

Module 1  
Section 1

# UNDERSTANDING TEMPERAMENTS

You can improve your relationships  
once you better understand  
yourself and others.

# IN THIS SECTION YOU WILL:

Learn the differences between temperament and personality.

Discover how to identify your own temperament and the temperament of others.

Recognize strengths and weaknesses in each temperament type.

Find ways to improve your relationships and reduce conflict.

# UNDERSTANDING TEMPERAMENTS

## The Story of Taylor and Jamie

Taylor and Jamie met through their friends who thought they would get along. Taylor was immediately impressed by Jamie's calm and peaceful nature - the kind of person who was easy to be around. Jamie liked that Taylor was confident and accomplished. They got married and everything felt perfect for a while... but soon Taylor noticed that Jamie seemed lazy and unmotivated. Jamie, on the other hand, became annoyed by Taylor's demands and pushiness. The qualities that brought them together now seemed like annoying weaknesses. Their relationship followed the pattern of "opposites attract, then attack". They became more frustrated with each other and both wondered...

## Why Can't You Be More Like... Me?

This kind of situation happens a lot in relationships. At first, we appreciate the differences in others, but eventually we start wishing they were more like us. Sometimes, we even try to change the other person. We might point out what

we think are their "flaws", criticize or nag them, or make them feel ashamed, hoping they will change. But it doesn't work. Each of us has certain traits that seem to be a part of who we are since we were born. When we understand these traits and how they affect us and our approach to life, we can learn to manage them. Most importantly, when we understand ourselves and others, we have a better chance of bringing out the best in both of us instead of the worst.

## What is the Difference Between Temperament and Personality?

**Temperament** refers to the traits that you are born with. They are natural to you and they influence how you see the world and what motivates you. While you can develop traits from other temperaments (it's good to have a balance), generally you feel most comfortable with your own type. On the other hand, your **personality** can change. Your experiences, temperament, genetics, environment, and more can all influence your personality. What you believe about your experiences affects your thoughts and attitudes. And your thoughts, attitudes, and feelings affect how you behave.

When your responses to situations happen over and over again, it creates your character or personality. It goes like this...

### **Belief - Attitude - Behavior - Character**

Your experiences can affect your values, thoughts, behaviors, abilities, emotional patterns, interests, preferences, etc. and all of these can change over time.

### **What Does Temperament Mean?**

Over 2000 years ago, there was a Greek doctor named Hippocrates who is known as the father of medicine. He noticed that people had certain traits that he put into 4 categories. He saw that people usually had one main type and another secondary type. Since people were a mix of 2 types, this was called "temperament," which means "to mix" in Latin. After that, many tests were made to help people understand themselves better. Some of these tests are called DISC, Myers-Briggs, Kiersey-Bates, and others. The results of these tests usually divide people into the same four groups. Some groups are identified by letters, while others use numbers or colors.

One way to remember these four temperament types is by thinking of them as different countries. Larry Bilotta changed the original names into modern terms and described them as Control, Fun, Perfect, and Peace. Each of these

"countries" has its own language and ways of doing things.

### **Welcome to Control Country**

People from Control Country love to be in charge and take the lead. They want to accomplish tasks and goals. They are good at being leaders, taking action, setting goals, and being confident and independent. Sometimes, they focus so much on their goals that they don't think about how they treat others. They might interrupt others or talk too much without listening. They can also be abrupt and intense. Even though they seem like they don't need anything, they actually need to be appreciated. If they don't feel appreciated, they can become sad. They might try to find appreciation from others if they don't get it from the people closest to them.



When they are at their best, they can be born leaders, quick to take action, goal-setters, have confidence, and be bold and independent. If people from Control Country don't feel appreciated, they can act bossy, impatient, easily angered, demanding, and like they know everything.

## Let's Visit Fun Country

People from Fun Country like to smile and laugh. They can find humor in almost anything and even laugh at themselves. They are open and enjoy being around people. They always want to have fun.

It's important for them to be noticed, but sometimes people from other countries think they get noticed enough. Sometimes, people see them as unstable because they have emotional highs and lows.

When they are at their best, they are inspiring, optimistic, sincere, enthusiastic, fun-loving, social, and the life of the party. When their biggest needs are not met - to be noticed, validated, and understood - they act their worst. Fun Country people can become irresponsible, fake, talk too much, lack discipline, and get easily distracted.



