve disciples were frightened beyond rationality.

That ratio of twelve to one is similar to that evident among Christians today. It seems that when life's sea becomes turbulent, twelve Christians will fret and fume and worry, while only one will have enough inner peace to trust God to take care of the circumstances. The twelve will he prone to worry all night, which further complicates their emotional, physical, and spiritual lives, while the one who "believes God" will get a good night's sleep, awaken refreshed, and be available for God's use the next day.

Circumstances-subject to change-should never be the base of our peace. (And becoming a Christian does not spare us from difficult circumstances.) Real, consistent peace is found as we look to God and allow the Holy Spirit to supply us with one of life's greatest treasures: "the peace of God." The apostle Paul described this peace this way: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests he made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:6-7). An untroubled, unworried individual facing the circumstances of life possesses a peace "which surpasses all

understanding." That is the "peace of God" that the Holy Spirit longs to give every believer.

These first three characteristics, love, joy, and peace, are emotions that counteract the most common weaknesses of temperament, including cruelty, anger, indifference, pessimism, gloom, and criticism. They stand as adequate reasons for living the Spiritfilled life, but this is only the beginning.



Longsuffering

The fourth temperament trait of the Spiritfilled person is longsuffering-or patience and endurance. A very simple definition of longsuffering is "to suffer long." Longsuffering involves the ability to bear injuries or suffer reproof or

affliction with out answering in kind. Consider what the apostle Peter said about the Lord Jesus: "When He was reviled, [He] did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten" (1 Pet. 2:23). That's longsuffering.

A longsuffering person is one who can do the menial, forgotten, and difficult tasks of life without complaining or seething, but graciously, as unto the Lord. This person finishes it task or suffers affronts while manifesting the loving Spirit of Christ. When I think of the characteristic of longsuffering, I think of the classic statement by Dr. Bob Jones: "The greatest ability is dependability."



Gentleness

The fifth characteristic of the Spiritfilled temperament is what

the King Janes Version calls gentleness. Most of the modern translators of the Greek New Testanment render this as kindness or goodness, which makes it almost synonymous with the sixth characteristic of the Spirit. These alternate translations of the word lessen the importance of the tenderheartedness that can be behind it thoughtful, polite, gracious, considerate act of' kindness. The world in which we live knows little of such tenderheartedness. It is the result of the compassion of the Holy Spirit for a lost and dying humanity.

The hurrying, hustling, and pressurized life we live today tends to make even some of the finest of Christians annoyed at the interruptions of "the little people." Jesus' gentle spirit can be contrasted with the disciples' cruel attitude toward the children who had been brought to Jesus for a blessing. While the disciples rebuked those who brought them, Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them" (Mark 10:13-14).

This gentle characteristic of the Holy Spirit never asks, "How often must I forgive my brother when he sins against me?" or, "Should I forgive a brother who does not ask for forgiveness?" or, "Isn't there a limit to how much a person can stand?" The Holy Spirit is able to give gentleness in the face of all kinds of pressures.

Jesus, who possessed the Holy Spirit "without measure," pictured himself as a shepherd gently caring for easily injured

sheep, and he, through his followers, tenderly cares today.



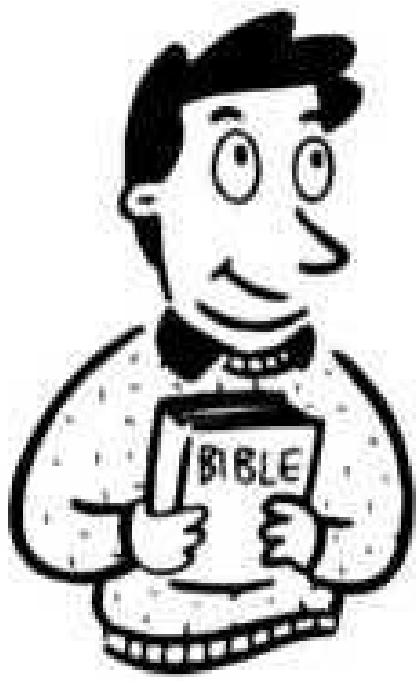
Goodness

The sixth characteristic of the Spiritfilled life is goodness, which is defined as "generous of self and possessions." It is benevolence in its purest sense. It includes hospitality and all acts of goodness that flow from the unselfish heart that is more interested in giving than receiving. Paul told Titus, the young preacher, that he should preach so "those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works" (Titus 3:8).

We moderns are so selfish by nature that we need to be reminded by the Word of God and the indwelling Holy Spirit to occupy ourselves with goodness. This characteristic then describes a person who is more interested in doing for others than for self'.

All four of the natural temperaments are prone to be selfish and inconsiderate; all need this trait of goodness. It is particularly needed by those with Melancholy tendencies as a cure for depression and gloom, caused by an overindulgence in self=centered thought patterns. There is something therapeutic about doing for others that lifts a person out of the rut of self thought. As the Lord Jesus said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

Many Christian have cheated themselves out of a blessing by not obeying the Holy Spirit's inspired impulse to do something good or kind for someone else. Instead of bring ing joy to someone else's life by that act of kindness, the self centered person stifles the impulse and sinks deeper and deeper in the slough of despondency and gloom. It is one thing to get good impulses; it is quite another to transmit them into acts of'goodness. D. L. Moody once stated that it was his custom, after presenting himself to the Holy Spirit and asking to be led by the Spirit, to act upon the impulses that came to his mind, provided they did not violate any known truth of Scripture. Generally speaking, that is it good rule to follow, for it pays rich dividends in mental health in the life of, the giver.



Faith

The seventh trait of the Spiritfilled life is faith. It involves a complete abandonment to God and an absolute dependence: upon him. It is a perfect antidote to fear, which causes worry, anxiety, and pessimism.

Some commentators suggest that "faith" here in Galatians 5:22 involves more than faith in God; it involves faithfulness or dependability. But actually, a person who has Spirit-inspired faith in God will be faithful and dependable. The pastor who married Beverly and me used to say, "When the Spirit is in control, life goes forward under the full conviction of God's ability and power."

In it vital way faith is the key to many other Christian graces. If we really believe God is able to supply all our needs, our faith will nurture peace and joy and crowd out doubt, fear, striving, and many other works of' the flesh. Many of God's people, like the nation of Israel, waste "forty years" out in the desert of life because they do not believe God. Far too many Christians have "grasshopper vision." They are like the ten faithless spies sent to scout out the Promised Land. They saw giants there and came back to report, "We were like grasshoppers ... in their sight" (Num. 13:33). How could they possibly know what the giants thought of them? You can be sure they did not get close enough to ask! They did just what we often do-jumped to a faithless conclusion. Unbelief, which causes fear, always limits God's use of a life. This subject will he considered later.

The Bible teaches that there are two sources of faith. The first is the Word of God in the life of the believer. Romans 10:17 states, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." The second is the Holy Spirit, as made clear here in Galatians 5:22. If your temperament is conducive to doubts, indecision, and fear, then as a believer you can look to the filling of the Holy Spirit to give you a heart of faith that will dispel the emotions and actions of your human nature. It may not happen overnight; habits are binding chains, but God gives the victory in Christ Jesus. "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the Lord!" (Ps. 27:14).



Meekness

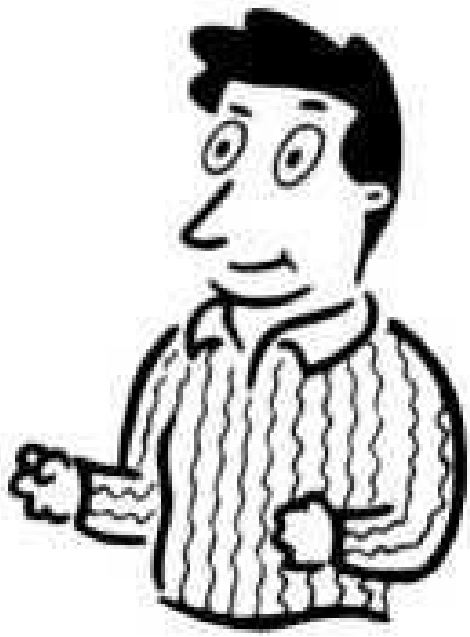
The eighth temperament trait of the Holy Spirit's filling is meekness. The natural person is proud, haughty, arrogant,

egotistical, and self-centered, but when the Holy Spirit fills a heart, that person will become humble, mild, submissive, and easily entreated.

Jesus is the greatest example of meekness. The Creator of humankind was buffeted, ridiculed, abused, and spat upon by his own creation. The Creator of the universe was willing to humble himself, take on the form of a servant, and become subject to the whines of humanity, even to the point of death, that he might purchase our redemption by his blood. He said of himself, "I am meek and lowly in heart" (Matt. 11:29, KJV).

His meek spirit is especially evident in the hours of his suffering. Consider the resources at his disposal: "Do you think that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He will provide Me with more than twelve legions of angels? How then could the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must happen thus?" (Matt. 26:53-54).

Such meekness is not natural! Only the supernatural indwelling Spirit of God could cause any of us to react to physical or emotional persecution in meekness. It is a natural tendency to assert one's self, but even the most angry temperament can he controlled by the filling of the Holy Spirit and made to manifest this admirable trait of meekness.



Self-Control

The final characteristic of the Spiritfilled believer is self=control. The King James Version uses the word teml) (winl(e, but really it is self-control or self=discipline.

Our natural inclination is to follow the path of least resistance. The Sanguines probably have more temptation along this line than any of' the other temperament types, though who hasn't given in to this very common temptation? Self-control will solve the Christian's problem of emotional outbursts, such as rage, anger, fear, and jealousy, and rein in emotional excesses of any kind. The Spirit-controlled temperament will be consistent, dependable, and well-ordered.

I see all four of' the basic temperament types having a common difficulty that can be overcome by the Spiritfilled trait

of self control. That weakness? An inconsistent or ineffective devotional life. No Christian can he mature in Christ, steadily filled with the Holy Spirit, and fully used by God who does not regularly feed on the Word of God. Yet what stumbling blocks do the various temperaments face?

Sanguiues are generally too restless and weak-willed by nature to be consistent in anything, much less in getting up a few minutes early to have a regular time of Bible reading and prayer.

Cholerics have the strong willpower to be consistent in anything they set their minds to, but they tend to not see the need for such a practice. By nature self-confident, even after they are converted, it takes some time for them to internalize what the Lord Jesus meant when he said, "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Even when they do set aside a regular devotional time, they have to fight the temptation to keep their practical, active minds from flitting off into many other directions or planning the day's activities.

Melancholies are perhaps the most likely temperament to maintain a regular devotional life, except that their analytical abilities often send them off in the quest of some abstract, theologically hairsplitting truth rather than allowing God to speak concerning personal needs from the mirror of his truth. For Melancholies, prayer can become a time of complaining and mourning to God about their unhappy state of affairs; a devotional life can conceivably thrust them into greater periods

of despair. Conversely, when controlled by the Holy Spirit, their prayer life can he characterized by giving thanks (1 Thess. 5:18) and rejoicing.

Phlegmatics are prone to recommend a regular quiet time as a necessary part of the Christian life, but if their slow, indolent, and often indifferent inclination is not disciplined by the Holy Spirit, they never quite get around to regularly feeding on God's Word.

A Strength for Every Weakness

Teaching the psychology of human temperament class at Christian College, a school I founded while pastoring in San Diego, gave me an opportunity to experiment with the concepts in this book. One year I had sixty-five upper-division students in my class, all enrolled in the biblical psychology department and seeking to be biblical counselors. Talk about creativity! We had just moved into a new building, and for the first time in my teaching career I had three huge blackboards to work with.

So I challenged the class to share with me all the weaknesses they could think of that they were likely to encounter in the counseling room. Before we were finished we had written clown eighty-four weaknesses! I think they included every weakness known to mankind. Then I spontaneously wrote down the nine fruit of the Spirit and said, "These are the resources we as Christian counselors have for helping people. These fruit will provide a strength for every weakness. Let's

see which fruit match up with each weakness." Frankly, I had never done that before, so I had no idea how it would turn out. To my amazement I found that every weakness had at least two compensating strengths, and some had as many as five.

I think we have proven that God has supplied its in the Spirit-controlled life at least one strength for every temperament-induced weakness.

As you look at these nine admirable traits of the Spiritfilled person, you get a picture not only of'what God wants von to he, but also of what he is willing to make you in spite of'your natural temperament. But remember, no amount of self-improvenent or self-effort can bring any of these traits into our lives without the power of the Holy Spirit. From this we conclude that the single most important thing in the life of any Christian is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The supreme question, then, comes to mind: How can I he filled with the Holy Spirit.-, That is the question answered in chapter S.



Study Questions



1. Discuss and review, one at a time, the nine characteristics of the Spiritfilled life as described in Galatians 5:22-23.

2. For each characteristic, why is this quality possible only through the power of the Holy Spirit?

3. Discuss the fruit of the Spirit as listed in Galatians 5:22-23 by comparing them with the "blessed" qualities presented in Matthew 5:3-12. What ideas are parallel in the two passages? (This might be easiest if you make two columns, one for Matthew 5 and one for Galatians 5. Make two lists of characteristics and then draw lines connecting parallel characteristics in the two lists.)

4. What Gospel stories show Jesus exemplifying each of the nine character traits of the Spiritfilled person?

5. In chapter 6 the discussion of the weaknesses of each temperament type ends with a list of Spiritfilled characteristics (fruit of the Spirit) that this temperament especially needs. One at a time discuss the four temperaments and how a particular fruit of the Spirit would transform that weakness.

C H A P T E R 8

How to be Filled with the Holy Spirit



> And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but he filled with the Spirit. (Eph. 5:18)

The most important thing in the life of any Christian is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. The Lord Jesus said, "Without Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). Christ is in believers in the person of his Holy Spirit. If' we are filled with his Spirit, he works fruitfully through us. If we are not filled with the Holy Spirit, we are unproductive.

It is almost impossible to exaggerate how dependent we are on the Holy Spirit. We are dependent on him for convicting its of sin before and after our salvation, for giving its understanding of the gospel, for bringing us into his kingdom, for empowering its to witness, for guiding its in our prayer life- in fact, for everything. It is no wonder that evil spirits have tried to counterfeit and confuse the work of'the Holy Spirit.

There is probably no biblical subject on which there is more confusion today than that of'being filled with the Holy Spirit. Many fine Christian people equate the filling of the Holy Spirit with speaking in tongues or some emotionally ecstatic experience. Others, because of excesses observed or heard of, have all but eliminated the teaching of the filling of the Holy Spirit. They just do not recognize his importance in their lives.

Satan places two obstacles before mankind: (1) He tries to keep people from receiving Christ as Savior; (2) if he fails in this, he tries to keep Christians from understanding the importance and work of the Holy Spirit. Once a person is converted, Satan seems to have two different approaches. He tries to get us to associate the filling of the Holy Spirit with emotional excesses or-the opposite swing of the pendulum-to ignore the Holy Spirit altogether.

One of the false impressions gained from people and not from the Word of God is that there is some special "feeling" when one is filled with the Holy Spirit. Before we examine how to he filled with the Holy Spirit, let us discuss what the Bible says we can expect when we are filled.



What to Expect When Filled with the Spirit

The Bible teaches that we can expect four things when we are filled with the Holy Spirit.

The Nine Temperament Traits of the Spirit-Filled Life

We have already examined these traits-listed in Galatians 5:22-23-in detail in chapter 7, but their presence in the believer's life bears further emphasis. Any individual who is filled with the Holy Spirit is going to manifest these characteristics. Spiritfilled believers do not have to try to manufacture these characteristics or play a part or act out a role; when the Holy Spirit has control of their nature, they will simply he different than their normal temperament would make them.

Many who claim to have had the "filling" or, as some call it, "the anointing," know nothing of love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, or self con-n-()]. These are, however, the hallmark of the person filled with the Holy Spirit!

A Joyful, ThanksGiving Heart and a Submissive Spirit

Ephesians 5:18-21 says that when the I1u1 Spirit tills the life of it hwIieyer, the Spirit will cause that person toy have a singing, thanksgiving heart and a submissive spirit:

> And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dis.sippation; belt be filled with the .Sp)in't, .speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and .spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the lather in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fi'ar r f God.

A singing, thanksgiving heart and it submissive spirit, independent of circumstances, are so unnatural that they can only he ours through the filling of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God is able to change the gloomy or griping heart into it song-filled, thankful heart. He is also able to solve our natural rebellion problem by increasing our faith to the point that we really believe the best way to live is in sulmis-Sion to the will of God.

These results of the Spiritfilled life are also the results of the Nord-filled life, as found in Colossians 3:16-18:

> Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in (111wisdom, teaching and admonishing one all other it p.salnls and hylilit.% and spiritual songs, singing with ,race 111 your hearts to the Lord. And whatvtter you do in word or deed, do all in the name o/the Lord Jesus, giving thaniks to Cod the lather through Hint. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as I.s fitting in the Lord.

It is no accident that the results of, the Spiritfilled life (Eph. 5:18--21) and those of the Word-filled life are one and the same. The Lord Jesus called the Holy Spirit "the Spirit of truth" (John 16:13), and he also said of the Word of God, "Your word is truth" (John 17:17). Why does the Word-filled lift: cause the same results as the Spiritfilled life? Because the Holy Spirit is the author of the Word of God.

This highlights the error of those who try to receive the Holy

Spirit through a once-for-all experience rather than seeing the Spiritfilled life as an intimate relationship with God-described by Jesus as "abiding in Me" (see John 15). This relationship is possible as God communes with the Christian and fills the believer's life through the "Word of Truth" and as the Christian communes with God in prayer guided by the "Spirit of truth." The conclusion that we can clearly draw here is that the Christian who is Spiritfilled will he Word-filled, and the Word-filled Christian who obeys the Spirit will be Spiritfilled.

The Power to Witness

The last thing Jesus told his disciples before ascending into heaven was this: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall he witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Before his crucifixion, Jesus had told them, "Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper [Holy Spirit] will not come to vou; but if 'I depart, I will send Him to you" (John 16:7).

Even though the disciples had spent three years with Jesus personally, had heard his messages several times, and were the best trained witnesses he had, he still instructed them "not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father"-the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4). All of their training obviously was incapable of producing fruit of itself without the power of the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit came on the

Day of Pentecost, the disciples witnessed in his power, and three thousand people were saved.

We too can expect to have power to witness when filled with the Holy Spirit. Would to God that there was as much desire on the part of God's people to be empowered to witness in the Spirit as there is to have an ecstatic or emotional experience with the Holy Spirit.

The power to witness in the Holy Spirit is not always discernible but must be accepted by faith. Ifwe have met the conditions for the filling of the Holy Spirit and then step out and witness for Christ, we should believe we give that witness in the power of the Spirit whether or not we see obvious results. Because the Holy Spirit demonstrated his presence on the Day of Pentecost so dramatically and because occasionally we see the evidence of the Holy Spirit in our lives, we conic to think that it should always he obvious, but that is not true. You see, in the sovereign plan of God he has chosen never to violate the right of man's free choice. That means we can witness to someone in the power of the Holy Spirit, and that person might still reject the Savior. We cannot always equate success in witnessing with the power to witness!

One day it was my privilege to witness to an eighty-yearold man. Because of his age and particular problems, I made a special effort to meet the conditions of-being filled with the Holy Spirit before I went to his home. He paid very close attention as I presented the gospel by using the "Four Spiritual

Laws." When I finished and asked if he would like to receive Christ right then, he said, "No, I'm not ready yet."

I went away amazed that a man his age could say he was not ready yet" and concluded that I did not witness in the power of the Holy Spirit.

A short time later I went hack to see the man and found that he had passed his eighty-first birthday. Once again I started to present the gospel to him, but he informed nie that he had already received Christ. He had restudied the laws that I had left with him, and alone in his room he had gotten down on his knees and invited Christ into his life as Savior and Lord. The Spirit had been at work, even though I had not been aware of it.

To he sure, a Christian life when filled with the Holy Spirit will produce fruit. Again, examine the Scriptures. What Jesus referred to as "abide in Me" and what the Bible teaches in relationship to being "filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18) are one and the same. Jesus said, "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot hear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me" (John 15:4). This indicates that the abiding life or the Spiritfilled life will produce fruit. If you meet the conditions for the filling of the Holy Spirit, then believe, not by results or sight or feeling, but by faith that God is working through you.

These Characteristics Will Glorify Jesus Christ

> However; when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, lint whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come. He will glorify Me (Jesus], for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. (John 16:13-14)

A fundamental principle should always be kept in mind regarding the work of the Holy Spirit: He does not glorify himself, but the Lord Jesus Christ. Anytime anyone but the Lord Jesus receives the glory, you can be sure that what is done is not done in the power of or under the direction of the Holy Spirit, for his express work is to glorify Jesus. This test should always he given to any work that claims to be the work of God's Holy Spirit.

The late F. B. Meyer told the story of a missionary who came to him at a Bible conference after he had spoken on the subject of how to be filled with the Holy Spirit. She confessed that she never consciously felt filled with the Holy Spirit and was going to go up to the prayer chapel to spend the day searching her soul to see if' she could receive his filling.

Late that evening she came back just as Meyer was Inning the auditorium. lie asked, "How was it, Sister?" and she said, "I'm not quite sure." I le then inquired of her day's activities. She explained that she'd read the Word, prayed, confessed her sins, and asked for the filling of'the Holy Spirit. She then stated, "I do not feel filled with the Holy Spirit." Meyer asked,

"Tell me, Sister, how is it between you and the Lord Jesus?" Her face lit up and with it smile she answered, "()It, 1)r. Meyer, I have never had it more blessed time of fellowship with the Lord Jesus in all of my life." He replied, "Sister, that is the Iioly Spirit! "The Holy Spirit will always make the believer more conscious of the Lord Jesus than of himself.

Summary

In review, let its summarize what we can expect when filled with the Holy Spirit. Very simply, it is the nine temperament characteristics of' the Spirit-the fruit of the Spirit-a singing, thanksgiving heart that gives its a submissive attitude, and the power to witness. These characteristics will glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. What about "feeling" or "ecstatic experiences The Bible does not tell its to expect these things when we are filled with the Holy Spirit; we should not expect that which the Bible does not promise.



What about Change?

In counseling couples I have had people tell the they knew they were "filled with the Spirit," and yet it conies out that they are disagreeable, emotionally unstable, and difficult to live with. They have been kidding themselves; such behavior is not caused by the Holy Spirit.

Others who claim to have had some kind of "experience" with the Holy Spirit negate their claim by continuing to manifest the works of the flesh, such as anger, jealousy, and worry. They fail to see that the Holy Spirit wants to change our emotions!

People truly filled with the Spirit will show it by their behavior. The best way I know to clarify the term Spiritfilled is to point out that its plain-sense meaning is "control." In Ephesians 5:18 it is compared negatively to someone who is controlled by alcohol. "Do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation [excess]; but be filled with the Spirit." The importance of this verse cannot he exaggerated. It is the most powerful command in the Bible to be "filled" or controlled by the Holy Spirit. Look again at the context. A drunk person is "filled" with wine (alcohol or drugs) when controlled by the substance. The person isn't literally filled with the liquid or the drug (it may take only a small capsule of dust), but if the substance "controls" him, it will alter his behavior-mentally, emotionally, and physically.

That is what God is telling its here. Instead of being filled with a mindless substance that controls our behavior, we should be filled with or controlled by the Spirit-meaning that the Spirit will control our behavior. We see this when our weaknesses are controlled by the Holy Spirit and we act like "new creatures."

When an angry, selfish, caustic Choleric becomes kind and compassionate, that is the Holy Spirit. When an inconsistent,

weak-willed Sanguine becomes a person of strong character, that is the control of the Holy Spirit. When a naturally critical, ungrateful Melancholy becomes a thankful praiser who serves others, that is the control of the Spirit. When a selfish, stingy, unmotivated Phlegmatic gives both self and possessions to God to serve other people, that is the Holy Spirit.

You can't have the power of God directing your life and act the same way you did when you were controlled by your natural temperament, which is the flesh. Will you be taller, smarter, more talented, or better looking? Sorry about that! But you will act differently because you are now under emotional control.

What you are emotionally is what you are! If you are out of emotional control, you are out of control. When the Holy Spirit controls your life, you will be dominated by love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance-not your natural emotions of anger, selfishness, fear, depression, and so forth. In essence, your behavior indicates whether you are filled with the Spirit. For that reason, a good test of whether you are filled with the Spirit is how you act under pressure. When Paul and Silas were put in prison for preaching the gospel, they exhibited the filling of the Spirit by rejoicing and singing. That is unnatural! And it is evidence of the Spiritfilled life. When you face the trials and pressures of life with love, joy, peace, thanksgiving, and rejoicing, that has to be the Holy Spirit.

