

Graciousness Again

“He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend.”
Proverbs 22:11

The DEFINITION

- A. **Gracious.** The quality of being pleasing and attractive; possessing charming and winning grace especially in manner; of character: likely to find favour; of actions: winning favour or goodwill; being courteous and polite with especially condescending courtesy; being merciful and compassionate; possessing grace or moral excellence; endowed with grace or charm of appearance; in a limited sense being graceful and elegant; characterized by kindness and courtesy especially being condescendingly kind, indulgent, and beneficent to inferiors. (OED).
- B. **Odious.** A quality and manner deserving of hatred, hateful; causing or exciting hatred or repugnance, disagreeable, offensive, repulsive; exciting odium. (OED).
- C. **Froward.** Disposed to go counter to what is demanded or what is reasonable; perverse, difficult to deal with, hard to please; refractory, ungovernable; in a wider sense, bad, evilly-disposed, ‘naughty’. (OED).
- D. **Churlish.** Intentionally boorish or rude in behaviour; hard, harsh, ‘brutal’, surly, ungracious. (OED).
- E. A gracious person is never offensive or haughty, always discreet and modest, selfless and serving, forgiving and patient, cheerful and agreeable, gentle and kind, courteous and polite, merciful and compassionate, flexible and accommodating, and is delightfully charming in every way. They are usually described as a “lovely person”; and they would never behave themselves in a disagreeable way. They have many friends, though they do not pursue them or flaunt them. They are always kind, and you feel accepted, safe, and loved in their presence. Instead of the discomfort, fear, tension, and work of talking to some, they put you at ease completely and instantly.

The IMPORTANCE

- A. A gracious woman retains honour – she is always adored, appreciated, respected, and valued (Pr 11:16).
- B. But there is an odious woman (or person), who provokes hatred and repugnance in others (Pr 30:21-23).
- C. A beautiful woman not gracious is a ring in a pig’s nose (Pr 11:22). How much more an ugly woman!
- D. When I am asked what quality attracts others the most, I will always say graciousness (Proverbs 22:11).
- E. A good name and loving favor from others is better than riches, and it is won by graciousness (Pr 22:1).
- F. As Christians, we should be exactly like our Lord Jesus Christ – He was Graciousness, as is His Father.
- G. Our goal is to be conformed more and more to the glorious image of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to grow in favor with God and men as He did, which requires graciousness in both cases (Luke 2:52).
- H. Pain or trouble in human relationships is caused by one or both parties lacking in proper graciousness.
- I. There is no makeup or cosmetic surgery that can add so much to a woman’s appeal (I Pet 3:3-4), and neither is there any makeup or surgery that can cover odiousness (Pr 27:15-16).
- J. The man marrying an odious woman will live 50 years in marital hell (Pr 12:4; 19:13; 21:9,19; 25:24).
- K. A rule for success – to be approved and promoted by kings – is to be gracious (Proverbs 22:11).
 - 1. Jonathan, though prince, instantly and greatly loved David for his gracious speech (I Sam 18:1-4).
 - 2. Joseph and Daniel rose to assist great kings by their excellent spirits (Gen 41:38-39; Daniel 6:3-4).
 - 3. If you wish to be a noble man, comparable to a king or prince, then learn and practice graciousness.

The EXAMPLE

- A. Our Lord Jesus Christ – the perfect Man – should always be our chief goal in character and conduct.
 - 1. Jesus grew in favour with God and man – graciousness with godliness brought approval (Lu 2:52).
 - 2. Jesus had grace poured into His lips, which is the great key and proof of graciousness (Psalm 45:2).
 - 3. When Jesus returned to His hometown, the people heard His remarkable graciousness (Luke 4:22).
- B. Samuel also developed such a spirit – he had graciousness with godliness that both sought (I Sam 2:26).

- C. Daniel had an excellent spirit without fault or error – he was very faithful and noble (Dan 5:12; 6:3-4).
- D. David was incredibly gracious long before he ever entered the palace – God had taught him Himself.
 - 1. He was a man after God’s own heart; therefore he possessed the beautifying graciousness of God.
 - 2. All the people accepted and loved him and set his name high through Israel (I Sam 18:5,14-16,30).
 - 3. Jonathan, who was to be king, loved him instantly as his own soul (I Sam 18:1-4 cp Prov 22:11).

The SOURCE

- A. The Holy Spirit leads and convicts people to be gracious – by His unlimited fruit (Galatians 5:22-23).
- B. The Holy Scriptures describe the beautifying character traits and virtues that should characterize saints, but they must be taught frequently, practically, and forcefully to communicate a real lesson.
- C. You can never get started until you acknowledge your sin and repent for your past odious conduct.
 - 1. Any church can be easily divided by public opinion into those with or without an abrasive edge.
 - 2. Half of those chosen with an abrasive edge will deny it and argue that they are truly quite gracious.
 - 3. All that matters is how God and others view you. Your opinion of yourself is only selfish pride.
 - 4. A great difficulty in ever changing is the stubbornness of most odious folks to admit their faults.

