

**PEOPLE  
are  
~~FUNNY!~~  
PREDICTABLE!**

Dr. Robert A. Rohm, president of Personality Insights, is teaching business leaders how to build better teams and have better relationships



*"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."*

— Jesus Christ  
John 13:15



In recent articles, we have looked at our predictable patterns of behavior that are based on the way we are “wired”. We have explained the “**DISC Model of Human Behavior**”, which helps us identify, predict, and understand the behavioral patterns of ourselves and others. (If you are new to the study of relationships and personality styles, our web site will bring you up to speed. You can find us at <http://www.personality-insights.com>.)

Last month, we examined how Jesus utilized **D, I, S** and **C** traits appropriately in building relationships and meeting people’s needs. (This is important for us because working in business is all about relationships and needs, too. Observing how Jesus understood and communicated with His associates should provide us with valuable insights.)

This month, we’ll be looking at how He dealt with four of His Apostles: Paul, Peter, John, and Thomas. What I hope you’ll see is that Jesus didn’t try to treat them all the same, nor did He give them all the same assignments. He knew the strengths and struggles that came with each of their personalities – and He helped them in developing their strengths and mastering their weaknesses.

From what you know about Paul, what would you say was his basic personality type? Certainly, he did not hold back from sharing his opinions or taking action – in fact, he seemed to enjoy confrontations and challenges. These **D** words fit him well: dominant, dogmatic, determined, driving, decisive, doer. They describe him accurately before and after he met the living Christ.

The difference is in who controlled him: Before his conversion, Paul was in charge of how these traits were used. After he was converted, he allowed God to have rightful control. His message in Galatians 5 is: Be controlled by the Holy Spirit... the fruit that results in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Paul’s **D** shines through in the dynamic words he wrote to the Church: Stand fast... Press on... I have fought the good fight... We are hard pressed, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed... Always confident... Always rejoicing... Always having all sufficiency in all things... Always abounding in the work of the Lord... The gospel is the power of God...

Can you see him in a Roman dungeon, chained between two massive, muscled soldiers? Nero may have thought Paul saw himself only as a prisoner of Christ! Looking at his guards, he thought, “I’ve got them right where I want them! They can’t get away from the Gospel now!” He asked for supplies to write “notes” to a few of his friends – and penned much of the New Testament.

Of course, the Lord Jesus never had an eye-to-eye meeting with Paul during His lifetime – Paul persecuted the early Church after Jesus’ death and resurrection. God brought about his conversion by blinding him with a brilliant light, suddenly striking him down, and leaving him in helpless, total dependence on the people he had so violently opposed and pursued to the death.

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## Often, bringing the strong-willed to the end of their self sufficiency is God’s way of dealing with them – not to destroy them, but to teach them that their “sufficiency comes from God”

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Often, bringing the strong-willed to the end of their self sufficiency is God’s way of dealing with them – not to destroy them, but to teach them that their “sufficiency comes from God” –oops! Another line written by Paul!

Look at God’s plan and purpose, once this **D** leader got under His control: In Acts 9, the Lord told Ananias that Paul was His “chosen instrument to carry My name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel.” **Ds** love a challenge – what great motivation for Paul!

Let’s move on to an example of the **I** type personality: Jesus’ impulsive follower, Peter. If you have spent time around **I** type people, you know they have a tendency to speak and act before they think.

In Matthew 14, Peter climbed overboard and began walking on the water to Jesus. In chapter 16, it was he who said to Jesus, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” But two verses later, he said something thoughtless, and Jesus told him he was a “stumbling block” who did not have in mind the things of God.

Peter was with Jesus in chapter 17, when He was ministered to by Moses and Elijah. The experience left everyone else speechless. But God Himself had to tell Peter to stop talking, and “Listen to Him!”

In John 13, Jesus began washing His disciples’ feet. “No”, said Peter, “you will never wash my feet.” Jesus said, “Unless I wash your feet,

you have no part with Me.” How did Peter respond? “Okay, Lord, give me a bath!”

Later in that chapter, Peter said, “Lord, I will lay down my life for you.” In the Garden, he even sliced off a soldier’s ear, defending Jesus from arrest. But just a few hours later, the laughter of a servant girl caused him to curse and swear that he never knew Jesus. What other people think is so important to an **I**.

After Jesus rose from the dead, He met His remorseful disciple on the beach. He asked Peter, “Do you love Me?” and Peter replied, “Lord, you know I care for you...” But Jesus said, “Peter, I asked if you love Me...” And Peter answered, “Lord, I have great feelings for you...” The third time, Jesus used the word Peter has used: “Peter, do you care for me?” The Bible tells us Peter was grieved at this question – the Lord understood him so well. And he replied, “Yes, Lord, you know all things; you know that I do care for you.”