This is particularly true in the home, for what we are at home is what we really are. Some people place great emphasis on speaking in tongues or healing or other "works for God" as evidences of being filled with the Holy Spirit. A better test would he to ask a person's partner-or children or neighbors-how that person acts at home.

Why do I place the real test of the Spirit-controlled life at homer Because that is where the Bible places it. Ephesians 5:13 is also the introduction to the longest passage in the New Testament on family living-giving instructions on how wives should treat husbands, how husbands should treat wives and children, and how children should obey and honor their parents.

The conclusion to be drawn here is that if you are not controlled by the Holy Spirit at home, you are not controlled by the Spirit. That doesn't mean we cannot exhibit the Spirit-controlled life at church, work, and other places, but we need to begin at home. You see, if we can live the Spiritfilled life at home, we can live it anywhere.

Which brings us to the most important subject of allhow to he filled with the Spirit.



The filling of the Holy Spirit is not optional equipment in the Christian life, but a command of God! The imperative mode of Ephesians 5:18 makes "Do not be drunk with wine ... but be filled with the Spirit" a command.

God never makes it impossible for us to keep his commnandments, so it is possible for us to be filled with his Spirit. Here are five simple steps for being filled with the Holy Spirit:

Examine Yourself for Sin

The Christian interested in the filling of the Holy Spirit must regularly "take heed to" himself (Acts 20:28) or "examine himself" (1 Cor. 11:28). This selfexamination is not to see if we measure up to the standards of other people or the traditions and requirements of the church but to see if we measure up to the previously mentioned results of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Do we glorify Jesus? Do we have power to witness? Do we lack a joyful, submissive spirit or the nine temperament traits of the Holy Spirit? This selfexamination will reveal those areas in which we are deficient and will uncover the sin that causes them.

We cannot be filled with sin and the Holy Spirit at the same time; sin keeps us from being filled, and our patterns of sin usually follow a temperament pattern. For example, Sanguines tend to be angry or may be guilty of sexual sin. Cholerics tend to he angry and self-willed. Melancholies are prone to he critical and fearful, while Phlegmatics may he worrisome, selfish, or stubborn. These are only some of the many sins that can keep us from being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Confess All Known Sin

"If' we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 john 1:9).

The Bible does not put an evaluation on one sin over another but seems to judge all sin alike. After examining ourselves in the light of the Word of God, we should confess all sin brought to mind by the Holy Spirit, including those characteristics of the Spiritfilled life that we lack. Until we start admitting our weaknesses as sin-our lack of compassion, our lack of self-control, our lack of humility, our anger instead of gentleness, our bitterness instead of kindness, and our unbelief instead of faith-we will never have the filling of the Holy Spirit. But the moment we recognize these deficiencies as sin and confess them to God, he will "cleanse its from all unrighteousness." Until we have done this, we cannot have the filling of the Holy Spirit, for he fills only clean vessels (see 2 Tim. 2:21).

Submit Yourself Completely to God

> Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let .sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of un-righleousness to sin, fret Present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments olrzgh-teousness to God. (Rom. 6:11-13)

To be filled with the Holy Spirit, we must make ourselves completely available to God to do anything the Holy Spirit directs us to do. If there is anything in our lives that we are

unwilling to do or to be, then we are resisting God, and this always limits God's Spirit! Do not make the mistake of'being afraid to give yourself to God!

Romans 8:32 says, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" If God loved us so much as to give his Son to die for us, certainly he is interested in nothing but our good; that means we can trust him with our life. You will never find a miserable Christian in the center of the will of God; God will always accompany his directions with an appetite and desire to do his will.

Resisting the Lord through rebellion obviously stifles the filling of the Spirit. Israel limited the Lord, not only through unbelief, but, as Psalm 78:8 says, by becoming "a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that did not set its heart aright, and whose spirit was not faithful to God." All resistance to the will of God will keep tis from being filled with the Holy Spirit. To be filled with his Spirit, we must yield ourselves to his Spirit just as a man yields himself to wine for its filling.

For consecrated Christians, giving the Lord control or dominance is often the most difficult thing to do. You see, we can always find some worthy purpose for our lives yet not realize that we are doing good while being filled with ourselves rather than with the Holy Spirit.

At a high-school and college camp, I heard a thrilling testimony from a ministerial student who said that he finally

realized what it meant to be filled with the Holy Spirit. As far as he knew, he had not been guilty of the usual sins of the carnal Christian. Actually, he had only one area of resistance in his life. He loved to preach, and the possibilities of being a pastor or evangelist appealed to him very much, but he did not want the Lord to ask him to he a foreign missionary.

During that week the Holy Spirit spoke to the young man about that very vocation. When he submitted everything to the Lord and said, "Yes, I'll go to the ends of the earth," for the first time he experienced the true filling of the Holy Spirit. He then went on to say, "1 don't believe the Lord wants me to be a missionary after all; he just wanted me to he willing to be a missionary."

When you give your life to God, do not attach any strings or conditions to it. He is such a God of love that you can safely give yourself without reservation, knowing that his plan and use of your life will be far better than yours. And, remember, the attitude of yieldedness is absolutely necessary for the filling of God's Spirit. Your will is the will of the flesh, and the Bible says that "the flesh profits nothing" (John 6:63).

Yieldedness is sometimes difficult to determine once we have solved the six big questions of life: (1) Where shall I go for training after I finish high school? (2) What vocation shall I pursue? (3) Whom shall I marry? (4) Where shall I live? (5) Where shall I work? (6) Where shall I attend church? Your answer to these questions will determine much of the outcome

of your life. A Spiritfilled Christian will be sensitive to the Spirit's leading in small decisions as well as the big ones. But I have observed that many Christians who have made the right decisions on life's six big questions are still not filled with the Spirit because they are not totally yielded to the Spirit of God.

Someone has suggested that being yielded to the Spirit is being available to the Spirit. Peter andJohn in Acts 3 make it good example of that. They were on their way to the temple to pray when they saw a lame man begging alms. Because they were sensitive to the Holy Spirit, they healed him "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth." The man began leaping about, praising God until a crowd gathered. Peter, still sensitive to the Holy Spirit, began preaching, and "many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand" (Acts 4:4).

I fear we are often so engrossed in some good Christian activity that we are not "available" when the Spirit leads. Many a Christian has said no to the Holy Spirit when offered an opportunity to teach Sunday school. It may have been the Sundayschool superintendent who asked, but that superintendent too had been seeking the leading of the Holy Spirit. Many a Christian says, "Lord, here am I; use me!" but when asked to go calling or witnessing, that person is too busy painting, bowling, or pursuing some other activity that interferes. What is the problem? That person just isn't available to the Spirit. A Christian yielded to God, "as being alive from the dead" (Rom. 6:13), takes time to do what the Spirit directs.

At this point let me warn you that Christians who are interested enough in the Spiritfilled life to read a book like this may yet miss his filling by just 2 to 5 percent. Let me explain. Most Christians are basically committed to Christ, but all of us are tempted to hold some area hack from God. A hobby, a habit, a person, a pet sin, whatever it is, it will keep us from being filled with the Spirit. We may rationalize and say, "I am almost completely yielded to God, why doesn't he accept that?"

But our God is a jealous God; he will not share your affection with another. You find that in the first commandment to "have no other gods before Me" (Exod. 20:3). Our Lord reiterated that in the New Testament when he said, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind" (Luke 10:27). This is an important key to being filled with his Spirit-total, unconditional yieldedness to him. Not 98.4 percent, but 100 percent!

The good part of this is that you will never he sorry. I have never known anyone who ever yielded completely to God who lived to regret it. He is for you. He wants to bless your life, but his condition comes in your first yielding everything to him. I can tell you that the best bargain I ever made was in giving myself, totally, unconditionally to him to do with nee anything he sees fit. That was forty years ago, and I reap the dividends from that decision every day. Don't cheat yourself out of unlimited blessing by holding back anything from God. It isn't

worth it.

Some years ago it doctor named Ralph, the chief surgeon at it major hospital in Los Angeles, shared with me how lie had experienced the Spiritfilled life years before. It seemed that when he finished medical school, he had it problem. He wanted to specialize in three things: surgery, research, and teaching. The medical counselors admitted he was qualified to do any one of the three, but only one. "In medicine you can only specialize in one area,,. they said. So he prayed that the Lord would have one of, those specialty schools invite him to study; he would open the door as an indication of, God's leading.

Instead, he was invited by all three schools, which didn't solve his problem. So he ,joined the Marines! That did, of course, solve his problem for three years. But one night out in the South Pacific after his tour of dtity, he was faced with the same decision. The next day he would fly back to the United States to pick up the pieces of his medical career. What path would lie take? Kneeling in the sand under it palm tree, he cried out to God, "Heavenly Father, I know you have something special for ►ne to do. Whatever it is, I just want you to know, I'm your boy!"

As Dr. Ralph, fitrty-eight years old, told nme this story, I saw hot tears in his eyes-yet a smile. He said, "Tim, do you know what I do for a living? I spend one-third of my time in surgery, one-third in research, and one-third in teachingjust what they told me I couldn't do."

I was looking into the face of a very fulfilled man. Why? Because he was so smart? Hardly. Because he had given his life away. He admitted, "That was the best bargain I ever made."

And so it will be for you if you give yourself without reservation to God.

Ask to Be Filled with the Holy Spirit

"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:13).

When Christians have examined themselves, confessed all known sin, and yielded themselves without reservation to God, they are then ready to receive the Spirit of God. How? By asking to be filled with the Spirit. Any suggestion to present-day believers to first wait or tarry or labor or suffer is man's suggestion. Only the disciples were told to wait, and that was because the Holy Spirit had not yet come on the day of Pentecost. Since that day, God's children have only to ask for his filling to experience it.

The Lord Jesus compares God's answer to our request with our treatment of our earthly children. Certainly a good father would not make his children beg for something he commanded them to have. How much less does God make us beg to be filled with the Holy Spirit-which he has commanded. It is just as

simple as that. Remember, God is more interested in filling us than we are in being filled.

But don't forget this next, fifth, step.

Believe You Are Filled with the Spirit and Thank Him

`But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin" (Roni. 14:23).

"In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (I Thess. 5:18).

For many Christians the battle is won or lost right here. After examining themselves, confessing all known sin, yielc1-ing themselves to God and asking for his filling, they are faced with it decision-to believe they are filled or to go away in unbelief, in which case they, have sinned, for "whatever is not from faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23).

Sometimes the sane Christians who, when doing personal work, tell new converts that they should "take God at his word concerning salvation" find it difficult to heed their own advice concerning the filling of the Holy Spirit. Oh, that those sincere personal workers would believe God when he says: "How much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 1 1:13). Ifyou have fulfilled the first four steps to being filled with the Spirit, then thank God fir his filling by faith. Don't wait for feelings, don't wait for any

physical signs, but fasten your faith to the Word of God that is independent of feeling.

Feelings of assurance of the Spirit's filling often follow our taking God at his word and believing he has filled us, but they neither cause the filling nor determine whether or not we are filled. Believing we are filled with the Spirit is merely taking God at his word, and that is the only absolute this world has (see Matt. 24:35).



Walking in the Spirit

"I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16).

"If'we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:250

"Walking in the Spirit" and being filled by the Holy Spirit are not one and the same thing, though they are very closely related. Having followed the five simple rules for the filling of the Holy Spirit, we can walk in the Spirit by guarding against quenching or grieving the Spirit (as we will describe in the next two chapters) and by following the above five steps each time we become aware that sin has crept into our lives.

Though we can be filled with the Holy Spirit in a moment of

time, being filled with the Holy Spirit is not a single experience that lasts fbr life. On the contrary, it must be repeated many times. In fact, at first it should be repeated many times daily. This can be done while kneeling at your place of devotion, at the breakfast table, in the car en route to work, while sweeping the kitchen floor, listening to a telephone conversation- anywhere. In effect, walking in the Spirit puts one in continual communion with God, which is the same as abiding in Christ. And walking in the Spirit requires daily feeding on the Word.

To "walk in the Spirit" is to be freed of your weaknesses. Yes, even your greatest weaknesses can be overcome by the Holy Spirit. Instead of being dominated by your weaknesses, you can be dominated by the Holy Spirit. That is God's will for all believers!

More specific details will be given on walking in the Spirit in chapter 13. But first we must heed Paul's warning not to grieve the Holy Spirit. What does that mean?



Study Questions



1. How does the devil confuse us on the subject of the Holy Spirit?

2. Review the four things we can expect when we are filled with the Spirit.

3. Compare the similarities between the emotional results of the Spiritfilled life, as presented in Ephesians 5:18-21, and the results of the Word-filled life, as presented in Colossians 3:16-17. Why are the similarities significant?

4. If we are Spiritfilled and witnessing in the power of the Spirit, why might we not "feel" the power or see immediate results?

5. Why should we be filled with the Spirit?

6. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit in terms of "control"? In terms of "change"?

7. Discuss in detail the five steps in being filled with the Spirit. (Read each Bible verse presented and study its significance.) How might each temperament type react to taking each step?

8. What are the natural reactions expected from each temperament when presented with the challenge to seek the filling of the Holy Spirit?

9. What is the special significance of thanking God for his

filling?

10. What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?

11. In silent prayer, walk through the five steps of being filled with the Spirit. Ask the Holy Spirit to direct your selfexamination and each subsequent step.

CHAPTER 9

Grieving the Holy Spirit through Anger



Let no corrupt word proceed out ofyour mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking

be put away from you, with all malice. And he kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. (1;ph. 4:2932)

Anger is one of the most common and one of' the most destructive emotions known to mankind. It ruined the first family, causing the first murder when Cain flew into a rage and killed his brother Abel. Ever since then it has ruined millions of'lives, marriages, friendships, and other relationships.

Ephesians 4:29-32 says that we "grieve" the Holy Spirit of' God through bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, and malice or enmity of heart. These anger-related sins probably ruin more Christian testimonies than any other kind of sin.

For some reason, otherwise consecrated Christians seem reluctant to face as sin these emotions that stem from anger. They gain victory over such external habits as drinking, gambling, and profanity without coming to grips with the emotions that churn within. Although unseen, anger is every hit as much it sin as these overt practices. Galatians 5:20-21 lists hatred, strife, and wrath in the same category as murders, drunkenness and revellings, saying, " ... of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God."

Anger takes many forms. Many people do not regard themselves as angry individuals because they don't

understand the many disguises anger takes. Consult the following list for a description of the sixteen variations of anger.

Bitterness	Wrath
Malice	Hatred
Clamor	Seditions
Envy	Jealousy
Resentment	Attack
Intolerance	Gossip
Criticism	Sarcasm
Revenge	Unforgiveness



Anger is one of two universal sins of mankind. After counseling thousands of people, I have concluded that all emotional tension can be traced to one of two things-anger or fear. And sometimes the two are intertwined. Dr. Henry Brandt, in his book The Struggle for Peace, points out that anger can cause a person to become fearful. In his book The Psychology of Jesus and Mental Health, Dr. Raymond L. Cramer, another Christian psychologist, says, "At times anxiety [fear] expresses itself'in anger. A tense, anxious person is much more likely to become irritable and angry." From these two psychologists we can conclude that an angry person can also become it fearful person, and it fearful person can become an angry person.

Thew two basic emotions are significant, as anger grieves the Holy Spirit, and fear quenches the Holy Spirit, as we will see in chapter 10.

In our study of' the temperaments we found that the extrovertish Sanguine and Choleric temperaments are anger-prone, while the Melancholy and Phlegmatic temperaments are fearprone. Because we exhibit a combination of' temperaments, many of its have it natural predisposition to both fear and anger. Then, too, from the statements cited from Dr. Brandt and Dr. Cramer, it seems that the extrovert's expression of anger could cause fear, and the indulgence of the fearprone habit of the introvertish temperaments could cause anger and hostility.

The connection between anger and fear can get complicated. For instance, fearprone Melancholies can also become angry

because of their foul thinking pattern. In their subtle style they harbor insults, affronts, and injuries for long periods of time, mulling them over and over until they explode by doing some bizarre thing that shows how out of control they are.

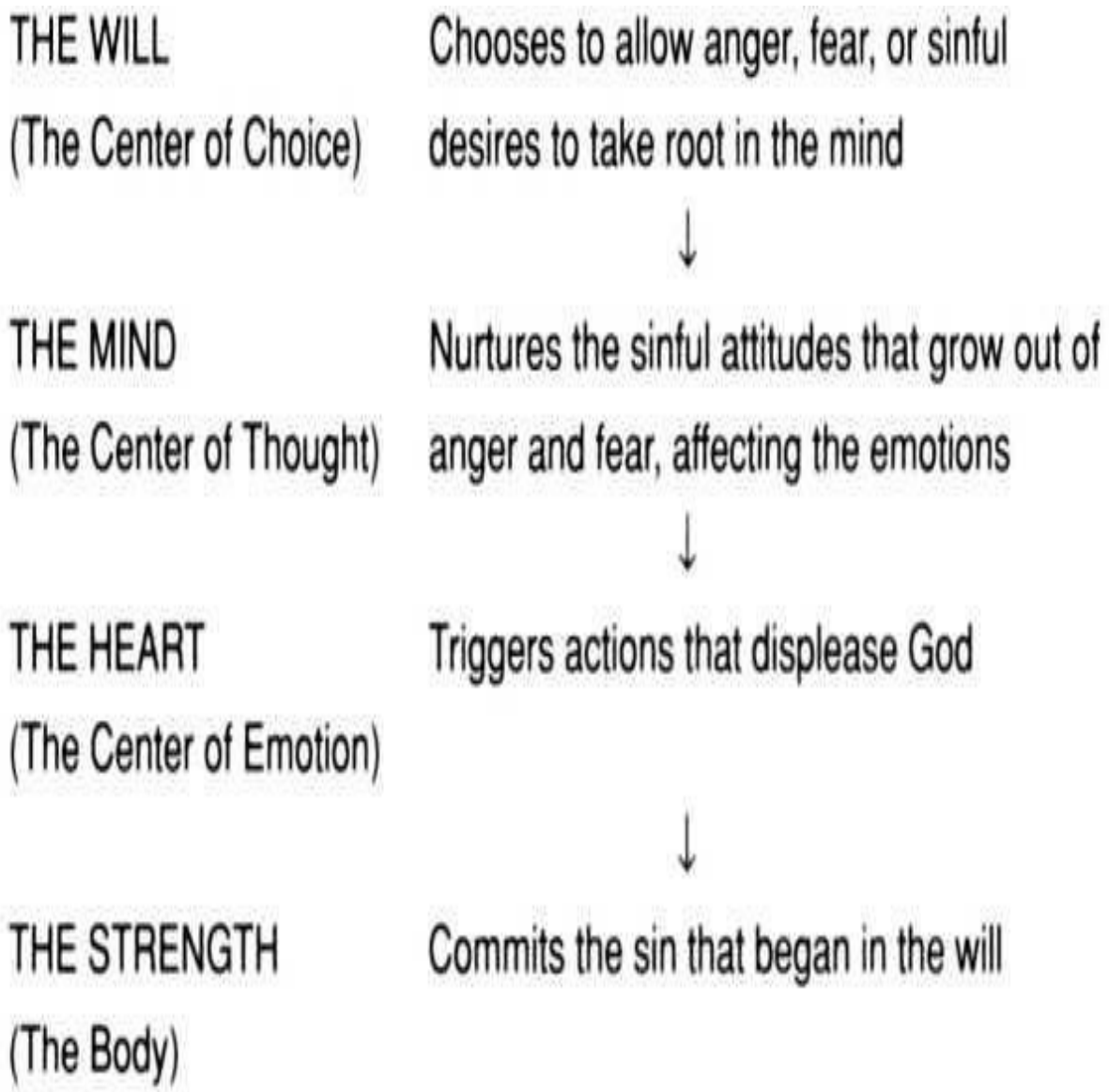
In my opinion, these two emotions bring more Christians into bondage to the law of sin than any other emotions or desires.



A Man without Christ

The following illustration is based upon the works of the flesh described in Galatians 5 and Ephesians 4.

The Path of Sin



Proverbs 4:23 says, "Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life." The heart to which the writer referred was not the blood-pumping station that keeps our body in motion but the emotional center located between our temples.

This drawing of the man without Christ shows three of the

four most important parts of our being: the will, the mind, and the heart (or emotional center). The fourth, according to Luke 10:27, is "strength" or body. People are affected emotionally by what they allow in their minds. What we place in our mind is determined by our will. That means that if we will to disobey God and record things on the files of our mind that cause emotions contrary to the will of God, these emotions trigger actions that displease God.

All sin begins in the mind! People never sin spontaneously. Long before they commit murder they have harbored hatred, anger, and bitterness in their minds. Before people commit adultery they have harbored lust in their minds. Filthy pornographic literature stimulates the mind to evil, whereas the Word of God calms the emotions and leads them in the ways of righteousness. Someone has said, "You are what you read." People choose through their wills whether to read pornographic literature or something wholesome such as the Bible. The mind receives whatever the will chooses to read or hear, but be sure of this, the emotions will be affected by whatever is put in the mind. That is why Jesus Christ gave its the challenge to "love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul [will], with all your strength, and with all your mind" (Luke 10:27).



If mankind really understood the high price paid for pentup wrath or bitterness and anger, we would seek some remedy for it. We shall consider the high cost of anger emotionally, socially, physically, financially, and most important of all, spiritually.

The Emotional Costs of Anger

Suppressed anger and bitterness can make individuals emotionally upset until they are "not themselves." My wife and I sat in the back of a new Cadillac one night, bracing ourselves as a deacon who had spent seven years on the mission field "taught a lesson" to a motorist who had cut him off on the freeway; he raced up behind him at seventy miles an hour and smashed into the hack of his bumper. He taught me it lesson, too-never to ride with him again. Why would it reasonably intelligent man do such it foolhardy thing in front of "conmpany Because he became so enraged that he lost control of his good sense and made it foolish decision.

Many men in this country think anger is it good "macho" emotion. Some even think you're not a "real" man unless you can get ►nad. That is contrary to what Scripture saysthat an angry man is a fool (Eccles. 7:9) who can make harmful, wasteful, or embarrassing decisions.

Anger takes another emotional toll: If we permit anger to dominate us, it will squelch the richer emotion of love. It is interesting in this connection that among the four scriptural commands to husbands to "love your wives," Colossians 3:19

adds the provision "and do not be bitter toward them." Bitterness is stronger than love. It is impossible for anyoneman or woman-to love someone and indulge bitterness toward them at the same time; the love will turn to hate.

Our anger toward one person or situation can also wreak havoc when we displace it on our loved ones. Many a man takes his office grudges and irritations home and unconsciously lets this anger curtail what could be a free-flowing expression of love for his wife and children. Instead of enjoying his family and being enjoyed by them, he allows his mind and emotions to mull over the vexations of the day. Life is too short and our moments at home too brief to pay such a price for anger.

The late Dr. S. I. McMillen, a Christian medical doctor, wrote None of These Diseases, one of the ten books that has most influenced my life. Consider his comment about the emotional cost of hate and anger:

> The moment I start hating a man, I become his slave. I can't enjoy my work any more because he even controls my thoughts. My resentments produce too many stress hormones in my body and I become fatigued after only a few hours' work. The work I formerly enjoyed is now drudgery. Even vacations cease to give me pleasure....
>
> The man I hate hounds me wherever I go. I can't escape his tyrannical grasp on my mind. When the waiter serves

me porterhouse steak with French fries, asparagus, crisp salad, and strawberry shortcake smothered with ice cream, it might as well be stale bread and water. My teeth chew the food and I swallow it, but the man I hate will not permit me to enjoy 1 t... .

The man I hate may be many miles from my bedroom; but more cruel than any slave driver, he whips my thoughts into such a frenzy that my innerspring mattress becomes a rack of torture.

It's a form of bondage that we can all live without!

The Social Costs of Anger

Very simply, an angry person is not pleasant to be around; consequently, those who are angry, grumpy, or disgruntled are gradually weeded out of the social lists or excluded from the fun times of life. This is it price that it husband or wife is often asked to pay for the anger of it spouse, which in turn may increase their anger toward each other and limit what otherwise could he an enjoyable relationship.

The social price paid for inner anger and bitterness is seen more clearly in detail as a person grows older. You may have heard the comment: "Have you noticed how ornery and cranks' Granddad is getting in his old age?" What seems to he it change is not a change at all. With age Granddad just loses some of his inhibitions and the desire to please others and

reverts to the candid reactions of'childhood. Granddad begins to act the way he has felt all his life. This bitter, resentful, and often selfpitying spirit makes him unbearable to have around, which in turn makes life more difficult f'Or him in his old age. What a tragedy if Granddad is a Christian and did not let God's Holy Spirit "put to death the deeds of the body" many years before (see Rom. 8:13).

