

Cultivating Our Personality

Each person has a unique personality forged through natural tendencies and environmental factors. Some of these environmental factors include the ideals our parents and other adults instilled in us and incidents or circumstances that determine how we view the world and those around us.

Our personalities are God-given, but they all come as double-edged swords. Every personality has both positive and negative characteristics. We Christians must be honest with ourselves to determine which traits are inherent in the personality God gave us. This is the edge of our personality we must hone, or cultivate.

However, there is also an edge to each personality that is potentially harmful, which needs to be dulled so as not to hurt us or those around us. For example, a mostly melancholy personality usually has the gift of perception and empathy, but it may also have the opposite edge of dark thoughts, overthinking, and depression. If we leave our personalities to develop alone, the negative aspects can grow and overpower the positive. We need to take an active interest in understanding both the positive and negative aspects of our personality. Recognizing our personality's gifts and drawbacks is key to developing our personality as a tool for use in God's kingdom.

Scriptures

Genesis 1:2

Matthew 10:29-31

Galatians 2:20

2 Corinthians 5:17

Romans 12:1-3

Ephesians 4:22-24

Philippians 4:13

James 1:5

Questions

1. How do we balance accepting our children and fellow Christians for who they are with helping them overcome potentially harmful personality traits?
2. Why do some of us recoil at recognizing our God-given gifts?
3. Some personalities can have more prominent sharp edges to it. Is it appropriate to expect those around me to accept the abrasiveness because "that's just how I am?"
4. How can we assess the less positive aspects of our personality without becoming discouraged?
5. Are there personalities that God cannot use until they have been sanctified?
6. Where is the appropriate middle ground when considering others' views of what we say and do? Some may be crippled in life by caring too much about the opinions of others, and some may be very self-assured and seem not to care about the thoughts and feelings of those around them.
7. Many people dislike their personality. When we read Romans 9:20, does this place a judgment on feeling this way?