

Being Gracious

Awana Counsel Time, November 16, 2011

It's Thanksgiving time, we talk a lot about being thankful, being grateful, being appreciative. And we have a lot to be thankful for: our country, our freedom to worship, this church.

Tonight I want to talk about a word that's similar to thanksgiving, but it's a little bit different: Gracious

Gracious is defined as: to show kindness, courteous, to be compassionate.

This is something I'm working on in my life. Especially when it comes to the things I say. I want my conversations to be seasoned with grace, which means to be kind with the things I say. It's so easy to say mean things, hurtful things (that's our sinful nature); it takes more work to say gracious things but it honors God when I do.

Let's look up a verse that you can use to remember this principle by [Proverbs 19:11](#)

A man's wisdom gives him patience, it is to his glory to overlook an offense.

Let's personalize this verse a little, I like to do this when I want to look at how I can make this Scripture apply to my life. *A girl's wisdom gives her patience, it is to a girl's glory to overlook an offense.*

We don't automatically have understanding of things or patience. Think of a toddler that wants what she wants and she doesn't get it. She throws a fit, she yells, screams, throws herself on the floor. But as we grow up, we learn, we gain understanding and wisdom and when we have those things we have more patience. We can wait in line, wait our turn, do without things.

It is to a girl's glory to overlook an offense. What does that mean? Glory means honor or respect. Offense: something that irritates, annoys, or angers you. So it means you are honored when you look over an offense, look over like you didn't notice it.

Each one of us feels that we have rights: rights to watch TV when we want and to watch what we want, to be on the computer, to play with our things. That's our sinful nature, always wanting to be first. There are over 40 girls in this room and guess what? Each one of you wants to be first. That's just the way we, that's why God gave us this verse in Proverbs 19:11, to remind us of the behavior that is pleasing to Him.

We each have our own way of doing things, other's do things differently. Sometimes we get annoyed or

offended by what they do. But we have 2 choices is how we respond to a situation where we feel offended. We can be like a toddler, who's out of control, I call this Poor & Pitiful response. Or we can choose the Gracious & Glorious response, which is God's way. A P&P response can be things like:

- stomping out of a room
- displeasing noises
- rolling your eyes

G&G responses are things like:

- not responding
- not making eye contact
- quietly and respectfully walking away

Why should we choose the Gracious & Glorious response? Several reasons.

1 It helps us **handle conflict** in a good way. Let's say your brother is on the computer and your turn is next. You go up to him and say "its my turn." And he says, "I'm almost finished with my game, just wait." What would be a P&P response? What would be a G&G response?

2 It helps the **fight not get bigger**. Let's say your sister took your favorite shirt to her room because she was mad at you. When you go to her room and ask for your favorite shirt back, what would a P&P response be? What would a G&G response be? [Proverbs 12:16](#) says *a fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent girl overlooks an insult.*

3 We one of us has our rights, but by choosing the G&G response you are showing **humility**, you are giving up your rights for the sake of peace and unity. Let's look at [Philippians 2:5-8](#) to see why that's important. Being humble is acting like Jesus, and that's what we all want when we love God.

4 The next reason is also practical, when you over look an offense, you are practicing **forgiveness**. Again, this is what Jesus did, what He wants us to do [Colossians 3:13](#) says we are to forgive as the Lord forgave you.

So, you know? You're going to be offended sometimes. People will annoy and frustrate you, and you have two choices in how to react, one choice honors yourself, your selfishness; the other honors God.

Remember this too: you, and you, and me offend God. Probably every day. We think mean thoughts, we say mean things, we don't read God's word, we don't ask for His help. How does He respond to us? P&P or G&G? Every time, several times a day, whenever we need it, God is gracious to us. He forgives us over and over, and He does it with love. We need to follow His example,

and honor and glorify him by being gracious. With our words, with our actions, with our attitudes.

Be gracious. Be kind to one another. Be courteous.