The Physical Costs of Anger

It is difficult to separate the physical price paid for anger from the financial because anger and bitterness produce stress, which in turn causes physical disorders that needlessly cost thousands of dollars in medical bills. Some doctors estimate that 60 to 80 percent of illnesses today are emotionally induced, and anger and fear are the main (-it]- prits! (Just think of the missionaries that could be supported and the churches that could be built with the money Christians now unnecessarily pay for medical expenses.)

If doctors are correct in their estimates, and we have no reason to believe they are not, this is money and talent wasted. How can our emotions actually cause physical illness? Very simply, for our entire physical body is intricately tied up with our nervous system. Whenever the nervous system becomes tense through anger or fear, it adversely affects one or more parts of the body. Both Dr. McMillen and Dr. Brandt refer in their books to an illustrated example drawn by Dr. O. Spurgeon English in his book TheAutomatic• Nervous System.

You have doubtless seen in your doctor's or chiropractor's office a skeleton with wires representing nerves that go from the emotional center to all the vital organs of the body. These wires represent the nerves that transmit messages from the "heart" or emotional center to the organs of the body. Ifyou are emotionally upset, the tension first "hits" the emotional center and from there is transmitted to your organs.

For any body movement to take place, a message must be conveyed from the emotional center to the member to be moved. This message is given with lightning-like speed, and we are not conscious of the source from which it originates. For example, when a shortstop sees the flash of a ball to his left, his body, arms, and legs seem to move in one coordinated movement spontaneously, but it has not been spontaneous at all. Before he ever moved a muscle, his emotional center sent its impulses of action through the nervous system, notifying his members precisely what to do in that given situation.

If the emotional center is not under stress, the functions of the body will be normal. If, however, the emotional center is "upset," a not-normal reaction will be generated through the nervous system to almost every part of the body.

1)r. McMillen states, "The emotional center produces these widespread changes by means of three principal mechanisms: by changing the amount of blood flowing to an organ; by affecting the secretions of certain glands; and by changing the tension of muscles." He then points out that the emotions of

anger or hatred can cause the blood vessels to dilate, permitting an abnormal supply of' blood to the head. The cranium is a rigid structure without room for expansion; consequently, anger and wrath can very easily give a person severe headaches.

A doctor friend illustrated the way in which our emotions can cause ulcers and many other stomach diseases by restricting the flow of blood to the stomach and other vital organs. Ile doubled up his fist until his knuckles turned white and said, "If I could keep my fist doubled up long enough, I would lose all feeling in my fingers, because the flow of blood is restricted. The solution to that problem is very simple: All I have to do is relax." And with that he opened his hand, and his fingers turned their normal color again.

He further explained that there is it muscle over the human stomach that is emotionally controlled. When we are enraged it will tighten down and restrict the flow of blood to the vital organs of heart, stomach, liver, intestines, lungs, gallbladder, and so forth.

Prolonged anger, resentment, hatred, wrath, or bitterness can also cause severe damage to these organs. It seems that when our bodies have the elasticity of youth, we can absorb much of the tension created in our emotional centers. But as we get older, protracted anger can cause tension on our points of least resistance-the weakest parts of our bodies-and cause physical breakdowns. Dr. McMillen lists more than fifty diseases that are caused by emotional stress. He also suggests that some

very common infectious diseases are contracted when the resistance is low at the time of exposure, the reason being that prolonged emotional stress can reduce our resistance.

Think of the needless stress-induced sicknesses Christians could have avoided if they had been filled with the Holy Spirit.

That answers for me the question that has been asked many times by rebellious, bitter Christians: Why has God permitted all this sickness to come into my life? But often it seems that God didn't "permit" it as much as personal anger-sin-caused it.

Many a doctor has been forced to tell heart patients, victims of high blood pressure, sufferers of colitis, goiter, and many other common diseases: "We can find nothing organically wrong with you; your problem is emotionally induced."

Usually the patient will become angry, thinking that the doctor means, It's all in your mind. But what the doctor means is, It's all in your emotional renter One psychologist told me that he estimated that as many as 97 percent of his patients with ulcers had them because of anger. In fact, one of the first questions he asks upon hearing that a patient has ulcers is, "Who are you mad at?" He added, "Then they usually get mad at me."

I made that statement at a seminar in Columbus, Ohio, not realizing that a young internist-an ulcer specialistwas in my audience. He came up to me later and said, "I would take issue

with your friend. I would say it is more like 100 percent of those who have ulcers get them because they are angry." I'll let the experts haggle over the 3 percent difference, but they obviously agreed on the devastating physical costs of anger.

The increase in physical illnesses originating from our emotions has given rise to the use of tranquilizers and other emotion-depressants. These treatments are very limited in their lasting effect because they do not deal with the cause of the problem. Psychologists tell us that human beings are not able to fully control their emotions even by their wills. I agree, for I have found that nothing short of the power of Jesus Christ is able to make an angry, bitter, vitriolic individual loving, compassionate, gentle, and kind.

The Spiritual Costs of Anger

The highest price of all paid for an angry, bitter disposition is in the spiritual realm. Jesus Christ came to give its not only eternal life when we die but also abundant life here and now. That life can only be experienced by abiding in him or being filled with the Spirit. No one can abide in Christ or he filled with the Spirit who grieves the Holy Spirit, and "bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking" grieve the I loly Spirit of God (Eph. 4:31).

Grieving the Holy Spirit limits the work of God in Christians' lives, keeps Christians from becoming mature in Christ Jesus, and hinders them from being glowing, effective, fruitful. Churches today are filled with evangelical Christians jest like

the children of Israel, who never fully possessed their possessions. Continual grieving of the Spirit of God through anger keeps many children of God from enjoying all that Jesus Christ has for them. This affects believers not only in this life but also in the life to come, for we should he occupying ourselves with laying up treasures in heaven, which can he done only as we walk in the Spirit.

Very honestly, a simmering anger was my pet sin fi-many years. I thought I was a godly man, trying to have regular devotions and keeping my mind clear of impure thoughts. Then one (lay I saw the real meaning of this passage in Ephesians 4- that I was not filled with the Spirit after all; I was grieving the Spirit through anger. Somehow I had devel oped the errant defense mechanism that "controlling my anger was victory over anger." God wants to cure our anger.

I can testify that he is abundantly able to do so. And I will have more to say about that in later chapters.



The Basic Cause of Anger

What causes a perfectly normal, likable, congenial human being to suddenly react with heat and anger? The full realization and acceptance of the answer to that question provides the Christian with the first giant step toward its cure. Stripped of all the facade and fancy excuses for condoning

anger, of calling it "Old Nick" or "my natural Irish disposition," we are confronted with an ugly wordSelfishness. Although we love to excuse our weaknesses and justify them to ourselves as we nurse our grudges and indulge in angry, vengeful, bitter feelings, they are all motivated by selfishness. When I am angry, it is because someone has violated my rights, and I am interested in myself. When I am bitter against someone, it is because that person has done something against me, and again I come hack to selfishness. Vengeance is always inspired by selfishness.

A lovely Christian woman came to my study to tell me her side of the problems in her home. When I confronted her with her own angry, bitter spirit, she blurted out in self-defense, "Well, you'd be angry too if you lived with a man who constantly ran roughshod over you and treated you like dirt!"

Admittedly, he was not treating her the way a Christian man should treat his wife, but her reaction could not possibly he caused by generosity-it was plain old selfishness. The more she indulged in her selfishness and let her anger predominate, the worse her husband treated her.

When I told her she had two problems, she looked at me rather startled and asked, "I)id I hear you correctly? I have two problems? I have only one-my husband."

"No," I said, "you have two problems. Your husband is one problem, but your attitude toward your husband is another.

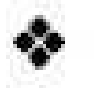
Until you as it Christian recognize your own sin of selfishness and look to God f<rr it proper attitude, even in the face of these circtmtstances, you will continue to grieve the I loly Spirit of' God."

The change in that woman in almost one month's time was almost unbelievable. Instead of using her husband as an excuse to indulge in anger, she began to treasure her relationship to Jesus Christ more than the indulgence of her own selfishness. She went to Christ who has promised to "supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:19) and began to experience victory over bitterness, wrath, anger, and all those emotional attitudes that grieve the Holy Spirit.

Instead of' waiting for it change in her husband's behavior, she ultimately changed her husband's behavior by first changing hers. She told nie that when God gave her victory over her own reaction to her husband's miserable disposition, she began being kind to the one who was "spitefully using her," just as our Lord had instructed (see Matt. 5:44). Since love begets love and we reap what we sow, it was not long before the husband began to respond with kindness.

As fantastic as it may seem, I have observed this in the lives of those individuals who are willing to recognize inner anger and turmoil as the sin of selfishness and look to God for the grace, love, and self-control that he promises to them who ask him fi>r help. If you are reaping it crop of anger, bitterness, and hatred, a little investigation will indicate to you that you have

been sowing it crop of anger, bitterness, and hatred. The Bible tells its, "Whatever it man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7). If you had been sowing love, you would be reaping love. If you are not reaping love, may I suggest that you change the seeds you are sowing. For with God's help you don't have to be dominated by anger the rest of your life.



Study Questions



1. Using dictionaries and reference books, discuss the fine distinctions between the definitions of the six sins of anger as described in Ephesians 4:31 (King James Version and New King James Version): bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, and malice.

2. What does it mean to grieve the Holy Spirit (see Eph. 4:30 and 1 Thess. 5:19)?

3. What are the two universal sins of mankind? Which temperaments are most likely to struggle with which basic category of sin?

4. Of course no temperament type is by nature "anger-free." Read the list of sixteen common forms of anger. Discuss which forms of anger would most likely be obstacles in each of the four basic temperament types.

5. If opposites attract, especially in marriage, how might two differing ways of dealing with anger only raise the level of tension-angerin a home?

6. Review the four "costs" of anger. Give personal examples of any price you know you've paid for expressing or holding in anger.

7. Which of the nine characteristics of the Spiritfilled life (the fruit of the Spirit) serve as antidotes to the various manifestations of anger?

C H A P T E R 1 0

Quenching the Holy Spirit through Fear



> Rejoice always, *nay without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Chris t Jesus for you. 1)o not quench the.S*nrit. (1 Thess. 5:16-19)

To maintain the Spiritfilled life, one must guard against quenching and grieving the Holy Spirit. We have already seen that one grieves the Holy Spirit through anger. We shall now see that we quench the Holy Spirit through fear. Quenching the Holy Spirit is stifling or limiting him. Neither grieving nor quenching the Holy Spirit eliminates him from our lives, but they do seriously restrict his control of our bodies, which God would otherwise strengthen and use.

First Thessalonians 5AG-19 indicates that the Spiritfilled Christian should be one who is able to "rejoice always" (sec also Phil. 4:4) and "in everything give thanks." Anytime we Christians do not rejoice or give thanks in everything, we are out of the will of God. "In everything" does not mean only in

good circumstances; even the natural "flesh" can rejoice in enjoyable circumstances. But we are to rejoice and give thanks in any circumstance.

That means we must live by faith. It is faith in God's love, God's power, and God's plan for our lives that keeps us rejoicing through the Spirit in whatever circumstances we may find ourselves. An unhappy, unthankful attitude that quenches the Holy Spirit is caused by unbelief in the faithfulness of our God, which produces fear as we face the uncertain circumstances of life. Let's look more closely at the subject of quenching the Holy Spirit through fear.



Fear Is Universal

The first reaction to the sin of disobedience on the part of Adam and Eve was one of fear.

> [Adam and Eve] heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, "Where are you?" So he said, "I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself. " (Gen. 3:8-10)

From that day to this, the further we go in disobedience to God, the more we experience fear. The converse is also true. The more a person obeys God and learns about and leans upon him for every need, the less that person experiences fear. The universal nature of fear is easily seen in the fact that Jesus so frequently admonished his disciples with phrases such as, "Fear not," "Be not faithless, but believing," "0 ye of little faith," and "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

World conditions today are not conducive to peace and faith. The news media constantly remind us of economic downturns, brutalities, wars, fightings, riotings, and all kinds of frightful violence and abuses. Even with the demise of the Soviet Union, what is often referred to as the "Damocles sword" of the threat of nuclear weapons hangs over our heads. What if they get into the hands of terrorists?

In the face of such fear of disaster, it is comforting for the child of God to heed the words of the Lord Jesus Christ who said, "You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled" (Matt. 24:6). Even though fear is universal, God's children do not have to be dominated by this vicious emotional destroyer.

Some years ago Reader's Digest carried it popular reprint by Joseph Fort Newton, former pastor of Saint James Chinch in Philadelphia. The article, "A Minister's Mail," summarized the themes of thousands of letters written to him in response to a

syndicated newspaper feature titled "Everyday Living." He said, "The first thing that these letters show is that Private Enemy No. I in human life is neither sin nor sorrow; it is fear. The one most rife is fear of ourselves." He cited men as being afraid of' "failure, breakdown, poverty," and of being "unequal to the demands made upon them." He also cited worry, a form of fear, as "a tiny rivulet seeping into the mind like slow poison, until it paralyzes us."

Fear, like anger, takes many firms. The accompanying list describes the main variations.

Anxiety	Worry
Doubts	Inferiority
Timidity	Cowardice
Indecision	Suspicion
Superstition	Hesitancy
Withdrawal	Depression
Loneliness	Haughtiness
Overaggression	Social Shyness



The High Cost of Fear

Any form of fear has its costs or consequences, again in four areas of life.

The Emotional Costs of Fear

Every year countless thousands of individuals fall into mental and emotional collapse because of fear. Sometimes insulin shock and in some extreme cases electric shock treatments are used to alleviate suffering from the tyrannical forces of fear. Fear prompts some people to draw into a shell and let life pass them by, never experiencing the rich things that God has in store for them. The tragedy of it all is that most of the things they fear never happen. A young businessman addressing a sales company came up with the figure that 92 percent of the things people fear will occur never take place.

I counseled a woman who had driven her husband from her because she was so obsessed with fear that another woman was going to take her husband away from her. Her emotional state caused such erratic and abnormal behavior that he left her, though the "other woman" never existed. This is only one example of the countless families that fall apart each year when one member isn't able to cope with reality because of fear.

Millions of people are victims of lesser fears that have a tragic impact on their lives in that they limit their potential and expression of their creativity. Many of those people suffer from inadequate education, not because they were not intelligent enough to go on to college or trade school, but because they were afraid they couldn't do upper-level work. Millions of others refused vocational advancement because they were afraid to move out of their familiar comfort zones and venture into something more complex-and today they regret it. Fear is

an inhibitor that has kept more people from fulfilling their destiny than any other one emotion.

The Social Costs of Fear

The social cost of fear is perhaps the easiest to bear, but it is expensive nonetheless. Fear-dominated individuals do not make enjoyable company. Their pessimistic and complaining spirit causes them to be shunned and avoided, further deepening their emotional disturbances. Many otherwise likable and happy people (and their mates) are scratched off social lists simply because of ungrounded fears.

Many fearful individuals, particularly those who are quite self conscious, have a difficult time relaxing and accepting themselves. They make few friends because others do not feel comfortable around them. Consequently, they spend their lives in lonely contemplation with few if any friends. Such individuals approach me at my seminars and quietly ask, "What is wrong with Ine that I can't make friends with the opposite sex? I'm tired of not having someone with whom I can share my life." It doesn't have to be that way.

The Physical Costs of Fear

Fear, like anger, produces emotional stress, and we have already seen that this accounts for two-thirds or more of all physical illness today.

Some of the fear-induced diseases mentioned by Dr. S. I. McMillen in his hook None of These Diseases are high blood

pressure, heart trouble, kidney disease, goiter, arthritis, headaches, strokes-most of the same fifty illnesses he listed as being caused by anger. In illustrating the effect of fear upon the human heart, McMillen cites Dr. Roy R. Grinker, one of the medical directors of Michael Reese Hospital in Chicago. "This doctor states that anxiety places more stress on the heart than any other stimulus, including physical exercise and fatigue."

I)r. McMillen points out that fear causes a chemical reaction in the human body, as illustrated when the saliva seems to dry in your mouth when you stand up to give a speech. That type of reaction does not harm a person because it is short-lived, but that anxiety indulged in hour after hour can cause physical damage to the body.

A doctor friend explained it to me this way: We have an automatic alarm bell system that rings whenever we are confronted with an emergency. Some call this the "fright alarm system." If the doorbell rings at 2:00 A.M., we are awakened suddenly and in complete control of our faculties, no matter how deep a sleep we woke from. This is God's natural gift for self-protection. What happens is that the fright of the emergency signals the adrenal gland to secret adrenaline into the bloodstream, causing us to be immediately alert and in control of all our faculties-in fact, probably more alert than normal.

When I pastored a country church in Pumpkintown, South Carolina, one of' my parishioners was speeding his wife to the

hospital for the birth of their second child. As they came down the muddy mountain road, the front of the car slipped into the ditch. In the face of the emergency this man's adrenal gland worked overtime; he leaped around in front of the car and literally slid it back up onto the road!

The next day in the parking lot of the hospital he tried to prove to incredulous friends that he had lifted the front of his car, but of course he could not budge it one inch. He didn't understand that in the heat of the emergency he had possessed supernormal strength; his God-given alarm system was not available for the parking lot demonstration.

My doctor friend explained that this does not cause any damage to the human body; after the emergency is over, the adrenal gland returns to its normal function, and the bloodstream throws off the excessive adrenaline with no ill effects.

But that is not the case when a person sits down on a Saturday afternoon to pay the household bills only to find he does not have enough money in his checking account to pay for everything he owes. He is overcome with a numbing fear, and hour after hour, as long as that person worries, the adrenal gland pumps adrenaline into the bloodstream until it overflows the natural flushing system, creating physical havoc. That chemical has to go somewhere. In some people it throws the stomach acid out of balance, or it can cause excessive calcium deposits, or sometimes it produces the pain-racked bodies of

arthritis sufferers.

I know a lovely Christian woman afflicted with arthritis that finally restricted her to a wheelchair. She had every medical treatment known to science and was finally told by her third arthritis specialist, "I'm sorry, Mrs. , but we can find nothing organically wrong with you. The cause of your arthritis is emotional." When I heard that analysis, my mind went back to my childhood when she was in perfect health. Even though we enjoyed going to her house for the delicious cookies that she baked, we referred to her as "the professional worrier." She worried about everything. She fretted over her husband's employment, and he worked thirty years for the same company and never knew a day without pay. She was apprehensive about the future of a daughter whom she feared would never marry. Today she has a lovely home and six children. She was anxious about her weak, sickly son who grew up to be a six-foot-four, 245-pound tackle on a Big Ten football team. I can hardly think of anything she didn't worry about, and all to no avail. All of her major fears, like most fears in life, never happened.

No wonder the Lord Jesus said in his Sermon on the Mount, "Do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on" (Matt. 6:25). Paul says, "Be anxious for nothing" (Phil. 4:6). Anxiety and worry, which stem from fear, cause untold physical suffering, limitations, and premature death, not only to non-Christians, but also to Christians who disobey the admonition

to "commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him" (Ps. 37:5).

One day I called upon a bedridden woman whom I'd perceived to he "older." I was amazed to find that she was fifteen to twenty years younger than I had estimated. She made herself old before her time by being a professional worrier. As gently and yet as truthfully as I could, I tried to show her that she could learn to trust the Lord and not worry about everything. Her reaction was so typical it hears repeating. With fire in her eyes and a flash of anger in her voice she asked, "Well, someone has to worry about things, don't they?"

"Not if you have a heavenly Father who loves you and is interested in every detail of your life," I replied. But that dear sister didn't get the point. I hope you do!

Thank God we are not orphans! We live in a society that accepts the concept that we are the products of a biological accident and the long, unguided process of evolution. That popular theory, which undergirds all secular education in this country, is rapidly falling into scientific disrepute because after more than one hundred years there is still no scientific evidence to confirm it. Yet its theories of 'a Godless origin of life have offered no one to take God's place in supplying the needs of the human heart when we fall into overwhelming circumstances; it is not only incorrect, but it is also enslaving mankind in a prison house of physical torture due to fear. If you are a Christian, memorize Philippians 4:6-7, and every time you find yourself worrying or becoming anxious, pray. Thank

God that you have a heavenly Father who is interested in your problems and turn them over to him. Your little shoulders are not broad enough to carry the weight of the world or even your own fancily problems, but the Lord Jesus "is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think" (Eph. 3:20).

I realized how important it is to teach Scripture to our children when one of our daughters-then in the Sundayschool Beginner's Department-said, "I learned in Sunday school today what God wants nie to do with my problems. God said, 'Gast all your care upon Him, f'Or He cares for you'-1 Peter 5:7." Much of the physical suffering and consequent heartache, including financial difficulties, that occur in the average Christian home would be avoided if believers really acted upon that verse.

The Spiritual Costs of Fear

The spiritual cost of, fear is very similar to the spiritual cost of anger. It quenches or stifles the Holy Spirit, which keeps its from effectively seeing our weaknesses strength-cned by the positive nine fruit of the Spirit. Not yielding to the Spirit cheats its in this life and keeps its from earning rewards in the life to come. Fear keeps its from being joyful, happy, radiant Christians and instead makes us thankless, complaining, defeated people who can ultimately become unfaithful. A fearful person is not going to manifest the kind of, life that encourages it sinner to come and ask, "What must I do to be saved?" If Paul and Silas had let their fears predominate, the

Philippian jailer would never have been converted and we would not have the great salvation verseActs 16:31.

Fear keeps the Christian from pleasing God. The Bible says, "Without faith it is impossible to please [God]" (Heh. 11:6). The eleventh chapter of Hebrews, called the "faith chapter," names people whose scriptural biography is given in sufficient detail to establish that they represent all four of the basic temperament types. The thing that made these people-and surely others-acceptable in the sight of God is that they were not overcome by their natural weakness of either fear or anger, but they walked with God by faith. Since he "shows no partiality" (Acts 10:34), what he did to strengthen their weaknesses he will do through his Spirit for you if you let him.



What Causes Fear?

Because fear is such a universal experience and because some of the readers of this book will be parents who can help their children avoid this tendency, I would like to answer this question in simple, clear terms. There are at least eight causes of fear.

Temperament Traits

We have already seen that the introvertish Melancholy and Phlegmatic temperaments are indecisive and fearprone. Even

Sanguines are not really as self-confident as their blustering way would have us believe; they too can be fearful. Very few Cholerics would not have some Melancholy or Phlegmatic tendencies, so conceivably almost all people have some temperament tendency toward fear, some more than others.

Patterns of Childhood

Psychologists and psychiatrists agree that the basic needs of people are love, understanding, and acceptance. The most significant thing that parents can do for their children-short of leading them to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christis to give them the warmth and security of parental love. This does not exclude discipline or the teaching of submission to standards and principles. In fact, it is far better for a child to learn to adjust to rules and standards in the loving atmosphere of home than in the cruel world outside. There are, however, two specific parental habits I suggest you diligently avoid:

(hie►prolecting children. An overprotective parent makes a child self-centered and fearful ofthe very "disasters" that the parent is afraid will happen. Children quickly learn to read our emotions. Their bodies can far more easily absorb the falls and shocks of life than their emotions can absorb our becoming tense, upset, or hysterical over these minor experiences. The mother who repeatedly suggests fear and because of, her fear forbids her son to play football probably does more harm to his emotional development than the damage done to junior if his front teeth were knocked out or his leg broken. As a rule, legs

heal and teeth can be replaced, but it takes a miracle of God to remove the scar tissues of fear from our emotions.

Dominating Children willi anger or disapproval. Angry, explosive parents who dominate the lives of their children or who critically pounce upon every failure often create hesitancy, insecurity, and fear in them. Children need correction but in the proper spirit. Whenever we have to point out our children's mistakes, we should also make it it practice to note their strengths and good points, or at least criticize them in such it way as to let them know that they are still every bit as mach the object of our love as they were before.

The more I counsel with people, the more convinced I am that the most devastating blow one human being can inflict upon another is disapproval. The more it person loves its, the more important it is for its to seek some area of that person's life where we can show our approval. A six-foot-two husband in marriage counseling once said rather proudly, "Pastor, I have never laid it hand on my wife in anger!" Just as I looked at this timid, cowering, wife, tears burst from her eyes. She looked at him and said, "A thousand times I'd rather that you had beat me than everlastingly clubbing nee with disapproval, disapproval, disapproval!"

Though I have addressed these "causes of fear" to parents, I must insert here a significant observation after counseling at least two thousand married couples. Most wives gain their feelings of self-worth from their husbands. That is why a

husband's approval is so important to a wife's sense of personal self-acceptance. In fact, most wives, if they had good childhood relationships with their fathers, will feel good about themselves five years into a marriage-if their husbands love them and convey approval. If husbands don't, the wives' fears intensify, and they feel insecure. If a wife comes from a battered home or if her father rejected her, it may take ten or twelve years of a husband's love and approval to build a degree of self-acceptance and trust. It is no coincidence that four times in Scripture God commands the husband to love his wife, while only indirectly commanding wives to love their husbands (see Titus 2:4).

