

# "Imparting Grace To The Hearers"

(The Art of Encouragement)

By Paul R. Blake

Introduction: 2Timothy 1:3-12

A. 2Timothy 1:16-18 – Refreshing!

1. You can't help but like Onesiphorus.
2. Upon what do you base that attraction? Paul's compliment!
3. What did it cost him?
  - a. A moment's thought and thoughtfulness.
4. What was the return on his investment?
  - a. A hundred-fold to everyone who heard it directly or indirectly

B. What is a compliment?

1. "An expression of praise, admiration or congratulation; a formal act of praise, courtesy, or respect; a ceremonious greeting or remembrance; 'to pay a compliment' is to show fondness, regard, respect, or favor; from a Latin word meaning to complete or fill up courtesy or proper behavior"
2. Sounds as if it should be a part of the Christian's code of conduct.

C. Some men cannot bring themselves to say a kind word.

1. Preach an encouraging sermon; he does a lesson on the sin of positivism
2. Preach a sermon on the life of Christ; he preaches on the Deity issue
3. Preach on how to have strong homes; he preaches on MDR
4. "I never compliment a man; it ruins him. I praise God only."
  - a. Are you better than the apostle Paul?

D. Paul often spoke well of his brethren. His example serves to illustrate true Christian behavior toward others.

1. Note that his compliments were not for the rich and influential, but for the unknown and unsung.
2. Note that his praise was based good deeds and not flattery of persons.

## I. WHY? BECAUSE OF:

A. Obligation - Phil. 2:25-30; 1Thes 5:12-13

B. The effect on the receiver - Rev. 3:8-11 2Tim. 3:14-15

1. Mom praising me as a five year old for weeding carrots
2. Kids dumping toy box after a word of praise

C. In payment of gratitude - 2Tim. 4:11

D. To draw nearer to the saints - Philemon 4-9

## II. KINDS OF COMPLIMENTS

A. Direct Statement - 2Tim. 1:4-5; Heb. 6:9-11

B. Recommendation - Phil. 2:19-23; 2Tim. 1:6-7

1. You may not often know what good things others may be saying of you, but if you are doing well and trust your brethren, you won't worry.

C. Caring reproof - Gal. 2:11-14

D. Assignment of a task - 1Cor. 15:8-10

### III. WHAT ARE THE RESULTS?

- A. Renewed confidence in the hearer - Col. 4:9, 12-13
  - 1. On the part of the one complimented and on those who hear him spoken of well
- B. A growing fellowship - 3John 3-6
- C. Increased unity among the saints - 2Peter 3:15
  - 1. What will those who heard Paul rebuke Peter think when they read what Peter said of Paul?
- D. Returns blessings to the speaker - 1Thes. 2:13-14, 19-20

### IV. RECEIVING A COMPLIMENT

- A. For some folks, compliments are more difficult to accept than to give. Some find it easier to accept criticism than a compliment.
- B. Accept the compliment without deflecting it.
  - 1. "It's really nothing" or "I didn't do anything, really" undermines both your good and the word of the person speaking of it.
- C. Choose an appropriate time to return your own compliment.
  - 1. Automatically returning a compliment sounds forced and insincere.
- D. Avoid fishing for more compliments.
  - 1. "Do you really think so" questions the integrity of the speaker. Sometimes we feel unworthy and would like to hear more to build our confidence. The person complimenting you believes in your goodness. It is not conceited to accept that someone thinks well of you.
- E. Thank the speaker! Courtesy is like cool water in this desert of incivility in which we live today.

### Conclusion:

- A. John 6:5 - Jesus took very little and made a feast of it. The small word of kindness we offer to others will return a hundredfold in the hands of God.
- B. Has God ever paid you a compliment? - Rom. 5:8!
  - a. Why did He permit such ungodly treatment of His Son? He loves you!
- C. Persevere throughout your life and face all of your trials and the Lord will pay you the ultimate compliment: "I want you to make your home with Me in heaven."
  - a. Matt. 25:21
- D. SPEAK KINDLY... Speak kindly in the morning; it lightens the cares of the day, and makes the household and all other affairs move along more smoothly. Speak kindly at night, for it may be that before the dawn some loved one may finish his or her space of life, and it will be too late to ask forgiveness. Speak kindly at all times; it encourages the downcast, cheers the sorrowing, and very likely awakens the erring to earnest resolves to do better, with strength to keep them. Speak kindly; kind words are a balm to the soul. They oil the machinery of life and keep it in good working order.