

## *Devoted John*

**The following seven traits and behaviors are clues to the presence of the Devoted style. A person who has a strong Devoted tendency will demonstrate more of these behaviors more intensely than someone who has less of this style.**

1. **Commitment:** Individuals with Devoted personality style are thoroughly dedicated to the relationships in their lives. They place the highest value on sustained relationships, they respect the institution of marriage as well as unofficial avowals of commitment, and they work hard to keep their relationships together.
2. **Togetherness:** They prefer the company of one or more people to being alone.
3. **Teamwork:** People with this personality style would rather follow than lead. They are cooperative and respectful of authority and institutions. They easily rely on others and take direction well.
4. **Deference:** When making decisions, they are happy to seek out others' opinions and to follow their advice.
5. **Harmony:** Devoted individuals are careful to promote good feelings between themselves and the important people in their lives. To promote harmony, they tend to be polite, agreeable, and tactful.
6. **Consideration:** They are thoughtful of others and good at pleasing them. Devoted people will endure personal discomfort to do a good turn for the key people in their lives.
7. **Attachment:** Relationships provide life's meaning for this personality style. Even after a painful loss of someone around whom their life was centered, they are able to form new meaningful bonds.

### **The Devoted John in Action**

People with Devoted style care more about other people than about themselves. They are loyal, helpful, considerate, and they are ideal team players. They prefer following to leading and are intensely dedicated to the individuals, groups, and organizations in their lives. Devoted people will always be polite, agreeable, and tactful. But don't expect them to make many decisions, at least not easily. They prefer to let others make the big ones or at least to gather others' opinions before coming to a decision. This tendency, while it can promote teamwork and harmony, can be a drawback for a Devoted person who assumes a leadership or independent role.

People with a predominance of this style will do more of the work and make more the sacrifices involved with keeping a relationship (or a family, office, or organization) going. This is one strong reason why they make excellent employees and spouses, but the tendency to defer to others can be a problem if they involve themselves with people who are overbearing or who tend to take advantage of others.

The biggest stress for a Devoted person is having to deal with trouble in their relationships. They're worriers; they take criticism hard and feel personally responsible

for things that go wrong in their relationships. They may spend more energy than other people worrying about the short—or long-term fidelity of their spouse. And when they are worried about the relationship they may need excessive reassurance. They cope with these stresses by taking it upon themselves to make things better: they aim to please. Unfortunately, this coping style often compounds their problems. The mates of extremely Devoted individuals may already have become exasperated with their compliance and lack of initiative. What they may need now is a show of strength instead.

### **Issues of the Devoted John**

Since they are flighters by nature or temperament under stress they tend to run. What is interesting and important to note about this personality type is that they don't run away they run for help. They look for expertise or security in someone they can depend on and trust with their issues and concerns. Their tendency to become dependent rather than to think independently for themselves is a tendency they have to guard against. Faulty or failing relationships make them anxious and that anxiety has to be dealt with usually by attempting to restore or "take care of" the person they are having relationship difficulty with even if it means threatening their own independence and safety.

### **Scripture for the Devoted John**

Since they are flighters by nature and the disciple John is actually the epitome of a flighter, the book of 1<sup>st</sup> John has a lot to say to Devoteds of whom of course John was. In the book of 1<sup>st</sup> John chapter 2:18-29 we read the following: <sup>18</sup>Dear children, the last hour is here. You have heard that the Antichrist is coming, and already many such antichrists have appeared. From this we know that the end of the world has come. <sup>19</sup>These people left our churches because they never really belonged with us; otherwise they would have stayed with us. When they left us, it proved that they do not belong with us. <sup>20</sup>But you are not like that, for the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and all of you know the truth. <sup>21</sup>So I am writing to you not because you don't know the truth but because you know the difference between truth and falsehood. <sup>22</sup>And who is the great liar? The one who says that Jesus is not the Christ. Such people are antichrists, for they have denied the Father and the Son. <sup>23</sup>Anyone who denies the Son doesn't have the Father either. But anyone who confesses the Son has the Father also.

