

more to be

WIRED UP

discovering your God-given personality and spiritual gift

Did you know that we are wired up by God, complete with a specially created personality and perfectly designed spiritual gift?

While we're all made in God's image, we are certainly quite different from one another. Look around your family and among your friends, and you'll see His creative hand at work in more than just appearance. Some of your friends love sports, others are musically gifted. Some are super loud, others are quiet. Some love to talk...constantly...and others prefer to work with their hands. Some love to lead in a group project, and others hide out serving behind the scenes.

Our wiring not only reflects our passions and interests, but it also gives us a clue to our God-given purpose. It is often the reason why we find ourselves in conflict with others -- as the way we're inclined to see life and react to situations comes up against those who are different from us. That's why it is so important to understand the different ways God wires us up:

As we understand His design, we'll be better able to reach out to others with His grace, respond with a bit more patience, and pursue the areas in which God designed for us to serve.

Before we uncover what makes up our personality and spiritual gifts, let's consider the back story:

- God is the one who perfectly put together our wiring.
- He decides on our personality type.
- God distributes spiritual gifts.
- We cannot earn spiritual gifts.
- When we belong to the body of Christ, we are to use our gifts for the good of the body.
- Although there are some gifts we may not have in large quantity, like hospitality, we are still required to practice being hospitable.

- The greatest gift is love, and without it, none of our gifts can be used appropriately.
- Every personality has a combination of strengths and weaknesses, and we should seek to use our strengths for God's work and seek the Lord to minimize our weaknesses.
- Understanding different personalities increases our level of compassion for others and our ability to have better relationships, all around.

About Personalities

So how do you figure out your God-given personality? In general, psychologists have pinpointed four distinct personality types, each with their own set of strengths and weaknesses. These personalities go by different names, but are most commonly referred to as Sanguine (like a social butterfly and life of the party), Choleric (definitely the leader type who gets angry easily), Melancholy (a sensitive artist type who likes everything in order), and the Phlegmatic (the laid back observer who prefers to hang out behind the scenes).

The names of the different personalities aren't nearly as interesting as the way their unique traits come together. For example, a Sanguine girl is usually lively and outgoing but can also be forgetful and uncomfortably loud, whereas a Melancholy soul is often artistic and sensitive, but can be prone to being sad and prefers being alone. So can you imagine how two friends -- Miss Sally Sanguine and Miss Mary Melancholy -- could be really good for each other and yet also drive one another nuts? It is no wonder that opposite personalities tend to attract, and yet can also drive each other crazy. Learning to identify what you like in others can enable you to "put up" with their weaknesses a little bit more graciously, especially when you understand that what you're experiencing is a "packaged deal":

We all have strengths and weaknesses within our personalities, and we'll often find ourselves attracted to the strengths we see in others that we find as weaknesses in ourselves.

As you look at this list of personalities traits, hopefully you'll be able to identify your own personality. If you'd like, you can circle all the traits that you think best describe you (and be honest!). The columns with the most circled responses likely reveal your personality combination—yes, you can be a combination of two personality types (and sometimes even three). If you're not sure about the traits, ask your mom or

mentor for their input. If you'd like to download this quiz with a list of strengths and weaknesses, go to <http://www.moreto.be.com/2012/07/27/download-spiritual-gifts-types/>.

Since your personality indicates your tendencies, especially in how you react to situations and interact with others, knowing your personality's strengths and weaknesses will enable you to navigate through circumstances and relationships a little bit more gracefully.

As you pin-point your personality, you can embrace all that is good in the way God has made you, while also surrendering your weaknesses, so that God can use you more powerfully to impact this world.

Often, we spend too much of our time focusing on our weaknesses – those areas that seem to always cause us trouble – and we forget that those weaknesses are woven into our unique personality. Where there is a strength, there is also a weakness. When we begin to understand this truth, we can put off condemnation – that's when we beat ourselves up because of our weaknesses. Instead, we can learn how to yield the weakness to God (kind of like confession), asking Him to work in us and through us.

It is in our weaknesses that God displays His strength.