## Onto Perfect Country

What's most important for people from Perfect Country is "getting it right". They are good at paying attention to details and they want things to be perfect and exact. They like things to be organized and structured, and sometimes they use a lot of words to say very little.

People often mistake them for being from Control Country, which can make them upset. But Perfect Country people don't want to control things - they just want everything to be right before they can move on.

They have a desire to make things better and as perfect as possible, even when it comes to people. A person from Perfect Country may point out things that are not perfect in someone else, but they don't mean it as an insult. They do it because they care and want the other person to know how they can improve (even though most people don't take it that way!). These people are often very creative and sensitive.

Because others may think Perfect Country people are being critical or mean, they might think it's okay to be mean back or to treat them roughly. But in reality, Perfect Country people get hurt deeply and have a hard time letting go of those hurts. Forgiving others can be difficult for them because their hearts are so open and sensitive. They take things to heart, and when they get hurt too much, they start thinking that they will never be good enough.

When people from Perfect Country feel understood and supported, they are creative, organized, thoughtful, idealistic, loyal, determined, and caring. Unfortunately, they are often misunderstood and can become moody and sad, remember the bad things, spend too much time planning, feel unsure of themselves, and have very high standards.

### **Final Stop: Peace Country**

People from Peace Country just want everyone to get along so that they can have a peaceful life without conflicts. They are relaxed and calm, and they are okay with having moments of silence in conversations. Peace Country people also like to cooperate and follow the rules, which can sometimes make them get pushed around by people from other countries. Control people want them to be more productive, Fun people want them to be more excited about life, and Perfect people want to show them how to be better.



People in Peace Country will go along with things as long as they are not pushed too far. If they feel insulted or not respected for who they are, they will back away.

Peace Country people understand the idea of working smarter, not harder because they like to be efficient and use as little energy as possible to get things done. They can surprise others with unexpected humor.

Peace Country people are usually calm and easy to get along with, but it can be difficult for them to achieve peace because they try to avoid conflict at all costs. Sometimes, people need to resolve conflicts in order to find peace, and this can be challenging for Peace Country people.

When they are at their best, they are good listeners, patient, funny, capable, patient, and easy-going. However, if they are not respected, they can become unmotivated, stubborn, fearful, shy, worried, and indecisive.

## Resolving Conflicts

Most of the time, when people argue, there is a deeper reason behind it. Let's look at an example of a fight between Taylor and Jamie that happens again and again.

On the surface, it seems like they are fighting because Jamie doesn't help out enough around the house. Jamie is mad because Taylor expects too much and wants chores to be done on a day off from work. Taylor is mad because Jamie is lazy and doesn't do enough.

To solve the fight, Taylor (Control Country) could try not to disrespect Jamie (Peace Country) and instead understand that Jamie values rest and relaxation. Taylor could also remind Jamie that after a few chores are done, the rest of the day can be peaceful. Jamie could show appreciation for everything Taylor does and suggest a compromise to work for only part of their day off.

A good way to handle any fight is to first stop and try to see things from the other person's point of view. Really listen and try to understand what might be going on underneath. Second, acknowledge what the other person is saying. This doesn't mean you agree, but it means you can understand why they might think that way. When the other person feels understood, they are more likely to listen to your point of view and understand how you see things differently.

## Practicing the Languages

It's important to know what motivates other people so we can relate to them better. Let's be honest. We all like our own ways of doing things and sometimes judge others who are different from us. The more we can learn to understand each other and treat people in ways that matter to them, the fewer fights we'll have and the better our relationships will be. Remember, we are all unique, and even people from the same group will have differences (and we all have a little bit of all the groups in us). A balanced person will work to develop the strengths in all of the types and not make excuses like, "This is just how I am." At the core, what we all want is to be fully known and loved and accepted.

“. . . LET EVERYONE BE QUICK TO HEAR, SLOW TO SPEAK, AND SLOW TO ANGER . . .” JAMES 1:19

## Notes



# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1

Which two temperament types do you think are most like you?

2

What "country" traits do you recognize in people you know?

3

What traits from each country do you most appreciate and what traits are more difficult for you?

4

Will understanding temperament differences change the way you treat others?

