

I Said This You Heard That

Speaking Red

May 1, 2022

Good morning everyone.

I'm so happy I was able to convince Hannah to let the band do that song because, not only do I love country music in general, I love those particular lyrics and the attitude they represent.

- The attitude of vision and dedication and willingness to not be deterred by obstacles
- The attitude that is typical of those who are of the "Red" temperament.

If you're new with us today and you're wondering what I'm talking about I should tell you that we're in the second week of a series called *I Said This You Heard That ...*

... which is designed to help us better understand the people around us – the people we ...

- Live with
- Work with
- Play with
- Have to put up with

We're trying to better understand how they're naturally "wired" or their temperament – the way they ...

- Approach life
- Perceive life
- Engage with life
- Avoid life

... so that we can better communicate with them.

Because when we communicate better, our relationships are better.

And when our relationships are better, *life itself* is better for everyone involved.

The trick, of course, is *understanding the people around us* because everyone, it seems, is different.

“Like the snowflakes that fall from the sky, we’re all unique. We’re all one-of-a-kind.”

Even the Bible echoes that thought.

In one of his prayers, King David of ancient Israel put it like this:

*You made my mind and heart.
You wove me together in my
mother’s womb.*

*I will give you thanks because
your deeds are awesome and
amazing.*

Psalm 139:13-14 (NET)

However, like the snowflakes that fall from the

sky, there are many similarities and commonalities.

And, over the years, people who study these kinds of things have come up with many ways of classifying and typifying certain aspects of the way people are wired up.

One of the most popular approaches in recent days is the Enneagram ... which is actually very old in its origin.

Then of course, there is ...ⁱ

- The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.
- The “Big Five”
- The MMPI
- The Values and Motives Inventory
- The Motives, Values and Preference

Inventory

And the list could go on and on ...

... because, as unique as we all are, there are well-recognized similarities and commonalities that allow us to understand the bigger picture of how the people around us are internally wired.

Now, the one we're using in this series has been around for a very long time – maybe longer than any of the others – and has taken several forms over the years.

Beginning with Hippocrates way back in the fifth century ...

... and his classification of four basic temperament types:

- Sanguine
- Choleric

- Melancholic
- Phlegmatic

... which he believed was linked to the color of a person's bodily fluids.

Obviously, that was wrong, but his observation and classification was still very helpful ...

... which is why, years later, it was adopted by those who created the DISC profile ...

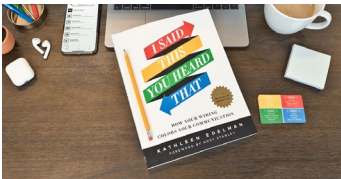
... which describes the four temperaments as ...

- Dominant
- Influential
- Steady
- Compliant

As I said last week, over the years we've used the DISC profile extensively within our staff and volunteer leadership here at North Heartland. In fact, it's part of our interview process.

More recently, a Christian psychologist by the name of Kathleen Edelman ...

... created a workbook called *I Said This You Heard That* ...



- ... which explains the four temperaments in terms of colors
- ... and how understanding each temperament helps us to speak according to *their* needs not ours; how to speak “that” instead of “this.”

A Brief Review

Now, as part of last week's message, we watched a video clip of her explaining these four types, so I don't want to go back thorough all of that.

Instead, I want to give just a very brief overview of how this works in her system.

Basically, people tend to lean in the direction of being task-oriented or people-oriented as well as being an introvert or an extrovert ...

... which describes how you do your thinking, not if you're outgoing or prefer to be a wallflower.

Extroverts tend to process their thoughts out loud while introverts like to think it all out internally before they speak.

And that combination is what produces a temperament type – the way you prefer to experience and interact with the world around you.

By the way, Edelman occasionally uses the same words as Hippocrates – Sanguine, Choleric, Melancholic and Phlegmatic – but mostly she sticks to colors.

Now, because of those combinations of “leanings,” we will typically speak in one of four basic “languages.”

Yellow: People & Fun Red: Power &
Control

Green: Calm & Harmony Blue: Perfection &
Order

But speech goes both ways.

Because of our leanings – our temperament ...

... we desire *to hear* certain things from the people around us.

Yellow

Approval

Acceptance

Attention

Affection

Red

Loyalty

Sense of Control

Appreciation

Credit for Work

Green

Harmony

Worthiness

Lack of Stress Support

Respect Space & Silence

Blue

Safety

Sensitivity

And, if you're curious what your color is, there's a test that's available on our website (www.northheartland.org) if that would be helpful to you. There's a banner at the very top of the page that will take you to it ...

... along with links to some of the additional

videos Edelman makes available on YouTube.

