

Man is a strange creature. Every man has his own likes and dislikes. One man's meat may be another man's poison. Some like things hot while others like things cold. Tastes, temperaments, attitudes, aptitudes, strengths and weaknesses differ from person to person. I have my own likes and dislikes. There are some common human habits that I dislike the most. The first amongst these is flattery. Flattery is a device used by people to win over others and befool them.⁸⁰ The art of flattery is considered by some as the most useful art. They believe that flattery is the lubricant that makes the machine of social life running smoothly. Such flatterers are found everywhere. They know how to get their work done. They would flatter a person in several ways and bring them round to a desired course of action. They never mean what they say, but they have no principles or worries of conscience. Truth has no value for¹⁶⁰ them. They know how to play their cards and befool others. I hate this tribe of flatterers and their tricks. The moment I find a person flattering another, I get worked up and feel like giving a bit of my mind to the flatterer as well as the person being flattered. I believe that flattery is a misuse of human intelligence and exploitation of the weakness of others. One must learn to be straight forward and truthful in life. Flatterers,²⁴⁰ I am sure, have caused more harm than good to society. Another thing that I positively dislike is the habit of backbiting. There are people who sit in groups for hours every day and kill a large number of characters through backbiting. Most of these scandals are polluted imagination or only mountains created out of their thinking. They create misunderstandings and quarrels that poison the stream of social life in a big way. Many a times, these gossips create permanent³²⁰ enmities to several generations. I hate backbiters and do not hesitate from exposing one whenever I catch hold of such a person. My actions have saved several families from disaster and several friendships from being broken. I have successfully persuaded a large number of people to discontinue from this evil practice. There is yet another thing that I dislike. By nature, many people are negative in their outlook and attitude. One must not give up hope whatever the circumstances are.⁴⁰⁰ A negative attitude never pays. Every failure should be considered as a stepping stone to success. Those who are always depressed, they never go up in life. They dishearten others also. One should always spread hope and joy in life. A cheerful person makes everybody happy and cheerful. I believe, man was made in the image of God. Let him not spoil his divine face by indulging in things like flattery, gossips, depression or backbiting. In word and deed, honesty⁴⁸⁰ and cheerfulness always pay in the long run.⁴⁸⁸