5

What do people tend to misunderstand about you?

6

Are there areas of your personality you would like to change?

7

What beliefs and attitudes, and behaviors would need to be different?

8

What experiences can you identify that have influenced your beliefs, attitudes or feelings, and your behavior?

# PRACTICE, ROLE PLAY, OR JUST MORE TO CONSIDER

1 If you want to convince some friends to take a trip with you, depending on what temperament style they have, what words would you use?

2 Think of a situation where people with differing temperaments need to work together (a job, project, etc.). In what ways might each one be helpful and contribute? What could be some potential challenges?

3 Think about a conflict you have had with someone in which you have a relationship.

Talk about or role play how else the conflict might have gone if you had used some of the skills presented such as -

- listen more and first (instead of trying to get the other person to hear your point of view)
- look for other hidden hurts or misunderstandings that may be fueling the conflict
- try to understand the other person's viewpoint
- validate them (not necessarily agree)
- express your viewpoint or needs

## What is your temperament type combination?

Below are columns with descriptive words. Decide if that word describes you and put a scoring number by it. Be completely honest and don't answer how you **want** to be. Think about what comes naturally to you. Some words are flattering, and some are unflattering - still be as honest as you can. Cross out or put a 0 by words that are - not at all like you or usually not like you.

3 = That is **usually me**    4 = That is **mostly me**    5 = That is **definitely me**

Column 1	Column 2
___ Determined	___ Funny
___ Goal-oriented	___ Emotional
___ Decisive	___ Impulsive
___ Outgoing	___ Outgoing
___ Domineering	___ Spontaneous
___ Competitive	___ Talkative
___ Likes to get the job done	___ Forgetful
___ Strong-willed	___ Popular
___ Persuasive	___ Disorganized
___ Outspoken	___ Lives in the present
___ Practical	___ Difficulty with appointments
___ Bossy	___ Impractical
___ Resourceful	___ Easily angered
___ Bold	___ Cheerful
___ Is a leader	___ Undisciplined
___ Hot-tempered	___ Friendly/sociable
___ Self-confident	___ Interrupts others
___ Workaholic	___ Compassionate
___ Daring	___ Easily discouraged
___ Adventurous	___ Likes to play/have fun
___ Domineering	___ Restless
___ Productive	___ Sincere
___ Persevering	___ Weak-willed
___ Self-sufficient	___ Extrovert
___ Insensitive	___ Very positive
___ Quick to act	___ Inspirational
___ TOTAL	___ TOTAL

Column 3	Column 4
---- Idealistic	---- Adaptable
---- Deep-feeling	---- Easy going
---- Can be pessimistic	---- Selfish
---- Loner	---- Efficient
---- Self-sacrificing	---- Spectator of life
---- Introspective	---- Calm
---- Planner	---- Unenthusiastic
---- Perfectionist	---- Good listener
---- Analytical	---- Worrier
---- Faithful friend	---- Patient
---- Suspicious	---- Competent
---- Scheduled	---- Consistent
---- Creative	---- Lazy
---- Orderly	---- Teases others
---- Moody	---- Content
---- Detailed	---- Stubborn
---- Gifted	---- Not aggressive
---- Considerate	---- Regular daily habits
---- Hard to please	---- Indecisive
---- Sensitive	---- Stingy
---- Indecisive	---- Witty / dry humor
---- Insecure	---- Pleasant
---- High standards	---- Shy
---- Critical	---- Negative
---- Persistent	---- Submissive to others
---- Caring	---- Resists change
---- TOTAL	---- TOTAL

Add up each column. The column with the highest score is your primary temperament and the column with the next highest score is your secondary temperament. Everyone is a blend of the temperaments, but people usually have two that are most like themselves. Read on to learn more about each pair.

# WHICH “COUNTRY” AM I FROM?

Column 1 is Control Country

Column 2 is Fun Country

Column 3 is Perfect Country

Column 4 is Peace Country

**The temperament combinations and brief descriptions are as follows:**

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**Control - Fun:** These people love to stay active. They are productive and purposeful. They are also good at selling things and promoting them. Control-Fun people can motivate others and they enjoy a challenge. Sometimes they seem fearless. They can make even the toughest people like them and they are very good at talking to others. People always notice them when they are around. They are good at leading and getting things done, and other people like to follow them.