<sup>24</sup>So you must remain faithful to what you have been taught from the beginning. If you do, you will continue to live in fellowship with the Son and with the Father. <sup>25</sup>And in this fellowship we enjoy the eternal life he promised us.

<sup>26</sup>I have written these things to you because you need to be aware of those who want to lead you astray. <sup>27</sup>But you have received the Holy Spirit, and he lives within you, so you don't need anyone to teach you what is true. For the Spirit teaches you all things, and what he teaches is true—it is not a lie. So continue in what he has taught you, and continue to live in Christ.

<sup>28</sup>And now, dear children, continue to live in fellowship with Christ so that when he returns, you will be full of courage and not shrink back from him in shame. <sup>29</sup>Since we know that God is always right, we also know that all who do what is right are his children.

Here John is counseling Devoteds to live what they were taught in childhood by good teachers and not be concerned when those they had a relationship with leave if they leave the truth of God's word. John is also counseling the Devoteds to transfer their trust and devotion to God so they are not lead astray by following (since they are such good followers) after false teaching and seemingly charming individuals who may influence them in the wrong direction and lead them off the path. True fellowship for the Devoted

John is friendship and fellowship with Christ, following his direction and leading and his alone, making them independent from false dependencies.

## Loyalty

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### WHY IS LOYALTY IMPORTANT?

PSALM 25:10

Loyal obedience to God brings a sweet fragrance into our lives because we are full of love and truth.

RUTH 1:14-16

Loyalty is the mark of true friendship.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:7

Loyalty is love in action.

### WHAT KIND OF PEOPLE ARE LOYAL PEOPLE?

PROVERBS 11:3

A loyal person is trustworthy, and therefore honest.

PROVERBS 17:17

True friends are loyal.

### CAN YOU HAVE DIVIDED LOYALTY?

LUKE 16:13

Loyalty, by definition, is undeviating commitment. If you claim loyalty to God, you cannot also claim loyalty to anything that takes priority over God.

*Promise from God: Psalm 31:23*

<sup>23</sup> Love the LORD, all you faithful ones!

For the LORD protects those who are loyal to him,  
but he harshly punishes all who are arrogant

## Friendship

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### WHAT IS THE MARK OF TRUE FRIENDSHIP?

PROVERBS 17:17; 1 SAMUEL 18:1-4

Some friendships are fleeting and some are lasting. True friendships are glued together with bonds of loyalty and commitment. They remain intact, despite changing external circumstances.

### WHAT GETS IN THE WAY OF FRIENDSHIPS?

1 SAMUEL 18:5-13

Jealousy is the great dividing force of friendships. Envy over what a friend has will soon turn to anger and bitterness, causing you to separate yourself from the one you truly cared for.

PSALM 41:9

When respect or reverence is seriously damaged, even the closest friendship is at risk.

2 SAMUEL 13:11

Friendships are destroyed when boundaries are violated.

GENESIS 50:14-21

Forgiveness restores broken relationships.

### **WHAT DO I DO WHEN I'M HAVING TROUBLE MAKING FRIENDS?**

JOB 19:19; JOHN 5:7

We all go through times when it seems our friends have deserted us.

JOHN 15:15; HEBREWS 13:5

The first thing we must do is remember that God is our constant friend and will never leave us.

EPHESIANS 4:32

Acts of kindness and generosity attract others to you.

### **WHETHER CASUAL OR ROMANTIC, MALE/FEMALE FRIENDSHIPS INVOLVE UNIQUE PRESSURES AND TEMPTATIONS. DOES THE BIBLE OFFER ANY GUIDELINES FOR DATING RELATIONSHIPS?**

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4-7

Paul's timeless description of Christian love becomes the standard of respect and decency that should mark all our relationships, including our dating relationships.

