

3-We Are What We Repeatedly Do

Albert Einstein defined insanity as *“doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results”*. If we want to avoid insanity then we need to make changes. But change takes work. Lots of work! Aristotle said *“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”* If we want excellence in our lives we must develop excellent habits. Before we develop excellent habits we must identify what is excellent. We must set our standards high! I challenge you to set your high standards based on the Biblical standards outlined in **Gal 5:22-23**- *“But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”*.

Yes another bold statement. Again you can feel the passion as I share my walk with you. I do so to offer encouragement. Change is never easy. Stepping out of your comfort zone takes courage. I trust your success will be as beneficial for you as it has been for so many of the folks I have mentored over the past 18 years! We are all creatures of habit. The question is what should our habits be? If the answer is that we need new habits then we need to follow the advice of Aristotle and set Gal 5:22-23 as our high standard. We must identify the habits to which we aspire. We must have the discipline to repeat these “new creation” habits until they have replaced the “old creation” habits that do not serve us well! For years I allowed my old nature to take priority over relationships. I was tasked driven-if you got in the way I rolled over you because the task was my priority. Once I understood the unintended consequences of my nature I tempered my approach to the task. I built a team. I made the goal a team goal. I included the team in key decisions. I encouraged everyone to share their opinion and I valued those opinions. I am still task driven but now I take the team with me instead of rolling over them. Our accomplishments are team accomplishments. I will never be the most sensitive man but I will never be as insensitive as I once was!

I challenge you to understand your temperament and how your temperament influences those around you. It was only when I understood my temperament and saw the ramifications on others that I was motivated

to temper my temperament. As I explored the sphere of emotional intelligence I discovered that I had to upgrade my self-awareness in order to understand how my temperament was counterproductive if left unmanaged. By increasing my emotional intelligence in the area of self-awareness and self-management I was able to become the “gentle giant” instead of the ogre! It was the interplay of my emotional intelligence, my personality and the Holy Spirit that delivered a new habit that serves me well.

It’s time for you to begin using your self awareness to understand your temperament and how it can work either for or against you! As you gain a better understanding of your temperament you will discover it’s not what your temperament is but how you apply it that makes the difference. I am still a task-oriented man but I have learned to temper my strength so it serves me well and serves those around me equally well. Once my self-awareness made me aware of the impact of my temperament there was an immediate “upgrade” for me as well as those closest to me. My team received the benefits of my temperament without the drawbacks. I must also point out that my faith played a role in this transformation. That quiet little voice that Christians know as the Holy Spirit was critical to my self-awareness. It was His Voice that alerted me to the impact that my unbridled temperament was having on my team. The interaction of my faith through the Holy Spirit and my awareness of my temperament is proof positive that a New Insight results in a New Outlook, and a New Outlook results in a New Outcome.

Verse:

Psalm 119:125 *“I am your servant; give me discernment that I may understand your statutes”*.

Personal Reflection: What is my New Insight? What “old creature” habits are creating the most insanity in my life? What is my temperament? How can I temper my temperament to better serve those closest to me?

Group Discussion: Examine how many different temperaments are represented across the group?

What are the strengths of each temperament?

What are the vulnerabilities of each temperament?

How can we best blend our temperaments to advance the Kingdom?