

Personality Differences Seminar

Session Two

Read John 14:34-35

- Paul spent a whole chapter emphasizing that it was God's idea that all Christians be different. In fact, He's the one who made us that way. Therefore, instead of trying to make everyone like ourselves, we should nurture each other, especially those who are weak and struggling. Paul ended the chapter says there is an excellent way, and that way is love.
- You almost get the impression that Paul had been reading John's gospel when he wrote the letter to the Corinthians. In fact we can be sure that Paul got his ideas from the same place as John – from the Holy Spirit. In this passage in John's gospel we read that Jesus gave a new commandment to his disciples. Curiously, it was not to preserve pure doctrine, or to worship correctly, or to live holy lives – although Jesus certainly taught those things. Jesus' highest priority for his disciples was that they love each other. This so captivated John that he kept bringing it up in his letters.

Read 1 John 2:7-11 and 2 John 1:5

- Some churches excel in theology, some excel in worship, some excel in service, some in evangelism – but all churches have a terrible time loving people while being faithful to our calling as Christians. And a big part of the problem is confusing sin with personal difference. We have a natural tendency to label personality differences as moral failings, and to excuse moral failings in people who are like us.

I. Review

A. Reason for the seminar

1. People struggle to understand each other
2. People struggle to relate productively

B. Purpose of This Seminar

1. Understand people
2. A “conversation-starter”
3. Begin to distinguish between valuable differences and failure

C. Myers-Briggs Theory

1. What does the first letter indicate? (Source of energy)
2. What does the second letter indicate? (Focus of attention)
3. What does the third letter indicate? (Manner of thought)
4. What does the fourth letter indicate? (Decisiveness)

D. Temperament: Four classical and Myers-Briggs clusters

1. Sanguine/Artisan – SP
 - a. Actor
 - b. Action-oriented
2. Melancholic/Guardian – SJ
 - a. Belonger
 - b. Community-oriented
3. Choleric/Idealist – NF
 - a. Sensitive/romantic thinker
 - b. Identity/feeling-oriented
4. Phlegmatic/Rationalist – NT
 - a. Analytic thinker
 - b. Achievement-oriented

II. Putting Personality to Work (continued)

A. Getting along with people

1. Distinguish between moral failing and differences in orientation and ability
 - a. Refrain from condemning others who are different
 - b. Learn to bear patiently with those who do not have your own strengths

2. Don't make personality an excuse for irresponsible behavior on your part
3. Collaborate with others who complement your own strengths and weaknesses
 - a. Enlist others to assist you in your areas of weakness
 - b. Willingly help others who are weak in your areas of strength
4. Appreciate differences

B. Leading and following

<i>Temperaments:</i>	SP – Artisan	SJ – Guardian	NF – Idealist	NT – Ra- tionalist
<i>Strength</i>	Tactics	Logistics	Diplomacy	Strategy
<i>Weakness</i>	Diplomacy	Strategy	Tactics	Logistics

1. Artisans
 - a. Best at responding to the immediate situation
 - b. Worst at solving interpersonal problems diplomatically
2. Guardians
 - a. Best at getting people and things where they need to be, on time
 - b. Worst at devising a comprehensive long-range plan
3. Idealists
 - a. Best at solving interpersonal problems diplomatically
 - b. Worst at responding to the immediate situation
4. Rationalists
 - a. Best at devising a comprehensive long-range plan
 - b. Worst at getting people and things where they need to be, on time

C. Mating

1. SP – Artisan: Playmate
 - a. Fun
 - b. Irresponsible
2. SJ – Guardian: Helpmate
 - a. Responsible
 - b. Dull
3. NF – Idealist: Soulmate
 - a. Deep, meaningful
 - b. Introspective, moody
4. NT – Rational: Mindmate
 - a. Interesting
 - b. Distracted

D. Parenting

1. SP – Artisan: Liberator
 - a. Goal: let the little tykes enjoy life
 - b. Tendency: permissive, indulgent
2. SJ – Guardian: Socializer
 - a. Goal: shape the little brutes into civilized human beings
 - b. Tendency: controlling
3. NF – Idealist: Harmonizer
 - a. Goal: form close bonds with the little cherubs
 - b. Tendency: smothering, over-involved
4. NT – Rational: Individuator
 - a. Goal: let each child develop his own individual interests and abilities
 - b. Tendency: neglectful, under-involved

E. Annoying People

1. SP – Artisan: Spoiler
 - a. Annoyed by everyone who pursues peace and order and ties to control him
 - b. Annoyed most by SJs who insist on following the rules
 - c. Annoy everyone by raising a ruckus and disturbing the peace
 - d. Annoy most: SJs who are trying to enforce peace & order
2. SJ – Guardian: Controller
 - a. Annoyed by everyone who doesn't follow the group rules and customs
 - b. Annoyed most by SPs who are always flaunting the rules and disturbing the peace
 - c. Annoy everyone by ordering them around
 - d. Annoy most: SPs who are his special target
3. NF – Idealist:
 - a. Annoyed by everyone who is not sensitive
 - b. Annoyed most by SPs who are careless about the feelings of others
 - c. Annoy everyone by their introspection and moodiness
 - d. Annoy most: no one in particular
4. NT – Rational: Plotter
 - a. Annoyed by everyone who is careless, sloppy, and short-sighted
 - b. Annoyed most by SJs who are stuck in the past and throw up roadblocks to change
 - c. Annoy everyone by secretly plotting the future for us all
 - d. Annoy most: NFs who are horrified that he is plotting the future without considering the feelings of others

F. Teamwork workshop

Return to your discussion group of the first session

1. Select one person in your group
2. What sort of things do you *like* to do? What are your *strengths*?
Give examples
 - a. Have the rest of you seen these strengths in this person? If not, why not? Give examples
 - b. Have you had an opportunity to use these strengths in ministry? Give examples
 - c. What roles in a group are most suited to you?
3. Which *roles* in a group are least suited to you? Give examples
 - a. Have you felt obligated to do these things anyway? Give examples
4. What sort of people do you naturally *work well with*? Examples
5. What sort of people naturally *complement* you? What sort of people are strong where you are weak, or weak where you are strong?
 - a. Have you had opportunity to work with such people in ministry?
 - b. How did it go? Did you get along, or did you conflict?
Give examples
6. Move to the next person

III. Conclusion

A. Sin and difference

1. What looks like a character issue to you may not look that way to others
2. What may be a character flaw(or virtue) in you may not be in others

3. Don't label something a sin unless it is a clear biblical sin
4. Repent of your own sin, not the sins of others
5. Learn to identify and appreciate personality differences

B. Strengths and weaknesses

1. Learn and be honest about your strengths and weaknesses
2. Find your approval and security in Christ, not other people or communities
3. Commit yourself to using your strengths to full potential
4. Commit yourself to a life-long effort to improve your weaknesses.
5. Enlist as partners others who have strengths that complement your weaknesses
6. Willingly partner with those who have weaknesses that need your strengths

C. Community roles

1. Encourage and place others in roles appropriate to their strengths
2. Be gentle and generous with those in roles demanded of them which do not fit them
3. Be kind and gracious, yet firm in redeploying people in positions where they are failing

D. Pride and humility

1. People are dramatically different because God made us that way and wants us that way.
2. Stop judging people on the basis of how *you* think, feel, & act
3. Learn to appreciate how godliness is expressed in different personalities
4. Learn to understand how sin is expressed in different personalities

5. Learn to affirm godliness and correct sin in love
6. Rejoice in Jesus' ordering of the church.

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