

## Attitude And Gratitude.

### Reverend Vossen

Romans 14:1-12

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God. We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living. **Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then, each of us will be accountable to God.**

### I. Attitude And Its Respect Toward Others

From the Our Daily Bread, May 18th, by David McCasland

A friend told me he had recently accomplished one of the things on his "bucket list" (a list of things to do before you die) when he took his sister to Europe. Although he had traveled there many times, she had never been there. What struck me was the unselfish nature of having that goal on his "bucket list." It caused me to wonder how many of my dreams and goals are focused on others, not on myself.

Romans 12:6-21 speaks of God's gifts to us as members of the body of Christ and how we should use them in everyday life. All of them are outward in focus. Teaching, for example, is not for the teacher's self-fulfillment but for the benefit of others. So too with the other gifts mentioned in verses 6 through 8. Paul summarized this open handed approach by urging us to "be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves" (v.10 niv).

Paul exemplified this attitude by including others in his ministry and investing his life in the next generation of believers. Generosity, hospitality, forgiveness, and compassion guided his behavior.

Our goals in life should include giving away the gifts God has given to us.

Grant us, then, the grace for giving  
With a spirit large and free,  
That our life and all our living  
We may consecrate to Thee. —Murray

Instead of complaining or whining about what is, or is not right in our perspective in our brothers and sisters life in Christ. Let's have the attitude toward investing in that person's life in a positive way, with the gifts God has granted us from the resource of His Holy Spirit. For every one of us is accountable to the Lord, and we

need to all be able to be transparent in actions one toward another. For our God sees all clearly without any mask or veil for us to hide behind.

Let our attitude toward others be clothed with humility, that way our gifts will be holy and our lives a blessing to all.

## II. God's Attitude Is Toward Mercy, And Gratitude Should Be Its Reflective Character Trait.

Matthew 18:21-35

Peter came and said to Jesus, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times." For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything." And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, "Pay what you owe." Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, "Have patience with me, and I will pay you." But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. **Then his lord summoned him and said to him, "You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?" And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."**

Constables Notes

From a discussion of discipline Jesus proceeded to stress the importance of forgiveness. Sometimes zealous disciples spend too much time studying church discipline and too little time studying the importance of forgiveness.

18:21-22 Jesus had been talking about excluding rather than forgiving (v. 17). This led Peter to ask how often he as a disciple should forgive an erring brother before he stopped forgiving. The rabbis taught that a Jew should forgive a repeated sin three times, but after that there need be no more forgiveness (Amos 1:3; 2:6). [783] Peter suggested seven times and probably felt very magnanimous doing so. Seven was a round number, sometimes regarded as a perfect number, obviously exceeding what the scribes taught (cf. Lev. 26:21; Deut. 28:25; Ps. 79:12; Prov. 24:16; Luke 17:4).

Jesus' response alluded to Genesis 4:24 where the ungodly Lamech said, "If Cain is avenged sevenfold, then Lamech seventy-sevenfold." Lamech claimed to have taken even more revenge on the man who struck him than God had taken on Cain for killing his brother Abel. Jesus turned Lamech's bad example around and urged his disciples to practice generous forgiveness when their brothers hurt them.

The NASB has Jesus saying "seventy times seven" whereas the NIV translators wrote "seventy-seven times." Probably the NIV is correct since Jesus quoted the Septuagint of Genesis 4:24 exactly here, and it has "seventy-seven times." Even though the difference between these two translations is great numerically, it is not a very important difference. Jesus was not specifying a maximum number of times His disciples

should forgive their brothers. Neither was He wiping out what He had just taught about confronting an erring brother (vv. 15-20). His point was that disciples who are humble should not limit the number of times they forgive one another nor the frequency with which they forgive each other. The following parable of the unmerciful servant clarified this point.

### **Learning to be thankful in your life, is an appropriate response toward God, friends and family and acquaintances.**

1 Corinthians 1:4

I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that has been given you in Christ Jesus,

1 Thessalonians 5:18

give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Ephesians 1:16

I do not cease to give thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.

Let us show forth a spirit of thanksgiving for what God has done for us. In the good times and bad. Gratitude for what God has done, what He is doing and what He is going to do. This attitude of gratitude will lift up your spirit, and when extended toward all those around you. Will see you find favor with God and man.

### **III. Gratitude, Mercy And Favor.**

Genesis 33:1-11

1 Now Jacob looked up and saw Esau coming, and four hundred men with him. So he divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maids. 2 He put the maids with their children in front, then Leah with her children, and Rachel and Joseph last of all. 3 He himself went on ahead of them, bowing himself to the ground seven times, until he came near his brother. 4 But Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and they wept. 5 When Esau looked up and saw the women and children, he said, "Who are these with you?" Jacob said, "The children whom God has graciously given your servant." 6 Then the maids drew near, they and their children, and bowed down; 7 Leah likewise and her children drew near and bowed down; and finally Joseph and Rachel drew near, and they bowed down. 8 Esau said, "What do you mean by all this company that I met?" Jacob answered, "To find favor with my lord." 9 But Esau said, "I have enough, my brother; keep what you have for yourself." 10 Jacob said, "No, please; if I find favor with you, then accept my present from my hand; for truly to see your face is like seeing the face of God—since you have received me with such favor. 11 Please accept my gift that is brought to you, because God has dealt graciously with me, and because I have everything I want." So he urged him, and he took it.

Amazing chapter, because basically Jacob is expecting the worse. For he had ripped off the birthright, and expected a hostile reception. However, his attitude of humility, linked with mercy from his brother, saw the favor of God. Isn't it amazing as well how much credit Jacob gives God and his thanksgiving from the heart. Its reflective of something within his character that God is beginning to chisel out in the reflection of His life.

## Conclusion Question

What is God wanting to chisel out in your life this week? Can He produce an attitude of humility, that produces gratitude and thanksgiving being expressed in your life. If He can, you will find favor and blessing attracting itself to your life.