Sometimes they can be mean and have a quick temper. They often ask other people to finish something they started because they have a hard time focusing on one thing for a long time. They can also use or take advantage of other people to achieve their goals.

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**Control - Perfect:** This combination combination makes for leaders who you can count on to do a great job. They are very focused on their goals, hardworking, and capable. They can be competitive and forceful in what they do. They often succeed in any kind of business they try. They have a quick and smart mind, are great at researching, and can make decisions easily.

Weaknesses can include a tendency to act like a bossy person. This type is the most determined and their quick thinking and sarcasm can really hurt others. They may have irregular and long work habits. They can hold onto anger and unfriendliness and may have trouble getting along with others. As a parent, this type can be very strict and hard to make happy.

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**Control - Peace:** This type of person is quick and active, but also calm and cool. They take their time and don't rush into things. People like working for them because they are organized and know where they are going. They can help others use their skills without making them feel used. They rarely offend others. They are often great administrators in any job.

However, they have weaknesses too. They tend to hold onto resentment and bitterness. They may say mean things disguised as jokes, so it's hard to tell if they are making fun of someone or not. They can be very stubborn and once they make up their mind, it's hard to change it. They also have a hard time admitting their mistakes. Sometimes, their worrying side stops them from taking risks and reaching their full potential.

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**Fun - Control:** This type of temperament is very outgoing. They are happy, like being around people, and are enthusiastic. They are also organized and get things done. This type of person will do well in jobs that involve working with people, as long as the job is exciting, has variety, and involves activity. They have leadership skills that make people enjoy working for them.

People with a Fun-Control temperament are often talkative and have strong opinions. They say what they think without knowing all the facts, which can sometimes get them into trouble. They are the fun and popular person at parties, but when they feel threatened, they can become insecure and annoying. Other weaknesses include getting angry easily and trying to find reasons to justify their actions.

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**Fun - Perfect:** This type of person experiences a wide range of emotions. They can go from laughing one moment to crying the next. They genuinely feel the happiness and sadness of others. They are good with people and can make a positive impact on their lives. They can succeed in many different fields, especially public speaking, acting, music, and fine arts. They are dreamers, but they need to be careful not to let negative thoughts stop them from reaching their full potential. They are also more easily able to connect with God.

One weakness of Fun-Perfect people is that they tend to be fearful and get angry easily. They can be hard on themselves if they don't meet their high standards. They want others to admire them, which motivates them to keep doing well, but it can also make them feel insecure and afraid. They need to be careful about criticizing others, as it can push people away. They also struggle internally as their two sides compete against each other.

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**Fun - Peace:** These people are very easy to get along with and are very lovable. They are generally happy, have a good sense of humor, and are carefree. They rarely get upset and always see the positive side of things. Fun-Peace people love to tell jokes and stories. They enjoy helping others and are great at sales. They are naturally family-oriented and are loved by their children and others. They would never intentionally hurt someone.

The weaknesses of Fun-Peace people are that they lack motivation and discipline. They would rather socialize than work. They also tend to not take serious situations seriously and make jokes about them.

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**Perfect - Control:** This combination of temperaments combines the mood swings of the "Perfect" side with the determination and self-will of the "Control" side. People with this temperament have strong leadership skills and strive for perfection in everything they do. They are capable of excelling in any job and can efficiently run their own business.

However, Perfect-Control individuals need to be careful not to let negativity affect them. Although they don't stay in a negative or depressed mood for long, they can easily slip into one and become difficult to be around. Their mood is influenced by their thoughts. They can be hard to please and rarely feel satisfied themselves. They may exhibit behaviors such as self-persecution, hostility, nit-picking, and criticism. They are known for getting angry and verbally criticizing others for their failures or mistakes.

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**Perfect - Fun:** : This combination often produces individuals who are gifted and capable. They may have an inclination towards music or art and are usually good students. They can also make excellent teachers. The Perfect side of their temperament allows them to notice small details, while the Fun side makes them great communicators. They are very emotional and have a deep capacity to connect with God. They are willing to sacrifice themselves to help others.

However, if they feel hurt or misunderstood, they can become unreasonably critical of themselves and others. The Perfect - Fun combination is the most conflicted of all the types, as the two sides don't always blend well. When the Fun side dominates, the Perfect side wants to tone it down, and vice versa. They struggle to cooperate if they don't believe something is right and can be too idealistic and impractical.