By the same token, a man's acceptance of his role as a husband is a reflection of his wife's "respect." Most women know they are no physical match for their husbands, and in seeking weapons with which to compete or defend themselves they often resort to rebellious disrespect. In the long run this is devastating to a relationship, for it makes it man insecure-full of doubts and fears-and he may do bizarre things to compensate for it.

Spiritfilled parents-or spouses-will be inspired through their loving, compassionate nature to build others up and to show approval whenever possible. Even in the times of correction or disagreement, they will convey their love. To do otherwise with our children is to leave lasting fear-scars on their emotions. To do otherwise with our spouses is to destroy our relationships.

Traumatic Experiences

The third cause of fear is a traumatic experience, particularly in childhood. Today we hear it lot about child abuse or sexual molestation that can negatively influence it person's ability to make normal adjustments in adulthood; this is due largely to fear (and sometimes anger and fear). I have counseled many women who after their marriage and perhaps first child have had it difficult time forgetting the fears and angers of tragic childhoods-to the point that they were incapable of responding in love to their husbands.

A twenty seven year olei nurse asked, "Why can't I respond to ntv husban(P When he tries to kiss me, I feel like I ant being smothered." Then she added, "My husband is the nicest, kindest, most gentle man I have ever met."

That didn't make sense. Most wives can easily respond to husbands who are loving and kind, particularly those who are gentle. So I asked the obvious, "Were you molested as it girl"

She acknowledged that she had been raped in the fourth grade; she remembered the pain as vividly as if it were yesterdav. Naturally when her husband came to her in love, she thought of' the childhood pain, and it became impossible for her to experience normal emotions. Fear did its ugly work of impairing what God intended to he a beautiful and natural response. Fortunately she let the Holy Spirit replace her fears with faith and love and learned to forget those things that are behind (see Phil. 3:13) so she could respond normally.

In the first edition of this hook I told the story of my wife being t atunatized-nearly drowning-as it child. I didn't realize she couldn't swim when we married. I won letters on the swwwilmuing team in high school; I thought everyone could swim. We met in it Christian college where swimming was not allowed. So it was September after our July wedding that I discovered the awful truth. We went swimming with two other married couples, and, although she dressed for the occasion, we could not get her into the water. Not understanding her fear, I did a dumb thing. I splashed water in her face, and she freaked out.

Later, when "raising" our kids on water skis in the San Diego Bay, we let her drive the boat-hut never forced her to join us in the water.

When I wrote the first edition of this hook, Beverly still didn't know how to swim. At least a few readers noticed this. One day I received a letter from a missionary leader of a jungle training camp in Central America:

> Dear 1)r. LaHaye,
>
> We love your book. We make it required reading por all our missionary trainees. 11 helps them with interpersonal relationships. But we have one problem with it. You tell how your wife was traumatized as a child and now is afraid of the water: All the nonswimming wives down here identify, with her and say, "If Beverly LaHaye can't swim,

why must I be forced to learn?" The obvious reason of course is because if the canoe overturned in a jungle river some day, they would drown.

He continued, "You say in the hook that fear is a sin. What I want to know is, If your wife really is filled with the Holy Spirit, why can't she swim?"

Well, I took the letter home, laid it on the dining room table, and said, "Honey, are you in a good mood? There's a letter on the table you should read." So I got her a box of tissues and she used it. I never felt I should invade her privacy on this delicate subject, so we didn't discuss it. But a few days later I overheard a phone conversation about "a heated swimming pool."

She found a Phlegmatic swimming instructor in the church and arranged private lessons. Then one morning after I left for church with the whole family in tow for our Christian high school, she went out in the garage and got out my wet suit-which I wore for warmth so we could keep on water skiing all winter long. She put it on for buoyancy! You couldn't drown in a rubber wet suit if your life depended on it! But that wasn't enough. She got a life belt out of our boat and put it on over her wet suit.

Then taking her Bible to the first swimming class, she read God's promise "I will never leave you nor forsake you" (Heb. 13:5). And God proved faithful. After about six lessons, Bev

learned to swim. She will never swim the English Channel, but each summer when our whole family goes to Lake Powell, Bev swims with our kids and helps teach our grandchildren to swim.

If you're a swimmer, you may not see the miraculous in that story. But if you or someone you love is afraid of the water because of 'a traumatic experience, you know that it is one of the hardest fears to overcome. The key to success for Bev was that she admitted she needed to face her fear; she took God at his word and stepped out on faith, and the Holy Spirit gave her the strength to overcome that lifetime weakI ('55.

What God did for her, he will do for you if you take it similar step of'faith.

A Negative Thinking Pattern

A negative thinking pattern or defeatist complex will cause a person to he fearful of attempting something new. The moment we start suggesting to ourselves, "I can't, I can't, I can't," we are almost certain of failure. A salesman friend taught me a principle that he probably learned at a sales seminar. "There are two kinds of thinkers in life. Those who think they can and those who think they can't-and they are both right."

Our mental attitude makes even ordinary tasks difficult to perform when we approach them with a negative thought. Repeated failures or refusal to do what our contemporaries are able to accomplish often causes further breakdown in self-confidence and increases fear. A Christian need never be

dominated by this negative habit.

Beverly is a PhlegSan with a tad of Choleric (less than 15 percent). She is definitely not an extrovert and has never had a problem with anger. Like all Phlegmatic women, she is gracious. That is what captivated my heart when I met her when she was only eighteen. That may be why God selected her to be the founder and president of Concerned Women for America, the largest women's organization in the country with close to seven hundred thousand members-and growing.

When she represents Christian women to the media, she always comes across as being gracious-because that is the way she is. Millions of Christians have seen her on TV, read her hooks or articles, or heard her live radio show, which is sweeping the country. Few would believe, however, that for the first twelve years of our marriage she was afraid of her own shadow. Even though she was an excellent Junior Department superintendent in our Sunday school, she was afraid to speak to adults. She had a self-imposed limit: the sixth grade. Anything under that was fine; over that she would say, "My husband is the adult speaker in our family."

Since being filled with the Holy Spirit, as I outlined in chapter 8, she has spoken to as many as forty thousand people at a pro-life rally-and loved it. She has even appeared before the Senate judiciary Committee hearings for the appointment of Supreme Court judges at the request of the president. Now that is a scary environment-particularly with liberal senators joe

Biden and Teddy Kennedy serving as chairman and vice-chairman.

But it proves what I have been saying in this hook. The filling of the Holy Spirit enables us to turn weaknesses into strengths. Oh, it didn't happen overnight. It came one step at a time, from hesitantly accepting a speaking assignment for a hundred women at a mother-daughter banquet to speaking befrtre seven thousand men and women at a patriotic rally in the Long Beach Civic Auditorium.

By memorizing Philippians 4:13 and seeking the Spirit's power in applying it, any Christian can gain it positive attitude toward new challenges.

Anger

Anger, as pointed out in the previous chapter, can produce fear. I have counseled with individuals who had indulged bitterness and anger until they erupted in such explosive tirades that they afterward admitted, "I'm afraid of' what I might do to my own child."

One of our Sundayschool teachers came in for counseling one day with just such a problem. After having two daughters, she had just birthed it son who when he cried gave her an unnatural urge to choke him. The second time it happened she was so unnerved that she drove straight to my office and told me, "Pastor, I think I am losing my mind." We discovered that it

certain expression on her son's crying face reminded her of her father, whom she hated even though he was dead. The rage that rose up within her almost overcame her natural maternal instinct, and she became fearful of' what she might do to her child. In her case, fi rgiving her father was necessary to enable her to overcome her fear of rejecting her son.

Sin

"If our heart does not condemn its, we have confidence toward God" (1 John 3:21) is a principle that cannot he violated without producing fear. Every time we sin, our conscience reminds its of our relationship to God. This has often been misconstrued by psychiatrists who blame religion for creating guilt complexes, which, they suggest, pro-ducc fear.

Some years ago our family doctor, who at that time was not a Christian, said to me: "You ministers, including my saintly old father, do irreparable damage to the emotional life of people by preaching the gospel."

I questioned his reason for such a statement and he said, "I took my internship in a mental institution, and the overwhelming majority of those people had a religious background and were there because of fear induced by guilt complexes."

The next day I attended a ministers' meeting where Dr. Clyde Narramore, a Christian psychologist from Los Angeles, gave a

lecture on pastoral counseling. During the question period I told him of the previous day's conversation and asked his opinion. Dr. Narramore instantly replied: "That is not true. People have guilt complexes because they are guilty!"

The result of sin is a consciousness of guilt, and guilt causes fear today just as it did to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. A simple remedy for this is to walk in the way of the Lord.

Lackof Faith

Lack of faith, even in a Christian's life, can produce fear. That can take the form of fear of people, failure, vocationthe list is endless. I have noticed as a counselor that fear often takes two directions.

The first is fear of the past-or, more specifically, sins of the past. Because all Christians do not know what the Bible teaches in relationship to confessed sin, many have not come to really believe that God has cleansed them from all sin (see 1 John 1:9). Some time ago I counseled with a woman who was in such a protracted period of fear that she had sunk into deep depression. We found that one of her basic problems was that she was still haunted by a sin committed eleven years before. All during this time she had been a Christian but had gone through a complete emotional collapse, haunted by the fear of that past sin.

When I asked if she had confessed that sin in the name of Jesus Christ, she replied, "Oh, yes, many times." I then gave her a spiritual prescription to make a Bible study of all Scripture verses that deal with the forgiveness of sins. When she came back into my office two weeks later, she was not the same woman. For the first time in her life she really understood how God regarded her past sin, and when she began to accept the fact that he would remember it no more (see Heb. 5:12; 10: 17), she got over that fear.

A man I counseled who had a similar problem gave me a slightly different answer when I asked, "Have you confessed that sin to Christ?"

"Over it thousand times," was his interesting reply. I told him that that was 999 times too many. He should have confessed it once and thanked God 999 times that God had forgiven him for that awful sin. The Word of God is the cure for this problem, because "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. 10:17). From a practical perspective, sometimes it is easier to confess our sins than to forget them. To such individuals I recommend the following therapy that comes in two parts.

Comic/ilele a Bible study on forgiveness. By this I mean take a yellow pad and a concordance and write down every Bible verse on forgiveness. When that is complete, read over each of the verses you have listed and summarize that list on one page. By reducing that list to it single page, you will learn from God's Word for yourself the heart of what he wants you to know

about forgiveness of sin. It is easier to believe God keeps his word when you know what he promises in his Word.

Thank God for his forgiveness. The second part of this therapy is this: Every time you remember a sin that you have already confessed, formally give thanks to God for the fact that he has forgiven you of that sin. That is an act of faith, appropriating his promise by a prayer of faith.

I recommended this procedure to one woman who was so fearful that for the first three days she had to open her Bible to 1 John 1:9, hold her finger on the verse, and pray, "Lord, on the basis of this verse I thank you for forgiving me of my sin." Eventually the guilt and fear passed. If you persist, soon that sin will cease to trouble you.

Lack of faith also causes fear in a second direction-the future. If the devil can't get you to worry about your past sins, he will try to get you to worry about God's provision for the future. And if you worry about the future, you can't fully enjoy the riches of God's blessing today. The psalmist said, "This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps. 118:24). People who enjoy life are not "living tomorrow" or worrying about yesterday; they are living today.

If you are thinking about the potential problems and difficulties you might encounter tomorrow, you will naturally become fearful-unless you have a deep, abiding faith in God's ability to supply all your need. My wife shared with me a

beautiful saying she heard that bears repeating: "Satan tries to crush our spirit by getting us to bear tomorrow's problems with only today's grace."

If you are worrying about tomorrow, you can't possibly enjoy today. Think about it: You can't really give God tomorrow; you can give him only what you have, and today is all you have. As Raymond Cramer said in The Psychology ofJesus and Mental Health: "What does your anxiety do? It does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow, but it empties today of its strength. It does not make you escape the evil; it makes you unfit to cope with it if it comes."

Now I think you are about ready to face the primary cause of fear. The above seven causes of fear are only contributing factors. The basic cause for fear is selfishness.



Don't Be a Turtle

As much as we don't like to face the ugly word, it is a fact: We are fearful because we are selfish. Why am I afraid? Because I am interested in self. Why am I embarrassed when I stand before an audience? Because I don't wish to make it fool of' myself. Why am I afraid I will lose my job? Because I am afraid of being a failure in the eyes of my family or not being able to provide my family and myself with the necessities of life.

Excuse it if you will, but all fear can be traced basically to the sin of selfishness.

A Christian woman went to a Christian psychologist and asked, "Why am I so fearful?"

He asked several questions. "When you enter a room, do you feel that everyone is looking at you?"

"Yes," she said.

"Do you often have the feeling your slip is showing"

"Yes."

When he discovered she played the piano he asked, "Do you hesitate to volunteer to play the piano at church for fear someone else can do so much better""

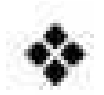
"How did you know?" was her reply.

"Do you hesitate to entertain others in your home?"

Again she said, "Yes."

Then he proceeded to tell her kindly that she was a very selfish young woman. "You are like a turtle," he said. "You pull into your shell and peek out only as far as necessary. If anyone gets too close, you pop your head hack inside your shell for protection. That shell is selfishness. Throw it away and start thinking more about others and less about yourself."

The young lady went back to her room in tears. She never thought of herself as selfish, and it crushed her when she was confronted with the awful truth. Fortunately, she went to God, and he has gradually cured her of that vicious sin. Today she is truly a "new creature." She entertains with abandon, has completely thrown off the old "shell," and consequently enjoys a rich and abundant life.



Who Wants to Be an Oyster?

A similar statement is made by Dr. Maxwell Maltz in his hook Psycho-Cybernetics:

> One final word about preventing and removing emotional hurts. To live creatively, we must be willing to be a little vulnerable. We must be willing to be hurt a little, if necessary, in creative living. A lot of people need a thicker and tougher emotional skin than they have. But they need only a tough emotional hide or epidermis-not a shell. To trust, to love, to open ourselves to emotional communication with other people is to run the risk of being hurt. If we are hurt once, we can do one of two things. We can build a thick protective shell, or scar tissue, to prevent being hurt again, live like an oyster, and not be hurt. Or we can "turn the other cheek, " remain vulnerable and go on living creatively.

An oyster is never "hurt. " He has a thick shell which protects him from everything. He is isolated. An oyster is secure, but not creative. He cannot "go after" what he wants-he must wait for it to come to him. An oyster knows none of the "hurts" of emotional communication with his environment-but neither can an oyster know the joys.

Once fear has been faced as a sin rather than excused as a behavior pattern, the patient is well on the road to recovery provided that person knows Jesus Christ and is willing to submit to the filling of the Holy Spirit. A more detailed cure for selfishness and for fear will be given in later chapters.



Study Questions



1. Discuss the sixteen expressions of fear listed on page 147. How might each fear be evidenced in a person's behavior? Which temperaments would be most susceptible to each type of fear?

2. Do you agree that fear is "Private Enemy No. 1 "? In your own community what fears predominate?

3. Discuss the social, emotional, and physical costs of fear. What habits of fearprone people make them social misfits?

4. What are the spiritual costs of fear?

5. How can parents induce or accentuate the fear tendencies in children?

6. How does a negative thinking pattern induce fear?

7. How can living in the past affect one's ability to live in the present? What Scripture verses can help alleviate the problem of guilt and fear over past sins?

8. What Scripture verses can help a Christian eliminate worry over the future?

9. Discuss the images of living in a turtle shell and in an oyster shell.

10. Considering your own temperament type and personality, determine the kinds of fear you most frequently struggle with. Discuss these if you choose to do so. In what ways do you quench the Holy Spirit through fear? What opportunities do you turn away from because of fear?

CHAPTER 11

Depression, Its Cause and Cure



During the last twenty years it has been my privilege to be in hundreds of churches speaking on family-life stubjects: I

spend it night each on anger, fear, and depression. I have made it it point the night bef►re speaking on depression to ask the audience, °I low many of,you will honestly admit that at sonic time in your life you have been depressed;.. 'lo my knowledge every hand has been raised, attesting to the universal experience of depression.

Ur. Raymond Cramer, in the Pstirholo ' of,twos nud ,%1e►rlal Health, said:

> Emotional depression is widespread if not almost universal. Severe depressed slates have characterized human history ever since Adams dejection following his expulsion from the Garden ofEden. Depression is an emotional illness to which many of our socially most useful and productive people are subject. Depressive traits rover a wide range of professional groupsthe so/hislicated and highly intelligent are not exempt!

Depression is no respecter of persons but strikes the educated and the unlearned. I was acquainted with it man and his wife, both getting their doctorates in psychology at the same time, and both were seriously depressed. Perhaps the fact that each was subject to the analysis of the other was enough to depress them!

Depression is defined by Webster as "the state of being depressed ... dejection, as of mind ... a lowering of vitality or functional activity ... an abnormal state of inactivity and

unpleasant emotion." God never intended people to live like that! It has always been God's intent that we enjoy a peaceful, contented, and happy life, referred to in John 10 as the "abundant" life.

No Christian filled with the Holy Spirit is going to be depressed unless the depression is physically induced, in which case medical treatment is needed. (We will discuss this later in this chapter.)

As we shall see in examining the causes of nonphysically induced depression, it always involves an element of anger-grieving the Holy Spirit-and in some cases fearquenching the Holy Spirit. Before we examine the specific causes of depression, let us examine the heavy costs of that negative emotion.



The High Cost of Being Depressed

Every negative human emotion indulged in over a period of time takes a heavy toll on a person. Emotional depression is usually the result of 'a negative thinking pattern that we will discuss near the end of this chapter. There's a heavy toll for traveling that road; consider the following six costs as part of the price one pays for depression, depending on how serious and prolonged it is.

Gloom and Pessimism

A depressed person is gloomy and pessimistic. Everything looks black, and even the most simple things become difficult. Depressed people commonly "make mountains out of molehills," and this does not make for good fellowship. Depressed people are generally not sought out by friends, which makes them even more depressed. People like to he around the lighthearted, not the depressed. Selfish motive? Yes, but nevertheless true. The gloomy, pessimistic spirit of depressed people usually makes them lonely, which just nourishes the depression.

Apathy and Fatigue

Another price paid by the depressed person is apathy and fatigue. It takes considerable energy to be angry all (lay or to lie awake worrying all night, and this expenditure of energy does not leave an angry or fear-dominated person with much pep to enjoy the pleasurable blessings of life. But depression is often worse than fear and anger in that it tends to neutralize a person's natural ambitions. Since molehills look like mountains, the attitude usually is, "What's the use?" It's easy to sit pessimistically on it stool of gloom and do nothing.

All people need a sense of accomplishment that comes with it task well done. This feeling of well-being so needed by depressed people is repelled by their apathy, which is the enemy of all achievement; it certainly is not the soil From which the seeds of "goals," "projects," and "visions" grow. The Bible tells us that "where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prow. 29:18, KJV). That is true not only in the spiri tual arena,

but also in the mental realm. If people do not have it vision or goal to which they are working, they are living in a mental vacuum of apathy that saps the vitality of their energy.

This lack of vision accounts for much of the apathetic behavior of many young people. Our society sends young people today such confusing signals. Modern musicians feed them a diet of rebellion and self=will at a time when they need role models and challenges to honor and obey their parents. Instead, their "rights" are stressed in some schools and by some lawyer groups until they demand "rights" without responsibilities at an emotionally combustible age (fourteen to about twentyfive) when they are forced to make some of the most significant decisions of life. If they cop out by getting hooked on TV fantasies and video games, they may escape the drudgery of the here and now and refuse to take advantage of an offer of education. Then later, when they are adults and want to work, they don't possess the basics required for getting a job. Many unemployed job seekers and welfare recipients are almost paralyzed because they have no marketable skills to offer the work force; they look down the long tunnel of their future and find no light at the end. Lack of hope accounts for the catastrophic increase in depression among the youngest teenagers.

When I wrote How to Win overDel)ression fifteen years ago, I mentioned what I saw then as an emotional phenomenon of' that period. Depression among college students was sweeping the campuses, and the press was reporting a drastic increase in

suicide among eighteen-to twenty-three-yearolds. At that time suicide below the high-school level was almost nonexistent. Today more than five thousand seventhto ninth-graders commit suicide each year, and it's estimated that for each successful suicide in that age group there are three to five unsuccessful attempts.

Our society has overprotected our young from values and discipline and overexposed them to permissive sex, drugs, alcohol, and violence to the extent that it is hard for them to cope with the highly technological age they live in. Depression is all too often the result. Many look with hopeless eves toward an impossibly complex future that demotivates them. The younger generation today needs greater motivation than any preceding generation; instead it has less.

This indicates that we can expect an increase in depressed adults in the twenty-first century. But thanks to God, there is victory from depression through Jesus Christ our Lord. The rise in depressed individuals will increase the number of souls who will recognize their need of an outside stimulus in seeking a cure. This fact should quicken the consciousness of Spiritfilled believers: All about us are apathetic, depressed, empty-hearted, no-vision souls that desperately need Christ. This is a most thrilling age in which to live the Spiritfilled life as it demonstration of what Jesus Christ is able to do for an individual. All people need role models. God intended Spiritfilled Christians to provide those role models.

Hypochondria

Another problem occasioned by depression is hypochondria. Depressed people may have aches, stomach pain, and numerous difficulties without any known cause. But they can learn the art of being sick to excuse their apathy. Some people use this "tool"-"pretending" to be sick-to avoid what they think are unpleasant tasks. They don't call it pretending or even think of it as such. It is very real to them but usually unnecessary.

Aches and pains can enslave a depressed person whenever that person thinks of some unpleasant task or experience. Millions of dollars and untold human suffering are the price being paid for this hypochondria-type sickness induced by depression.

A healthy mental attitude toward things can hardly be overemphasized. I remember counseling a housewife who "hated housework." She loved her home, children, and husband, but by her own testimony "hated to do dishes, and it irks me because my husband won't buy me a dishwasher." She had made a martyr of herself every time she stood at the kitchen sink. What was the problem? Her attitude toward doing the dishes was making her sick. Her attitude turned an unpleasant, boring, and ultimately exhausting task into a "mountain" that almost destroyed the many other blessings that surrounded her. She was forgetting her faithful husband, healthy children, and lovely home. Instead, she was focusing upon a pet peeve through the magnifying glass of self-interest. This is always a formula for depression.

Actually, a degree of stress created by tackling a task perceived to be difficult is good for a person-presupposing a positive mental attitude toward the task. In None of These Diseases Dr. S. I. McMillen said:

> I can recall many times when I had to make house calls on patients when I wasn't feeling well myself. I found out that the stress of making the trip often cured me of my minor aches and pains. However, if I had made the trip in the spirit of antagonism, my faulty reaction might have put me in the hospital for a week.
>
> Is it not a remarkable fact that our reactions to stress determine whether stress is going to cure us or make us sick? Here is an important key to longer and happier living. We hold the key and can decide whether stress is going to work for us or against us. Our attitude decides whether stress makes us "better or bitter. "

Loss of Productivity

It is only natural that if depression leads to apathy, then it also leads to loss of productivity. How many geniuses or gifted individuals have never realized their potential because of their depression-induced apathy? The loss is not only in this life, but also in the life to come (see 1 Cor. 3:10-15). The Lord Jesus' parable in Matthew 25:14-30 pointed out this very thing. He pictured his return as a time for his servants' accounting. The master seriously rebuked one for being "a wicked and lazy

servant." The servant had not murdered anyone or committed adultery; he had merely done nothing with the talent given him. Some Christians are going to lose rewards in this life and the life to come because they are doing nothing with the talents the Lord has given them.

Apathy produces apathy just as depression produces depression. Christians tend to become depressed and apathetic if their lives do not count for Christ. Repeatedly taking in the Word of God without expressing it to other souls has a tendency to make one depressively apathetic. I heard it young Christian who had struggled with depression most of his life say, "Last Friday I felt wonderful! I had a great opportunity to witness my faith to a fellow employee." There is tremendous therapy in witnessing our faith to other people.

Irritability

Depressed people are prone to he irritable-irritated that others are in it good, energetic mood when they are in a pensive, gloomy mood. They are also irritated by petty things that would otherwise completely escape their attention.

Withdrawal

In my counseling experience I've seen that severe cases of depression lead to withdrawal-a tendency to escape from an unpleasant reality of life, to daydream about their pleasant childhood (which may he it figment of the imagination), or to build air castles about the futre. This is very natural since

contemplation of the present is depressing. Daydreaming, however, is a serious deterrent to an effective thinking process and not at all beneficial to mental health. It also makes a person uncommunicative and isolatedwithdrawing from others.



