

# Defusing Drama: LESSON 1

**Introduction:** All of us, whether we like to admit it or not, give into the temptation to gossip, have a critical or negative attitude, or be overly dramatic. We often do these things so that attention is placed upon ourselves. Have you ever considered that many behaviors you choose are for the purpose of making yourself the center of attention?

These behaviors often take place when emotions are heightened and self-control is lost resulting from a trial, bump in the road, or the sense that you are no longer in control of a situation, but want to be. What does God say about these moments (Philippians 2:4-8 and Luke 22:42)? The natural reaction of the carnal man and the flesh will quench the Holy Spirit, if you allow it. Our society often refers to people who create a lot of drama as “drama queens.” A dictionary definition is “a person given to often excessively emotional performances or reactions.” While the term is somewhat humorous, Satan uses unnecessary drama to disrupt and even destroy individuals, families, and whole churches. An unsaved person may not know better, but a melodramatic Christian has no excuse. For the purpose of this study, we will use the following definition:

**Definition:** A drama queen is a person (male or female) who either amplifies or creates unnecessary emotional upheaval as a coping mechanism resulting in a lack of self-control.

Self-control is not a synonym for focus, determination, or discipline. According to Galatians 5:22-23, self-control (temperance) is a fruit of the Holy Spirit. Christians who choose to live their lives as slaves to their emotions are not controlled by the Holy Spirit.

We live in a very emotional society where everyone does what is right in their own eyes. Self-control is not a valued character trait, and Christians are far too often no different from pagans when it comes to exercising self-control.

## 1. What is self-control?

Self-control is the ability to control one’s emotions and behaviors in the face of temptations and impulses. This is not easy choice, but it is the choice of putting God first. This raises a difficulty. If it’s truly “self” control, then we’re all in deep trouble because we can’t even come to Christ without God’s help (John 6:44). If we are depending on our own “self” to control our behavior, then we can never truly hope to live a holy life that is pleasing to God.

Self-control is not willing ourselves to be obedient and avoid sinful practices. What Christians need to realize is that self-control has little to do with self and control. It is a fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23), and it is a result of someone who walks with the Lord in the light of His Word. Someone who does not evidence self-control is not walking with the Lord. This may seem harsh, but it is realistic. Of course, choosing to repent and confess immediately is also an option for the Christian so fellowship can be restored.

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Self-control, therefore, is a team effort. We need a lot of help in fighting the three-fold enemy of the Devil, the world, and the flesh. We cannot do it by ourselves. Victory only comes when we allow God to strengthen us (Philippians 2:13; 4:13).

## 2. How does the Bible value self-control?

- \* Proverbs 25:28
- \* 1 Corinthians 7:5
- \* 1 Timothy 2:9
- \* Titus 2:11-12
- \* James 1:19

## 3. What are the keys to victory?

You can have as much self-control as you choose. It is just a matter of submitting to the Holy Spirit and allowing him to take control. But, how do you do this?

- \* **Read Your Bible!** How can you expect to grow as a Christian if you do not read your Bible? Sadly, most Christians view a personal devotional time with God as not very important. Why else would you skip it so often? Does your body need food? Does your car need gas? Your spiritual life needs fuel. That fuel is systematically reading the Bible and applying it to your life. The Holy Spirit speaks, guides, and convicts through Scripture. If you ignore it, you cannot have self-control.
- \* **Memorizing Scripture.** Memorizing Scripture with your heart not your brain helps change behavior. Psalm 119:11 says, “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”
- \* **Choose to glorify God by serving others first.** Jesus decided to wash his disciple’s feet. How disgusting and derogatory for the God of heaven to do such a thing (John 13:1-17). Yet, he chose to be humble and not stir up drama. Your reaction to life events is your choice (Philippians 2:4).

## Homework

**Memory Verse:** James 1:19-20 - Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

**Take the Test:** Give yourself an honest evaluation on the test provided. For extra credit, review your answers with your spouse or a close friend.

**Action:** Make it a point to choose peace over pandemonium this week.

# THE DRAMA QUEEN TEST

**Instructions:** Using the following scale, honestly rate yourself and then tally your score.

1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=somewhat agree, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree.

The results are on the back page. Do not view them until after you have completed the test.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. You personalize things that aren't personal. You often find yourself offended by others who disagree with you.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Having a bad day means the end of the world. It seems impossible to turn it into a good day so you do not even try.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Having a bad day means everyone else's world should end too.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. You tend to blow things out of proportion. Whether it be a tsunami or a splinter, you have the same emotional reaction.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Every conversation mysteriously becomes all about you. You find yourself offended when others do not like you giving your own \$.02.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. You love being the center of attention, and will do pretty much anything to stay there.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. You gossip about others (Gossip is telling info to someone who is not part of the problem or solution). You get an adrenaline rush if someone has a problem. Fresh Meat!
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. You love watching drama unfold, especially on social media. You check the replies to a post often just to see who is winning, or bring home the victory, baby. Boom! Mic drop.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. You stir up drama by being edgy because you know it will offend people, especially on social media. This can also apply to your dress standards, appearance, or vocabulary.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. You frequent blogs and message forums just so everyone can know that your opinion is the right one. After all, total strangers need correction and you like trolling.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. You are annoyed when people will not do things your way because it is the right way.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. You compare your life to others and gain comfort knowing you are better than them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. You find fault and criticize others quite often. You have a reputation for being a Negative Nancy, Daisy Downer, or Paulina Partypooper.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. You believe everyone would benefit from your opinion even though no one asked for it, and often share your opinion even though no one asked for it.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. You're obsessed with your looks...mirror, mirror on the wall.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. You get stressed out easily and lose emotional control. You never stop to think that this has a deep effect on others around you. After all, your emotions are more important.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. You do not apologize for your mistakes and find it easy just to blame others. You may not always be right, but you are most certainly never wrong.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. You use your bluster to fluster. Don't have control of a situation? Just yell! That will teach everybody else something.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. You cry when you don't get your way, hold grudges, or are hostile to change.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Someone you respect has called you "a drama queen" or overly dramatic.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total Score

### **Answer Key**

If you scored a 20-40, Congratulations!!! You are either a corpse or fibbing.

If you scored 41-55, you believe you have fairly strong self-control.

If you scored a 56-70, you rank within the status quo with a flair for the dramatic.

If you scored a 70-100, Congratulations!!! You just won the Oscar for Best Drama Queen.

### **Bonus**

Subtract 10 points from your total score if you reviewed your answers with your spouse or a close friend and did not get into an argument.

### **Penalty**

Add 10 points from your total score if you reviewed your answers with your spouse or a close friend and did get into an argument.

If you scored a 110, you may be the new star of a reality TV show. This is not a good thing.