

What Your View of Jesus Reveals About Your Personality

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.' I did not know Him, but for this reason I came baptizing with water: so that He might be revealed to Israel." Then John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on Him. (John 1:29-32)

Let's get very practical. When you are emotional and feeling things at a deeper level than usual, it is vital to submit those emotional feelings to the Holy Spirit. Just as you would bring your thoughts or desires before the Lord, you must do the same with your emotions and feelings to see if they align with God's Word or need to be changed by the Spirit.

It will be vital for you to compare your emotions to the emotional life of Jesus Christ to determine if your feelings are right or wrong.

This can be challenging because almost everyone has an imbalanced view of Jesus' emotional life. Practically we tend to see Him as either Lion or Lamb and not both. Those of us with more Lamb personalities will focus on the parts of the Bible where Jesus was meek, kind, patient, loving and appears more passive if not even timid. Those of us with more Lion personalities will focus on the parts of the Bible where Jesus was strong, firm, urgent, controversial and appears more active if not aggressive.

Are you more of a lion or a lamb? Do you see Jesus more as a

Lion or a Lamb?

The Bible presents Jesus as *both*.

In Revelation 5:5 John calls Jesus “the Lion of the tribe of Judah.” A lion is the king of the jungle. A male lion lives in a pride or pack with mainly females and children, and will slaughter anything that threatens his pack. Sometimes Jesus is a Lion.

In John 1:29 John calls Jesus “the Lamb of God.” Lambs are meek creatures who run from danger and stick together with their flock because they are social animals. Lambs eat grass and are not a threat to other animals because they are vegetarians.

The key to your emotional life is twofold: (1) you need the Holy Spirit to help you discern when to be a lion and when to be a lamb, and (2) you need the Holy Spirit to empower you to be a lion when the time is right and a lamb when the time is right.

Where do you need to invite the Holy Spirit to empower your emotional life so that you feel the fullness of Jesus in your feelings? As you become more emotionally healthy, you will be ready for healthy relationship. {eoa}

Mark Driscoll is a Jesus-following, mission-leading, church-serving, people-loving, Bible-preaching pastor and the author of many books, including *Spirit-Filled Jesus*, which you can order here. He currently pastors *The Trinity Church* in Scottsdale, Arizona, with his family. For all of pastor Mark Driscoll’s Bible teaching, please visit or download the app. You can download a free devotional e-book from pastor Mark here.

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The Key to Becoming an Emotionally Healthy Christian

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control; against such there is no law. Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. Let us not be conceited, provoking one another and envying one another (Gal. 5:22-26).

Would you like to become more emotionally healthy? The good news is that every believer has the potential for improved emotional health that increasingly manifests the character of Jesus Christ. How? By the power of the Holy Spirit.

Near the end of his powerful letter to the Galatians, Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, reminds us that our emotional life and character flow from only one of two streams—the flesh or the Spirit. Because Jesus lived by the Spirit and sent the Spirit to empower our lives, we can live by the same power.

Paul takes his language in Galatians 5:25 from the military. When a platoon goes out for a hike, everyone follows the highest commanding officer, keeping in step and staying in line. Otherwise, a soldier can wander off and get shot by the enemy. So it is for each Christian. The Holy Spirit is our commanding officer, and we must follow His leadership over our entire lives—including our emotional lives—or risk becoming taken captive by our enemy (the devil).

It is common to think God is not sovereign, but rather our

emotions are. Whatever we feel, it is as if those feelings have a life unto themselves, and we cannot be held responsible for them but only for our thoughts and actions. It is wrongly assumed that our feelings are like the laws of gravity—beyond our control, overwhelming and unchangeable.

But God expects His Spirit to rule over all of our lives, including our emotions. Oswald Chambers rightly says:

God holds the saints responsible for emotions they have not got and ought to have as well as for the emotions they have allowed which they ought not to have allowed. If we indulge in inordinate affection, anger, anxiety, God holds us responsible; but He also insists that we have to be passionately filled with the right emotions.

