



What
Kind of **Person**
Are You?

WHAT KIND OF PERSON ARE YOU?

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What sort of person am I? What sort of person are you? What *sort* of person...?

It's not an exact science. There are words, but not strict definitions, labels, pigeonholes. It's an intuitive sense.

Are you honest? Trustworthy? Kind? Good?

It also depends on who's asking the question. And under what circumstances.

For instance, Jesus went to the local synagogue one Sabbath Day. After He had read from Scripture and taught the people about the Kingdom of God...

Mark 1:23 Suddenly, a man in the synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out, ²⁴ "Why are you interfering with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"

²⁵ But Jesus reprimanded him. "Be quiet! Come out of the man," he ordered. ²⁶ At that, the evil spirit screamed, threw the man into a convulsion, and then came out of him.

²⁷ Amazement gripped the audience, and they began to discuss what had happened. "WHAT SORT OF NEW TEACHING IS THIS?" they asked excitedly. "It has such authority! Even evil spirits obey his orders!" ²⁸ The news about Jesus spread quickly throughout the entire region of Galilee.

What sort of teaching? What sort of teacher? He speaks with authority. Authority that even evil spirits obey! That's a special sort of Person, wouldn't you agree?

Luke 5:17 One day He was teaching; and there were some Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting there, who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem; and the power of the Lord was present for Him to perform healing. ¹⁸ And some men were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed; and they were trying to bring him in and to set him down in front of Him. ¹⁹ But not finding any way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles with his stretcher, into the middle of the crowd, in front of Jesus. ²⁰ Seeing their faith, He said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven you." ²¹ The scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, "WHO IS THIS MAN who speaks blasphemies? Who

can forgive sins, but God alone?"²² But Jesus, aware of their reasonings, answered and said to them, "Why are you reasoning in your hearts?"²³ Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins have been forgiven you,' or to say, 'Get up and walk'?²⁴ But, so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins, (WHAT SORT OF MAN I AM)"—He said to the paralytic—"I say to you, get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home."²⁵ Immediately he got up before them, and picked up what he had been lying on, and went home glorifying God.²⁶ They were all struck with astonishment and began glorifying God; and they were filled with fear, saying, "We have seen remarkable things today."

Even the religious leaders had questions...

Luke 7:36 Now one of the Pharisees was requesting [Jesus] to dine with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table.³⁷ And there was a woman in the city who was a sinner; and when she learned that He was reclining at the table in the Pharisee's house, she brought an alabaster vial of perfume,³⁸ and standing behind Him at His feet, weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears, and kept wiping them with the hair of her head, and kissing His feet and anointing them with the perfume.³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet He would know who and WHAT SORT OF PERSON THIS WOMAN IS who is touching Him, that she is a sinner."

⁴⁰ And Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he replied, "Say it, Teacher."⁴¹ "A moneylender had two debtors: one owed five hundred [pieces of silver], and the other fifty.⁴² When they were unable to repay, he graciously forgave them both. So which of them will love him more?"⁴³ Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have judged correctly."⁴⁴ Turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave Me no water for My feet, but she has wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair.⁴⁵ You gave Me no kiss; but she, since the time I came in, has not ceased to kiss My feet.⁴⁶ You did not anoint My head with oil, but she anointed My feet with perfume.⁴⁷ For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little."

⁴⁸ Then He said to her, "Your sins have been forgiven."⁴⁹ Those who were reclining at the table with Him began to say to themselves, "WHO IS THIS MAN WHO EVEN FORGIVES SINS?"⁵⁰ And He said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

Jesus' own disciples were stunned, and unsure...

Matthew 8:23 When He got into the boat, His disciples followed Him.²⁴ And behold, there arose a great storm on the sea, so that the boat was being covered with the waves; but Jesus Himself was asleep.²⁵ And they came to Him and woke Him, saying, "Save us, Lord; we are perishing!"²⁶ He said to them, "Why are you afraid, you men of little faith?" Then He got up and rebuked the winds and the sea, and it became perfectly calm.²⁷ The men were amazed, and said, "WHAT KIND OF A MAN IS THIS, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

They had no category for Him! This was beyond their image of a Messiah. They had no label that fit.

Word about Jesus even reached the governor of the region, and aroused his curiosity...

Luke 9:7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was happening; and he was greatly perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead, ⁸ and by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the prophets of old had risen again. ⁹ Herod said, "I myself had John beheaded; but WHO IS THIS MAN ABOUT WHOM I HEAR SUCH THINGS?" And he kept trying to see Him.

Then, finally, as Jesus and His disciples walked through the northern territory of the Galilee, He asked them:

Matthew 16:13 "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "YOU ARE THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD." ¹⁷ And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of John, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."

At last, they were beginning to understand (although, in the next breath, Peter stood up to Jesus and rebuked Him because He spoke of His impending arrest and execution).

Jesus continued to present the Kingdom of God among the people, showing mercy to the broken, healing the sick, even raising the dead, while explaining the Scriptures and showing God to be a good and faithful Father, who provides help and hope to those who seek Him.

Yet, the people's view of Jesus was limited to His deeds of kindness and His words of truth. Most still didn't grasp WHAT SORT OF MAN He really was. And it broke His heart.

Luke 13:34 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!