EPHESIANS 5:3-5, 8-18; MATTHEW 5:27-30

In dramatic contrast to much that we see in our modern world, Jesus calls us to a standard of sexual purity in thought as well as in deed.

*Promise from God: Matthew 18:20*

<sup>20</sup>For where two or three gather together because they are mine, I am there among them."

### **The Devoted John's Role in God's Kingdom**

Devoted Johns do make good followers and compassionate friends. They are frequently the caregivers in the church and community caring for those they love and are concerned about. Under certain circumstances they also make excellent leaders. Under God's direction and authority they can lead after and as they follow him. For proof and an example of devoted leadership study the life of the Devoted Moses. This is a great example of a Devoted John personality under direction and direct authority from God.

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## **Moses**

Some people can't stay out of trouble. When conflict breaks out, they always manage to be nearby. Reaction is their favorite action. This was Moses. He seemed drawn to what needed to be righted. Throughout his life, he was at his finest and his worst responding to the conflicts around him. Even the burning bush experience was an illustration of his character. Having spotted the fire and seen that the bush did not burn, he had to investigate. Whether jumping into a fight to defend a Hebrew slave or trying to referee a struggle between two kinsmen, when Moses saw conflict, he reacted.

Over the years, however, an amazing thing happened to Moses' character. He didn't stop reacting, but rather learned to react correctly. The kaleidoscopic action of each day of leading two million people in the wilderness was more than enough challenge for Moses' reacting ability. Much of the time he served as a buffer between God and the people. At one moment he had to respond to God's anger at the people's stubbornness and forgetfulness. At another moment he had to react to the people's bickering and complaining. At still another moment he had to react to their unjustified attacks on his character.

Leadership often involves reaction. If we want to react with instincts consistent with God's will, we must develop habits of obedience to God. Consistent obedience to God is best developed in times of less stress. Then when stress comes, our natural reaction will be to obey God.

In our age of lowering moral standards, we find it almost impossible to believe that God would punish Moses for the one time he disobeyed outright. What we fail to see, however, is that God did not reject Moses; Moses simply disqualified himself to enter the Promised Land. Personal greatness does not make a person immune to error or its consequences.

In Moses we see an outstanding personality shaped by God. But we must not misunderstand what God did. He did not change who or what Moses was; he did not give Moses new abilities and strengths. Instead, he took Moses' characteristics and molded them until they were suited to his purposes. Does knowing this make a difference in your understanding of God's purpose in your life? He is trying to take what he created in the first place and use it for its intended purposes. The next time you talk with God, don't ask, "What should I change into?" but "How should I use my own abilities and strengths to do your will?"

### **STRENGTHS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- ◆ Egyptian education; wilderness training
- ◆ Greatest Jewish leader; set the Exodus in motion
- ◆ Prophet and lawgiver; recorder of the Ten Commandments
- ◆ Author of the Pentateuch

### **WEAKNESSES AND MISTAKES**

- ◆ Failed to enter the Promised Land because of disobedience to God
- ◆ Did not always recognize and use the talents of others

### **LESSONS FROM HIS LIFE**

- ◆ God prepares, then uses. His timetable is life-sized
- ◆ God does his greatest work through frail people

### **VITAL STATISTICS**

- ◆ Where: Egypt, Midian, wilderness of Sinai
- ◆ Occupations: Prince, shepherd, leader of the Israelites
- ◆ Relatives: Sister: Miriam. Brother: Aaron. Wife: Zipporah. Sons: Gershom and Eliezer

### **KEY VERSES**

“It was by faith that Moses, when he grew up, refused to be treated as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. He chose to share the oppression of God’s people instead of enjoying the fleeting pleasures of sin” (Hebrews 11:24, 25).

*Moses’ story is told in the books of Exodus through Deuteronomy. He is also mentioned in Acts 7:20–44; Hebrews 11:23–29.*