The emotional life of a Christian is to be measured by the exalted energy exhibited in the life of our Lord. The language applied to the presence of the Holy Spirit in the saint is descriptive of the energy of emotion that keeps the inner and outer life like our Lord's own life. {eoa}

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4 Reasons Why Today's Church Has Lost Its Passion for Jesus

Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only that which is good for building up, that it may give grace to the listeners. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you are sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, outbursts, and blasphemies, with all malice, be taken away from you. And be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you (Eph. 4:29-32).

God is a passionate person who wrote the Bible through passionate people to be read and obeyed by us passionately! Our emotional God made us in His image with emotions to have a loving relationship. Sadly, many have arrived at a passionless Christianity, and I believe there are four reasons why.

People are emotionally unhealthy. Some people are so emotionally unhealthy and untethered that their spirituality becomes little more than chasing experiences devoid of any real study or knowledge of God. It's as if the Holy Spirit were a bartender and the church an open bar. Overreacting, others want to downplay the emotions because of unhealthy emotionalism.

People place mind over emotions. The modern era of rationalism so shaped some people that they read the Bible through the lens that the mind is more trustworthy than the emotions. Therefore, *Star Trek's* Spock is the ideal being we should aspire to become.

People make God non-relational. In an effort to preserve God's unchanging nature, they made God non-relational. In a

relationship there are emotions between persons in response to one another, and so it is in our relationship with God. Nonemotional Christianity is also non-relational and nonbiblical.

People don't connect the Holy Spirit with emotional health. There has not been sufficient emphasis on the biblical connection between the ministry of the Holy Spirit and emotional health. For starters, God the Father, Son and Spirit have emotions. The Bible clearly teaches that the Holy Spirit is a person with emotions—contrary to much false teaching in other religions.

We can “grieve the Holy Spirit of God” (Eph. 4:30a) as others before us have “rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit” (Isa. 63:10a). When people have no regard for Jesus, the Bible says they have “outraged the Spirit of grace” (Heb. 10:29, ESV). When we have “loved righteousness and hated wickedness,” God anoints us with the Holy Spirit as the “oil of gladness” (Heb. 1:9, MEV).

There is no possibility of being emotionally healthy without a deep, intimate, personal relationship with the Holy Spirit. What is true of Jesus is true of you. There is no emotional health apart from the Holy Spirit. {eoa}

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Why You Can't Trust Your Runaway Emotions

Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God, which is in you by the laying on of my hands. For God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and love, and self-control. So do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me (2 Tim. 1:6-8).

We were bored little boys—until we discovered the blue tarp in the garage at our buddy's house. Unsure what lay beneath, one of the boys yanked the tarp and revealed, in all its glory, a blue minibike.

We stood breathless as we looked in disbelief at this treasure. We had no idea where it came from or why it was there. Perhaps it was a gift from God like the chariot that took Elijah into heaven? For a boy, when a motor and wheels come together, something supernatural and sacred happens.

With the quiet precision of ninjas, we slyly rolled our little hog out of the garage. One of the boys jumped as high as he could and came down full force on the kick starter. Like Lazarus getting out of his grave in full glory, the old bike roared to life. Unfortunately, the throttle was stuck open, and our buddy lasted mere seconds on the seat. Like an old bronco rider, he was quickly bucked off. The minibike, however, was stuck on full speed as it took off down the street with no one steering it.

Chasing after it down the road, we were screaming at the other kids in the neighborhood to get out of the way. Eventually the street beast tilted to the right and veered into a fence,

where it fell over as a tire kept spinning.

People are like that minibike. Experiences in life are like fuel. Emotions are like the motor. The will is like the handlebars. Without a driver, things get crazy fast.

Experiences in our lives spark our emotions, and very quickly, our lives start operating out of anger, depression, joy or whatever emotion we are feeling. The problem is, without a driver staying in the seat and holding the handlebars, things quickly escalate, and we are a lot like that minibike—out of control and barreling forward. If our feelings drive everything we say and do, it's only a matter of time before the bad crash happens.