2 Corinthians 12:9

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

We don't beat ourselves up over our weaknesses. When we are weak, others have the potential of seeing more of God at work in us. For example, Miss Cara Choleric may find herself being a little too bossy in a leadership moment while Miss Pam Phlegmatic may not say a word in order to avoid conflict. In both of those cases, their strengths – leadership and peacemaking – have gone to the extreme and have become their weaknesses. The solution for both is the same:

- slow down to ask God to work through them
- seek forgiveness from God and those they've hurt
- move forward with that weakness surrendered to God so that it functions as a strength again

When our weaknesses dominate our personalities, we might find ourselves in a mess with others and even with God. But through humbling ourselves before the Lord, we can enable Him to work in our mess and use our uniquely designed personality to shine bright for Him. I could tell you stories upon stories of God working in my weaknesses, so don't forget to ask me when I see you in person (yes, I'm hopefully dreaming of have a cup of tea with you!). But until then, trust me when I

Personality Types & Traits			
			
Sarah Sanguine {social}	Clara Choleric {leader}	Maggie Melancholy {sensitive}	Paige Phlegmatic {relaxed}
Playful	Adventurous	Detailed	Thoughtful
Sociable	Determined	Persistent	Controlled
Loves a Party	In Charge	Respectful	Adaptable
Lively	Outspoken	Deep Thinkers	Attentive
Imaginative	Competitive	Moody	Diplomatic
Talkative	Strong-willed	Anxious	Avoids Conflict
Responsive	Excitable	Rigid	Laid Back
Easygoing	Impulsive	Pessimistic	Lazy
Carefree	Optimistic	Reserved	Warm
Often Late	Active	Quiet	Relaxed
Forgetful	Aggressive	Artistic	Acceptance
Sensitive	Restless	Musical	Affectionate
Romantic	Planner	Cautious	Sluggish
Not Shy	Impatient	Independent	Not Judgmental
Confident	Controlling	Creative	Observers
Warm Hearted	Judgmental	Focused	Shy
Pleasure-Seeking	Dictator-like	High Standards	Avoid Change
Not Organized	Problem Solver	Sensitive	Passive-Aggressive

say that there is nothing more beautiful than a person walking in humility and surrendered to God. It leaves an impact like nothing else!

So what's your personality?

If you'd like to take a personality assessment test, I'd highly recommend getting "Wired that Way," which is a book and personality test written by Florence and Marita Littauer. It is my favorite test because of their biblical approach and philosophy. If you'd like to go online with your mom or mentor, you can try out one of these tests: <http://www.41q.com/> or <http://www.123test.com/disc-personality-test/>. While they describe the personalities differently, you'll get a sense of your strengths and weaknesses from these assessments.

Spiritual Gifts...

In addition to having a unique personality, God also gives each of us a spiritual gift, which isn't like a big present that shows up on Christmas morning. We don't get to ask for it or have to wait to open it up. Nor is a spiritual gift something we can trade in for another gift. In other words, there is no return policy on spiritual gifts. The gifts we've been given are to be embraced and used to bless our brothers and sisters in the family of God.

God made you special to be especially used.

God made us different on purpose so that we could bless one another. Our spiritual gift has been bestowed on us by God for the sake of using it to serve others, as it says in 1 Peter 4:10, "Each one should use whatever gift [she] has received to serve others..." The Scriptures also tell us that the gift we've been given is distributed by God to show people all about God:

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 MSG

God's various gifts are handed out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various ministries are carried out everywhere; but they all originate in God's Spirit. God's various expressions of power are in action everywhere; but God himself is behind it all. Each person is given something to do that shows who God is: Everyone gets in on it, everyone benefits. All kinds of things are handed out by the Spirit, and to all kinds of people! The variety is wonderful...wise counsel, clear understanding, simple trust, healing the sick, miraculous acts, proclamation.... All these gifts have a common origin, but

are handed out one by one by the one Spirit of God. He decides who gets what, and when.

So what exactly are spiritual gifts? And how do we know which one God has given us? Well, the theologians (the people who study God's Word) have come up with quite an extensive list of gifts and descriptions for how they are used in the body of Christ. I know that some of the terms may seem strange to you, so I've given each gift a "role" so that you might think of spiritual gifts in terms of how you would see a person with that gift using it. You'll also find a description of what each gift looks like and where it is found in the Bible.