Causes of Depression

Since depression is a universal experience, it is worth our time to examine its basic causes. I will give the standard suggested causes and then turn to the most common cause.

Temperament Tendencies

Although depression is common to all temperament types, none is as vulnerable as the Melancholy. Melancholies can go into longer and deeper periods of depression than any of their fellows. Sanguines, if they do become depressed, remain that way only briefly. Being so susceptible to the immediate environment, a bird flying overhead, a change of' activity, or a cheerful companion coming on the scene can transform their depression into joy.

Cholerics are rarely slaves to depression. Perennial optimists, they look with disdain upon depression because of its impractical resultant apathy. They are not overly occupied with themselves but have longrange goals and plans that more than occupy their minds productively.

Phlegmatics would probably rate second in depressive tendencies among the four temperament types, though their periods of depression would not be as frequent or as deep as the Melancholy because of their basically cheerful nature and sense of humor.

Of course we are not one solid temperament type; a PhlegMel is going to he vulnerable to depression. A ChlorMel will also experience depression. Again, virtually no one is exempt.

There are three reasons why the Melancholy temperament has more problems with depression than others.

1. Melancholies' greatest weakness is self-centeredness. They spend a great deal of time in selfexamination. In his book Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cure, the late Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, a great Bible teacher and author who was a medical doctor before becoming a minister, said:

> The fundamental trouble with these people is that they are not always care/ul to draw the line of demarcation between selfexamination and introspection. We all agree that we should examine ourselves, but we also agree that introspection and morbidity are had. But what is the difference between examining oneself and becoming introspective? I suggest that we cross the line from selfexamination to introspection when, in a sense, we do nothing but examine ourselves, and when such selfexamination becomes the main and chief end in our life.

In short, selfexamination is commendable when it results in doing something about what has been discovered. Selfexamination for its own sake is introspection, which produces depression.

2. Melancholies are perfectionists. They find it easy to criticize not only others, but also themselves. Melancholies can become greatly distressed with their own work. The fact that it is far better than that of the other temperament types means nothing. That it does not measure tip to their supreme standard of' perfection causes them to become depressed at what they consider a personal failure-falling beneath their standard.

Psychologists tell its that a Melancholy is prone to be overconscientious. Dr. Raymond Cramer expressed it this way:

> The depressive takes life too seriously. He has a narrow range o/'interests, develops a meticulous devotion to duty, and is preoccupied with the smallest, most insignificant details. Combined with these trails there is often a compelling drive for the highest possible degree of success and excellence. The depressed person can put out a surprising amount of constructive work and assume a great deal of responsibility. He accomplishes this fry driving himself ruthlessly. He is a slave driver/or getting results; he brags of his accomplishments, prides himself that his work cannot be duplicated, that no one else could possibly take his place, that his efforts are indispensable;

his drive for power and control, his lack of appreciation for the feelings of others make him almost impossible to get along with.

Even when Melancholies reach their standard of perfection, they can be disagreeable, unlovable, and unappreciated, which throws them into a fit of depression.

3. Perfectionist Melancholies tend to be unrealistic toward themselves and others. They seem incapable of adjusting to the demands made upon them by changes in the course of life. For instance, a very active person at churchone who teaches a Sundayschool class, directs youth groups, and is active in the calling program-may not recognize that duties at home also demand attention. Admittedly, the standard of Christian service at church is higher for the single person or young married couple without children than for a young mother with three small children. And home responsibilities should not be offered as an excuse for lack of church attendance, but the curtailment of some Christian activities should not cause Mrs. Melancholy to feel that she is forsaking her spiritual service, or that she is a success as a mother but a failure as a Christian. The truth of the matter is, she is not a success as a Christian until she is a success as a mother.

The person who already has an overloaded schedule must either neglect family or shirk some responsibility (which makes the perfectionist guilt-stricken) when taking on additional duties. Happy are they who know their limitations and refuse to

accept another responsibility unless they can complete the ones for which they are presently accountable. It is far better to do a good job of a few things than a poor job of many things. This is particularly true of conscientious people with perfectionist tendencies; unless they do their best, they will never be satisfied with their accomplishments. Dissatisfaction with personal accomplishments often leads to depression.

Hypocrisy

Average Christians who attend a Bible-teaching church soon learn the standards of the Christian life. If they attack their personal weaknesses externally rather than by the control of the Holy Spirit working from within, they may become depressed. Suppose you have a problem with resentment, bitterness, and hostility. You soon learn that this is not the standard of spirituality for the Christian. Unless you handle this matter on a personal basis with God, you will try to solve it by the power of self-control.

To control anger by the force of one's will is not only futile, but it will also lead to an explosion somewhere in the body-high blood pressure, heart trouble, ulcers, colitis, or it myriad of other maladies-or it may result in a belated emotional explosion. The frustration that follows an angry reaction to a given situation leads to depression. A true cure for these problems will be dealt with in detail in a later chapter. Suffice it to say here that it must come from within through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Physical Problems

Physical problems can lead to depression. Whenever a person is weak, even simple difficulties are magnified. This can be avoided in physical weakness when one bears in mind the principle given by Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, "When I am weak, then I am strong." Paul knew that the grace of God is sufficient f'()r a Christian after a severe illness or at any other difficult time.

I have observed that individuals can become depressed when there is a mineral or vitamin deficiency. I am told that vitamin B is the nerve vitamin, the complete absence of which can make a person nervous, which in turn can lead to frustration and depression. It is also apparent that some women suffer a hormone deficiency when going through the change of life, and this deficiency often produces depression. Depression can be the result of 'a nonfunctioning thyroid gland or hormonal malfunction or just wear and tear on vital organs as the body ages.

Anyone who is depressed without an obvious reason (death of a loved one, loss of a job, letdown after the completion of a major project, and so forth) for more than a week should see the family physician, especially if the person has no history of severe depression. You may have developed a physical malfunction or deficiency. If that is the case, often medication can help the problem.

I say this-see your doctor-and yet I also say that most people today are inclined to attribute their depression to physical problems rather than consider that it is spiritually and emotionally induced.

The Devil

Most Bible teachers remind us that the devil can oppress Christians even if he does not indwell or possess them. It is true that some Christians have seemingly been depressed by the devil. Personally, I am not overly impressed with this as a reason for one's depression because l John 4:4 says, "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." Therefore, if a Christian is depressed by the devil, it is because that person is not abiding in Christ or is not filled with the Holy Spirit. We have already seen the nine characteristics of the Spiritfilled life. I do not find any place for depression caused by the devil in the life of the Spiritfilled Christian. But it should be borne in mind that not all Christians are Spiritfilled. We must meet the conditions as outlined in chapter 8 and walk in the Spirit to avoid being depressed by the devil.

Rebellion and Unbelief

Psalm 78 shows how Israel seriously limited God by its rebellious unbelief. Because the people rebelled and refused to trust him, God's limitation caused them to be depressed with their circumstances. The terms unbelief and rebellion are used interchangeably in this instance, for unbe lief leads to rebellion and rebellion leads to unbelief. If people really knew God as he

is, they would believe him implicitly. But because their faith is so weak, they tend to rebel against the testings or the leading of the Lord, and rebellion and unbelief lead to depression.

Some years ago a very fine Christian worker came in for counseling. She was already in the deep throes of apathy caused by depression. As I counseled with her, I found she was hostile toward many people, very bitter, and rebellious toward God. It seems that some well-meaning but ill-guided friend convinced her that she might be "healed" of 'a lifelong illness. At a gathering she was declared "healed" of her epilepsy. She immediately discarded the medication she had taken for years and went around telling everyone of the "marvelous work of God.,,

For some time she had no ill effects from the cessation of her medication, and then suddenly, without warning, she blacked out while driving and totaled her car by smashing into it telephone pole. She returned to her doctor and resumed her medication, which arrested that problem. But by this time she had lost her driver's license for violating the law that required medication for her illness. Nothing, however, has been invented to arrest the problem of rebellion (except acknowledging it as an awful sin and asking God to take it away). In the course of our counseling, she acknowledged that she was angry at God because he had not healed her the way she had demanded. But she had not prayed in the will of God; she had prayed in her own will, demanding that God answer her prayer exactly as she prescribed. Because he did not, she

turned in unbelieving rebellion against him, and in her frustration grew progressively depressed and apathetic. She refused to acknowledge her sin of rebellion and continued to prescribe her own cure for "healing this lifelong disease."

Instead of repenting of her sin by the simple method I prescribed and seeking God's grace to live with her illness (see 2 Cor. 12:9), she persisted in her rebellion. Today she is confined to a mental institution because her depression has become so severe she has lost touch with reality. This is a rare case, but it nevertheless illustrates the fact that rebellion can lead to depression.

Psychological Letdown

There is a natural psychological letdown whenever a great project has been completed. A very energetic and creative individual can be happy and contented while working toward a longrange goal. But when that goal is reached, it is often followed by a period of depression because the individual has not been able to mount another project to succeed the one just concluded. This could well explain why many ministers leave their churches within six months after completing building programs. As I look back at my own life, I find that the only times I have had "itchy feet" and thought my ministry in a church might be finished was right after a long building program. The truth was, my best ministry was still ahead. Little did I realize that this was the natural reaction to the termination of a longrange project. The feeling of depression was eliminated when new projects and higher goals were set to

replace those completed.

Elijah, the great prophet, had a similar experience after calling down fire from heaven and slaying 450 prophets of Baal. He sat down under a juniper tree and "prayed that he might die, and said, `It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!"' (1 Kings 19:4). This gifted prophet, unusually faithful to God, like most of the prophets had strong Melancholy tendencies. Because of the faithfulness of God and because he kept his eye on the goal of serving his Master, he returned to dependence on God and went on to greater heights of service for the Lord



SelfPity: The Basic Cause of Depression

As important as they are, the above-mentioned elements are not the primary cause for emotionally induced depression. Too often they are the excuse one uses to condone depression rather than going to almighty God for his marvelous cure.

The truth of the matter is, a person becomes depressed after it period of indulging in one of the most subtle sins of all-self'pity. I have questioned hundreds of depressed individuals and have yet to find an exception to this. I have had a number of people deny at the outset that selfpity was the cause, but upon thorough questioning they finally admitted that their

thought process prior to the period of depression was one of selfpity. Many did not recognize their self=pity until I pointed it out, but they had still indulged in a self-induced "pity party."

Dr. McMillen points out the many physical illnesses produced by the emotions of jealousy, envy, self-centeredness, ambition, frustration, rage, resentment, and hatred. He then observes: "These disease-producing emotions are concerned with protecting and coddling the self, and they could be summarized tinder one title-self-renteredness. " He further states, "Chronic brooding over sorrows and insults indicates faulty adaptation, which can cause any condition from itching feet to insanity. The most common form of faulty reaction is .selfpity. "

The sin of selfpity is so subtle that we do not often recognize it for what it is. While I was holding meetings in a church some years ago, a very lovely Christian woman about seventy years old came to me about her problem of-depression." This woman was a seemingly mature Christian with a gifted mind and many years of experience teaching an adult Bible class. She had been told by pastors, "You are the best woman Bible teacher I have ever known on a local church level," and it was apparent that she truly had a grasp of the Word of'God.

At first I was at a loss to know how to reveal her selfpity to her, and I asked God secretly for special insight as she talked. It was not long until I found myself asking how she enjoyed

her church, and her response immediately proved that I had "struck a nerve." She said, "Nobody appreciates me around here! In fact, these people aren't very friendly. Most of the people in this church are young married couples, and they don't pay attention to a widow like me. As far as they are concerned, I could quit coming to this church right now, and they'd never miss me. They don't need me around here; in fact, I can come to this church on some Sundays and go away without anyone ever speaking to me."

There you have it! Depression caused by selfpity. Only when I wrote down those words that came from her own lips was I able to convince that dear woman that she had been indulging in the sin of selfpity, which caused her depression. I would be the first to acknowledge that selfpity is natural. But the Bible clearly teaches that we do not have to be dominated by the natural man, for we are to "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16).

One day I dropped in to see a minister friend of mine and his wife. While we were having a cup of coffee, the phone rang and the pastor went to answer it. As soon as he was out of earshot, his wife said, "I'd like to ask you something. Why is it that I have greater periods of depression today than when we were young in the ministry? Our work is going well, God is blessing, we have enough to live on, and yet I find that I go through more periods of depression now than when we had far greater problems."

Not wanting to ruin a good friendship, I reluctantly asked, "Are you sure you really want to know?"

"Yes," she replied.

"It isn't very pretty. In fact, it's rather ugly," I said.

She insisted, "I don't care what it is, I'd like to know what causes it."

As gently as I could, I informed her that she had been indulging in the sin of selfpity. I shall never forget the look of startled amazement on her face. I don't think I would have gotten a more spontaneous response had I reached across the table and slapped her face. Fortunately, I recalled enough of our previous conversation to give her an illustration.

She had just told me how disgusted she was with the chairman of the Christian education committee. It seems she had formulated a project that would greatly help the young people's ministry in the church. She took it to the missionary committee because it had to do with future missionary volunteers. They passed it on to the trustees because it involved finances. The trustees passed it on to the deacon board because it involved the spiritual life of the church. Then it was discussed by the entire advisory board, composed of every elected officer in the congregation, and finally it received the unanimous vote of the church. Everyone was in a joyous mood; they had a good time of prayer, anticipating God's use of` this program.

Then it happened! The chairman of the Christian education committee carne to her and critically asserted, "I'd like to know why you and your husband always bypass the Christian education committee! It's obvious you don't feel that our committee is a necessary part of this church. I think I'll resign." For the first time the pastor's wife realized that she had inadvertently bypassed this particular board. From this point I took a chance and surmised her thought pattern by saying, "You indulged in such thoughts as, Who does he think he is, criticizing me for a project that received the unanimous vote of the church? I'm the one who is going to do most of the work. It's adding a lot of hardens to my already heavy schedule, and what thanks do I get for it? This man is more concerned about his own petty approval than he is the ongoing of 'the Lord's work. The next day you indulged in similar selfpitying thoughts so that today you are reaping the harvest of selfpity; just as sunshine follows rain, depression follows selfpity."

Galatians 6:7 says, "Whatever a man sows, that he will also reap." Whenever we sow the seeds of selfpity, we reap the results of selfpity in depression.

One of the best cases of self-diagnosis on this matter appeared in the sports page of the San Diego Union. One of the best-known football coaches in the National Football League, a former all-pro quarterback of tremendous ability, electrified the sports world by resigning suddenly. He had a good team and a brilliant quarterback, and he expected to go to the Super Bowl that year. But somehow things seemed to go

against him, and although the team won the hard games, they seemed to lose some of the easy ones. Immediately after his resignation, he went into seclusion. Entreaties by the team owners, players, and other coaches finally induced him to reconsider and step back into his position. Later, when interviewed by sympathetic reporters, he said, "The thing that I thought of last-not quitting-was the thing I should have thought of first. I have lived a life of not being a quitter, but that's exactly what I was doing-quitting. I wasn't being rational." When asked when he made the decision to return to the football team, he replied, "When I quit feeling sorry for myself and came to my senses."

Happy is the man or woman, like this great football coach, who can face the personal weakness of selfpity and diagnose it as the cause for depression. That is half the battle. For once we understand that selfpity produces depression, and that it is a sin, all we have to do is go to God for his cure. The cure for selfpity is identically the same as the cure for fear and anger, or any other human weakness, and we will deal with the cures in detail in a later chapter.

Of one thing I am certain: If we indulge in selfpity when we are insulted, injured, or rejected, depression will follow. In fact, the degree of depression will often be determined by the degree and length of selfpity. However, if you repent of that sin and by faith begin thanking God (according to I Thess. 5:18) for who and what he is and for what he will yet do in your

life, you too will have victory.

Additional Help

If you have a particular problem with depression or want to know more about this subject, please get a copy of my hook How to Win overDehression, written about ten years after the first edition of this hook-after I had counseled more than a thousand depressed people. (My wife says I have a magnetic attraction for the depressed, that's why so many have found their way to my door.) Today there are more than a million copies in print in English, and it has been translated into more than twenty languages.

I still receive heartwarming letters from around the world from readers who claim they experienced lasting victory over that which in some cases had been a lifelong problem. The most satisfying was from Paris-a woman on her way to commit suicide who "by chance" saw the hook in the French translation in the window of an evangelical hook store. She bought it, received Christ, and lives for him today.

A man brought his wife who had been depressed for years to our church one Sunday night-because I had advertised in the paper that I was speaking on this subject. When I said depression was caused by indulging in self=pity, she became so angry she stood up and walked out. fie bought my hook and talked her into reading it and now claims she is a different woman. But not until she was willing to face selfpity as a sin.

Again, some physically induced depressions need the help of and medication prescribed by a physician. Yet even those with legitimate physical causes for depression can benefit-as they follow a doctor's prescription, they can also learn to give thanks by faith. For those who have developed a habit of selfpity, thanksgiving living can become a lifetransforming experience.



Study Questions



1. List the six costly effects of depression. For each "cost" set up a scenario: What factors might contribute to this type of behavior? How might someone become depressed and react in this fashion?

2. How did fear and anger contribute to each set-up scenario (question 1)?

3. How might a person in each set-up scenario (question 1) have avoided the depression and counterproductive behavior that followed?

4. Which temperament type has the greatest struggle with depression and why?

5. Review the causes of depression, offering suggestions of how to avoid depression caused by each factor.

6. Discuss selfpity as the basic cause of depression. Consider this progression from circumstance to depression: (1) displeasure at some circumstance; (2) unbelief that God is controlling it for good; (3) selfpity; (4) depression. Read the biblical prayers of three great men: Moses (Num. 11:10-15); Elijah (1 Kings 19:1-10); Jonah (Jon. 4:1-8). How did the progression from circumstance to depression unfold in each life?

7. Consider a recent depression you have felt. What brought on the first feelings of displeasure? Why did you lapse into unbelief? How did that lead to selfpity and depression?

8. Which of the nine characteristics of the Spiritfilled life are antidotes to depression?

CHAPTER 12

Selfishness: The Bottom Line of Your Weaknesses



I was a guest on a lively Phil Donahue show discussing the breakdown of marriage. When he received the signal from his producer that only thirty seconds remained, he turned to me and asked, "Dr. LaHaye, can you in one word sure tip the major cause of divorce today?"

"Yes," I said, "the big word selfishness!"

Readily agreeing, Phil then inquired, "But isn't everyone

selfish to some extent?"

I considered that one of Donahue's more perceptive observations, for all people are selfish to some extent. Egotism is induced by our temperament, then either increased or decreased depending on childhood training, love (or lack of it), youthful experiences, education, and other factors. People raised as only children are often considered to be more selfish and a greater marriage risk than others, not having learned to share with siblings. (Children from large families tend to divorce less frequently than mates who were raised as only children.)



Selfishness: Destroyer of Relationships

Selfishness is the one sin that has plagued all mankind from the Fall in the Garden of Eden to the present. It was the original sin of Satan (see Isa. 14), Adam and Eve (see Gen. 3), and Cain (see Gen. 4). A study of human history will reveal man's inhumanity to man caused by selfishness, which is the basic cause of all the heartache and misery from the beginning of time to the twentieth century. It is the one sin that has caused more human suffering than any other. It has destroyed more interpersonal relationships and sparked more conflict than any other.

Selfish persons think first, last, and always of themselves.

Such an attitude appears most clearly in their conversation and conduct, particularly in the home, the central arena of life.

When two lovebirds say their vows to "love, honor, and cherish each other so long as we both shall live," their wedding guests hope they keep that vow and live "happily ever after." Whether they do is not dependent on how much money they make or where they live-and it certainly is not dependent on how good looking they are or how much education they have. It all depends on how selfish they are. For I have found that selfishness is the main destroyer of marriage. In fact, every other contributing factor to matrimonial breakdown, from "communication problems" to "sexual differences" to financial pressures and even the emotional conflicts of anger and fear, can all be traced to selfishness.

Nothing is more destructive to a marriage than selfishness. "I insist on having it my own way!" "I want the last word!" "I can spend our money as I please!" "But I wanted to vacation in the mountains this summer!" "I" problems create a myopic marriage partner. Selfish people are rigid and intolerant of other people's desires and insensitive to other's needs or feelings.

It is almost humanly impossible to love a compulsively selfish person. I have noticed in my associations with threeand four-time divorcees that they are very selfish people; one disastrous experience is followed by another, and all are blamed on the other party. They seem incapable of recognizing the selfish culprit.

Anyone considering marriage should carefully examine the prospective partner's treatment of others, especially family members, for consideration ofother people becomes it significant indication of future marital harmony.

I am often asked, "How old do you have to he to get n►arric&" The answer has nothing to do with age. An eighteen-or twenty-year-old may be mature enough for marriage, vet I have met people in their eighties who were too immature (or selfish) to marry. Some people select a marriage partner for all the wrong reasons and introduce their selfish agenda into the new union, destroying interpersonal skills and soon erasing all feelings of' love. One is not old enough for matrimony until he or she is unselfish enough to think more of someone else's needs and desires than his or her own. Such mature individuals rarely divorce and usually enjoy it happy marriage, regardless of' contrasting temperaments or other differences that may exist between them. Conflicts in taste or attitude do not destroy marital harmony, but expressions of selfishness often do.

Partnerships of all kinds can suffer from selfishness. Two people start out a business as equal partners and selfishness creeps in, turning best friends into worst enemies. They may blame their conflicts on "personality differences" or "philosophical differences," but the bottom-line problem is selfishness.

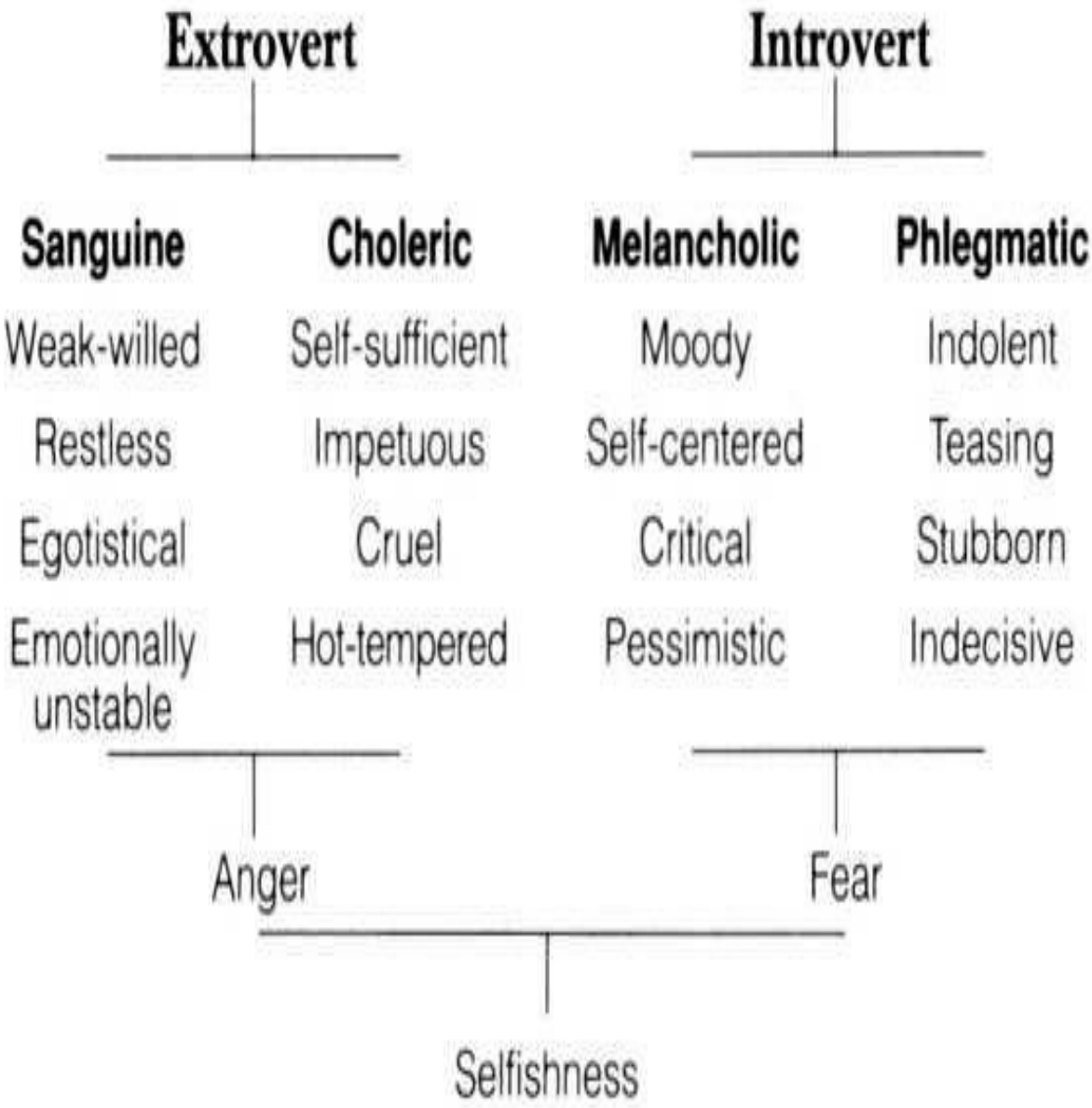
And the degree to which individuals overcome selfish ness determines the success and happiness of all their interpersonal

relationships, particularly in marriage.



