

#509 07/27/09 Appreciating the gifts of others

I have always longed to play the piano. I did not desire to be a famous concert pianist, but just to play for my own enjoyment. You might say, “So, take lessons!” I did. The time and money spent was not a total waste because I did learn to read music. Later, I was in the band. I think “Chief” Davidson was very tolerant to allow me to be in the concert band. It was a struggle for both of us.

Out of my failures with music, I developed a deep appreciation for those who do have a musical gift. In fact, I have come to appreciate many gifts that I see in others. There are various artistic gifts as well as gifts of social skills and intuition. Some people who have a “green thumb” create beautiful gardens. Oh yes, and how about those who have athletic gifts, demonstrating skill and grace beyond anything I could imagine were possible? There are many more gifts than I can even begin to name.

If we want our intellectually gifted child to be humble, we must teach him to appreciate the gifts of others. Our attitude—and therefore the attitude we teach our child—must be that God has given each person one or more gifts. And, that no one gift is superior to the others.

The best way to teach our child this appreciation is to teach him that all gifts come from God. If we are watching an athlete perform, we can say to our child, “He has an amazing gift, doesn’t he? I’m sure God has plans for how he’s using his gift just like he has plans for you to use your gifts.” Saying it that way puts playing a sport and doing math on the same level in that they are both gifts from God to be used for his glory.

Or, if a student in our child’s class is struggling with academics, we can say to our child, “I know he has trouble understanding math. I’m just thankful that he’s found his God-given gift in drama. I enjoyed seeing him perform in the Christmas play.

Little by little, hearing such remarks, our child will come to appreciate the gifts of others. It will also help him understand why he cannot do everything as well as he does academics. With those understandings, he will be developing that important character trait, humility.