Now, because I know that some of you are wired up to be more visual in your learning, I want to show you a short video that kind of summarizes everything I just said.

So, check it out.

Video Clip –

Now, what we're going to do beginning today and continuing for the next four weeks is to look at each color and talk about three things:

- The strengths and weaknesses of that particular temperament.
- The pitfalls you need to be aware of in communication if that's your type.
- And then, for everyone else, how to speak the language of that particular type.

Obviously, there's a lot more to it than what we'll have time to go into in each message so, again, I encourage you to get the workbook or watch some of Edelman's videos.

Of course, all of this raises the question of *why*.

- Why should we care what color anyone else is?
- Why should we try to speak the language of someone else's temperament?

One reason, as I said earlier, is that better *understanding* leads to better *communication* which leads to better *relationships* which leads to a better *life*.

But for those of us who are Christians – we believe in and follow Jesus of Nazareth and his way of living – it's a little deeper than that.

For a Christian – and we talked about this in detail last week ...

For a Christian the most profound implications of *being* a Christian have to do with how we manage our *relationships* – not with how spiritual or moral we try to become.

Not that those – being spiritual and moral – are unimportant.

But, again and again, Jesus and the Apostles make it clear that the true measure of our faith and commitment is *how well we love other people* – especially those who are not like us and may not like us.

And one of the most practical applications of that truth – on which this whole series is based (as well as Edelman’s book and videos) ...

One of the most practical applications is what

Paul wrote to a group of first century Christians in the region of Ephesus.

He wrote:

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths ...

And when Paul writes “unwholesome” he doesn’t mean “profanity.”

Instead, he means ...

- Things that tear people down instead of building them up.
- Things don’t create “wholeness” in a person but destroy it.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths ...

... but only what is helpful for building others up according to

...

Whose needs?

... their needs, that it may
benefit ...

Who?

... those who listen.
Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)

And that's what we're trying to learn how to do
in this series.

Understanding Reds

And we're going to begin with those of us who
are Red ... or Choleric ... or Dominant "Ds" on the
DISC profile.

I'm curious, is there anyone here has identified
themselves as being a Red?

If you're sitting next to someone who is a Red but has not identified themselves as a Red, would you raise your hand?

And, if you are a Red, congratulations! As King David wrote ...

- *God* is the one who made your mind and heart like that.
- *God* wove you together like that while you were in your mother's womb.

And *that* is awesome and amazing!

So, let's talk about you – and me, because that's what I am: a Red.

Let me give you four characteristics and behaviors of Reds.

1. Reds tend to be visionaries about anything and everything.

Reds – as we saw from the earlier chart – tend to prefer tasks over people, and they tend to think out loud.

And *because* they are task-oriented what they think out loud about is ... *tasks!*

They think out loud about ...

- What they are doing ...
- Or want to be doing ...
- Or plan to be doing ...
- And what they think everybody else could and should be doing.

Reds are driven by a vision of what could be accomplished if they – and others – would just put in the work.

... which leads to a second characteristic.

2. Most Reds have a high degree of personal confidence.

They're not intimidated by difficult challenges.

In fact, their intense desire to achieve often gives them courage to try things about which most people would say "it can't be done."

If you say *that* to a Red, it only energizes them. It brings out their competitive spirit. They love to *win* – no matter what the playing field.

And they work hard to win because they really do believe that, given enough time and energy, they can accomplish just about anything they desire.

In the immortal words of Travis Tritt, "I'm gonna be somebody someday. You can bet your hard-earned dollar I will."

3. And, because Reds believe they can *do anything* ... they desire to *control* and *direct* almost *everything*.

The two questions that will be on the mind of a Red in any given situation are “Who’s in charge here?” and “what’s the goal?”

If they don’t get a clear answer – or if they don’t like the answer – then it’s likely that they’ll attempt to take charge and set the agenda.

Now, that’s not necessarily a bad thing, because most Reds have an intuitive sense of what needs to be done in order to accomplish a goal.

In fact, if you have a problem that requires a solution, you want to talk to a Red. They have a knack for being able to quickly ...

- Analyze a situation

- Recognize the bottom-line issues – what really matters and what does not.
- And then, come up with a plan that has a decent chance of success.

Many years ago, when I first began to think about leaving my former church and starting a new one, I had the opportunity to visit with a church planting strategist for the Baptist General Convention of North America.

One of the first things he wanted to do was to give me a personality test.

Why I asked him “why,” he said that their research showed that the most successful church starts were led by people with a certain profile.

Guess which one?

Yep. It was Reds ... Choleric ... Dominant Ds on the DISC profile.

