

The Lawless - What Is He Like?

View of God, Scripture and the Church of the Lawless group

In general, the Lawless individual is not going to concern himself very much with considerations about God, scripture or the church. That is, unless he can benefit from it in some way. For example, he may join a church because he thinks he can make good business contacts there but may have no interest whatsoever in the real meaning of the religion.

There is no particular data on how or if this person even bothers with any type of consideration of scripture, the existence of God or any church.

Locus of Authority of the Lawless Group

In a person at this stage, there is no locus of authority. This person is totally under the control of his or her own ego or his or her own will with very little consideration of general principle or of other people. S/he has never submitted to any type of authority so his or her existence tends to be unprincipled and chaotic. If his will changes from moment to moment, so goes his life.

For this reason this person most often finds himself in trouble, addicted to drugs or in trouble with the law. But not always.

There reportedly are some externally very successful people who are in this category. They may be able to hide their lack of authenticity because they are good actors but everything they do is based on pretense. And everything they do has the intention of manipulating the situation or other people to their own advantage.

Because this person knows no other way, they most likely have no idea that their behavior is so self-serving relative to that of other people.

Needs of the Lawless Group

This person mainly acts so as to seek their own pleasure and to serve their own ends. Their behavior is selfish and manipulative.

Worldview of the Lawless = Egocentric

This group holds the most narrow worldview of all the stages. A person in this group sees the world in an *egocentric* way. The world exists only to serve him or her. Others really do not count for much.

EXAMPLES -

My Own Story

It is normal for a child to go through the Lawless Stage at some point. But the key word here is "through." They are supposed to grow out of it before becoming an adult. Unfortunately, there are many examples in our society of Lawless individuals getting away with Lawless acts.

But just to give readers a first hand view of how a Lawless person thinks, I am sharing one little story I remember from when I was in kindergarten.

James dashed out of his room with a black plastic container with a handle at the top and a snaky-looking sign on the front. A doctor's kit! He sat down on the floor in the darkish hallway where my kindergarten friend, Gail and I were playing one morning after I had spent the night at her house. James opened the bag and took out a plastic toy stethoscope to listen to his younger sister Gail's heart. As he did so, I caught sight of some small bottles inside the bag. Each bottle was about half full of tiny multicolored pills. Wow—pills in the doctor's kit! I could hardly control my excitement.

I had had many nurses' kits over my short years. For some reason, I always had a special fascination with nurse's kits—a toy I don't believe is popular at all anymore. In my day, there were many available—a plastic case of some sort, something like today's first aid kit, that contained oh, a plastic stethoscope, toy blood pressure cuff, some Band-Aids, gauze bandages, and usually a play nurse's cap. (If this was before your time, nurses in those days wore a special cap, usually a white piece of folded cloth with maybe a red cross on the front. By now the use of nurses' caps has fallen by the wayside in favor of the unisex scrub uniforms, sans cap.)

Anytime I would pass by one of those nurses' kits in a store, I would beg and beg until my parents bought it for me. But it had never occurred to me to ask for a doctor's kit—such were the cultural limits put on women in those days—but that is a story for another day.

I never dreamed that inside a doctor's kit would be pill bottles! But yes, to my amazement, there in James' doctor's bag were four or five little bottles with candy pills inside. I cannot begin to describe the captivation I then felt toward these bottles. Was it because I wanted the candy inside? Not in the least! It was the very thought of those bottles that grabbed me. Suddenly I knew I absolutely HAD to have them!

Thoughts swam in my head. If I asked for them, this kid might just give them to me. Or I might have to trade something of mine in exchange. But, I was sort of shy about asking. And I really didn't have any good way to explain why I wanted those bottles. Was it because I didn't feel I could ask my parents to buy me my own doctor's kit? I don't think so, but who knew if we bought another doctor's kit, whether it would contain these same type of bottles, or even any bottles at all?

Now, I had had enough moral training to realize it was wrong to steal. But.....at that moment it just seemed that was my only choice. I wanted those bottles so badly that

leaving them there at Gail's house was simply NOT an option for me that day. My conscience tried to step in and do its job, but well, weakly developed as it was in those days, my only strong concern was "Will I get caught?" And "If I get caught, just how much trouble will I get into?" Surely, these bottles had little or no monetary value.

But in my relatively powerless state as a kid, I just could not think of a way to obtain bottles like that honestly through my own resources. At no point did I consider that stealing those bottles was in some way harming my friends. I only wondered how long it would take them to realize the bottles were missing. Would they remember that we had played with them the day I was over there? Would it occur to them to accuse me of stealing them? Would these bottles be a serious enough loss that my friends would cause trouble about it?

While weighing these options in my mind, I waited and watched for my opportunity. How could I get the bottles into my possession without my friends noticing? Sure enough, at some point Gail and her brother moved on to another activity in a different part of the house, leaving the open doctor's kit there on the floor in the hall, right by the bathroom. I followed my friends out but very soon reported a need to visit the bathroom. On the way back I scooped those bottles out of Jim's doctor's bag and stuffed them into the bottom of my suitcase. And I have absolutely no recollection of ever playing with them once I got home.

That is what I can remember of my own Lawless stage in my kindergarten years. The rules didn't matter; my friends' welfare didn't matter. I wanted those pill bottles and nothing was going to stand in my way of getting them. I felt small and powerless. I saw no other way of obtaining the coveted medicine bottles through my own honest efforts. I viewed my friends as "haves" while I was a "have not." Most importantly, my own strong desire to own those bottles overpowered all other considerations. There was no guilt taking what I wanted if I could get away with it. But I was brought up in a relatively stable home that allowed me to grow beyond that Lawless stage in a graceful, hardly noticeable way. I am happy to say that by my teen years, I had certainly moved beyond this Lawless stage, though I have no strong story to report about the transition.

But you can see how in a person with a different set of life experiences, the "small and powerless" attitude, sense of being a "have not" and a hugely underdeveloped conscience could persist far into adulthood. This would be your "Lawless" or Stage One person – a victim of his own will.