Selfishness Causes Other Weaknesses

The following chart more simply identifies the natural weaknesses of each temperament.



As already discussed, the Sanguine and Choleric temperaments are extrovertish and have a predominant anger problem, while the Melancholy and Phlegmatic temperaments tend to be introvertish and struggle with fear. The chart reveals how these two and, for that matter, all of mankind's basic

weaknesses stem from selfishness. Self-interest is what causes people to become restless, weak-willed, hot-tempered, impetuous, self-centered, lazy, critical, fearful, depressed, or adopt any number of other negative forms of behavior.

Egotism, self-centeredness, self-contemplation, self-consciousness, and many other words are used to describe it, but they do not limit the fact that the basic human weakness is selfishness.

Consider the standard of the Ten Commandments. You will find that the unselfish person will keep them, whereas the selfish person will break them. For example, Christians who are unselfish toward God will humbly obey God and worship him only; they will not take his name in vain or make unto themselves any graven images; they will keep the Lord's I)ay rather than desecrate it for selfish purposes. In relationship to their fellowman, the unselfish will honor their fathers and mothers; they will not steal, nor will they be so inconsiderate of their neighbors as to bear false witness against them or covet that which is their neighbors'.

Take the matter of adultery, a raging problem in our day. And because 72 percent of married women are in the workforce, we have incredible exposure of even married people to temptation by the opposite sex. It is just a matter of time until the average person is faced with someone whose chemistry sparks a sexual temptation. Selfish men and women think only of the gratification of their lust-not their marital commitments.

Unselfish people, even in the face of temptation, consider how their actions will affect their spouses. Unselfishness, then, serves as a moral guard (saving them from the tragic consequences of that sin) and also builds self-discipline into personal character. This, of course, enriches the entire person.

From this it can easily be seen that the selfish heart is the root of all sin. It may take a variety of forms, but evil can still be traced to selfishness.



Temperament and Selfishness

The first contributing cause of selfishness emanates from the gene pool of our parents in the form of our inherited temperaments. Yet two people of identical temperament may reflect varying degrees of selfishness when they grow up. 'T'his can depend on how two sets of parents loved and disciplined these children (or failed to do so). Behavior, we must remember, depends on many things, including temperament, childhood training, love, life experiences, and spiritual maturity.

Sanguines are natural-horn egotists. It never crosses their minds that everyone doesn't love them. They like to be the center of attraction, captivating other people with their endless conversation. But if you listen to their talk long enough, you will discover that they are their own favorite persons. Most of

what they say revolves around their interests and desires. They are driven by a need to gain the approval of others. Even when they break their wedding vows, self-indulgence never impels them to consider the trauma experienced by their partners-until it is too late. Unselfish Sanguines are rare. Only the Spiritfilled life can modify this temperament by making them "others-conscious."

Cholerics are subject to compulsive selfishness. They know they are right (even when they are wrong) and never hesitate to impose their will on others. Having little need for the approval of others, they really don't care how demanding and unsympathetic they are. Insensitive to friends and associates, they will seldom try to hide their selfishness. One reason they have so few lasting friends is that they are so self-centered and unreasonably demanding of all their acquaintances.

Frequently absorbed with themselves, Melancholies often marry to allow someone else to fulfill their needs (real or imagined). The problem is, other people cannot make us happy, and consequently Melancholies become unhappy soon after the wedding. Of course, they weren't happy before the wedding.

Any doctor will tell you that more of his active patients are Melancholy than any other temperament. The moment they feel pain, all thoughts are turned inward. The world must stop until the discomfort is alleviated, but they usually encounter other distresses en route to solving the first.

In extreme cases, they have been known to assume the fetal position, reflecting their desire to return to the one time in life when they felt safe and every need was met by another person. Such people, unless they learn to be "others-conscious," are difficult to live with. They read into everything you say and assume you are attacking or criticizing them, when in reality you may not even be thinking of them. Your behavior could be (and probably is) totally independent of their emotions and hang-ups, but they can't understand that. (Don't admit, however, that your behavior doesn't revolve around them; they would consider it an insult.) They are almost impossible to please. Fortunately, the Spirit of God can help to overcome the selfishness of a Melancholy.

Phlegmatics can be as selfish as anyone, sometimes even more so, but because they are so gracious, "nice," and diplomatic, it isn't always apparent-unless you have to live with them. Because they are so passive, their selfish traits don't get them into so much trouble unless it person is forced to cope with them over it long period of time.

Phlegmatics don't express their selfish impulses freely. Introverts by nature, they are afraid of the consequences if' they were to voice or act out selfish desire. Their selfishness is easiest to perceive in two areas, one being their extensive self-protective devices. Sheltering themselves at all costs, they seldom expose fears and hesitations. For that reason, they rarely accept opportunities to perform in public.'I'hcy would

rather sit on their talents than risk ridicule or e►nbar-rassment, and they often limit their families and partners from getting involved in worthwhile activities or businesses due to their obsession with self-protection.

The selfish traits of' the Phlegmatic are also evident in their finances. They are just not outgoing, giving people. Their selfishness often makes them downright stingy. They are the lowest of tippers and usually give the least expensive gifts. Their efforts at frugality become legendary as they indulge their "pack-rat" tendencies. These are the people who have their original nickel, or the Phlegmatic man may have his original train set, stored neatly up in the attic out of reach of his children.

Tithing is a tough sell for Phlegmatics-until they see the dynamic results in 90 percent of their income with the blessing of God (after the tithe) going further than 100 percent used to go. That is a language they readily understand.

In marriage the Phlegmatics' selfishness becomes a real problem because they tend to indulge themselves. Their retiring nature makes them want to be the stick-in-the-mud, stay-at-home type who won't make an effort to be more active for their partners' sake. Indulging their passivity can make for stale marriages-and underachievement. They tend to value security above advancement.

The Holy Spirit can bring Phlegmatics out of this self-

protectionist shell and into the mainstream of life. Like all other temperaments, Phlegmatics and their partners would be much happier if they would let the Spirit of God overcome their selfishness.



Factors in Selfishness

Christian psychologist Dr. David Field in his book Marriage Personalities introduces two principal causes of selfishness: (1) egotism and (2) low self-esteem. He claims that both are "a serious problem in many marriages."

Egotism

Egotistical people, he explains, are narcissistic, seeking to draw excessive amounts of attention to themselves. Often they put others down in an attempt to promote themselves. "They insist that their viewpoint is always right."

> Egotists have a tough time in marriage. Their interests tend to be in outside activities, such as job and hobbles, rather than in the hone. This doesn't mean that they don't care about the marriage, but rather that they derive more fulfillment from their accomplishments than from their relationships.
>
> The most obvious example of P4otism is Mr. Macho in

the Macho marriage. Most Active-Resistant marriages also have an egotistic partner in the resistant role. I have occasionally told egocentric partners that they are lot like a rock in a blender 7b them, anyone who does not fit in with their plans is a source of irritation.

The egotist has several fears which influence his lack of trust for people. He fears that he is not as significant as he would like to believe. He fears that he is not as independent as he would like to believe. And he greatly fears being controlled by other people. 7o him, being vulnerable to someone is being controlled. He is afraid that his vulnerability will be used against him, so he resists closeness even though, in many cases, he truly desires it. He cannot imagine divulging hiss future, feelings, thoughts, and goals to another person. F,ven though his fears are misguided, it is very difficult to convince him otherwise. The only Berson he ends up trusting is hlnr.self.

Low-Self Esteem

Dr. Field blames the problem of low self-esteem on parents for expecting too much from their children, making them seem worthless or inept. Such ideas spawned early can often extend into adulthood. In disciplining children, parents should make clear that they object, not to the total child, but to a specific objectionable behavior for which correction must he administered. Parents may cause irreparable harm when they grab a child's head and moan, `,Johnnie, what am I going to do

with you? Can't you ever do anything right?" What child is going to argue with a parent? If Dad considers him a klutz, then he will remain a klutz into adulthoodparticularly if he is a Melancholy. Unreasonable demands on children during their ripening years can be devastating to their self-image. Dr. Field warns, "Even when he is an adult, this can have a definite negative effect in his mar,, riage.

When I suspect this problem, I ask a person to tell me what he likes about himself. He is usually very uncomfortable; it would be much simpler if he could tell me what he does not like. His worth and values are not based upon internal personal worth, but on his external performance. He may actually be very successful in business or sports, but it isn't enough. He feels he has to be perfect to make up for his internally felt shortcomings.

A woman with a low self-image often approaches marriage on the basis of what she can get rather than on what she wants. She doesn't believe she can commandeer the individual who will fulfill her dreams, so she compromises. After all, if she doesn't feel good about herself, why should anyone else? If her low self-esteem is acute, she may even think she doesn't deserve to be happy or successful. Then she may find it extremely uncomfortable to let other people love her because she doesn't love herself.

A classic example of this occurred in a Southern city. Seated across from me was a beautiful "Southern belle" in her mid-forties. After a little chitchat she softly asked, "Can you tell me why I am becoming so suspicious of my husband?" She had been married to the handsome hunk sitting next to her for twentyfive years and loved him very much. Typically (as she described him) he was busy talking to the woman on the other side of him. Then she offered this tidbit: "My husband claims he has never been unfaithful to me, but he is very attractive to the opposite sex, and I am afraid some woman will steal him."

I naively asked what she was doing about it. With a slight blush she replied, "I seduce him every morning before he goes to work."

With as straight a face as I could muster, I inquired about his response. She frowned and murmured, "That's what bothers me. He's beginning to avoid me, which only underscores my fears that he may have found someone else." Estimating his age at close to fifty, I advised, "That may not be the problem at all. Lovemaking is exciting for a man his age, but six or seven days a week is a little much even for the most virile."

She had never considered that! Of course not. She was too self-centered to think of him. Her seductive role, which most husbands would welcome two or three times a week, was inspired not by agape love but by self-love.



In short, selfishness is the opposite of love. Babies are the epitome of selfishness. When they come home from the hospital, they never consider making an appointment with Mother for their first night's feeding. Instead, they wait until she is in a deep sleep, still exhausted from giving birth, then pierce the night silence with a shriek for food-not ten minutes from now, but right this second!

We understand and accept that-in babies. But when the same child is twenty-one years old and still demands that his needs and wants be met immediately, we label him selfish.

The "Southern belle" I just described assuredly loved her husband, but not as much as she loved herself. She adored being known as his wife, showing off his good looks, and being treated as "a perfect lady." Unfortunately, she wanted him for the wrong reasons. He existed as a spouse to fulfill her life. His needs came second or third-or not at all.

The Bible says, "Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others" (Phil. 2:3-4). True love is a giving, doing, sharing emotion that seeks primarily to benefit another person, not to accrue gains for self.

One reason I enjoy Christmas so much is that I get to watch

my married children choose gifts for their partners. Although two of them are in Christian work and live on very limited budgets, they express their love each year by scrimping and saving for months before the holiday so they can bestow a gift rich in love. An object that brings pleasure to the person you love is worth almost any cost. Love simply cannot wait to give.

Philippians 2:3-4 establishes that love is "others-consciousness." By nature we tend to "look out for our own interests," but Paul forbids us to do that; instead, we are to look out for others first. The New International Version makes that even clearer, stating, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves." Paul said this after pointing out that we are to be united in love or "have the same love" (v. 2). And that love is the key; love kills selfishness just as selfishness will kill love. This brings us back again to the first fruit of the Spirit-controlled life: love, which overcomes selfishness.



Love Contrasted to Selfishness

Henry Drummond, a great Scottish statesman of the nineteenth century, was also a careful Bible student. He discov ered nine characteristics of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Note how they contrast with the traits of selfishness.

The Characteristics of Selfishness	The Characteristics of Love
Impatient	Patient
Unkind	Kind
Proud	Sincere
Stingy	Generous
Suspicious	Humble
Self-seeking	Polite
Inconsiderate	Trusting
Demanding	Gracious
Hostile	Unselfish

First John 4:18 says, "Perfect love casts out fear." It also casts out the characteristics of selfishness that defeat our lives and destroy interpersonal relationships.



The good news is that selfishness can be overcome and replaced by love-but only with God's help. Quite honestly, I do not know how to subdue it without his power. It is so difficult to control that restraint or mastery is never automatic, even for Christians.

One of the hardest things for people to learn is the Lord Jesus' principle, "He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it" (Matt. 10:39). When our faith and consecration have reached the point that we are willing to surrender our life completely to Jesus Christ, the Spirit of God will cure our problem of selfishness. This cure is basic, but through force of habit, when we don't continue to abide in Christ or walk in the Spirit, we may temporarily slip into old patterns of behavior.

Six clear steps to walking in the Spirit are presented in chapter 13. Those are basic to overcoming our weaknesses. In addition to them, the following steps will cut at the core of a selfish nature, helping you break selfish thought patterns and actions and improve your relationships as you become "others-conscious" rather than selfish.



Improving Your Relationships

Replace Selfish Actions with Generous Service to Others

One evidence of the Spiritfilled life is a submissive spirit.

Selfishness is self-seeking, whereas a person with a submissive spirit will seek to serve others. Whenever possible, try to replace every selfish thought or action by thoughtful, generous conduct, directing your attitude outward rather than inward.

Practice Giving Generously

"When you do a charitable deed, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, that your charitable deed may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will Himself reward you openly" (Matt. 6:3-4).

Selfish people always have a problem in giving, whether to God or to their fellowmen.

Start being generous by giving to God-tithing to your local church. Then invest as you are able to other ministries worthy of your support. Not only will God bless you financially, as he has promised to those who honor him with "their firstfruits," but you will find it increasingly easier to be generous to other people.

One selfish man I counseled still owned a train set from his childhood. After being convicted by God of his selfishness, he discovered an impoverished boy who had repeatedly requested a windup train set. I don't know who enjoyed the experience more when that old unused train traded owners, he or the boy with the "new train."

Not long after that my friend called and asked if I knew of a family that needed a car. He had decided that his intmacttlate trade-in might he appreciated by a needy family. Obviously he was getting the message. A short time later his wife said to fit(-, "I don't know what you did to nn' husband, but he is it different tnan!" I had simply challenged him to be it giver instead of 'a taker. He accepted the challenge, and today he and his wife have found, as our Lord promised, that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35).

Give Love to Your Partner and Family Each Day

"Above all these things put on love, which is the bond of' perfection" (Col. 3: 14).

The cure for selfishness is not complete until volt have learned to express love. Keep in mind that just as selfishness produces added selfishness, so love begets love. Determine that with God's help you will become it giver, beginning with your own family. Fill your home with compliments, courtesies, gifts, and kindnesses unlimited. It will enrich your own life and create an aura of' love that will penetrate every corner of,vour home.

Memorize Philippians 2:3-4 and Incorporate It into Your Life

"Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but ill lowliness of, mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each ofvon look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others...

The psalmist challenges us to hide God's Word in our heart so we do not sin against hill) (see Ps. 119: 11). You can replace your egocentric thought pattern with the one the I loly Spirit admonishes its to maintain in Philippians 2:3-1. Memorising this passage and repeating it daily in prayer will help to establish an "others-consciousness," displacing your old habit pattern.

Give Yourself to God to Help Others

"Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God" (Rom. 6:11-13).

The happiest individuals in the world are people helpers. The most miserable are the selfish. Dedicate yourself to serving the living creatures God loves most-mankind.

Practice Being Kind

"Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you" (Eph. 4:32).

People are starved for kindness today. Go out of your way to be considerate-and start in your home. At first you may have to practice this response consciously when meeting others, but with God's help you can develop it into a lifestyle. The spirit of

friendship always generates a friendly smile, a warm embrace, and kindly deeds.



Study Questions



1. How can selfishness cause fear?

2. How can selfishness cause anger?

3. How can selfishness cause depression?

4. Discuss the four temperaments. How does each tend to exhibit selfishness?

5. Read the Ten Commandments (Exod. 20). How is selfishness involved when each is broken?

6. Considering your own temperament blend, determine how you are most likely to exhibit selfishness.

7. Discuss one day when self-interest on your part made

for rocky relationships in your household.

8. What relationship is there between low self-esteem and selfishness?

9. Review the list of the characteristics of selfishness and the characteristics of love. For each pairing, present (or act out) two versions of a domestic or workplace scenario or a scene from a Bible story: What transpired when someone acted selfishly? What might have happened if someone had acted out of a loving spirit?

10. Discuss in depth the actions you can take to improve relationships by being more "others-conscious." What fruit of the Spirit does each action exhibit? (See Gal. 5:22-23.)

C H A P T E R 1 3

Haw to Overcome Your Weaknesses



Using the Temperaments to Good Advantage

The basic purpose in giving this temperament study is to examine both our strengths and weaknesses and to go to the Holy Spirit for his filling and have his strength for our weaknesses. Dr. Henry Brandt has defined a mature person as one who "is sufficiently objective about himself to have examined both his strengths and his weaknesses and has it planned program for overcoming his weaknesses." With the aid of this temperament study you can examine both your strengths and weaknesses and, we trust, construct it planned program for overcoming your weaknesses.

Once you have determined your basic temperament, pay close attention to your strengths and weaknesses. It is not God's will that your natural traits be destroyed. It is his will that Christ be glorified in every area of your life within the framework of your own personality. You may find that some of

the natural strengths are being neglected in your life, or that others are being overused until your actions are "the work of the flesh"-motivated by your own efforts rather than by the power of the Spirit.

An honest examination of your weaknesses can be most helpful in pointing out the areas of your life that need the anointing of the Holy Spirit. Remember one important fact. If you are a Christian, you do not have to be a slave to your natural weaknesses! "Now thanks be to God who always leads its in triumph in Christ" (2 Cor. 2:14).

God in his wise providence has created each of us for "his pleasure" (Rev. 4:11, KJV); therefore, we should not despise our temperament, but recognize that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Ps. 139:14) and that God uses our natural temperament when it is filled with his Spirit. God has made each of us for a specific purpose; by God's power we will become the finished vessels God wants to use.

If you have not already done so, review the temperament types and determine which temperament you are. List your natural weaknesses and then seek the filling of the Holy Spirit to overcome them.

After hearing a series of messages on Spiritfilled temperament, a Christian salesman gave himself some careful scrutiny and came up with the following chart showing his conclusions. He may not have diagnosed correctly the degrees

of his temperament, for he considered himself about 45 percent Sanguine, 35 percent Choleric, 10 percent Melancholy, and 10 percent Phlegmatic. Actually, he was probably a pleasant combination of Sanguine-Choleric. I am not endorsing his method of analysis, but feel that it showed such thorough selfexamination that it bears reproducing. If you plan to use this form of analysis, I would suggest an additional category- that of "needed strengths."

X-Ray of My Temperament

	SANGUINE	CHOLERIC	MELANCHOLY	PHLEGMATIC
Strong Tendencies	Enjoying Optimistic Friendly	Not discouraged easily Optimistic Leader Team player Decisive Adventurous	Faithful friend Self-sacrificing	Good under pressure Witty Dependable Enjoys humor
Weaknesses	Restless Weak-willed Great starter Slow finisher Actions based upon feelings	Impetuous Lack of compassion Hard Impatient	Critical Moody	Tease Indifferent Lazy
Spiritual weaknesses	Lust Lack of direction	Impatience	Critical	Critical
Negative results of the above tendencies	Financial problems Easy to over-extend time Unable to stay at one task for a period of time Wastes time in talking Starts many programs Procrastination Easily distracted Impatient with Melancholies Place time emphasis in wrong areas Poor study habits Nervous as to sounds, etc. Instant reaction to immediate circumstances	Rash decisions Overly strict with children Set too high standards Easy to take credit for what God has done Lack of kindness Always prompt Argumentative	Will take time from business to run errands Take dislike to people who get in my way or have different views Expect too much from the children Meddler	Hurt people with unkind jest Do not put out full effort at a consistent pace



The Holy Spirit-God's Cure for Temperament Weaknesses

As pointed out in chapter 7, the nine characteristics of the Spiritfilled life supply a strength for every one of your natural weaknesses. It is not God's will that you be dominated by your inherited weaknesses, but that you be filled with the Holy Spirit and freed from them.

The Holy Spirit does not automatically indwell every human being. He indwells only those who have received ‚Jesus Christ by faith as Savior from sin. Romans 8:9 says, "If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His." If you have never received Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, then your primary need right now is to humble yourself and invite him into your life. The Bible tells us, "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. 10:13). If you are willing to acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord of your life, then invite him in; "Call on the name of the Lord."

Salvation is not a long, tedious process but an instantaneous experience. Jesus called it being "born again" (see John 3) and likened it to physical birth. Your physical birth was an instantaneous experience, and by the same token so should be your spiritual birth. It is true that the Spirit of God speaks to our hearts through the Word of God over a long

period of time, and many people go through a process of considering their acceptance of Christ. But to receive him one must have a distinct experience of calling on the name of the Lord.

Jesus Christ himself said, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me" (Rev. 3:20). The verb to dine means "to fellowship." If you desire the fellowship of Christ through his Spirit, then you must invite him into your life. Only by this means can you have your past sins forgiven, your soul saved, and your life indwelt by the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit fills the lives only of believers, and believers are those who have invited Jesus Christ to come in and dwell within them as Lord and Savior. If you are seeking any other way of overcoming your weaknesses, or of having a relationship with God, you will seek in vain. Jesus Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6). If you have never called on the name of the Lord Jesus, may I urge you right now to do so. He is the only way to the Father, the only source of power to overcome your weaknesses.



Overcoming Your Weaknesses

If you are a Christian, you already possess the power to

overcome your weaknesses! That power is the Holy Spirit. If von are filled with the Holy Spirit as defined in chapters 7 and 8, he will overcome your weaknesses. If, however, you find that you grieve or quench the Holy Spirit by indulging in anger, fear, or any of the other selfishness-based weaknesses on the chart in chapter 12, there is a cure for you. Though somewhat general in nature, von will find the following plan for overcoming your weaknesses to be very effective.

Face Your Weaknesses as Sin!

Don't offer excuses for your weaknesses such as, "That's my nature," or, "I can't help it. That's the way I am." Too many Christians are mental escape artists and refuse to face their shortcomings and weaknesses as sin. Just because escapism is a common practice of our day, that is no excuse 161, Christians to indulge in it. Be a realist. If you know Christ, you can face anything.

Philippians 4:13 says, "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." Either that statement is true or false. If it is false, then God is a liar, the Bible is untrustworthy, and we can forget the entire Christian message! This position is unthinkable and, frankly, would leave us with no possible cure. People who do not know Jesus Christ may refuse to face the facts of their own weaknesses, for they do not have access to the overcoming power of God's Spirit. But that is not your problem if you are a Christian.

Alcoholics Anonymous makes it very clear that the first step toward overcoming alcoholism is facing the fact that you are an alcoholic. By the same token, if you do not face the fact that you are an angry, bitter, resentful Christian or a fearful, anxious, worried Christian, you will go to your grave dominated by anger or fear. If you are a depressive individual as a result of indulging in the sin of self=pity, you will go to your grave marred by the effects of long periods of depression. No matter what your weakness, take the first giant step toward the cure by facing the fact that it is a sin, and then go to God for his marvelous cure.

One of the best lay Bible teachers I have ever known was a military man who taught an adult class in our church. He often gave me scriptural insights that I had never seen before. Then one Monday morning I got to my office and read the report of the minister of education-that on Sunday my friend had blown up at one of' the students in his class, harming his and our church's testimony. When someone asked a stupid question that the teacher felt he had already covered, he berated the man as if he were a subordinate in the military.

Since I had seen God deliver me from the sin of anger, it was usually my job to take such individuals out for lunch and have what I called "a confrontation session." The Bible says we can comfort others with the same comfort God provides us (see 2 Cor. 1:4). So I told him in my most charming manner (or so I thought) what a good teacher he was, but, like Moses, he had never dealt with his inner hostility.

He didn't get angry; in fact, he smiled and said, "You don't understand. I am it Choleric. That's the way I am! I am it striker! It got inc uby in the military. I worked my way up to the highest enlisted rank, and now that I am retired I reserve anger as my response when I get upset."

