

## *Conscientious Matthew*

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

1. **Hard Work:** The Conscientious person is dedicated to work, works very hard, and is capable of immense, single-minded effort.
2. **The Right Thing:** To be Conscientious is to be a person of conscience. These are men and women of strong moral principles and values. Opinions and beliefs on any subject are rarely held lightly. Conscientious individuals do the right thing.
3. **The Right Way:** Everything must be done “right,” and the Conscientious person has a clear understanding of what that means, from the correct way to balance the checkbook, to the best strategy to achieve the boss’s objectives, to how to get every single dirty dish into the dishwasher.
4. **Perfectionism:** The Conscientious person likes all tasks and projects to be complete to the final detail, without even minor flaws.
5. **Perseverance:** They stick to their convictions and opinions. Opposition only serves to strengthen their dogged determination.
6. **Order and Detail:** Conscientious people like the appearance of orderliness and tidiness. They are good organizers, cataloguers, and list-makers. No detail is too small for Conscientious consideration.
7. **Prudence:** Thrifty, careful, and cautious in all areas of their lives, Conscientious individuals do not give in to reckless abandon or wild excess.
8. **Accumulation:** A “pack rat,” the Conscientious person saves and collects things, reluctant to discard anything that has, formerly had, or someday may have value for him or her.

### **The Conscientious Matthew in Action**

People who are heavily influenced by this style believe strongly in hard work and loyalty. They have a strong moral sense, with clear ideas of what is “right” and “wrong” (as they see it). “Should” (“I should” or “you should”) is common in their vocabulary.

Their work—what they do—is usually central to their lives. Whenever they commit to a task, they do the job completely and thoroughly. For this reason, they are the “A” students in school and the achievers in society.

One can count on a Conscientious-style person to cross all the “t’s” and dot all the “i’s.” For them, detail and order are the big priorities. They like things done a certain way and have difficulty adjusting to changes. When a problem does arise, they work tirelessly until it is solved. They can become paralyzed by the lack of a perfect solution, however. Indeed, their drive for perfection and the “right” answer, and their fear of making mistakes, can become a burden to them and to those around them. People who are extremely Conscientious characteristically have difficulty making decisions and

completing their work on time. Also, they require encouragement to delegate tasks, which they tend to avoid since they prefer to do things their own way.

Conscientious people are not given to displaying their emotions and can seem dry and lacking in spontaneity. They're "head" people rather than "heart" people. They are not without emotion inwardly, however, and often are attracted to partners who are openly emotional (for example, people with Dramatic personality style). Within their relationships their lack of emotion and sometimes material generosity can be problematic, however, since the partner often believes, erroneously, that the Conscientious person, who can't easily say, "I love you," is without feeling. Conscientious people make excellent partners, however, as they are not quitters and are extremely loyal.

Overall, this is a high-stress personality style—prone to Type A health risks when the style becomes extreme. For all their enviable self-control and direction, many Conscientious people find it difficult to relax, let stress drift away, calm their thoughts and worries, and experience pleasure.

### **Issues of the Conscientious Matthew**

Conscientious Matthews are flighters by nature. Therefore under stress they tend to move away from the thing or person who is causing them stress. However their movement often looks like work because under stress they tend to either worry about what is causing them stress or work diligently on something else that is less stressful but that can turn their attention away from what is causing their stress. Guilt is another prime issue they deal with. They often feel guilty even when they are not. This in turn causes problems for them with rest since rest is often the hardest thing for them to do. They have to be careful they don't lose sight of the forest or bigger picture in their focus on the trees.

### **Scripture for the Conscientious Matthew**

Since they are conscientious, truth is very important to them. As flighters the disciple John is best representative of a flight temperament. In the book of 1<sup>st</sup> John he addresses flighters and especially Conscientious Matthews in 1<sup>st</sup> John 3:11-24 where John writes, <sup>11</sup>This is the message we have heard from the beginning: We should love one another. <sup>12</sup>We must not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and killed his brother. And why did he kill him? Because Cain had been doing what was evil, and his brother had been doing what was right. <sup>13</sup>So don't be surprised, dear brothers and sisters, <sup>14</sup>if the world hates you.

