

POLITENESS IS THE Demeanor OF THE CONFIDENT # 2

Preface: Eight weeks ago, I wrote a brief article for the bulletin with the title above. I received several compliments on the article. Well ... at least one! So, I have decided to expand on the theme for this issue, especially because of the season. According to the prevalent philosophy, this is supposed to be a time of peace, happiness, joy, and just jolly good fellow activity. When, in reality, and paradoxically, for some it is an occasion for debilitating tension, brooding loneliness, contentious rudeness, and downright disrespect for proper decorum and appreciation for the rights of family and other people. This is a call to be courteous and polite in all seasons as a Christian should.

Strangely, some now are saying that our schools should teach students politeness, respect, honor, and courtesy. If I may use the jargon of the young today, **duh** ! When I was in Senior High School, in Russellville, Alabama in the 40's (That would have been in the last century !), I remember that a required subject was a course called "Etiquette". We had two textbooks during the year. One textbook was called "If You Please", and the other was called "Thank You". Among many other things we learned in the course was how to introduce people to one another, and how

to respond when introduced. We learned how to address our parents, teachers, and all other elderly people and authorities. We even learned the formal way to shake hands (firm, full grip, with eye contact and proper words for a polite acknowledgement). As I recall, one of the reasons for the class was to help prepare us for adulthood in the business and social world in which we would be expected to participate and hopefully improve.

If the schools begin to demand decency, courtesy and politeness (may it ever be so), the children of Christians should not have any problem conforming to the requirements, since Christians should already be bringing their children up in the training and admonition of the Lord. (Eph. 6:4) The Lord in His Word gives many instructions concerning our conduct toward others. Some of His instruction is found in the following scriptures.

(Col 4:6) "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one."

(Heb 12:9) "Furthermore, we have had human fathers who corrected us, and we paid them respect. Shall we not much more readily be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?"

(1 Pet 3:8) "Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another, love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous;"

(1 Pet 2:13-17) "Therefore submit yourselves to every ordinance of

man for the Lord's sake, whether to the king as supreme, or to governors, as to those who are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and for the praise of those who do good. For this is the will of God, that by doing good you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men; as free, yet not using liberty as a cloak for vice, but as bondservants of God. Honor all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king."

It will not break the jaw to say; Yes Sir, Yes Ma'am, Please, Excuse Me, The Lord Loves Us All, etc., but it may very well help to lift up our own attitude and conduct for good, and it may be an opportunity to show others that Christians are polite, courteous, and respectful. It distresses me to hear adults tell young people not to address them with polite, respectful words. cab