How did Jesus maintain emotional health? How can He help you maintain yours? That's what we're going to look at over the next few days. {eoa}

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Say No to Temptation and Yes to Triumph With This Warfare Tactic

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. They are of the world, and therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them. We are of God, and whoever knows God listens to us. Whoever is not of God does not listen to us. This is how we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error (1 John 4:4-6).

The essence of faith is trusting God. Trusting God is always important, but never more important than when we find ourselves tempted. In those moments, the Holy Spirit wants to help us as He helped Jesus continue to trust in God and not succumb to the temptation to test God. This kind of faith surrenders the outcome of events to God and accepts whatever future God determines is best.

For Jesus, this kind of trust meant He would face a very difficult future. He would have to trust the Father and the Spirit for His life of poverty, ongoing vocal public opposition, betrayal by Judas, shameful arrest and brutal execution.

You must understand that being tempted does not mean you are ungodly, unspiritual or unloved by God. Jesus experienced temptation, and you will too. Jesus overcame demonic temptation by living in the continual presence of God, the Holy Spirit.

To defeat a spiritual enemy, you need the energy of the Spirit of God. In 1 John 4:4 it says precisely this: "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." In context, John

means that the same Holy Spirit who dwells in the believer and dwelt in Jesus is more powerful than any and every demon, including Satan himself. For this reason, if you maintain a humble spirit, then you allow an opportunity for the Holy Spirit to give you a power you do not have to defeat an enemy you cannot otherwise defeat—by saying no to temptation and yes to triumph.

Christians should not act surprised when trouble comes into their lives. In this life, there's a war between two kings, Jesus and Satan. While the Bible promises us that King Jesus is victorious, we're on a pilgrimage to get to Jesus' eternal kingdom. Along the way, we preach the gospel by the power of the Holy Spirit in hopes of setting some war captives free from their bondage to Satan, sin and death. Christians seeking to serve their King Jesus and His kingdom need to know that an eternal vacation is coming, but only after the long war.

Our goal cannot be to become spiritual. Our goal must be to become Spirit-filled. {eoa}

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Why Knowing the Bible Well Doesn't Make You a Good Christian

He brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge concerning you, to preserve you,' and 'In their hands they shall hold you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" (Luke 4:9-11)

In college, Grace and I had an eccentric professor. Disheveled with a wild-eyed look, unkempt beard, and a large knife in his belt holster, he was quite a character. His lectures were electric. He had a razor-sharp mind, quick wit and larger-than-life personality.

He also liked to quote Bible verses—a lot. He would sprinkle in random Scriptures from memory, including entire chapters of the Bible. One time after class we asked him if he was a Christian. He laughed loudly and said something like, "Of course not. I don't believe any of that foolishness about Jesus!" Shocked, we asked why he knew so much Bible if he hated Christ and Christianity. He went on to explain to us that his brother was a pastor, and he memorized the Bible so he could mock his brother and win Bible arguments with him even though he was an atheist.

I learned an important lesson that day: just because you know the Bible that does not mean you know the Lord. In fact, Satan and demons know the Bible very well. The Bible is a spiritual sword. Like any weapon, you'd better know how to use it so that when you are attacked, you can defend yourself. In this battle with the devil Jesus repeatedly quotes from memory the Book of Deuteronomy. Jesus models a vital principle: we must

combat sinful temptation with biblical meditation.

In every age there are people who want to say yes to sin and temptation, so they search for what sounds like a biblical justification for inexcusable behavior. Many times this is in relation to sexual sin with demonically empowered arguments supporting such behavior, often with a philosophically compelling case.

Why? Because when new cultural norms disagree with the Bible, they tell us it's OK to change the Bible rather than change our behavior. That's demonic. As a general rule, when anyone's interpretation of the Bible concludes with them getting naked with someone other than their spouse of the opposite gender, you know that they studied at Satan's seminary. Most theological debates are just fancy ways for people not to exercise dominion over their drawers.

