

Living with Consideration

Introduction

- A. Interesting question: "What do we count most valuable -- practically?"
- B. The most valuable areas of our life, at least horizontally, are found in relationships: marriage, family, Church, friends. Consider the thoughts and feelings produced by words such as home, love, care, security, protection, fellowship, husband, wife, family.
- C. Because of such values the disruption of these relationships can be very painful. And, the result can be very scarring within, long lasting, and causes negative patterns in life style.
- D. The Bible warns us to be very protective of these relationships:

I. The Importance of Being Considerate Toward One Another. EPH 4:32

- A. The reason for such an exhortation.
 - 1. We are persons created in God's image. **We have rights and values and feelings.**
 - 2. Great harm follows when we are not treated as a person or we fail to so treat others. It is harmful to be **snubbed, neglected, lied to, lied about, treated unjustly, not recognized, not trusted, treated with suspicion, shunned, devalued, not included, not cared for, looked upon and treated as second rate.**
 - 3. Bible warns us of the serious consequences when people are not treated as persons. The consequences inevitably follow in the one mistreated and the one doing the mistreatment.
- B. The context of the exhortation.
 - 1. "Be kind" -- Showing consideration -- treated as a person with rights and feelings.
 - 2. "Compassionate" -- Treating a person with love and sympathy.
 - 3. "Forgiving ... you" -- Opposite of holding a grudge, resentment, bitterness.
 - 4. It appears the next step is assumed in this verse: plans/actions of reconciliation.
- C. A comment on this exhortation.

Our personhood is so important to us and we are so sensitive to damage in that area of our life that we often take drastic measures when seriously hurt, or if the hurt continues over a long period of time. Examples: violent reactions, desertion, resigning a job, getting even, anorexia nervosa and bulimia, divorce are only a few illustrations. **Slavery Bigotry**

II. The Importance of Being Considerate Toward God. Prov 3:5,6

A. The reason for the exhortation.

1. God is a Person: names, pronouns, choices, plans, feeling, relationships.
2. God has rights: worship, love, respect, trust, obedience, acknowledgment.
3. God has character (truth, love, holiness): violation causes hurt, breaks fellowship, causes confusion, discord, lack of growth.
4. Possible to live in such a way that we **snub God, neglect Him, treat Him with disrespect, treat Him unjustly, criticize Him, fail to love and trust Him. By so living we impugn His character, His Word, and His expressions of love for us.**

B. The content of the exhortation.

1. "Trust" -- one of the greatest compliments we could give God. "I believe You"
2. "Lean not" -- recognition of our dependence on Him. Recognize created order.
3. "Acknowledge" -- take into consideration His presence, plan, and Word.
4. **Questions: do we treat God with less consideration than we do one another? Would we stand for the treatment we impose on God?**
5. Too often our attitude seems to be that God exists just for us. That He is to be like a servant for us -- when we want Him He's always waiting to be called upon. We seem to take for granted that we can always have instant and automatic audience. We express the attitude, by our actions, that we believe God is willing to submit to almost any kind of careless treatment.
6. Bible reminds us that we cannot treat God with dishonesty and irreverence without serious consequences: **Proverbs 1:24-31; Isaiah 1:10-15; Jeremiha 1:6-11,14; Micah 3:4; Zechariah 7:8-13; James 4:3.**

Conclusion: **Do we give God the attention we want Him to give to us?**

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