So ...

- Reds tend to be visionaries about anything and everything.
- They have a high degree of personal confidence.
- They desire to control and direct almost everything.

4. Finally, Reds are willing to do what it takes to get better results.

You've heard the statement "if it ain't broke, don't fix it?"

That kind of thinking drives a Red crazy because, if it ain't broke, that just means there's time to find an even better way to do it! ...

whatever “it” might be.

Reds are always looking for the tweak or the angle or *the revolution* that can make things go better ... with, of course, “better” being defined by *them*.

Before our first daughter, Marilyn, was born, Jetta and I did what pretty much every set of expectant parents did at that time: we went to LaMaze classes.

As a task-oriented Red, I remember listening closely to what could be expected during the labor process.

And then they told me I was supposed to be “the coach” which, as a Red, I naturally loved.

So, the day finally came when Jetta went into labor, and we went to the hospital, and it was time to be the coach.

And I led her through what we had been taught.
When you feel a contraction ...

- Do five “hees” and one blow.
- Then three “hees” and one blow.
- Then, finally, one “hee” and one blow.

And we did that a few times ... until ... *I came up with a better plan.*

As to how that plan went ... well, let’s just say that my vision and creativity at that time was not appreciated or welcomed.

And that was very frustrating because I could plainly see that “the vaunted LaMaze” wasn’t all that great, and my way was definitely better!

Of course, that’s a great illustration of “the dark side” of being blessed with a Red temperament.

When our positive characteristics get taken to an extreme ...

- Our sense of confidence becomes pride and an unwillingness to admit when we're wrong.
- Our desire to control and direct becomes heavy-handed demandingness.
- Our desire to achieve and win can lead to insensitivity; treating people as simply a "means to an end."

In fact, if you're predominantly a Red (or have a significant amount of Red characteristics in your temperament mix), you've probably had people get upset with you over those kind of things.

They've told you that ...

- “You’re so arrogant!”
- “You always have to be right!”
- “You don’t care about anyone but you!”
- “You’re too demanding!”

The crazy thing is, when that happens, you’re shocked (and maybe even hurt) to discover that anyone would perceive you like that, because ...

- That wasn’t your intention at all!
- You were just trying to help!

The problem was ... and is ... you said “this,” and they heard “that” ...

... which is why, if you’re a Red, you need to learn to speak a different language.

You – we – need to learn to communicate in

ways that come across as ...

*... building others up according
to ...*

Whose needs?

*... their needs, that it may
benefit ...*

Who?

*... those who listen.
Ephesians 4:29 (NIV)*

“Red Speak”

And, if you're a Red like me, I'll give you some suggestions on that a bit later in this message.

But let's jump on the other side of the fence for a little while.

What do you do when you're in a relationship

with a Red and those positive aspects of their temperament begin to go overboard?

My observation is that most people don't know what to do, because an out-of-control Red is very hard to handle!

Fortunately, *God* knows what to do and we can learn from His example – specifically, from how He dealt with ...

- One of the reddest Reds of all time ...
- Who, amazingly, turned out to be the same guy who wrote the theme verse we've been using in this series ...
- None other than ... the Apostle Paul.ⁱⁱ

Paul was responsible for spearheading the spread of Christianity throughout the first-century Roman world and, without his

“redness” (so to speak), you and I wouldn’t be sitting here today.

But there was a point in Paul’s life where that got out of hand.

Paul was a man on a mission, but it was the wrong mission and it resulted in the destruction of many lives as Paul himself once explained.

By the way, if you’re not a Christian and you think that Jesus is only interested in “meek and mild” “goody two-shoes” types, you need to hear his story.

And as we listen, pay attention to all the “red” language he uses.

**Speaking to a crowd gathered in Jerusalem,
Paul said ...**

*“I am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city
in Cilicia, and I was brought up
and educated here in Jerusalem*

under Gamaliel.

“At his feet I learned to follow our Jewish laws and customs very carefully. I became very zealous to honor God in everything I did, just as all of you are today.

Notice the word “zealous” – that’s a totally Red characteristic.

He continues:

“And I persecuted the followers of the Way, hounding some to death, binding and delivering both men and women to prison.

Notice the intense *power and control* packed into that one sentence – “persecuting, hounding, binding, delivering” – again, a truly Red trait.

“The high priest and the whole council of leaders can testify that this is so.

“For I received letters from them to our Jewish brothers in Damascus, authorizing me to bring the Christians from there to Jerusalem, in chains, to be punished.

Notice how important the concept of authority is to Paul. Again, a typical Red perspective.