<sup>14</sup>If we love our Christian brothers and sisters, it proves that we have passed from death to eternal life. But a person who doesn't love them is still dead. <sup>15</sup>Anyone who hates another Christian <sup>16</sup>is really a murderer at heart. And you know that murderers don't have eternal life within them. <sup>16</sup>We know what real love is because Christ gave up his life for us. And so we also ought to give up our lives for our Christian brothers and sisters. <sup>17</sup>But if anyone has enough money to live well, and sees a brother or sister in need and refuses to help—how can God's love be in that person?

<sup>18</sup>Dear children, let us stop just saying we love each other; let us really show it by our actions. <sup>19</sup>It is by our actions that we know we are living in the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before the Lord, <sup>20</sup>even if our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.

<sup>21</sup>Dear friends, if our conscience is clear, we can come to God with bold confidence. <sup>22</sup>And we will receive whatever we request because we obey him and do the things that please him. <sup>23</sup>And this is his

commandment: We must believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and love one another, just as he commanded us. <sup>24</sup>Those who obey God's commandments live in fellowship with him, and he with them. And we know he lives in us because the Holy Spirit lives in us.

Here John is writing a very important message when he is telling Conscientious people to both show or demonstrate their love by their actions and to quit condemning themselves unjustly since "God is greater than their hearts and He knows everything", even if "our hearts condemn us". Truth, both knowing and doing truth with a clear conscience is very important to a Conscientious Matthew. They also often have a peculiar relationship with money which is also addressed somewhat in this passage.

## Rest

---

### WHO CAN AFFORD TO TAKE TIME TO REST WITH SO MUCH TO DO?

GENESIS 2:1-3

If God saw rest from work as holy, how can we afford *not* to rest?

EXODUS 20:8-11

God commands his people to observe times of physical and spiritual refreshment.

### HOW CAN I EXPERIENCE THE REFRESHMENT GOD PROMISES?

PSALM 23:1-3

As we follow Jesus ever more closely, we will experience the rest and refreshment of his presence.

MATTHEW 11:28-30

Jesus relieves our burdens and leads us in a life of peace and rest.

HEBREWS 4:1-11

The final and ultimate rest is the promise of heaven for those who put their faith in Christ.

*Promise from God: Isaiah 40:29-31*

<sup>29</sup>He gives power to those who are tired and worn out; he offers strength to the weak. <sup>30</sup>Even youths will become exhausted, and young men will give up. <sup>31</sup>But those who wait on the LORD will find new strength. They will fly high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.

## Money

---

### WHAT IS A PROPER PERSPECTIVE TOWARD MONEY?

PSALM 23:1; MATTHEW 6:24

The love of money can get our priorities out of line. We must keep reminding ourselves that God must be first in our lives and that money cannot satisfy our deepest needs.

1 TIMOTHY 6:6-10; HEBREWS 13:5; PSALM 119:36

Money is not the root of all evil; the love of it is!

PROVERBS 11:28; ISAIAH 55:2

Too often we buy things to fill a void or a need in our lives. The Bible points to a way to acquire a deep and lasting happiness that always satisfies.

PROVERBS 19:1; MARK 8:36

No amount of money is worth it if it was gained deceptively or dishonestly. Taking advantage of others to make money is stealing. Those who do this lose far more than they could ever gain.

PHILIPPIANS 4:11-13; PHILIPPIANS 4:19

The Bible promises that God will supply all of our needs. The problem comes when our definition of "need" is different from God's. The first thing we must do is study God's Word to discover what he says we need for a fulfilling life.

MARK 12:41-44; 1 JOHN 3:17

Consistently and generously giving away our money might be the most effective way to keep us from loving it. When we see what giving does in the lives of others, needs are met in us that material possessions could never satisfy. This kind of giving measures our Christian love.

PROVERBS 3:9-10; MALACHI 3:10; LUKE 6:38; 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6; PROVERBS 21:20; PROVERBS 28:19; MATTHEW 25:14; 1 CORINTHIANS 4:12; 1 THESSALONIANS 4:12

God urges us to be good stewards in earning, spending, and saving our money. He understands the importance of providing for the needs of our family and the future. But he also expects us to use our money generously to help others.

### **WHY DO WE ALWAYS SEEM TO WANT TO ACCUMULATE MORE?**

ECCLESIASTES 10:19

We tend to think money is the answer to every problem.

MARK 10:17-23

We accumulate money because we trust money and wealth to bring us happiness. How much more happy and productive we could be if we set our minds to accumulating treasure in heaven.

