

THE GIFT OF SPEECH, Pt 4

Flattery and Praise

Christian Character in Action: Lesson 20

8 July 2022

- Flattery:** To speak well of people and lift them up with your words to gain an advantage over them. It is a polite lie designed to make someone feel good about what you think of them so they will give you what you want.
- Prov 26:28** Flattery is a lie. It shows that I hate you and don't care that I'm ruining you. The damage is done when the truth becomes known. Flattery is a very hurtful practice.
- Job 17:5** If your children observe you using flattery, they will learn that it is okay to lie to people and pretend that you like them.
- Rom 16:17-18** Those who use "**good words and fair speeches**" to deceive people are attempting to "**cause divisions**," splitting a church, dividing friend from friend, husband from wife, etc.
- Psa 12:1-4** Those who flatter have a double heart. They tell you one thing, but their true intent toward you is something entirely different. Flattery is something God hates (Prov 6:17) and He will put an end to all flattering lips.
- Job 32:21-22** God doesn't want us to accept any man's person, or to give flattering titles unto man. Rabbi (Mt 23:8), Master (Mt 23:10), Reverend (Psa 111:9), Father (Mt 23:9), Holy Father, Pontiff, Holy Mother, etc.
- When you use one of those titles and you don't respect the person or what they represent, you are bestowing an honor with your lips that your heart disagrees with. You're being dishonest.
- Dan 11:21** The Antichrist is a "vile person." You would never GIVE such a person the kingdom. But he shall OBTAIN the kingdom by flatteries. In **verse 32**, he will corrupt people by flatteries. In **verse 34**, he will maintain his following through flatteries.
- He doesn't love people, but he says he does. He doesn't care about people, but he says he does, he thinks ill of all people, but he tells them they're wonderful.
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PROPER PRAISE AND ESTEEM FOR PEOPLE

1 Thes 5:12-13 The Bible instructs us to praise people for doing things worthy of praise, to commend people for doing things that are commendable, and to honor people who are honorable.

- This is not flattery because your lips agree with your heart.
- If someone is doing a good job, tell them. If they're a blessing, tell them.
- Flattery creates problems. Praise encourages people.

Prov 17:3 The Lord tries the hearts to see if there's any gold or silver in there.

Prov 27:21 Praise can reveal the gold or silver that is in a person's heart. It will also reveal if there's nothing of value in the heart.

- If praise causes your head to swell in pride, it's not the fault of the one who gave the praise, the sin is on your part.
- If you withhold praise from a deserving recipient, the devil will attempt to make them quit. They won't be a blessing anymore.
 - Praise can help! Your words of affirmation and support can encourage a person to continue to be a blessing, especially if they harbour some self-doubt.

EXAMPLE

1 Sam 18:5-9 After a great victory, the people praised Saul and David. But they told the truth and ascribed thousands slain to Saul and ten thousands slain to David.

- If they flipped the numbers to flatter Saul, it would have been a lie.
- The praise that Saul received revealed his bitter, jealous, suspicious, lying heart.
 - He suspected that David would try and take his kingdom away.
- The praise that David received encouraged him to fight for Israel. It revealed that his heart was right in his relationship with the king and his nation.

How will you receive praise? Will it fill you with pride — or will it humble you to consider that God can use you in such a way as to be a blessing to others? How is your heart?