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**Perfect - Peace:** These individuals are often great scholars and hard workers. They get along well with others and have a kind and caring nature. They prefer a quiet and solitary life. They excel in analytical thinking and strive for perfection in an organized manner. Their families love them for their discipline and dedication.

However, this combination is susceptible to anxiety, fear, and negative self-image. Because they are conscientious and agreeable, they can be easily influenced by others to take on commitments that drain their energy and creativity. If they get caught up in these pressures, they may lose sight of their own well-being.

If someone focuses too much on helping others, they might forget about their own family. Even though they are usually calm and peaceful, they can sometimes seek revenge.

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**Peace - Control:** This type of temperament is the most active among all the Peace Country combinations, but they are not overly energetic. They could become skilled counselors because they are good listeners, they don't interrupt, and they are interested in people. Although they don't usually offer their help to others, they act very professionally when people come to their organized space. Their advice is usually practical and helpful, and they make people feel comfortable and safe with their gentle manner.

Their weaknesses are not very obvious, but they become apparent in their lack of motivation and tendency to be afraid. This type can be very stubborn and inflexible. Instead of getting angry at others, they choose not to cooperate. This type is at risk of becoming more self-indulgent and passive, which can lead to a boring life for themselves and their families.

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**Peace - Fun:** This group of people is very easy to get along with. They are happy, cooperative, thoughtful, and like being around others. They are also dependable, like to have fun, and have a good sense of humor. This type of person rarely acts in a mean or aggressive way. They usually feel satisfied with their families, love their spouse and children, and enjoy a calm and peaceful life.

The weaknesses of Peace-Fun people may not be obvious unless you live with them. They can struggle with discipline and not reach their full potential. They might pass up opportunities or give up on things that require "too much effort". This type of person can become afraid, insecure, and shy. They might put up a wall to protect themselves and avoid getting involved in activities that demand a lot from them.

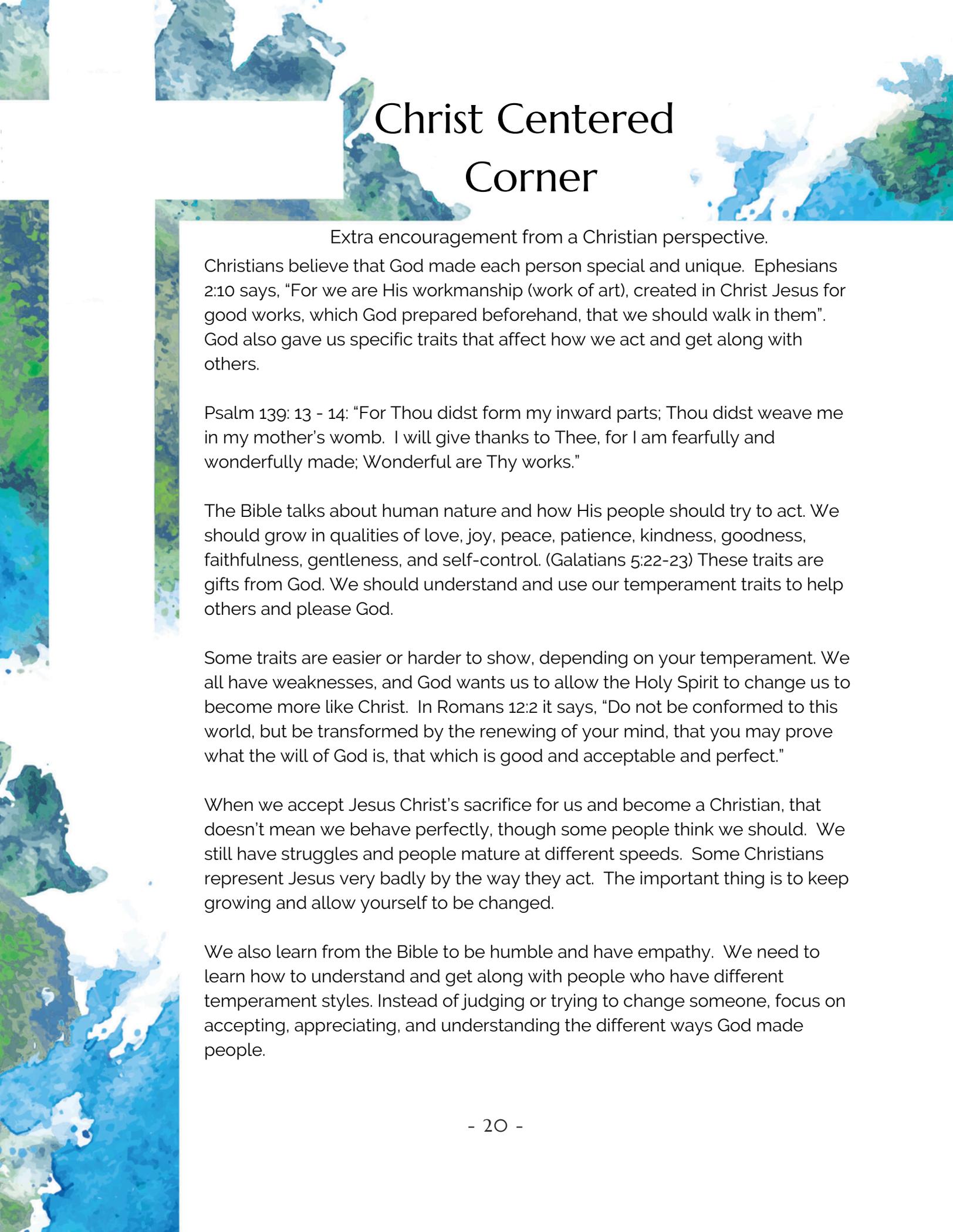
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**Peace - Perfect:** These are calm, kind, and polite individuals who rarely, if ever, become angry or unfriendly. They are reliable and do not cause embarrassment for themselves or others. They behave appropriately and dress modestly. They are usually tidy and organized in their work and are generally nice and helpful. They can handle pressure well, but they need external motivation to do so (they are usually not motivated from within).