The PRACTICE

- A. Exalt listening over speaking, if you talk a lot. An excellent spirit spareth words (Pr 17:27).
- B. Speak always with grace, seasoned with salt (Col 4:6; Eph 4:29; Eccl 10:12; Prov 16:13).
- C. A pure heart provides gracious speech, so keep thy heart with all diligence (Pr 22:11; 31:26).
- D. Don’t allow even a little folly, which impulsive spirits will try to justify (Ecclesiastes 10:1).
- E. Exalt mercy over judgment. Manliness or holy zeal is not always condemning (James 2:13).
- F. Learn each of the fifteen aspects of charity and practice them at all times (I Cor 13:4-7).
- G. To the odious person, compassion and affection is flattery and effeminate; but they err.
- H. Never . . . that means never . . . be interested in presenting your own opinion (Phil 2:3-4).
- I. Meekness is a great virtue we must seek – the lack of interest or effort in self-promotion.
- J. If you are given to moodiness, you need to rule your spirit; graciousness does not allow it.
- K. Admire and esteem gentleness rather than despise it as effeminate and weak (Gal 5:22-23).
- L. Practice with your wife and children, for familiarity provides the greatest test for graciousness.

For Further Study:

- 1. The Proverb commentary, “[Proverbs 22:11](#),” which details Solomon’s lesson about David’s graciousness before Jonathan.
- 2. The Proverb commentary, “[Proverbs 11:16](#),” which states the axiom that gracious women will always be esteemed.
- 3. The Proverb commentary, “[Proverbs 11:22](#),” which graphically condemns odious women regardless of their attractiveness.
- 4. The Proverb commentary, “[Proverbs 18:24](#),” which establishes the general rule that many friends indicate your friendliness.
- 5. The study document, “Gracious or Odious,” which compares and contrasts various adjectives and descriptions of both.
- 6. See the quiz below to measure yourself by a few questions about typical situations where you respond one way or the other.

Examine Yourself – Are You Gracious or Odious?

DIRECTIONS: Put a **G** for graciousness or an **O** for odiousness beside each statement.

- _____ 1. Talks loudly.
- _____ 2. Cheerfully changes, if her husband dislikes her outfit or meal plans.
- _____ 3. Has few friends.
- _____ 4. Thinks they are gracious.
- _____ 5. Says, "I am sorry," quickly and easily.
- _____ 6. Father is sure the kids can handle his calling them names.
- _____ 7. Verbally thankful with sincere repetitions.
- _____ 8. Others say, "That's Brenda. Try to overlook it."
- _____ 9. Interrupts husband or others for trivial corrections.
- _____ 10. Willing to eat French-fries when she ordered rice pilaf.
- _____ 11. When offered candy, she says, "My favorite kind has caramel."
- _____ 12. Never gets angry, ruffled, stiff, or offended.
- _____ 13. Thinks that wife and children accept his harshness.
- _____ 14. Asks nosy questions with the intent of "helping."
- _____ 15. Sends thank you cards and notes like breathing.
- _____ 16. Has a suggestion or three when visiting married children.
- _____ 17. Takes a quiz like this and does not change a thing.
- _____ 18. Chooses a restaurant but tells the kitchen how to cook.
- _____ 19. Easily overlooks and ignores others' faults.
- _____ 20. Has an opinion when it was not asked for.
- _____ 21. Speaks roughly to his children to show control.
- _____ 22. She thinks she is her husband's second conscience or mother.
- _____ 23. Apologetic and thankful when corrected
- _____ 24. Rules moods or pain so that no one ever sees either.
- _____ 25. Critical and complains.
- _____ 26. Defensive about correction.
- _____ 27. Never asks embarrassing or forward questions.
- _____ 28. Never says or repeats things about others who are absent.
- _____ 29. Intense and cannot relax and chill out without doing something.
- _____ 30. Stares instead of helping carry conversation.
- _____ 31. Patient listener that agrees and smiles.
- _____ 32. Opinionated.
- _____ 33. Forgives others instantly and fully.
- _____ 34. When meeting a person, "There's a spot on your collar."
- _____ 35. Efficient, business-like, and formal about everything.
- _____ 36. Shows dislike of group decision or activity.
- _____ 37. Always wants to "help" by sticking nose in.
- _____ 38. Smiles, laughs, and comforts waitress who spills her drink.
- _____ 39. Never demands or expects an apology.
- _____ 40. Wife says, "You just went to a gun show two months ago."
- _____ 41. Thorough with frequent compliments and praise.
- _____ 42. Has no problem interrupting conversations for "emergencies."
- _____ 43. Very attentive, affectionate, and giving to inferiors.
- _____ 44. Believes that "principle" should be taught at restaurants.

- _____ ** I think I am ...
- _____ ** Most others, not counting my mother, think I am ...
- _____ ** In light of the above, I am ...