

7. Helping Spiritual Young Men and Women Grow in Character and Attitude

In our last topic, we gave a spiritual profile of a spiritual young man. Today, we are going to talk about how we help spiritual young men and women grow in godly character and develop Christ-like attitudes. This becomes increasingly important as Christians grow and mature because their lives are beginning to exercise a greater influence on others as they serve Christ. Since we lead others most effectively by what we are rather than what we do, character and attitude are critical issues at all times, especially as a person begins to influence others.

Our goal is to develop the attitude that Christ showed in Philippians 2:5-8. “Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross.” This attitude must be continuing to develop in our own lives if we want to help others because they will become what we are whether that is good or bad. As growing Christians have this attitude developing in their lives:

1. This attitude produces a desire to become a spiritual parent

Paul had this attitude and it also became the attitude of Silas and Timothy as they traveled with Paul. As they wrote to the new Christians in Thessalonica, they wrote in 1 Thessalonians 2:7-12, “But we were gentle among you, just as a nursing *mother* cherishes her own children. So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. For you remember, brethren, our labor and toil; for laboring night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, we preached to you the gospel of God. You *are* witnesses, and God *also*, how devoutly and justly and blamelessly we behaved ourselves among you who believe; as you know how we exhorted, and comforted, and charged every one of you, as a father *does* his own children, that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.” In these verses, we see that Paul, Silas, and Timothy provided:

- the tender care of a nursing mother
- a strong love which caused them to share their lives
- an availability both day and night
- an example to follow
- the encouragement of a father
- an example of a worthy walk

Paul told the Corinthians that they were lacking in spiritual parents. In 1 Corinthians 4:15-17, Paul said that he and Timothy had the attitude of spiritual parents for them. “For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do not have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Therefore I urge you, imitate me. For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.” Paul said:

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- he had begotten them through the gospel
- he urged them to imitate him
- he had sent Timothy to remind them of his ways (actions) in Christ

2. This attitude produces a concern to develop one or more spiritual Timothy's - 2 Timothy 2:1-2

“You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. ² And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.” In these verses, we see that a concern to develop one or more Timothy's is what produces godly reproducing Christians:

- * Paul
- * Timothy
- * faithful men
- * others also

Who is your Timothy or Timothy's?

3. This attitude produces a proper attitude toward becoming a spiritual leader

a. an attitude of sacrifice to reach others for Christ - 1 Corinthians 9:19-27

-In verse 19, we see that Paul made himself a servant to all - “For though I am free from all *men*, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more;”

-In verse 22, we see that Paul became all things to reach others - “I have become all things to all *men*, that I might by all means save some.”

-In verse 24, Paul encouraged the Corinthians to follow his example - “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain *it*.”

b. an attitude which develops a seriousness of purpose in life - Titus 2:6-8

“Likewise exhort the young men to be sober-minded, in all things showing yourself *to be* a pattern of good works; in doctrine *showing* integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you.” In these verses, we see that Paul was encouraging Titus to carry out his purpose in life by helping others to grow and mature.

We see the characteristics of a spiritual young man who is growing in godly character and attitude. These include:

- learning to become a servant to others
- developing a concern to develop spiritual children
- beginning to develop one or more Timothy's
- developing a proper attitude toward becoming a spiritual leader
- a concern to reach others for Christ
- developing a purpose in life

As you can see, spiritual young men are going to have an impact on others as others observe their attitude and character. May the Lord richly bless you as you help Christians mature and become reproductive Christians.