And notice that *single-handedly* Paul intended to wipe out this blasphemy concerning Jesus. Only a Red would attempt something like that!

And, in typical Red fashion, he was effective. He was a one-man wrecking crew, roaming the countryside hauling Christians into jail for their faith, even participating in the murder of some.

Clearly, at this point in his life, Paul’s “redness” is out of control.

But God is going to do something that will bring about tremendous change in Paul's perspective, his attitude, his actions, and ultimately, his entire life.

Paul says ...

"As I was on the road, nearing Damascus, about noon a very bright light from heaven suddenly shone around me."

"I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?'"

Saul was Paul's name before he became a Christian.

"Who are you, sir?" I asked."

Classic response.

Paul gets knocked off his horse and hears a voice speaking to him and immediately recognizes it as an authority higher than him.

So, his response is not “who are you?” It’s “who are you, sir?”

“And he replied, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth, the one you are persecuting.’

“I said, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’

And the Lord told me, ‘Get up and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all that you are to do.’

*“I was blinded by the intense light and had to be led into Damascus by my companions.
Acts 22:3-11 (NLT)*

Ok, there's a little more to the story and we'll come back to it.

But let's pause here for a minute because I want you to see three things Jesus did that serve as an example of how you and I can deal with the Reds in our lives.

The first thing God did was to stop Paul in his tracks. Literally.

If you are going to communicate effectively with a Red temperament, you've got to realize that sometimes ...

1. Confrontation may be necessary to get their attention.

Since Reds are more task-oriented than people-oriented, they are not good at picking up on the distress that their actions may be causing.

Unless God has given them the spiritual gift of

discernment or they've grown and matured in their character ...

- Reds don't read body language very well
- They don't read between the lines
- And they're not good at picking up on subtle hints.

If you expect a Red to do those things, you're likely going to be very disappointed. If you don't say something to them, they're going to think, "no problems here – let's keep going!"

And confronting a Red isn't that hard ... if *you also* happen to be a Red. But if you're not, it can be very intimidating.

So, let me just encourage you.

We Reds may not enjoy being confronted but we also don't like being thought of as jerks. So do us

a favor and be brave. We're worth it.

Earlier, we saw that one of the primary needs of a Red is *loyalty* – which means that you'll stick with someone even when it's hard *because they matter*.

And when you take the risk of confronting a Red, that's what you communicate. "I'm willing to go toe to toe with you because you matter."

That's the first thing Jesus did for Paul.

Here's the second thing He did ... which we can also do ... which is to ...

2. Focus on how their *actions* affect you.

When Jesus confronted Paul, He didn't focus on the weaknesses of Paul's temperament.

He didn't ask "why are you being such a *jerk*?"

Instead, He asked, “why are you *persecuting* me?” He focused on what Paul was doing and its effect.

And instead of being defensive and trying to justify his behavior, Paul’s response was, “who are you, sir?” as if to say, “I had no idea I was persecuting *you personally*.”

When confronted in the right way, most Reds will respond the same way Paul did. “I had no idea that’s how you felt from what I was doing.”

The next thing Jesus did with Paul was to give him clear direction. “Paul, go to Damascus and await further instruction.”

And that’s great advice on communicating with Reds.

3. Be clear about what you want them to do.

We saw earlier that Reds need a sense of

control. They need to know that there is a plan of action.

And when you confront them, and you explain how their actions are messing with you, it can knock them off their high horse (like it literally did to Paul).

And that is a total loss of control. That's why being clear about what you want them to do next is so helpful.

I can't count the number of times I've said to my wife over the years, "You know that I'm not great with people. You know that I'm not great with relationships."

"So, when you see me getting out of line, or I'm doing something that hurts you, I need you to tell me what to do. I need you to give me a plan I can follow."

We Reds need that because a clear plan – even if

it's not *our* plan – establishes that sense of control in our lives.

So ...

- Jesus has confronted Paul.
- He's focused on how Paul's actions were affecting Him.
- And He's been clear about what Paul needs to do next.

And Paul, who has been blinded by the light, is being led into the city where, as it turns out, he'll have to wait for three days in silence and darkness.

You know what Paul was thinking during that time?

It doesn't say in the text, but as a Red myself, I

have a pretty good idea.

He was thinking, “I thought I was doing the right thing. But I was wrong. And have screwed up so badly, that’s it. God is done with me. I’m finished. I should go crawl in a hole somewhere.”

I think Paul was beating himself up mentally and emotionally.

I think that high sense of confidence that typifies a Red was in the tank, which is why what happens next is so amazing – and instructive.

Paul says that ...

“A man named Ananias lived there ... (in Damascus) ...