Nothing I could do or say could convince my friend that anger is it sin. Like many others he used Ephesians 4:26 as justification: "Be angry, and do not sin." I tried to explain to him that I knew that verse well. It used to be my life's verse. But it had three conditions: Don't sin; don't let the sun go down on your anger; and don't give place to the devil.

The anger-without-sin described in Ephesians 4:26, by the way, is righteous indignation. That is, it is objective anger at something outside yourself. It is not based on selfishness-which is the kind of anger this man had exhibited. "Those who try to use our Lord driving the money changers out of the temple as an excuse for expressing bad temper should take note that his was righteous indignation and not selfish anger. Those money changers had done nothing to him, he was righteously indignant because they had made the Father's house it "den of thieves" (Matt. 21:13). Notice that when he was later beaten, spit upon, mocked, crowned with thorns and finally crucified, he did not lash out in selfish-induced anger. Rather, he prayed, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Unfortunately, my friend would have none of my counsel but refused to face his selfishness-induced anger as sin. Since he wouldn't acknowledge his sin, I warned him that such behavior was not acceptable for leaders in our church. Unfortunately, it did happen again within it few months, and he was removed from his class.

I later watched as this man drove his five children from the church, the Lord, and himself. Eventually his wife, who possessed the "patience of a saint," divorced him, and he died prematurely, a bitter, angry man whose heart imploded long before his time. A high price to pay for refusing to face his anger as sin. Now he will have to face it on judgment Day-unnecessarily. You see, 1 Corinthians 11:31 says, "If we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged." That means God forgives it, and through his Holy Spirit gives us victory. If we don't `judge our own selves"-our selfishness-he will!

Confess Your Sin Every Time It Occurs

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 john 1:9).

This verse, although used appropriately for sinners needing salvation, is really written to Christians. John addresses "my little children," for he was speaking to those who are children of God by faith. Someone has called this verse "the Christian's bar of soap." It is intended to be used regularly to keep us from going through long periods of time with sin in our lives.

The Bible tells us: "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear" (Ps. 66:18). Your prayer life is short-circuited as long as there is unconfessed sin in your life. If you do not face your selfishness, anger, and fear as sin, your prayer effectiveness will be curtailed. But that prayer life can be reestablished the moment confession is sought.

I often am asked, "How often should I use 1 john 1:9?"

My answer is always the same: "Every time you sin-in thought or deed-and as soon as you are conscious of the sin." Don't let time elapse between the sin and the confession. Every time you "blow your top" or become fearful or depressed, you grieve or quench the Holy Spirit. The instant you are conscious of that selfish thought or action, confess it and thank God for his faithful forgiveness and restoration.

Ask Your Loving Heavenly Father to Take Away This Habit

"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him" (1 John 5:14-15).

Victory over fear and anger and selfishness is the will of God for you. These verses make it crystal clear that we can be confident in having the answer to our prayers when we ask according to his will. Therefore, when we ask God to cure our habitual weaknesses, we can be confident he will. Jesus said, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go

therefore and make disciples of all the nations" (Matt. 28:18-19). Since the Lord Jesus has all power and has demonstrated that power by creating the heavens and the earth, which includes mankind, certainly he has the power to overcome our natural weaknesses.

Selfishness is an attitude that becomes a lifetime habit, and in some people a compulsion. Habit is a cruel taskmaster. In fact, many people are literally "slaves to habit." If you are a Christian, that is not your problem. Oh, you may he a victim of habit, but as a Christian you have the power of the Spirit of God to empower you to break even the most entrenched habit. For some people it is instantaneous. For others, it isn't. The basic lifetime habit of selfishness can be broken but not without effort. If you persist in facing your weaknesses with God's power, you will experience victory.

Believe God Has Given the Victory

"Whatever is not from faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23).

Many Christians are hindered right here because they do not "feel cured" after they have asked for the cure. Our feeling has nothing to do with it. Instead, we need to rely upon the promises of God and expect his victory. You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. That includes being gracious instead of angry, trusting instead of fearful, giving instead of selfish. Commit your way unto the Lord instead of worrying about things.

The best way I know to accept victory-after you meet the conditions-is to thank him by faith for that victory. The apostle Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Notice, that verse does not say, "For everything give thanks." I have a minister friend who was running from God. While under the influence of alcohol, he rolled his car into a ditch, losing his left arm from the elbow down. He can't be expected to give thanks for the loss of his arm. But he can, and did, give thanks for the fact that God spared him and brought him to repentance. Since he responded in thanksgiving instead of rebellion, he has enjoyed a fruitful pastoral ministry in East Texas for many years.

Responding in thanksgiving is not only "the will of God in Christ Jesus for you," it is also an indication of submission to him and the key that unlocks the Spiritfilled life. Sometimes I meet people who candidly admit, "I don't feel like giving thanks."

So I tell them, "Then give thanks by faith until you do feel like it, for it is God's will for your life."

Since the will of God is that we give thanks in everything, then by faith we can give thanks for the cure for our weaknesses when we have obediently asked him for victory.

Askfor the Filling of the Holy Spirit

"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" (Luke 11:13).

To further help you overcome your weaknesses, I would remind you to ask for the filling of the Holy Spirit as outlined in chapter 8. If you have already faced your weaknesses as sin, confessed them, and asked the heavenly Father by Faith for victory, then why not prepare your life for service by asking for his filling, again believing that God has promise(l to answer your prayer in his will.

Walkin the Spirit and Abide in Christ

"Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh" (Gal. 5:16).

"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7; see also 15:1-11).

The "abiding life" is the "Spiritfilled life," and this is the way the Lord Jesus wants its to live. The following steps are suggested as a method of walking in the Spirit or abiding in Christ:

Be filled with the Holy Spirit as shoum in chapter 8.

Read the Word of God regularly.

Since the Word is a supernatural book, it accomplishes a

supernatural work in the life of the believer who reads it. A Spiritfilled Christian will read the Word of God-the primary source of spiritual food. We all need to think God's thoughts, and that only comes by filling our minds with his Word, which reveals his perspective.

To be faithful in this regard, set aside a regular time for reading. If von are a new Christian, I suggest that you start with the Gospel of' John; read I john, Philippians, and Ephesians several times; then read the entire New Testament. Do not turn to the Old Testament until you have read through the New Testament.

Although regular reading habits are essential for longrange walking in the Spirit, avoid the danger of becoming legalistic about your daily devotions. Certainly the Lord understands when you go to bed at 2:00 A.M. and have to get up at 6:00 A.M. to rush out to an early appointment. He who loved us enough to (lie for us understands the physical need for rest. He also understands the wild pace we live. There fore, we can still enjoy the filling of the Holy Spirit whether we have read the Word on a given day or not. But Spiritfilled Christians will desire to feed their souls on the Word of God whenever possible. I suggest reading one to five chapters each day, at least five days a week.

Another suggestion: Pick up an inexpensive spiral notebook about the size of your Bible and keep a daily journal, entering at least one special thought you receive from the Word each

day. Then occasionally review these thoughts, for they will enrich your mind and direct your walk in the Spirit, helping you guard against selfishness and sin.

Pray daily.

Because prayer is communion with God, it should also have a regular place in the life of the Christian who is walking in the Spirit. When we speak of prayer, most people think of protracted periods in the solitude of their rooms. These prayer sessions are beneficial and should have a regular part in a Christian's life, but that is not all there is to prayer. Luke 18:1 says, "Men always ought to pray and not lose heart." And 1 Thessalonians 5:17: "Pray without ceasing." Christians walking in the Spirit will live a life of prayer. They will commune with Christ through the Spirit about everything-asking his instruction about work and family decisions; in effect, they will follow the admonition, "In all your ways acknowledge Him" (Prov. 3:6).

Continually yield yourself to the Holy Spirit.

"Present ... your members as instruments of righteousness to God" (Rom. 6:13). Christians walking in the Spirit continually yield themselves to God. There is nothing wrong with a Christian having a desire in a particular direction, provided it does not violate the principles of the Word of God. But the desire should always be patterned after our Lord's Prayer in Gethsemane: "Not My will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:42). We are on dangerous ground only when we willfully,

stubbornly demand our way.

Say you are a college student, and you desire to change colleges this year or desire to invite a friend home for the holidays; you don't have to fear that these wants in themselves are displeasing to the Lord. Our desires can very well be of God. Always remember that God is interested in giving "good things to those who ask Him" (Matt. 7:11). Bill the yielded Christian walking in the Spirit will condition every desire: "Ifthe Lord wills," I would like to do this or that.

Serve Christ.

The Lord Jesus said, " If anyonc serves Me, him My Father will honor" (J(hn 12:26). He also said to his disciples, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of'men" (Matt. 4:19), and "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take tip his cross daily, and follow Me" (Luke 9:23).

‚Jesus Christ wants its to follow him in Christian service. All Christians are saved to serve him. You are either serving him or being served. As someone has said, ever' Christian is either it missionary h rce or it mission field. God uses people to (t) his work, and God seeks to fill your life not only by overcoming your weaknesses, but also by making you productive and effective in his service. This productivity is not only eternally tneaniugful, but it Is actually therapetitic.

We humans are made so that we are frustrated when we do

not serve something or someone higher than ourselves. In the case of Christians, it is God. The happiest people in the world are those who are productive for Jesus Christ. A schoolteacher friend who is predominantly Melancholy and has experienced protracted periods of' depression recently told me that he had one bright day during it lengthy depressed state. It was the result of it "chance" opportunity to witness of,his personal faith in Christ to another teacher. He enthusiastically stated, "'I'hat was the best feeling I had all week." If* that clear brother had been walking in the Spirit and desiring to be available to communicate his testimony to the hundreds of other souls with whom he came iti contact, he would not have had so many periods of depression.

When you get right down to it, the depressed individual comes to the decision: Am I going to yield myself to Christ to serve him, or am I going to indulge in the sin of selfpity? In short, then, the question involves selfpity or service.

Walking in the Spirit is a way of life. Admittedly, it is a supernatural way of life, but it is the result of the indwelling of God's supernatural Holy Spirit. It is nothing short of what we can expect as a result of our receiving Christ, for the Word of God promises that old things pass away and "all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).



Habit is a vicious force that dominates many people. Do not be surprised if you find that you revert to the habit of giving in to your weakness, whether it be selfishness, anger, fear, depression, or any of their derivatives. Just remember, you do not have to be dominated by that habit (see Phil. 4:13). True, the devil will fight you every inch of the way, but as Scripture promises, "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

Frequently I find Christians who try this pattern of facing their weaknesses as sin, confessing them, asking for victory, believing they have the victory, requesting the filling of the Holy Spirit, and walking in that Spirit, only to find that they revert to their old selfish habits. Too often they become discouraged or disgusted with their lack of progress and give up. This is a trick of the devil!

But a very simple cure takes an act of faith. Repeat the steps given in this chapter for overcoming your weaknesses every time you are conscious you have sinned-and eventually you will find that the old habits no longer dominate you.

A troubled new Christian once came to me. He knew that he should no longer use the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in vain. It grieved him, and yet by force of habit he did it without thinking. In it state of deep anguish he cried out, "What can I do to overcome this awful habit?" My answer was, "Every time you use the Lord Jesus' name in vain, face the fact that it's a sin, confess it, ask your heavenly Father to remove the habit, thank him by faith for his anticipated victory, ask for the filling

of the Holy Spirit, and walk in the Spirit."

Within three weeks that man came hack to tell me joyfully that profanity was a thing of the past. Should the vicious habit of grieving the Spirit through anger or quenching the Holy Spirit through fear or depression he any different? Let inc share with you some stories of Christians I know whom God has cured of their weaknesses.



Case Histories of Cured Weaknesses

Even Mechanics May Need a Psychiatrist

A young mechanic came into my office one day and told me that he had spent $750 seeing a psychiatrist and that he had finally discovered his problem: "I hate my mother!" Because his mother had hopelessly confused his life through her alcoholism and sought to turn him and his father against each other, he subconsciously despised her.

A relatively new Christian and a voting husband, this man was happily adjusting to his new life when suddenly his mother was released from an institution for alcoholics. She had no sooner called him on the phone than he and his wife started having problems. He had trouble with men at work. Everything was going wrong, and suddenly he developed an ulcer. All he needed to ruin his day was for Mother to call him or drop by

his garage. He told me that the hair on his arms stood straight up when his mother was within a hundred feet of him.

I asked, "If you have been seeing a psychiatrist all this time, why have you come to me?"

His answer was rather interesting. "The psychiatrist told me what's wrong, but he didn't tell me how to cure it." (About the only cure that I have seen from the school of psychiatry for intense anger came to my attention recently. A psychiatrist advised that a person should "find out what it is that annoys you and avoid it." I couldn't help wondering what a man does when he finds out that his wife annoys him. Of course, that could he one of the contributing factors to the high divorce rate in America.)

In a sense, psychiatry has no answer because it has no supernatural source of power to change the angry disposition of people. Thank God, this young man knew ‚Jesus Christ and by applying the formula mentioned previously could eventually not only come into the presence of his mother with his hair lying flat on his arms, but he could also talk to her kindly and graciously without grieving the Holy Spirit. He persistently uses that above formula and today enjoys victory.

A Skeptical Engineer

Another young man called, asking me to counsel with his wife, who had been seeing a psychiatrist twice a week. Since

neither of them came to our church, I couldn't understand how he expected me to get her to see me, so I suggested, "Why don't you come by and see me first? Then you can go home and tell your wife that you have counseled with a minister and suggest that she come in and see me also."

He thought that was a good idea and made a lunchhour appointment. I shall never forget his comment as he came through the door. The noon siren was blowing. He looked at his watch and very proudly announced, "I've kept my record intact. I've never been late for an appointment in my life!"

As soon as he was seated, he went into an angry, twentyfive-minute description of all the misery his wife had caused him and how psychotic she was. When he had finally unburdened himself, I began to present the gospel ofJesus Christ in the form of the "Four Spiritual Laws."

The young engineer quickly informed me, "Well, I don't believe in Christ; it's not that I'm an atheist; I just don't believe." Squelching my ministerial inclination to present the wonderful claims of Christ and the abundant proofs for his personal deity, I ignored his statement and went right on presenting the "Four Spiritual Laws." When I finished, after drawing the two circles showing the non-Christian and the Christian life, I asked, "Which of these two circles represents your life right now?"

I was rather surprised when he replied, pointing to the non-

Christian circle, "Oh, that represents my life. That's it picture of rne, right there."

Then rather hesitantly, because he claimed not to believe in Christ, I said, "Well, do you know of anv reason why right now you couldn't invite Jesus Christ into your life?"

To my utter amazement, he looked me straight in the face and said, "No, in fact, that is exactly what I need." With that he got down on his knees and began to pray. He first confessed what an angry, bitter, resentful, revengeful young man he was, and he asked Jesus Christ to forgive him and come into his life. When he finished, he sat down and began to weep. I watched him for several minutes, after which he sighed and said, "I've never felt so relaxed in all my life!"

At that point I saw the evidence of the working of God's Spirit in his life as a new Christian. He said, "By the way, Pastor, all those things I told you about my wife aren't really true. Forget it. Most of the problem has been me."

Two weeks later when he returned, I was intrigued by the fact that he had memorized the verses assigned him, completed a Bible study, and read his Bible every day simply because he was that kind of methodical individual. When I asked him, "How is your wife?" he again revealed the complete transformation miraculously accomplished in his life by the Holy Spirit when he said, "She's not doing too good, but I guess that's understandable. It's going to take a long time to overcome the effects of all the things that I have done to her in

our married life." This loving, compassionate, gracious young man was nothing like the angry, vitriolic, bitter individual of two weeks before-another evidence of the power of the Holy Spirit to overcome a person's natural weaknesses.

Two months later his wife, inspired by the transformation in her husband's life, got down on her knees in their home and invited the Lord Jesus Christ into her life. She has been delivered of her problems of fear and no longer sees a psychiatrist.

Victory over Depression

In the course of counseling, an often-depressed and fear-dominated housewife revealed what a miserable life she lived. She had gone through shock treatments five years before and sensed herself going back into that same cycle of fear and depression that she so dreaded. She had been raised in a Christian home and was married to a fine Christian businessman, but she was still dominated by the weakness of fear.

In her case it was more than just a temperament weakness. It was guilt over past sins. The sin in question had been committed eleven years before, and she could not get it out of her mind. Though she could say, "I know God has forgiven me," she would add, "but I can't forgive myself."

However, I was suspicious that she really didn't understand

the extent of God's forgiveness, so I assigned her a research study on all the biblical teaching on God's forgiveness of sin. Two weeks later she was radiant when she returned. For the first time in her life she knew what it was to have peace with God about her old sin. Gradually that sin became a thing of the past in her mind, and many of her fears vanished. Yet additional counseling was necessary because occasionally she experienced long periods of depression.

One day I was able to confront her with the fact that her depression was the result of selfpity, and that just as God had cured her of her fears of the past when she recognized his forgiveness, so he could cure her of the depressed periods if she would just quit feeling sorry for herself. Being perfectionist-prone, she indulged in mental "chewing" to herself about her husband's careless habits around the house. She would often grumble to herself because he was not more expressive of his love. She acknowledged many areas in her life where she felt sorry for herself.

When confronted with the sin involved in this deadly habit, she confessed it as a sin and went away armed with the previously mentioned method for overcoming her habits of criticism and selfpity and vowed with God's help to become thankful for the many blessings he had brought into her life. It was only a few weeks before she called to tell me that she no longer needed to come in for counseling. I have received several notes of appreciation from her, and her husband thanked me several times for "the transformation in my wife." It

wasn't the counseling; it was the power of God through the Holy Spirit that overcame her weakness.

A Way of Escape

These are only a few of the case histories that could be offered to illustrate the fact that God can overcome your weaknesses. We all have a tendency to exaggerate our problems, and if it is any comfort to you, remember, "No tempta-tlon has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it" (I Cor. 10:13).

Whatever your weaknesses, they are "common to man" because they are a result of your temperament, your background, your training and motivation. If you have received Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit is now your motivation and the most important part of your character. The abundant life that Jesus Christ came to give you (sec John 10:10) is yours through the filling of the Holy Spirit. If you have been dominated by your weaknesses, take heart. Jesus Christ can overcome them! A whole new way of life is now open to you as you let the Holy Spirit control your temperament.



Study Questions



1. Refer back to the illustration and chart in chapter 12 (page 194) that shows the weaknesses of each temperament. Working alone, consider your temperament blend and list your natural weaknesses in the order of their prominence in your daily life. (If appropriate, break the group into four smaller groups-by predominant temperament type-and within those small groups discuss weakness tendencies as personally as is comfortable.)

2. Why does becoming a Christian not necessarily transform our old habits?

3. What does change old habits? Thoroughly discuss the five steps to walking in the Spirit, citing the Scriptures presented.

4. Why are daily prayer and Bible study so vitally important to walking in the Spirit?

5. How does serving God and others help maintain our

walk with Christ?

6. Discuss the case histories at the end of the chapter. How is repetition a key to overcoming a bad habit? If possible, give personal examples of the importance of repetition.

7. Martin Luther said, "Did we in our own strength confide, Our striving would be losing." How is this true in regard to our overcoming our weaknesses? (If time permits, read or sing the entire song "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God." What other insight does it give into living a victorious Christian life?)

8. Have a time of quiet prayer and confession-walking through the first five steps for overcoming your weakness.

9. What decisions do you face this week for which you need to yield your will to God's will?

10. What specific actions can you take this week that will make yourself available to God for service to him, to your family, your neighbors, and strangers?

C H A P T E R 1 4

Spirit-Modified Temperaments



Asa counselor, I have had the great joy of observing the unmistakable work of the Spirit on the natural temperament of 'a person until it is almost impossible to see traces of the original temperament. As we have seen, this is done by the strengthening of a person's weaknesses. It is particularly encouraging to observe a transformation when the person does not know a thing about temperament; he is just changed by the Holy Spirit.

This temperament modification is to he expected. Being "born again" is a supernatural experience and as such will have it supernatural effect. The Holy Spirit will introduce spiritual strengths into the individual's nature until that person appears to he a "new creature," but the degree of temperament

modification will he in direct proportion to that persons vieldedness to the Holy Spirit-the Spirit's filling of that person's life.

The nine characteristics-fruit-of' the Holy Spirit as seen in Galatians 5:22-23 provide a working basis to show what God can do with the raw material of temperament. As we draw this hook to a close, let's again examine each temperament and show how the Holy Spirit supplies strength for each natural weakness. This change will take place gradually and usually subconsciously, except when the individual is so troubled by a particular sin that he or she deliberately seeks the Holy Spirit's remedy for it.

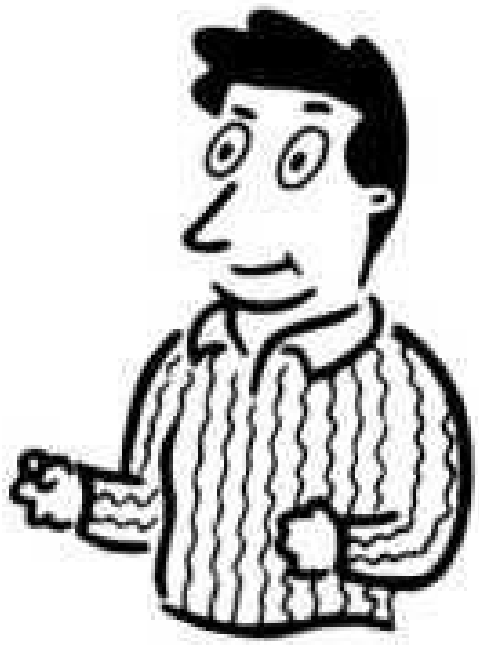


The Spirit-Filled Sanguine

Sanguines will always be extroverts-even after they are filled with the Holy Spirit. They will also be energetic, infectious, and compassionate. Because they are so talkative, their conversation will be one of the first apparent changes. They will probably talk just as much, but their conversation will often be about their new life in Christ, which has now come to occupy their interest. They will learn a new vocabulary, dropping the profane and crass words that are customarily used by unsaved Sanguines. They will still tell jokes as they enliven social gatherings, but now they will enjoy wholesome

humor rather than smutty or suggestive stories.

They will still feel the emotions of others, but with purposeful compassion. Instead of just weeping with those who weep, they will now encourage them by sharing the promises of God and pointing them to Jesus.



Self-Control

For Sanguines, weakness of will is probably the most serious problem. When filled with the Holy Spirit, Sanguines will find a new strength of character that keeps them from going along with the crowd or "following the path of least resistance." They will become more consistent in their personal lives, even becoming more organized and dependable. They will learn to say no to some opportunities so they can do a good job with the responsibilities already at hand. Though they are naturally

receptive to their surroundings, they will avoid being alone with members of the opposite sex or flirting with sexual temptation. Their sense of values change, and their own spouses begin to look more attractive to them; the happiness of their own families will become more important.

These dynamic people will find a challenging new purpose in life-to he used of God. Once Sanguines have tasted the joy of seeing the Holy Spirit use their lives to draw others to the Savior, the old way of life seems insignificant.



Peace

Another strength the Holy Spirit supplies Sanguines is peace. Sanguines are restless by nature, but as the Spirit brings

a new purpose into their lives, he also produces it relaxed peace. They gradually learn to commit their ways to the Lord, and instead of engendering strife and confusion, they will have a more pleasing, soothing effect on people. This helps them avoid many unpleasant situations brought on by their usual rash judgments.

This peace and self=control will help control their fiery tempers. By applying the f'Ormula f()r overcoming their weakness of anger (see chapter 12), they will avoid excessive outbursts that often prove embarrassing and humiliating. This in turn increases their peace.



Humility

Since Sanguines are inclined to be egocentric by natue, the

Holy Spirit will introduce a new humility into their lives, making them more concerned for the needs and feelings of others. They will not ridicule some poor soul in public just to get a laugh out of the group bull will be considerate of another's feelings and seek humor elsewhere. Their conversation will no longer revolve around themselves but around the Lord Jesus Christ, Christian work, and other people. In short, their egotism will give place to a meekness foreign to their nature and the braggadocio character of the past. This new humility will help them make new friends. Since they are such expressive people by nature, their faith will become both external and contagious.

Real-Life Examples

The apostle Peter is ultimately a good example of the Spiritfilled Sanguine. After the day of Pentecost, Peter used his lips to preach Jesus Christ in power. There was an apparent consistency and control in Peter's life from that point on, and absolutely no self-seeking tendencies. He was still a leader, but his conduct before the Sanhedrin in Acts 4 shows a Spirit-dominated restraint foreign to his nature. His life was used greatly to glorify Christ because he was Spiritfilled.

