

Something for All of Us to Work On

Proverbs 27:14

Are you a morning person? I know some people that just love for the alarm to go off, in fact, they usually awaken ***before*** the alarm even sounds. They get up happy, excited about the day and ready to bring you into their arena of joy. For them, there is nothing better than the morning's sunrise and they often express their delight by whistling, singing or incessant talking.

Are you not a morning person? Some people wake up in the morning as though they have just heard the most depressing news of their life. For them, sunrises are not attractive, the day is not "the first day of the rest of their life" and the only thing that can make them feel worse than hearing the alarm clock sound is being around someone who is so happy to be awake!

Proverbs 27:14, at first glance, is an odd verse. It says, "*He who blesses his friend with a loud voice early in the morning, it will be reckoned a curse to him.*" What in the world does that mean?

Well, this proverb is simply saying that it is not polite to greet your neighbor (or spouse, or child or parent or roommate) with a loud voice early in the morning because they may not be too excited about hearing your voice! The heart of this proverb is a reminder that we are to be...considerate! We are to consider the needs, desires, hurts and preferences of others. "Wait a minute", the morning person exclaims. "Don't I have a right to speak to whoever I want to, after all, it is a free country." And the answer is: rather than focus on your "rights", let's live life putting the desires of others before ours. Easier said than done!

The American Heritage College Dictionary defines consideration as "thoughtful concern for others...high regard, esteem". Not bad. Here is how Scripture defines consideration:

- "Bear one another's burdens" Galatians 6:2
- "Treat others the same way you want them to treat you" Luke 6:31
- "Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others." Philippians 2:3-4

Most of us are willing to carry the burdens of our friends. It is a step further to treat others the same way that we want to be treated (we want to be forgiven, but have a hard time forgiving others; we want freedom to make mistakes, but love to point out the flaws in those around us). Yet, on the right day, we may be able to do the first two. It is that third one, Philippians 2:3 specifically, that can be so difficult. We are actually supposed to regard those around us as more important than ourselves.

Let me encourage you today (and myself!) to be more considerate. Let's ask the Lord to grant us the wisdom and patience to be able to put the needs of others ahead of our own and to stop simply focusing on what "we are entitled to" and instead think of how we can be a blessing to other people.

So, do something nice for your spouse, give an unexpected gift to your child, make your bed without being asked and take on a task at work even if it is not in your job description....oh, and maybe keep the singing to yourself tomorrow morning!

Michael Staton
Pastor, First Baptist Church of Mustang

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