

Shunning Over-Familiarity

Commentary from *Imitations of Christ*

DO NOT open your heart to every man, but discuss your affairs with one who is wise and who fears God. Do not keep company with young people and strangers. Do not fawn upon the rich, and do not be fond of mingling with the great. Associate with the humble and the simple, with the devout and virtuous, and with them speak of edifying things. Be not intimate with any woman, but generally commend all good women to God. Seek only the intimacy of God and of His angels, and avoid the notice of men.

We ought to have charity for all men but familiarity with all is not expedient. Sometimes it happens that a person enjoys a good reputation among those who do not know him, but at the same time is held in slight regard by those who do. Frequently we think we are pleasing others by our presence and we begin rather to displease them by the faults they find in us—(Author Unknown).

Thoughts from Word for the Day

“A fool vents all his feelings, But a wise [man] holds them back” (Proverbs 29:11 NKJV). There is much wisdom in holding your tongue until careful thought is given to your words. A man under the control of an unregenerate soul has little success holding back his thoughts. Like a cobra’s venom they spew forth a deadly evil. This is not to be with you my friend.

There are times to speak out against foolishness. The Scriptures say, “Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes” (Proverbs 26:5 NKJV). If there is hope for the fool, a chance of reaching him, then speak words of wisdom that he be not encouraged by your lack of argument. However, make sure you are not venting the vile poison of angry pride for then you engage in the same folly as he. As it is written, “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you also be like him” (Proverbs 26:4 NKJV).

Vile speech arises in the company of others. Follow the advice given by the author of *Imitations of Christ*. Do not open your heart to all men, and do not seek the approval of everyone you meet as this will lead to compromise. Seek intimacy with God instead, but be charitable to all.

Prayer

Father, how many times have I failed to hold my tongue? Give us the bit of Thy holy Word to bridle our unruliness. Comfort us with your Spirit that we would not feel the need to compromise our love for you to gain the approval of others. Lord, be glorified by our lives today, amen.