A salesman friend of mine-almost pure Sanguinetook me to lunch one day and shared his problems. One quarter he had led the office in sales, and then he'd gone into an apathetic mode, in which he'd sold nothing. He had a problem with lust, and his past devil-may-care life was becoming attractive again. He had given up his Sundayschool class and found petty excuses to skip church services. He was thoroughly miserable!

I pointed out that the Holy Spirit was not about to let him go, for "whom the Lord loves He chastens" (Heb. 12:6), and his misery was of the Lord. We then discussed the Spiritfilled life, which made sense to him. Gradually I watched this man gain a new self-control. He has been first or second in sales each month for more than a year now; his family life is transformed. But even better, God has used him mightily in the lives of many businessmen, both churched and un churched. Believe in(-, he is not about to trade his Spiritfilled experience for the old Sanguine life.

Many Sanguine Christians have been used of God to share their faith as they sought the filling of the Hole Spirit and walked in the Spirit. Great will be their reward in heaven! Sad to say, many other Sanguine Christians have gone restlessly and unproductively through life, stirring up strife, hurting other believers, and actually hindering the work of the church. They will be saved, "so as through fire" (1 Cor. 3:1:5), but will have little or no reward-all because they did not heed God's command to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to abide in Christ.

One of my best friends in the Lord's work is evangelist Ken Poure. IIe was a typical used-car salesman when he came to faith in Christ. I did not know him in those days, but according to his testimony, he had been raised in an unsaved home and it showed. He talked and walked in the flesh.

I have known him now for thirty years, and he has been the most consistent spirit-filled Sanguine I have ever known. He is

supremely extrovertish and funnier than it rubber crutch. Everyone loves to be around him. He is the natural life of the party who keeps in the Word and has a depth of spiritual devotion far beyond his human nature. Thousands of people have yielded their lives to the Lord for salvation and/or service at flume Lake where he has been the camp chaplain and eventually director for more than forts' years. That kind of consistency is not Sanguine; it is the Holy Spirit!



The Spirit-Filled Choleric

Spiritfilled Cholerics often become dynamic and eflcctive Christian leaders. Their strong willpower, directed by the Holy Spirit toward eternal goals, makes them very productive. They will "go the extra mile" in getting the Lord's work done. In fact, many of the great leaders in church history possessed a heavy dose of Choleric temperament. Their natural productivity is not because they have superior intelligence but is the result of their active minds and dogged determination.

A sales company years ago determined that the difference between the very successful salesman and the ordinary salesman was 17 percent greater effort. The Choleric Christian is most apt to go that extra 17 percent, and when a natural optimism is added, you find a man or woman who is willing to "attempt great things for God."

During the past twenty years I have worked with thousands of ministers all over the country as I've conducted Family Life Seminars. A high percentage of these pastors have been Cholerics, particularly in Independent or Baptist churches. Actually, the temperament combinations that predominate in ministers are either SanChlor or ChlorSan. The difference will be seen in the way they conduct the service. SanChlors are warm people lovers who lead a friendly church. Cholerics are well-organized motivational speakers.

The leadership of the Choleric has sometimes proven a danger in Christian history when someone has given in to the temptation to take credit for what God has done, grieving the Spirit and reverting back to doing the work of the Lord by human energy. Because of the Cholerics' natural ability, it often takes some time for their neglect of the Spirit to be apparent to others. Paul said, "Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1, KJ'). We should follow Christian leaders only as they follow Christ, as he has revealed himself in his Word.

The key to the Spiritfilled ChlorSan's success as a pastor is not his willpower but his reliance on the Holy Spirit. It isn't the success of his latest marketing plan, but the Spirit's power in his life. Many have escaped the Choleric's vulnerability to pride, but many have not. In fact, many of the ministers I know personally who have committed the sin of adultery were prideful men. There seems to be a Choleric tendency, in ministers or laymen, to think they are above the rules. They

may even preach the principles of God, but they fail to apply them to themselves. Ultimately such conduct will trip them up because "God is not mocked; for whatever it man sows, that he will also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

On the other hand, I have known men of God who were tremendous organizers and leaders, yet manifested a humble spirit of dependence on Christ. Often the faith of such men is infectious. Not only do they attempt great things for God, but they seem to inspire confidence in others to want to share in the realization of their vision. Church history is filled with the names of outstanding Choleric leaders who humbled themselves under the mighty hand of God so that he could use them. Many of' the great faith ministries of modern times were pioneered and led in the early days by dedicated Cholerics.

Note that Cholerics have the greatest spiritual needsthough they are often unwilling to acknowledge that fact even when made aware of it. Pride of accomplishment is never very far from the surface of a Choleric. Often they are content to "do the work of the Lord" independent of the Holy Spirit. Happy are the Cholerics (and their families) who recognize with Paul that they must "die daily" and he willing to say, "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me" (Gal. 2:20).



Love

Among the first changes in the Spiritfilled Choleric will be a love for other people. Cholerics will gradually look at others as individuals for whom Christ died, and a genuine compassion for others will characterize their outlook. If properly taught, they will see the need of sending missionaries to spread the Word of God.

One non-Christian Choleric, upon hearing that his cousin was going to become a Bible translator and "bury his life in the jungles of Brazil," made the following statement: "I know what I would do. I'd take a machine gun and mow those natives down!" During the missionary's first term on the field, the cousin was converted. The Holy Spirit transformed him so that he met his missionary cousin at the airport when he returned after four years and outfitted the whole family with new

clothes. Recently this convert told me that he and his wife are going to work for Wycliffe Bible Translators to raise money and find workers to get the gospel to the Bibleless tribes of the world! Only the Holy Spirit could put love in a heart like that!



Peace

Spiritfilled Cholerics are going to experience an enriching peace that is not limited to periods of activity. They will gradually find it easier to "wait on the Lord" for his wisdom rather than rushing off half-cocked on the basis of their own intuitive judgment. As the peace of God replaces their innate anger, they will find that they are happier and more contented. Instead of "stewing" and "churning" over some injustice done them, they learn to cast their cares on the Lord. If vengeance is

to be taken, they let the Lord do it. In short, they come to value the uninterrupted walk with Christ through the filling of the Holy Spirit more than they value doing their own thing.

In addition to gaining spiritual and emotional peace, they avoid the ulcers they would otherwise have suffered. I know one family of four Cholerics. You might be surprised that the strongest Choleric is the only one who does not have ulcers. But it is no coincidence that he is the only one of the four who was taught about the Spiritfilled life.



Gentleness

The other four spiritual characteristics so sorely needed by Cholerics are gentleness, meekness, goodness, and longsuffering.

When filled with the Spirit, Cholerics will turn from their natural tendency to be brusque, crude, and sometimes obnoxious, and they'll be polite, gracious, and courteous. Instead of ignoring their wives in public, Choleric men will begin to treat their wives respectfully. Not because consideration and courtesy are naturally meaningful to them, but because these qualities are meaningful to the wives, and it is a good testimony to Christ.



Meekness

When the Holy Spirit introduces it refreshing meekness and humility to the natural Choleric pride, Cholerics have a new desire to do things for others and a new patience when confronted with their inconsistencies and weaknesses. Instead of feeling a sense of superiority when confronted with another's weakness, they may thank God for the gracious gift of self-control-a gift they will treasure increasingly with its use.



Goodness

Longsuffering

Since the world is filled with needy people, Spiritfilled Cholerics will never run out of things to do and people to help. Now, however, instead of wasting time doing "good" to satisfy their personal quest for ac tivity, they will be led of the Spirit to invest themselves in sharing the one thing people need most-a personal experience with Jesus Christ. Their newfound graciousness, patience, and tact will make them productive soul winners, giving them a rich and rewarding life invested in people for the Lord's sake and many rewards laid up in heaven in obedience to the Lord's command.

Real-Life Examples

The power of the spirit to change the Choleric temperament

was illustrated to me some years ago. We had a teenage boy in our church who was downright mean. Our four-yearold girl would not go near him. During the boy's senior year in high school, the Holy Spirit convicted him deeply, and although he had been baptized and was a member of the church, he realized that he had never really been born again. On New Year's Eve he invited Jesus Christ to become his Lord and Savior.

The change in that boy was amazing! A new gentility and kindness came into his life that was unbelievable. Two months later he was walking on the sidewalk just after church as our little daughter came down the steps from the nursery department. Smiling at her, he held out his arms, and to my utter amazement she leaped into them and gave him a big hug. I was convinced that this was not the same boy-though he looked the same outwardly!

The Spiritfilled Choleric is going to enjoy many blessings unshared by the natural Choleric. Not the least of these is love and companionship. Unsaved Cholerics often have few close friends. Respect, yes. Admiration, yes. But few people love them. When filled with the Spirit, they will have a gracious personality that draws people to them on a genuine and lasting basis. The natural Choleric, when aware that he is unloved even by his own family, may say, "I couldn't care less." But in his heart he knows better-desperately needing the filling of the Holy Spirit.



The apostle Paul is probably the best biblical illustration of the Spiritfilled Choleric. For a description of a raw Choleric, read Acts 8-9. Yet this man was so dynamically transformed that the very study of his postconversion conduct has been used by God to lead many to acknowledge the supernatural power of Jesus Christ as the only explanation for his behavior.



The Spiritfilled Melancholy

The many talents of the Melancholy temperament are enriched and made productive by the filling of the Holy Spirit. The rich, sensitive nature of Melancholies will he earnestly attuned to

the heart-needs of humanity. No one can more realistically hear the pathetic cries of lost humanity than Melancholies. When filled with the Spirit, Melancholies will not just hear them, they will be available to God to do something about them. Their analytical perfectionism particularly fits them for the much-needed detail work often neglected by the more extrovertish temperaments. When filled with the Spirit, instead of being weakened in their effectiveness by irritation at others' carelessness, they will serve the Lord quietly, counting it all joy to he a part in the ongoing work of the Savior's kingdom.

The self=sacrificing Melancholy spirit has inspired thousands to yield themselves for missionary work. One of the research projects I worked on in pursuit of my doctoral degree was a temperament analysis of 'a thousand missionaries in forty-three countries. Seventy percent tested out Melancholy. Many Christians can look hack on a faithful, Spiritfilled Melancholy who doggedly kept after them after others had given up. Because of their great capacity for compassion, they can love others to the Savior, often suffering many abuses in the process.

Few Christians realize as they sing a beautiful hymn, read some meaningful poetry, enjoy such music as the Messiah, see some great work of art, or read some deep spiritual truths, that they are enjoying the results of a Melancholy's talents, modified and energized by the Holy Spirit.



Goodness

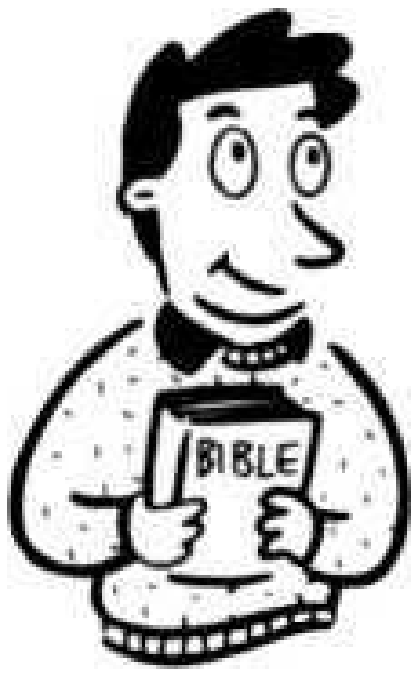
The self-centered characteristic that so often dominates the Melancholy's life will give place to meekness and goodness when that person is filled with the Holy Spirit. The best therapy in the world for Melancholies is for them to get their eyes off themselves and involved with others. I don't know how this can be done without Jesus Christ giving them an external view.

When the meekness and goodness of the Spirit begin operating in Melancholies, they also see themselves as the "chiefest of sinners" and recipients of the unlimited mercy of God. This can have a truly humbling effect on them.

Although Melancholies will rarely be careless in what they do, they will begin to realize that the needs of others are so acute that they must offer themselves to God to serve them. Their perfectionism is not what really does the jobbut the

working of the Holy Spirit. When the Spirit finally gets through that God wants their availability, not their perfectionism, they are ready to be used.

God can use anyone, and, as Paul said, "When I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Cor. 12:10). As Melancholies understand this, they begin to enjoy other people more in spite of their weaknesses, and they are less tempted to criticize them and in turn grieve their sensitive consciences. Spiritfilled Melancholies can enjoy peaceful sleep, while their backslidden fellows sleep on beds that feel like racks of torture as they relive the day's criticism and caustic remarks or thoughts and rehearse the consequences. Spiritfilled Melancholies are content to do the best work possible and leave the results to God.



Faith

Faith-the seventh characteristic of the Holy Spirit-cancels the Melancholy tendency to pessimism. Pessimism is contagious, but faith cures pessimism. As the Spirit has control of a Melancholy believer, things thought impossible are seen with the power of God in view. Through faith, Moses the Melancholy became a great leader. Many a modern believer confronted with overwhelming obstacles has looked at them by faith, and God has given victory. God is looking for amen and women of faith (see 2 Chron. 16:9). He is not looking for geniuses and intellectuals; he is looking for available vessels who have faith enough to believe God for achieving the impossible.

Some years ago I broke my brown sunglasses. In looking for new ones I discovered that green glasses make everything look better. The grass looks greener, the sky bluer, in fact, all colors become more vivid. Suddenly it dawned on me that when the Holy Spirit fills a believer, he puts on the glasses of faith and everything looks better-the impossible becomes possible, the unattainable attainable. Happy is the Spiritfilled person in these dark clays, for the glasses of faith make everything look better. God has used all kinds of people, both in Bible days and throughout Christian history. Some were well-trained geniuses like the apostle Paul; some were untrained, average men like Peter. But all people in every age who were used of God had one thing in common-faith. Few things limit God's use of a Christian worse than fear, doubts, and worry.



Joy

Peace

The Melancholy's natural moodiness is no match for the joy and peace of the Holy Spirit. No one can he filled with the Holy Spirit and be depressed (except for physical reasons), even Martha and Martin Melancholy. That doesn't mean they won't be depressed occasionally. It does mean that when they are depressed and moody they are not filled with the Holy Spirit. If they occupy themselves with the filling of the Holy Spirit instead of their circumstances, their moodiness will continually diminish.



Joy and peace come to the Christian from two sources: the Word of God and the gift of the Holy Spirit (see Col. 3:15-17; Eph. 5:18-21). I have known moody Christians who never read the Bible for their own spiritual blessings. They would rather sit around and feel sorry for themselves than refresh their minds and spirits reading the Word of God. Jesus said, "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full" (John 15:11). The Savior also said, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

The joy and peace of the Spirit emotionally prepare Melancholies to unlock the depth of riches God has placed

within them. As one Spiritfilled Melancholy told me, "Since I have been walking in the Spirit, I quit looking for happiness, and it dawned on me the other day that I am happy!"

It has been my observation that Melancholies filled with the Spirit can be extremely loyal to the Lord and faithful in serving him. This may have to do with their appreciation for the Spirit-induced joy that so drastically changes their life. Other temperaments may take their new life in Christ for granted and more easily slip back into the old ungrateful way of thinking.



Love

As God's love floods the Melancholy, that Spiritfilled Christian gradually becomes less occupied with self and more concerned about Christ and the needs of others. That in itself

is good therapy. Under the power of this love, Melancholies become different people.

Real-Life Examples

A Melancholy housewife complained to me about her Sanguine husband's inconsistency-always late, quite undependable, careless with his clothes, and always taking on more than he could do well. She heaped tons of criticism on him. Gently I shared with her that, in spite of all his weaknesses, God was using him-more than he was using her, it seemed. As a young dynamic Christian, he had won several coworkers and customers to Christ. Though she was much more talented and creative than he, she rarely shared her faith and was always waiting for "the right occasion" to serve the Lord.

Why was this? Her husband was available to the Lord and his service. With her, "the time is never right" or she "didn't know the right Bible verses" or she thought she might offend someone.

But today she is a soul winner. The reason is that now, instead of making excuses, she prays, "Lord, here are my lips; if you want to use them, they are available." She isn't always just sure how the conversation gets started, but regularly the Spirit uses her. Spirit-induced meekness and good ness make any person available to God, and availability leads to fruitfulness.

Another dramatic transformation took place in the life of a twenty-four-yearold woman who accepted Christ in our church while she was out on a pass from the state psychiatric ward. For four years she'd been under treatment for severe depression. I've seen few people exhibit such a remarkable change, but then I've known few people who had so far to go. She came from an indescribably difficult background and had little or no joy in her life. We began an intensive discipling program with her, and the change was apparent to everyone.

I did not realize that she was required to check in with her psychiatrist periodically-until we got a tearful call from her to come and get her at the hospital. It seemed that even her psychiatrist noticed the change in her. When he asked where she had been and what she had been doing since her last visit, she naively told him about her salvation experience. It must have threatened his professionalism, for lie jumped out of his chair, stood over her, and warned her in it loud voice that religion was just a crutch that would one day collapse under its own weight; she'd eventually be in worse condition than before.

Naturally she fell apart emotionally. That's when she called a pastor-counselor on our staff who talked her into catching a cab and coming straight to his office. He spent two hours trying to hind up her shattered emotions. Finally he got through to her with the biblical principle that "the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know them, because they are

spiritually discerned" (I Cor. 2:14). He then convinced her that she should forgive her insensitive therapist and go right on walking in the Spirit, thanking God by faith that she was getting better, which she really was.

I watched that young woman blossom into a productive member of society. She got a job in a local hospital, went to school at night, kept active in the singles' department of our church, and by the time she was thirty she had become the supervisor of a highly technical department that tested cancer patients. To my knowledge she has never had to go back under the care of her former counselors, having found a whole new way of life through salvation and the Spiritfilled life.

The apostle Thomas is a good New Testament example of what God can do with a Spiritfilled Melancholy temperament. He is known as the doubting disciple because of his statement, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe" (John 20:25). That is blatant unbelief induced by Thomas's doubts. Blatant because the words were spoken in spite of the Lord's oft-repeated promise to rise again and the ten disciples' assurance that "we have seen the Lord" (John 20:25).

Actually, that isn't the only sample of Thomas's Melancholy pessimism. In John 11 Jesus insisted, in spite of his disciples' warning that his life was in danger, that they should go to the home of Lazarus in Bethany. Seeing his Lord's determination

and expressing his pessimism, Thomas said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him" (v. 16).

Humanly, such a man was doomed to failure, but such was not the case with Thomas. After being filled with the Holy Spirit, Thomas went on to serve the Lord faithfully. The Bible doesn't give Thomas's whole story. But when I was in Madras, India, I saw the tomb of Thomas, and this story of his ministry is regarded as authentic by many scholars: It seems that after the day of Pentecost, Thomas was led of the Spirit to India, where he braved dangers and preached Christ with power. Many were converted, and churches were established. Eventually Thomas was martyred for his faith. The church in south India today dates back to the first century when doubting, Melancholy Thomas became a faithful servant of Jesus Christ through the filling of the Holy Spirit.



The Spirit-Filled Phlegmatic

Actually, unsaved Phlegmatics often act more like Christians than many Christians do afterward. That's because by nature Phlegmatics are calm, easygoing, peaceful, joyful, and consistent-basically the qualities you expect in a Christian. What then does the Holy Spirit do for Phlegmatics?

For one thing, their internal emotions and thoughts will more closely match what they appear to be on the outside. They will

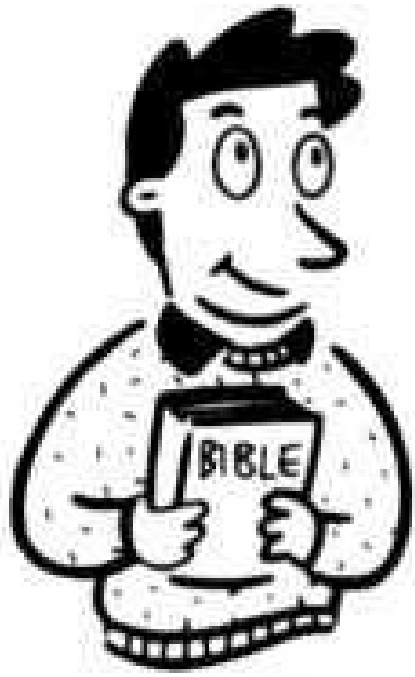
also overcome the weaknesses of reticence, stubbornness, fear, indifference, and lack of motivation. Phlegmatics have the capability of being good leaders, and the Holy Spirit enables them to achieve that potential. When filled with the Spirit, they will even volunteer for leadership-something the natural Phlegmatic would never do.



Love

The first fruit of the Spirit will go a long way toward motivating Phlegmatics. As their hearts are genuinely filled with love for others, they will be drawn out of their shells of self-protection and give themselves more vigorously in the service of Christ. As their love for the Lord grows, they will forget themselves and for the Lord's sake take on responsibilities they had previously rejected. With the Lord's power at their disposal, they will soon become willing leaders and participants instead of spectators.

This gift of love from the Holy Spirit will take the biting edge out of their humor, making them a source of pleasure for family and associates. God will use them to be cheering, calming, and encouraging influences on others.



Faith

The gift of faith provided to Spiritfilled Phlegmatics will dispel deep-seated fear. Fear is a cruel taskmaster, and as the Spirit brings confidence and faith, Phlegmatics begin to lose many of their natural and learned inhibitions. Many a Phlegmatic has said, "I could never say anything in public." But that changed with the power of the Holy Spirit.

The change doesn't come overnight, but gradually their

concern for others and their desire to share their faith overcomes their fears. When they do speak they usually do an excellent job because they are well prepared and their thoughts are well organized. They will never be extroverts, but they have a calm message so filled with facts and logic that it is well received by those turned off by the loquacious extroverts.



Goodness

As the Holy Spirit fills their lives, Phlegmatics gradually come to the full realization that they can do all things through Christ who strengthens them (see Phil. 4:13). This concept propels them through open doors of service, and since they are dependable and efficient by temperament, even greater opportunities await them.



Meekness

The goodness and meekness of the Holy Spirit work together in Phlegmatics, causing them to think of others instead of themselves, and the needs of others then become a source of motivation. Generosity floods their souls and their natural selfishness is replaced by a new gift of giving-of themselves and of their material assets.



Self-control

Spirit-induced self-control inspires Phlegmatics to finish the job and involve themselves in many forms of new service. Many a productive and faithful Christian worker is a Spiritfilled Phlegmatic.

A good Bible illustration is easygoing, good-natured Abraham. Dominated by fear much of his life, Abraham was so transformed by the gift of faith that Galatians 3:6 says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." His greatest weakness, fear, was turned into his greatest asset, faith, by the Spirit of God.

Actually, the fruit of the Spirit provides at least one strength for every human weakness. God does not want us to be dominated by our weaknesses and shortcomings. That is one reason he has sent his Holy Spirit. Most people wish they had some other temperament when they recognize their weaknesses. That is not what they really need, they just need the filling of the Spirit for the strengthening of their weaknesses.

This can be done only by the power of the Holy Spirit. The most important single thing in your Christian life is to he filled with the Holy Spirit. Go back and read chapter 8 again-"How to Be Filled with the Holy Spirit"-and practice his filling daily.

The story is told of a young man who asked an old saint he greatly admired how long it had been since he had lived a defeated day. The old man replied, "Over thirty years." He then explained to his young friend that thirty years earlier he had made a vow that he would never let an hour go by between his sin and his prayer of confession. The shorter you make that "down" time, the more likely you will be to walk continually in the Spirit.

If you make it it point to follow that procedure with the sincere request to be filled with the Holy Spirit (see Luke 1 1:13), you will enjoy the victory and power of' the Spiritfilled life. It will take time to become consistent, but remember, you have years of habit behind you that need to be overcome. You probably won't even notice the change when it comes, but

some day it will dawn on you that in daily life you are it new creature, that truly:

> The Lord has done great things /or us, and we are glad. (Ps. 126:3)



Study Questions



1. Envision a church committee meeting of twelve Spiritfilled people, one from each of the temperament blends. How might this committee "work"? Will members always agree on priorities and proposals?

2. Discuss two significant things you have learned about your temperament type in the course of this study.

3. Considering your temperament blend, which of the nine characteristics of the Holy Spirit do you most need to strengthen your greatest weaknesses?

4. If you consistently walk in the Spirit, how will those fruit of the Spirit change your upcoming week?

5. If you consistently walk in the Spirit, how will those fruit change your relationships?

6. God wants to use you to your full potential. In the course of this study, has the Spirit opened your eyes to new vistas that you feel you should explore? Discuss if appropriate.

7. What is the greatest lesson you've learned in this study? Be specific.

8. What would you have added to this study?

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ISBN-10: 0-8423-6220-7
ISBN-13: 978-0-8423-6220-7
Psychology/Christian Living
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