Peace-Perfect people avoid getting too involved in anything. They are not motivated from within and resist taking on more responsibility than they believe they can handle. They can become afraid, selfish, and have a negative view of themselves. As parents, they may lack the discipline needed to teach and prepare their children for life.

# RESOURCES

- Larry Bilotta is an author and speaker, specializing in relationships and marriages. He developed the Flag Page temperament test.  
<https://larrybilotta.com>  
<https://youcansavethismarriage.com/>
- Timothy LaHaye graduated with a Doctor of Ministry degree and a Doctor of Literature degree. He served a congregation in Minneapolis until 1956, then became the pastor of the Scott Memorial Baptist Church in El Cajon, California for 25 years. He wrote over 50 non-fiction books and co-authored 25 fiction books on subjects such as family life, temperaments, and Bible prophecy. He died days after he had a stroke on July 25, 2016, at the age of 90.
- Mark Gungor developed his "Laugh Your Way to a Better Marriage" seminar in the early 2000s. His innovative program challenged traditional approaches to relationship counseling by incorporating humor and lightheartedness into discussions about serious topics.  
<https://markgungor.com/>



# Christ Centered Corner

Extra encouragement from a Christian perspective.

Christians believe that God made each person special and unique. Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are His workmanship (work of art), created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them". God also gave us specific traits that affect how we act and get along with others.

Psalm 139: 13 - 14: "For Thou didst form my inward parts; Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb. I will give thanks to Thee, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; Wonderful are Thy works."

The Bible talks about human nature and how His people should try to act. We should grow in qualities of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23) These traits are gifts from God. We should understand and use our temperament traits to help others and please God.

Some traits are easier or harder to show, depending on your temperament. We all have weaknesses, and God wants us to allow the Holy Spirit to change us to become more like Christ. In Romans 12:2 it says, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect."

When we accept Jesus Christ's sacrifice for us and become a Christian, that doesn't mean we behave perfectly, though some people think we should. We still have struggles and people mature at different speeds. Some Christians represent Jesus very badly by the way they act. The important thing is to keep growing and allow yourself to be changed.

We also learn from the Bible to be humble and have empathy. We need to learn how to understand and get along with people who have different temperament styles. Instead of judging or trying to change someone, focus on accepting, appreciating, and understanding the different ways God made people.