

Are You Under Assertive, Assertive Like Jesus, Or Over Assertive?

The life goal of the genuinely born again is to become more like our Lord Jesus and represent Him in public. The Head of His called-out ones was assertive in representing His Father and the truths that people must live by. As His followers, we're called to represent Him in this world.

The UNDER Assertive Person



An under assertive person refuses to speak up because of fear of embarrassment or fear of the anger of others. Silence may seem a good alternative; you can avoid negative situations. But, your non-engagement has its pitfalls. The Bible addresses fearful passivity: *"Fear of man will prove to be a snare"* (Proverbs 29:25). *"There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love"* (1 John 4:18); *"For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by Him we cry, 'Abba, Father'"* (Romans 8:15).

An under assertive person's fear reveals an absence of the love of Jesus. Shrinking back can lead to denial of belonging to Jesus: *"If anyone is ashamed of Me and My words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels"* (Luke 9:26). Note this aftermath: after failing to intervene an under assertive person often slanders the one they should have spoken to! Slandering the person they refused to confront is a revenge weapon of the fearful. From the moment they failed to speak when they should have, the under assertive person has stifled the love of Jesus and given way to sin instead.

The OVER Assertive Person



This person is a bull-in-a-china shop thinks too much of themselves or is empowered by their own unresolved bitterness. The over assertive person goes through life leaving a trail of emotionally wounded people. Much like the obnoxious Nabal in 1 Samuel 25, the over-assertive bully refuses wise counsel. Even when helpful others address the person and his or her bull-ish attitude or behavior, they don't change: *"As a dog returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly"* (Proverbs 26:11; also 27:22).

The Assertive Person



Assertiveness is summed up in our Lord's own words, *"Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets"* (Matthew 7:12). The assertive follower of Jesus has appropriated by grace their Lord's humility and meekness. This person takes Paul's admonition seriously: *"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves"* (Philippians 2:30). Not over-bearing, the assertive person does however stand up for their Lord and for the righteous truths of His Word (see Galatians 6:1).

Confidently assured that the Spirit of Jesus dwells within them, they lovingly desire to represent Him to others. The biblically assertive person puts into action the command of their Lord, *"No one lights a lamp and hides it in a jar or puts it under a bed. Instead, he puts it on a stand, so that those who come in can see the light"* (Luke 8:16). Living for Jesus IS assertive!

Your assertiveness to intervene in the lives of those you care for is a sign that you are truly aware of the Spirit of Jesus indwelling you. That willingness to make Him and His will clear through you reflects your determination to represent your Lord to all, regardless of consequence. The choice is yours: to live in fear (under assertive), to live in arrogance (over assertive), or to live **in love (assertive). Choose love!!!**

And, keep this in mind:

- **To an under assertive person, an assertive person appears over assertive.**
- **To an over assertive person, an assertive person appears under assertive.**

Christ-like Character — Assertiveness

A definition of biblical assertiveness might be, “a follower of Jesus who possesses the best combination of truth and humility.” The following questions will be helpful in discerning your assertiveness. Be honest in your responses. Please write alongside each statement the appropriate number that describes you best from the selection below. And, it’s vital that you discuss the results with others who care about your Christ-like development.

1 means seldom or never

2 means somewhat or occasionally

3 means frequently

4 means almost always

- ___ 1. When a person is highly unfair, do you call it to their attention?
- ___ 2. Do you find it difficult to make decisions?
- ___ 3. Are you openly critical of others' ideas, opinions, behavior?
- ___ 4. Do you speak up when someone cuts ahead of you in line?
- ___ 5. Do you often avoid people or situations for fear of embarrassment?
- ___ 6. Do you usually make key decisions without talking them over with others?
- ___ 7. Do you insist that others take on a fair share of the household chores?
- ___ 8. Are you prone to "fly off the handle"?
- ___ 9. When a salesman makes an effort, do you find it hard to say "no" even though the merchandise is not really what you want?
- ___ 10. When a latecomer is waited on before you are, do you call attention to it?
- ___ 11. Are you reluctant to speak up in a discussion or debate?
- ___ 12. If someone has borrowed money (or a book, garment, tool, etc.) from you and is overdue in returning it, do you mention it?
- ___ 13. Do you continue to pursue an argument after the other person has had enough?
- ___ 14. Do you generally express what you feel?
- ___ 15. Are you disturbed if someone you know fails to greet you warmly?
- ___ 16. If someone keeps kicking or bumping your chair in a movie or a lecture, do you ask that person to stop?
- ___ 17. Do you find it difficult to keep eye contact when talking to another person?
- ___ 18. In a good restaurant, when your meal is improperly prepared or served, do you ask the waiter/waitress to correct the situation?
- ___ 19. When you discover that merchandise is faulty, do you return the merchandise and ask for an adjustment?
- ___ 20. Do you show your anger by name-calling or using obscenities?
- ___ 21. Do you normally wait for others to initiate a conversation before engaging them?
- ___ 22. Do you let your facial expressions (rather than words) represent how you are really feeling?
- ___ 23. Do you often step in and make decisions for others without asking them for input?
- ___ 24. Are you able to openly express love and affection to others?
- ___ 25. Are you able to ask your friends for small favors or help?
- ___ 26. Do you think you always have the right answer?
- ___ 27. When you differ with a person you respect, are you able to speak up for your viewpoint?
- ___ 28. Are you able to refuse unreasonable requests made by friends?
- ___ 29. Do you have difficulty complimenting or praising others?
- ___ 30. If you are disturbed by someone irritating you, do you say so?
- ___ 31. Do you shout or use bullying tactics to get others to do as you wish?
- ___ 32. Do you finish other people's sentences for them?
- ___ 33. Do you get into physical or verbal fights with others, especially with strangers?
- ___ 34. At family meals, do you control the conversations?
- ___ 35. When you meet a stranger, are you the first to introduce yourself and begin a conversation?