How did Jesus respond? He assured Peter that He had not thrown him aside; He gave him an assignment; and He said he would be counted worthy to die for Christ, just as he had said so impulsively before the Crucifixion.

Once the Holy Spirit gained control of Peter’s life, he did not stop being an **I**. But, because of Who was in control, God could use this illogical, impetuous, inspiring man to preach at Pentecost and lead the Christian

community in Jerusalem. Once he learned to value his words and commitments, he wrote: “But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect...”

The **S** type personality is seen in the Apostle John, who wrote the Gospel of John. (John the Baptist lived in the desert, wore camel skins, and ate bugs while loudly preaching repentance – not as **S**!) This John never mentioned his own name in his Gospel. He was identified as “the disciple Jesus loved”. When Jesus died on the cross, John was there, giving support to His mother, Mary. It was to him that Jesus entrusted her care. (Can you imagine Peter taking care of her? “Hey, has anybody seen Mary? I think she was with us at the Dairy Queen after church, but I’m not sure how she got home...”)

Typical of an **S**, John’s Gospel and epistles (I, II and III John) do not tell us much about him. But, tradition tells us much about him. But, tradition tells us that he was the only Apostle who did not die a martyr’s death. Could it be that his captors thought, “Let’s not kill John – he’s too nice. He can’t cause any trouble if we exile him to Patmos.” (There, God revealed His power and glory, which John recorded in the final book of the Bible, the Revelation – **S** types love to finish things!)

Many **S** types say their favorite verses are in Galatians 5 – the

passage Paul wrote about “love, joy, peace...” It really sounds more like an **S** type wrote them, doesn’t it? But I think Paul is saying, “Do you want to see the fruit of what God’s Spirit is doing in me? Look at this...!” And then he gives a list of qualities that we don’t think of as “typical” for **Ds**. If John had written those verses, would he have recognized that **S** type people seem more “at home” with these attributes? Might he have suggested that the fruit of the spirit in a **S** has more to do with boldness, truthfulness, and courage?

When you read John’s epistles, you’ll find his **S** style was under control: he loved people and encouraged them, but he boldly proclaimed what they needed to hear. He declared truth without hesitation. He was even blunt at times.

Lastly, let’s look at an example of a **C** type personality. We know him as “Doubting” Thomas. You remember him as the cautious one, to whom resurrection stories and rumors had no credibility.

He was a man who thought the world should make sense, who appreciated order and predictability. As the disciples traveled, he was paired with Matthew, the tax collector—two fact-based, task-oriented men.

When word came that Lazarus had died in Bethany, Jesus said He would go there. With resignation, Thomas said to the rest of the disciples, “Let us also go, that we may die with Him”. (Pretty encouraging, huh?) Yet, **C** types are consistent in sticking with their commitments.

Thomas sought out quality answers. In John 14, Jesus told His disciples “I go to prepare a place for you.” Thomas asked, “Lord, we

don’t know where you are going, so how can we know the way?”

When the other disciples said to him, “We have seen the Lord,” (John 20), he naturally argued, “Right! Dead men get up and walk every day! I saw Him die!” He told them, “Unless I see the nail marks in His hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it.”

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## God still works with all kinds of personalities.

### Your “wiring” is His special gift to you – He has equipped you with tools you need to do His work through your work..

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Did Jesus understand Thomas’ doubts? Certainly. When He saw him, His first words were, “Peace be with you... Put your finger here; see my hands... Stop doubting and believe.” Thomas exclaimed, “My Lord and my God!” Jesus understood Thomas’ questions, and He always provided truthful answers.

Jesus also said to him: “You have believed because you have seen. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.” If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, you are one of the blessed! But, because a skeptical **C** was there and checked it out, every skeptic can be assured of the Resurrection of Jesus! Thomas was so convinced of this

truth that he took the Good News to India, where he founded many churches and was martyred for his belief in the risen Christ!

God still works with all kinds of personalities. Your “wiring” is His special gift to you – He has equipped you with tools you need to do His work through your work with His balance and control, developing a craftsman’s skill with these tools.

In your family, work, and social life, you may become frustrated in dealing with the complex nature of other people and their personalities. But God is not. He made us. He loves us. He understands us.

He is not put off by a dictatorial **D** like Paul, an impetuous **I** like Peter, a shy **S** like John, or a critical **C** like Thomas. To me, this is exciting news. It means He can work with me, and He can work with you!

In John 13, Jesus explained to his disciples: “I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.”

Next month, we’ll begin looking at each style’s special gifts and contributions. We’ll “**DISCOVER**” each style’s outlook, blind spots, excesses, defenses, preferences, patterns, finances, learning styles, motivations, and success keys. This knowledge will provide powerful tools that you can use in building your business, your life, and your ministry in the marketplace! ■

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