### **WHY DON'T I EVER SEEM TO HAVE ENOUGH?**

ISAIAH 55:1-2

Because we foolishly spend our money on what does not satisfy the soul.

HAGGAI 1:3-6

Because we don't manage our money according to God's priorities.

LUKE 12:13-21

If we depend on our wealth to bring security, there will never be enough.

### **IS DEBT A SIN?**

MATTHEW 18:21-34

In teaching on forgiveness, Jesus uses this parable that seems to assume the lending or borrowing of money is not itself sinful, though the manner in which we respond to debt can be.

## PROVERBS 22:7

Although borrowing money is not, in itself, sinful, we are to be careful and wise in our borrowing so we don't become slaves to debt.

## PROVERBS 6:1-5

Debt is not a sin, but it is a dangerous thing. We are to avoid it whenever possible.

## ROMANS 13:8

Although incurring debt may not be sinful, the failure to repay a debt is.

## *Promise from God: Matthew 6:31-34*

<sup>31</sup>“So don't worry about having enough food or drink or clothing. <sup>32</sup>Why be like the pagans who are so deeply concerned about these things? Your heavenly Father already knows all your needs, <sup>33</sup>and he will give you all you need from day to day if you live for him and make the Kingdom of God your primary concern.

<sup>34</sup>“So don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.

## **The Conscientious Matthew's Role in God's Kingdom**

As a detail person, a truth person, and a hard worker, there is much the Conscientious Matthew finds to do in God's kingdom and for God's kingdom. In fact, it is not they cannot find something to do and work hard at it, but rather they often need to be reminded to rest since they were created as a human being and not a human doing. For more on Conscientious Matthew read the account of Matthew below and refer to the scripture references. Usually Conscientious Matthews are great readers.

## **Matthew**

---

More than any other disciple, Matthew had a clear idea of how much it would cost to follow Jesus, yet he did not hesitate a moment. When he left his tax-collecting booth, he guaranteed himself unemployment. For several of the other disciples, there was always fishing to return to, but for Matthew, there was no turning back.

Two changes happened to Matthew when he decided to follow Jesus. First, Jesus gave him a new life. He not only belonged to a new group; he belonged to the Son of God. He was not just accepting a different way of life; he was now an accepted person. For a despised tax collector, that change must have been wonderful! Second, Jesus gave Matthew a new purpose for his skills. When he followed Jesus, the only tool from his past job that he carried with him was his pen. From the beginning, God had made him a record keeper. Jesus' call eventually allowed him to put his skills to their finest work. Matthew was a keen observer, and he undoubtedly recorded what he saw going on around him. The Gospel that bears his name came as a result.

Matthew's experience points out that each of us, from the beginning, is one of God's works in progress. Much of what God has for us he gives long before we are able to consciously respond to him. He trusts us with skills and abilities ahead of schedule. He has made each of us capable of being his servant. When we trust him with what he has given us, we begin a life of real adventure. Matthew couldn't have known that God would use the very skills he had sharpened as a tax collector to record the greatest story ever lived. And God has no less meaningful a purpose for each one of us. Have you recognized Jesus saying to you, "Follow me"? What has been your response?

### **STRENGTHS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

- ◆ Was one of Jesus' 12 disciples
- ◆ Responded immediately to Jesus' call
- ◆ Invited many friends to his home to meet Jesus
- ◆ Compiled the Gospel of Matthew
- ◆ Clarified for his Jewish audience Jesus' fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies

### **LESSONS FROM HIS LIFE**

- ◆ Jesus consistently accepted people from every level of society
- ◆ Matthew was given a new life, and his God-given skills of record keeping and attention to detail were given new purpose
- ◆ Having been accepted by Jesus, Matthew immediately tried to bring others into contact with Jesus

### **VITAL STATISTICS**

- ◆ Where: Capernaum
- ◆ Occupations: Tax collector, disciple of Jesus
- ◆ Relative: Father: Alphaeus
- ◆ Contemporaries: Jesus, Pilate, Herod, other disciples

### **KEY VERSE**

"As Jesus was going down the road, he saw Matthew sitting at his tax-collection booth. 'Come, be my disciple,' Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him" (Matthew 9:9).

*Matthew's story is told in the Gospels. He is also mentioned in Acts 1:13.*