

The Work of Grace in the Personality

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One of the loveliest truths about Christianity is that it does not try to obliterate man's individual traits of whatever type. On the contrary, the grace of God works in every type to produce many benefits, advantages, and blessings, whether for the one who possesses these traits, or for his family, his church, and his country.

The Holy Spirit, who descended on the disciples in the upper room in the form of a strong wind, included all of them in confirmation of the unity of the body of Christ. He also quickly alighted upon each of them in the shape of divided tongues of fire to confirm their individuality, distinctiveness, and uniqueness.

God certainly does not want to make carbon copies of men, but is happy to deal with each soul individually. As a wise artist and competent architect, he can make of every soul a beautiful icon that is an expression of the great skill of its Creator.

Therefore, regardless of personality type, the Lord is able to sanctify it, and to bless this type in order to render it blessed and fruitful.

Just as the young minister must not try to impose his own type on those he ministers to, no individual has the right to hate his personality type or wish he had a different one. This doubtless is an indication of a lack of understanding of the abilities, potentialities and advantages of each type. Society, whether it is the church or the country, needs them all.

Personality Types:

There are many ways of classifying personality types; we give two methods by way of example:

The First Classification (according to the dominant activity)

The human personality is classified into three types according to the

individual's dominant activity: rational, sentimental, or striving.

The Rational Personality:

This type is characterized by the dominance of reason, for it does not cease to study, examine, and analyze. This is a well-read, cultured, educated personality. Its emotions are generally calm. It is interested in carrying out analytic and profound studies, whether on individual human life, the life of groups, or the life of the whole nation.

The Sentimental Personality:

This type is characterized by emotional activity; it is loving and affectionate, able to make good relations with many whether in the family circle, in church, or in society. It is a loving personality and is loved by many, with overflowing affections, warm feelings, and numerous friendships.

The Striving Personality: (Active)

This type is characterized by great energy, never ceasing its activity and movement. It cannot bear to be still. It is the right type for trips, parties, organization, and exhibitions. It is capable of implementing and supervising various field projects.

The Second Classification: (according to the dominant traits)

This classification is based on the individual's dominant characteristics:

The Leadership Personality:

This type has a strong will and self-confidence and is able to lead others. Clear vision is one of its assets and it possesses energy, determination, independence, and its emotions are under control. This type is inclined to work on its own.

The Sociable Personality:

This personality is characterized by vitality, energy, and the ability to soon make warm and friendly relations with people. It has many friends, is enthusiastic, cheerful, and affectionate. It has the tendency to react quickly and emotionally.

The Perfectionist Personality:

It is gentle and sensitive, thoughtful and creative. It constantly seeks perfection and what is better. It is self-critical, organized, and analyzes matters carefully and in detail. It is conscientious and responsible, but is often self-centered, overcritical, and moody.

The Serene Personality:

It is calm for it controls its feelings and its reactions. It is capable and disciplined, organized, practical, conscientious, and cheerful. It listens attentively to others and is generally objective. However, it can be slow, hesitant, sometimes obstinate and ironic.

The Work of Grace in Human Personality:

God's Holy Spirit is able to "baptize" any personality whatever its type, for there is no such thing as a "spiritual personality", but there is a "garden full of different types of personality", some examples of which are:

The Rational Personality:

It is capable, with God's grace, to undertake spiritual, ecclesiastical, and Biblical

Studies and research. It constantly studies the Bible and Church writings, as well as the various Church subjects such as the many different branches of Theology: theoretical, literary, comparative, doctrinal, historical, and ritual.

There is no doubt that the Church needs these researchers so that it can learn about its heritage and face the age it is living in on a solid foundation of serious studies. The Church also needs them to study the innovations of the era, whether in philosophy, education, psychology, sociology, medicine, engineering, or astronomy. It needs their research so that it can determine its stance on contemporary issues such as space exploration, genetic engineering, drugs, AIDS, and test-tube babies. These issues need studies and scholars, and the best ones for the job are the rational studious personalities.

2. The Sentimental Personality:

It has a significant and effective role to play in ministering to individuals, in mobilizing groups, and in leading meetings so that they follow a holy and constructive direction because of its characteristically good relations with those it ministers to.

The sentimental personalities can build bridges of love and cooperation between the church and society so that the church is not isolated from its environment, but on the contrary, participates in the life of the country.

The personal touches of love are essential keys to the heart of man, "*for love is stronger than death*" (Songs 8: 6) and "*love never fails*" (1 Cor. 13: 8).

3. The Striving Personality:

Its role cannot be ignored, for it organizes conferences, celebrations, exhibitions, and other church activities at the level of the class, the local church, the whole church, at both the ecumenical and national levels.

It is an active sociable personality, capable of managing, organizing, mobilizing and directing the various activities effectively and efficiently, since it is attentive to all the different aspects of an undertaking.

4. The Leadership Personality:

When the Holy Spirit fills it and His grace works in it, it is used by Him to lead inside the church and to witness outside it. Leadership is an essential component of work and service, for without a wise leadership and a sound vision, the people have a hard time, and some might be lost. God has granted leadership qualities to certain people from whom He has chosen church leaders at the different levels of the church hierarchy: the pope, the bishops, the clergy, and those responsible for service. Their role will certainly be effective in service and in encouraging many to work in the Lord's vineyard and in building the country.

The Sociable Personality:

It can be used by God to bring a great many into the fold of salvation and to persuade them to lead a sanctified life. It can be instrumental in discovering the talents, gifts, and capabilities God has given others. They can become essential building blocks in the Kingdom, useful in attracting souls, in promoting the unity of the Christian family, in bringing about reconciliations, and in establishing relations of love and goodwill among all compatriots. All these are important matters that need a certain type of effective sociable personality.

The Perfectionist Personality:

At the hands of the Holy Spirit, it can be effective in bringing others to Christian perfection. It can be effective in revising the programs, methods, and the curricula used in service until they are perfect. It can, with the grace of God, present a good image of real Christianity, whether in the family, the church, or society. It is a personality type that is never complacent, constantly striving for perfection in morals, in service, and in academic studies.

The Serene Personality:

At the hands of the Lord, it is lovely in a world that is confused and clamorous, full of noise and upheavals and problems. It is this type which is filled with faith and trust in God's promises. It is able to transmit calm and serenity to others, thus becoming a cause of peace of mind to many because it gives them, from the Lord's storehouse, a measure of faith that dispels their worries and lulls their fears. This results in the ability to look ahead and to take positive steps in order to calmly find solutions to existing problems.

No matter what type of personality we have, the important thing is that it be anointed by the Holy Spirit to be used by God for the spreading of the kingdom.

Let us all rejoice in the gifts of the Lord and the infinite power of God's Spirit to sanctify and consecrate man regardless of personality type and to make his energy, his talents and gifts fruitful to the glory of His Holy Name.