

## Our stance

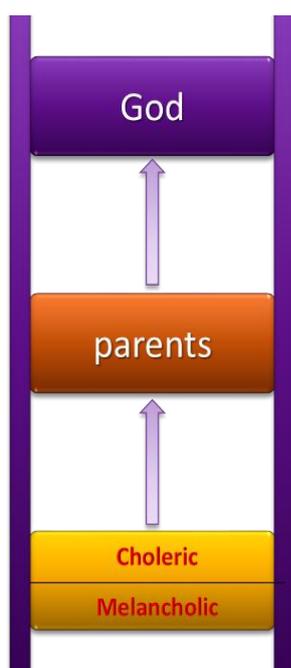
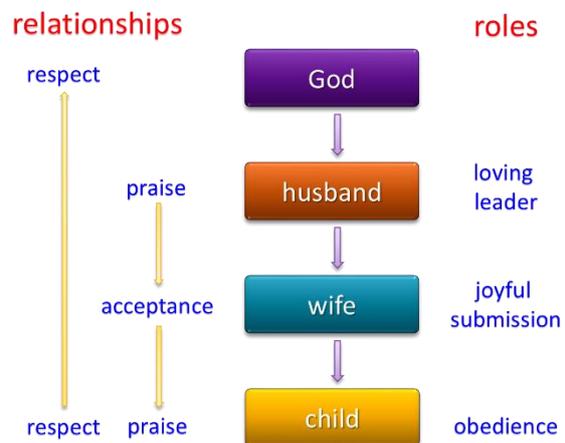
This course takes us back to the scenario in Step One in which the extrovert is sitting at one end of the table and the introvert at the other. We will be asking, ‘what does it take for both temperaments to be comfortable together (shalom) and to function fully together?’ We will approach this by thinking about our stance and how to change our stance. To do this will require us to explore the relationship between our two (or three) temperaments and especially the role of the undeveloped introvert.

### 1.1 What do we mean by ‘stance’?

We mean that internal position that we adopt that determines how we instinctively respond to the Lord, to others and to ourselves. We will discover that our stance developed as a result of what we feel about ourselves. We can say that our stance is determined by the attitude we have towards ourselves.

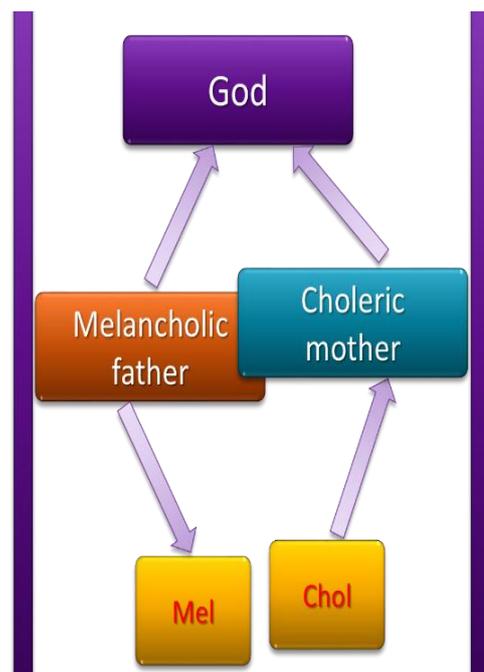
### 1.2 How did our stance form?

We have seen from earlier courses that we are shaped by nature, nurture and choices. An important part of nurture is the powerful influence of our parents, especially in the early years of our development. Our attitude towards ourselves was largely developed then. This is when security, self-worth, and significance could have been established. In Step Three, we saw how muddled roles within the family contribute to a negative stance and so we will remind ourselves of how this works. Muddled relationships result in muddled relationships. Where there is a clear understanding of where we all stand in relationship to one another, and the right ingredients present in that relationship, then a safe structure is created in which needs can be met and a child can develop with a strong sense of being joined up on the inside.



However, where that is not the case, a disconnection between the child’s temperaments takes place. It is this disconnection that gives rise to the stance. In the example to the right, we are looking at what could happen if a Choleric mother takes the lead in the family.

The child’s Choleric is drawn towards the Choleric in his mother, to her strength and leadership, but he dislikes the position that his Melancholic father takes up – and that leads him to form a negative view of his own Melancholic.



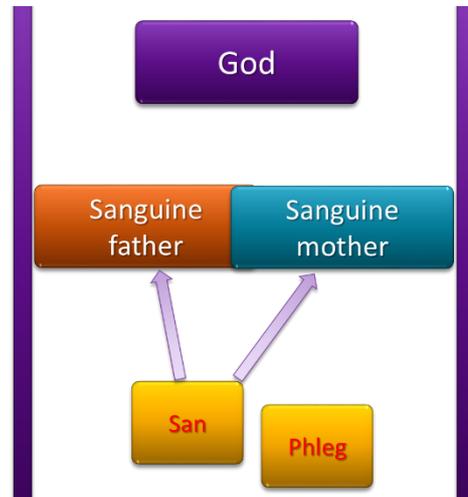
Instead of being like this:



He ends up like this:



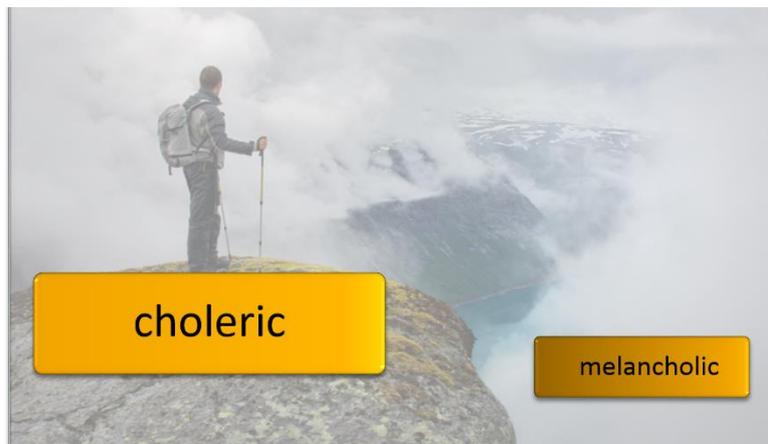
In the example to the right both parents are living in their Sanguine. It is important to them both to 'be on top.' Because there is no leadership structure, there is less incentive to draw on the introvert. The husband doesn't use his introvert to create an environment of sensitivity in which his wife can afford to live in hers. A Sanguine Phlegmatic child growing up in that family would see that acceptance comes from being as extrovert as possible and so would devalue – even disconnect – his Phlegmatic. This becomes a settled stance that could go with him for the rest of his life.



**1.3 The environment**

With parents 'out of place' within themselves and each other, an environment is created that sends the wrong signal to the child. The child hears, 'You are not good enough. Being yourself is not enough.' A Melancholic child comes into the world with the question, 'What am I worth?' The uncertainty that is created in the home produces a negative answer to that question. The Phlegmatic's question is, 'Am I good enough. Is there anything to me?' Again, if the introvert is not given its proper place in the family dynamics, he will set off into life with only negative answers to his question. This makes the normal challenges of life harder to handle.

Situations that could knock his sense of value or produce anxiety become more stressful because they feed into his underlying doubts about himself. He will struggle in life because he has a largely negative view of his introvert and this perspective will play out in his adult relationships



It is all about how the extrovert views the introvert. We will need to understand exactly what the one feels about the other for it is precisely at that point that our view of ourselves is formed. It is that view that determines our stance.