“He came to me and stood beside me and said, ‘Brother Saul ...

What? Did you say *brother* Saul?

“I’ve been trying to destroy you guys! And yet, you think of me as your brother?”

Ananias said, “Brother Saul receive your sight.’ And that very hour I could see him!

Then ... this is so important when it comes to “speaking Red” ...

“Then he [Ananias] told me, ‘The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and hear him speak.

“You are to take his message everywhere, telling the whole world what you have seen and heard.”
Acts 22:4-15 (NLT)

And that’s what Paul did ... and, as I said, because he did, you and I are sitting here this morning.

So, what's the takeaway in dealing with a Red?

- After you've confronted them ...
- And told them how their actions are affecting you ...
- And told them what you need them to do instead ...

4. Re-affirm their value to you.

God sent Ananias with an encouraging message that spoke to Paul's greatest strength and greatest weakness:

“In spite of all your failures, God has chosen you. And you have a great future ahead of you because He will use you in mighty ways.”

And Paul's temperament did not change.

If you read the rest of his story and the letters he wrote (which make up much of the New Testament), it's obvious that he was still who God had wired him up to be in his mother's womb: a Dominant D, Choleric, Red.

And God used him and his temperament for good.

Now, obviously, many more things could be said about “speaking red” – how to communicate with those of this particular temperament.

And if you want to know what that more is, I encourage you to check out the *I Said This You Heard That* workbook and videos.

But I thought it would be helpful to focus on what is clearly the most challenging aspect of dealing with a Red, which is when their need for power and control gets out of hand.

And I'm an expert on that because it's most challenging aspect of dealing with me.

So, you're welcome.

Advice to Reds

But now, in the time that remains, I want to say a few things to those who are my Red brothers and sisters about communicating with others in a way that that allows them to hear "this" and not "that" ...

... what we *really are* trying to communicate.

I don't always do these things well, but I've learned them because ...

- People who are loyal to me have confronted me and done what we just talked about.

- And I don't want to fail.

So, I've pointed my drive to succeed to the people side of those four quadrants.

Now, I'll never be as good at relationships as Yellows and Greens but I've gotten a lot better.

So, very briefly, four things about communication.

1. When you apologize, don't say "I'm sorry you feel that way."

... because what that communicates is "I'm sorry you're so weak and fragile that you can't handle your emotions properly."

That'll really win them over.

Not.

k When you apologize say “I’m sorry that *what I did* caused you to feel that way.”

But, Rick, it’s not totally my fault they feel that way! I can’t be responsible for someone else’s emotions!

That’s true. But you *can* own your part in it.

So *do it*, because when you do that causes the walls to come down.

Can you imagine Paul saying, “Jesus, I’m sorry you feel persecuted”?

An apology isn’t an apology unless you own it.

**2. Your tone and volume are always worse and higher to others than they are to you.
Turn them down.**

When you think you’re expressing frustration and anger at say, a level 3 out of 10, I can almost guarantee you that what people around you are

experiencing is a 7 or an 8.

You're just wired up to be more intense than everyone else.

So, own that. Take responsibility for it.

3. Trade controlling language for options language.

Because you can see a solution to almost everything and you are a verbal processor, a lot of times you look at what others are dealing with, and you just naturally say things like ...

- “You know, you *should* do this ...”
- “You *ought* to do that ...”
- “And *why don't* you do <whatever>”

And you're trying to be helpful. You're just asking a question or contributing advice.

But what people actually *hear* is that the reason why they *wouldn't* do what you suggest is because they are too stupid to figure out on their own what they *should do* and *ought* to do.

And people don't like that because it feels controlling and manipulative.

And people don't like being controlled and manipulated.

**A better way is to share your idea using
“options language.”**

Options language says ...

- “You know, you *could* do this ...”
- “Have you *considered* doing that?”
- “Hmmm ... *what if* you tried <whatever>”

Now, it's just a minor tweak, but the beauty of that kind of language is that people don't feel controlled. And they don't feel manipulated.

Instead, they feel the freedom to consider your idea and either accept it or reject it.

And people like that because people like freedom.

And they'll like you a lot better, too.

Conclusion

If we had the time, I could say a lot more on all of that.

But let's just close with this.

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths but only what is helpful for building others up according to their

*needs, that it may benefit those
who listen. Ephesians 4:29
(NIV)*

What we say and how we say it – especially for those of us who are Reds – matters.

Endnotes

ⁱ See <https://www.workstyle.io/best-personality-test>

ⁱⁱ The following insights are from Ken Voges and Ron Braund, *Understanding How Other Misunderstand You*