"You didn't get it! You listened, but you didn't recognize My voice. You watched Me, but you couldn't see Me for who I am."

Matthew 21:6 The disciples... brought [a] donkey and [its] colt, and laid their coats on them; and [Jesus] sat on the coats. ⁸ Most of the crowd spread their coats in the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them in the road. ⁹ The crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David;

*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord;
Hosanna in the highest!"*

¹⁰ When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" ¹¹ And the crowds were saying, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee."

A few days later, Jesus returned to that City during the preparation for Passover—the annual commemoration of God’s mighty deliverance of the Israelite people from four centuries of slavery and hard labor in Egypt.

He paused, as the city loomed before them across the Kidron Valley. He began to weep. He mourned their unbelief, saying:

Luke 19:42 "If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes... ⁴⁴ because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."

They refused to recognize WHAT SORT OF MAN HE WAS.

Full disclosure: this was not a new or recent issue for the people of God. From their earliest days, under Moses’ leadership, they veered away from God’s presence, and old habits repeatedly overcame their pledge of faithfulness to His commands.

The lament we heard from the lips of Jesus over the city of Jerusalem, could just as well have come from the mouth of the prophet Jeremiah or Isaiah. Here’s a sample from Isaiah:

*Isaiah 63:1 WHO IS THIS who comes from Edom,
from the city of Bozrah,
with his clothing stained red?
WHO IS THIS in royal robes,
marching in his great strength?
"It is I, the Lord, announcing your salvation!
It is I, the Lord, who has the power to save!"*

Isaiah was announcing their eventual salvation, but his words did not stir the people for long. They were troubled over the imagery of clothing stained with blood from a day of wrath and vengeance, as some of you have been when reading the Book of Revelation. They took in the words, but couldn’t quite make out WHAT SORT OF MAN THIS WAS.

King David had more light, as he sang these words over his city and his people:

*Psalm 24:7 Lift up your heads, O gates,
And be lifted up, O ancient doors,*

That the King of glory may come in!

⁸ *WHO IS THE KING OF GLORY?*

The Lord strong and mighty,

The Lord mighty in battle.

⁹ *Lift up your heads, O gates,*

And lift them up, O ancient doors,

That the King of glory may come in!

¹⁰ *WHO IS THIS KING OF GLORY?*

The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah.

Who is THE king of glory? The first question was raised from a relational distance.

Then, Who is THIS king of glory? The question now raised in His presence. It's become a personal matter. And the answer...

The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory.

Selah.

Notice the *selah*. It's a musical marker to repeat the last phrase as a choral response for emphasis.

The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory!

You may have been thinking to yourself, "Well, Jesus is a conundrum; He's hard to figure out—God-man, Man-God, one with the Father, identical with the Spirit, Savior of the world."

But it's really not *His* problem; it's ours. It's not that He is hiding from us; we are hiding from WHO HE IS. It's not about His representation; it's about our perception.

We use labels and definitions as much to escape from reality as to find it. If I can label something, I can also dismiss it as "no longer a mystery," "no longer a source of angst," "I no longer need to concern myself with it."

She's a flaming liberal; I'm a conservative.

He's no good; I do my part.

They're lost; I'm saved.

She's irreverent; I'm holy.

He voted for _____; I voted for _____.

We are hard of hearing and our eyesight (and insight) is dim. And we are lazy thinkers.

That's the bad news. But the good news is: because the problem is localized in me and you, we can change! We can grow up! We can open our eyes and open our ears. We can wake up!

How? you say. I'm so glad you asked!

James 1:22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. ²³ For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; ²⁴ for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten WHAT KIND OF PERSON HE WAS. ²⁵ But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty, and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man will be blessed in what he does.

Doing the Word. Not just reading it, or listening to it. Doing it. Putting it into practice. Falling down seven times and getting back up again, to do the Word.

If you have forgotten to do the Word, you have forgotten WHO YOU REALLY ARE. This is why I keep reminding you to read the Bible. Live with that Book. Every day. It's the mirror that shows you WHO YOU REALLY ARE, and WHO GOD HAS MADE YOU TO BECOME.

This is so important! This is more than having a great life. This—right here, right now—this is the formation of your eternal destiny. You're not only a part of God's great plan, you are a PARTNER in His great plan! The result depends on you, just as it depends on Him. He has His part, and you have yours. His may be infinitely greater, but yours is equally necessary. You cannot achieve what only He can do, and He will not do what you yourself must do.

² Peter 3:10 But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

¹¹ Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, WHAT SORT OF PEOPLE OUGHT YOU TO BE in holy conduct and godliness, ¹² looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! ¹³ But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

I'm looking forward to a new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

Only righteousness dwells there. So, will I be permitted to dwell there? Will you be permitted to dwell there? It all depends on WHAT SORT OF A PERSON YOU ARE.

And that depends on doing the Word, in holy conduct and godliness, day after day. When the sun shines, and when the rain falls. When progress is slow, and when the pace is rapid. When the road is smooth, and when it is rough. When people assist, and when they oppose.

It is to this end that Jesus assured us, *“Look, I am with you, even to the end of the age”* (Matthew 28:20).

We CAN do this, but only as we look to Him and lean on Him, together. Look, lean, together.

Now that you have heard this, What sort of person are you? What sort of person do you want to be?