Spiritual Gifts Simplified			
Role	Traditional Name	Description	Reference
Messenger	Evangelism	Enjoys telling others about the Bible and Jesus.	Eph. 4:11
Planner or Administrator	Administration	Likes to work toward God-given goals through planning, organizing, and supervising.	1 Cor. 12:28
Missionary	Apostle	Desires to be sent forth to new places with the Gospel.	Eph. 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:28
Counselor	Discernment & Prophecy	Has a clear sense whether the behavior or teaching is from God, Satan, human error, or human power and/or tells others about God's message.	1 Cor. 12:10, Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10; Eph. 4:11
Sunday School or Bible Teacher	Teaching	Enjoys instructing others in the Bible in order to help people grow in their faith.	Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11
Leader	Leadership	Desires to lead and motivate others to get involved in the accomplishment of God's goals.	Rom 12:8

Spiritual Gifts Simplified

Bible Student	Knowledge	Enjoys learning as much as possible about the Bible.	1 Cor. 12:8
Encourager	Exhortation & Faith	Comes along side of someone with words of encouragement and counsel to help others be all God wants them to be and/or has an extraordinary belief in God's power.	Rom. 12:8, 1 Cor. 12:8-10
Giver	Giving	Shares their resources with cheerfulness and no promise of return.	Rom. 12:8
Prayer Warrior	Healing & Prayer	Uses prayer and acts of service to bring about God's healing.	1 Cor. 12:9, 28, 30
Servant	Helps, Mercy & Service	Serves through meeting needs and by responding with sensitivity to those in difficult situations.	1 Cor. 12:28, Rom 12:8, Rom. 12:7
Hostess or Host	Hospitality	Serves by warmly welcoming people, even strangers, into their home or church and providing food or lodging.	1 Pet. 4:9,10
Pastor	Pastor & Shepherd	Feels responsible for protecting, guiding, and feeding a group of believers entrusted to their care.	Eph. 4:11

After reading through this list, you might be thinking, "I have no idea what my spiritual gift is!" Well that is totally okay. These gifts become obvious as you grow up, although some may stand out from an early age. You can experiment with serving your family, friends, and church in lots of different ways to see if you can pinpoint your spiritual gift. When you get that feeling of "I just love to do this" and a sense of never tiring of the task, you'll know that's your spiritual gift at work. As you mature, God will no doubt provide you with opportunities to use your spiritual gift, because that His is purpose, so don't

worry over what it is now. Rather, choose to enjoy the adventure of discovering your spiritual gift by serving the people God has put in your life!

So what's your spiritual gift?

I'd certainly love for you to figure out your spiritual gift and to begin using it now to bless others. Take the time to read through the Spiritual Gifts list and discuss it with your mom or mentor. Consider what opportunities exist for you to "try out" the gifts within your church or in your family. You may also want to do an online assessment such as, <http://www.churchgrowth.org/cgi-cg/gifts.cgi?intro=1>, with your mom or mentor, and have her complete it, too. Then brainstorm ways she may be able use her gifts with you joining her in serving!

How can I apply this to my life?

There are many benefits to determining our spiritual gift and God-given personality:

- We can learn how to best be involved in serving others, especially in church, ministry work, and families;
- We can select a field of study or employment that allows our gifts and personality to flourish.
- We can better understand the conflict and struggles we have in our relationships as well as resolve them more easily.
- We will be able to say no to those things we know do not fall within our strengths or gifts set.
- We will navigate through a weaker area more humbly.
- We will better understand others and work with them more effectively.
- We will see areas in which God is perfectly using our personality and give Him praise.

Ultimately, coming to an understanding of our wiring provides us with understanding of our God-given purpose in life. When we recognize our gifts, strengths, and weaknesses, we will not only be able to confidently say "yes" to the opportunities before us that we have a passion for, but we can quickly humble ourselves before the Lord when we find ourselves in a situation in which our weaknesses present a tremendous challenge. God doesn't provide us with a life built around our gifts and personality. He provides a life in which He plans to use our gifts and personalities, both the strengths and weaknesses, for His work.