Jesus modeled for us how to combat sinful temptation with biblical meditation. He so filled His mind with the Scriptures that when tempted He could quote the exact Scripture correctly. This allowed Him, and allows us, to defeat the enemy. {eoa}

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How to Resist the Devil's Tempting Bait

The devil, taking Him up onto a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "I will give You all this power and their glory, for it has been delivered to me. And I give it to whomever I will. If You, then, will worship me, all will be Yours." And Jesus answered him, "Get behind Me, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve'" (Luke 4:5-8).

The key to catching fish is knowing what kind of bait they like. Once you get the right bait on the hook, the rest is pretty easy. You drop it in front of the fish, they swim up, bite the bait and overlook the hook.

You would think that at some point, the fish would catch on to this ploy. Nope. The fish never learn, and the same old bait-and-hook method works every time.

People are a lot like fish. The devil and his demons figure out what bait we like and dangle it in front of us. Like a fisherman, the devil couldn't care less what bait we prefer. He will gladly give us sex, money, power, success, comfort, drugs, alcohol—pick a preference. Like fish, we continually swim right on up and take the bait, forgetting about the hook.

In tempting Jesus, Satan loaded every cultural bait on the hook at the same time. We read in Luke 4:5–7, "And the devil took him up and showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time, and said to him, 'To you I will give all this authority and their glory, for it has been delivered to me,

and I give it to whom I will. If you, then, will worship me, it will all be yours.'”

I believe when Satan showed Jesus every temptation in every nation and culture, in an instant, He felt the combined level of temptation that everyone on the earth was facing at that moment. Can you imagine how you would fare under the same circumstances?

Jesus Christ didn't even nibble.

Why? Because He had perspective. Jesus was offered two options in that instant:

Option 1 was the temptation to have no pain and all pleasure in exchange for losing His relationship with God the Father and God the Spirit.

Option 2 was the invitation to have all pain and no pleasure in exchange for keeping His relationship with God the Father and God the Spirit.

Jesus valued His relationship with God the Father and God the Spirit more than literally anything else. When tempted, you need to keep the perspective of Jesus and remember that your most valuable treasure is your relationship with God. {eoa}

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How to Resist the Devil When You Are Hungry, Isolated and Tired

Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted by the devil for forty days. During those days He ate nothing. And when they were ended, He was hungry. The devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command this stone to become bread." Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God'" (Luke 4:1-4).

Let's look at the first weapon Jesus used when He was tempted by the enemy.

The story of Jesus' temptation begins in Luke 4:1-2, "Jesus, being filled with the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, being tempted by the devil for forty days. During those days He ate nothing. And when they were ended, He was hungry."

Unlike God, Satan is not omnipresent. He cannot be in more than one place at a time. Satan himself went to war with Jesus, but for the rest of us, he sends someone else on his behalf. As is often the case with the demonic, no one invites it, but instead, it rudely shows up in a pushy and bossy way, demanding to be dealt with immediately.

Like Moses (Ex. 34:28) and Elijah (1 Kings 19:8), Jesus spent 40 days alone in the wilderness. By the time the dragon showed up for war, Jesus had reached the limits of His humanity. In

this we learn when our enemy is likely to HIT—when we are *hungry, isolated and tired*.

Living out of His full humanity, the Lord Jesus was vulnerable. We are as well, anytime we find ourselves hungry, isolated or tired. To make matters worse, Satan and demons do not share the limitations of our humanity. They do not get the flu, need a day off or age. Our humanity has limits that spirit beings do not share.

How can you as a human being with finite energy possibly win a battle against spirit beings who have the benefit of being able to war against you day and night without needing a meal, nap, glass of water or day off? Your power is finite, but the Spirit's power is *infinite!*

Where did Jesus' temptation occur? In a barren, lonely, desolate wilderness. Sometimes following the leading of the Holy Spirit means we, like Jesus, will find ourselves in poverty rather than prosperity, trouble instead of tranquility and hardship instead of happiness. It just goes to show that the surest place to be is in God's will, even if it's in a wilderness. It is better to have the Spirit and nothing else than to have everything but the Spirit. {eoa}

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There's a Spiritual War Taking Place

He brought Him to Jerusalem, set Him on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here. For it is written: 'He shall give His angels charge concerning you, to preserve you,' and 'In their hands they shall hold you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone.'" Jesus answered him, "It is said, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'" When the devil had ended all the temptations, he departed from Him until another time. (Luke 4:9-13).

In an interesting moment, a pastor revealed to me that his previous job had been in the United States military as a SERE (Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape) specialist. As I understand it, he prepared troops to survive if they were stranded in a harsh environment or captured by the enemy.

They would try to psychologically press the trainee to the limits of their humanity to find their breaking point. He went on to explain that every human being has a limit to how much stress and duress they can physically and mentally endure, and once you push a person over that line they break. His job was to find that line and help military personnel push beyond their limits and move that line.

The Bible is, in many regards, a battlefield report of a war that has been raging for all human history. According to the Bible, angels are spirit beings created by God to serve His purposes. However, one angel became proud, which is the root of many sins, and preferred to be his own god rather than worship and obey the real God (Is. 14:11-23; Ezek. 28:12). Tragically one-third of the angels sided with Satan to declare war on God and become the army devoted to destroying God's

kingdom (Is. 14:12; Luke 10:18; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 9:1, 12:3–9).

Their rebellion culminated in a great battle against God and His holy angels. Satan and his demons lost and were kicked out of heaven.

The scene shifts to a new battlefield—earth. Tragically our first parents surrendered to Satan and sinned, and ever since everyone has suffered. Every one of us born since the fall has entered into a spiritual war between the kingdom of God and spiritual terrorists seeking only to kill, steal, and destroy.

But God Himself foretold the coming of Jesus to crush Satan (Gen. 3:15). Many years later Jesus was born. Like Adam, He was not openly attacked by the evil one until there was a public ministry calling on His life. To walk with God is to walk into a war. Thankfully God gives us five weapons for spiritual war. {eoa}

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Have You Performed a Spiritual Self-Examination?

Examine yourselves, seeing whether you are in the faith; test yourselves. Do you not know that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified. I trust that you will know that we are not disqualified. Now I pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that you should do that which is honorable, whether or not we may seem disqualified. For we can do nothing against the truth, but only for the truth. For we are glad when we are weak, and you are strong. We wish even your perfection. (2 Cor. 13:5-9 MEV).

When Jesus said to love God and others with “all your heart,” it shows that we need to pay attention to and work on our hearts continually.

In life, the “want to” precedes the “how to.” Good advice on *how* to do something serves no purpose unless we *want* to do it. This is the heart of Christian living. Only after we want to do what is right are we then ready to learn how to do that very thing.

Be honest, how is your heart toward God? If you could pick one word (e.g., tender or hard, loving or angry, obedient or defiant, etc.) to describe your heart toward God what would it be?

Grace and I have been together since March 12, 1988. Then one day I asked, “How are we doing in our relationship?”

I was expecting her to tell me that she felt like she was married to Jesus. Much to my surprise, she took that opportunity to gently let me know that I had a lot of room for improvement.

I got a bit defensive. I asked why she had not told me these things before. She kindly reminded me that she had on various occasions and that I was not really listening or acting upon what she was saying. She was right.

I took the words of my wife to heart and scheduled a day alone with the Lord. My goals were to (1) pray to the Lord, asking Him how I could love better in my relationship with my wife, (2) listen, (3) journal out my thoughts with the Lord, and (4) study scriptures that pertained to what He would say to me.

But before God talked to me about my relationship with Grace, He spoke with me about my relationship with Him. The Lord convicted me that if I loved Him better first, then I would love Grace better, so I needed to start working on my relationship with Him first.

I believe that much of the time, God feels like my wife did. God loves you, and He wants a loving relationship with you. He has spoken to you through Scripture, your conscience, and the wise counsel of godly people about some areas you need to improve in order to nurture a loving relationship with Him and others. Have you been listening? {eoa}

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