

Consideration

By B. D. Tate

It sounds simple doesn't it; but in truth we may not know how to be considerate. This word seems to encapsulate what the Bible means when it teaches us, "...the two shall become one." Let me explain.

Consideration means that both marriage partners always consider the other. This is different now than before when you weren't married. Before, as a single adult, if you considered each other it was nice of you to do so; but in truth, you didn't have to. Now that you are married the covenant between you requires it. This is how it works.

Consideration leads to communication. As a married couple you talk about all the decisions, wants, desires, and wishes. Every decision is discussed which leads to **agreement.** **Agreement** means both of you are on the same page, understanding what is being discussed, what the possible outcomes could be, what the possible options are, and what is ultimately going to happen. **Agreement spawns out of communication.** **Agreement** may not always be what both of you want. It may mean some give and take; this time she gets what she wants, next time he gets what he wants, sometimes you have to do what neither wants, etc. **Agreement then leads to each other's blessing.** This means there are no secrets, no clandestine behind the scenes involvements, *what one knows the other knows.* **The blessing** is permission, submitting, agreeing, cooperating together realizing that a decision must be made and who's going to make it. **It means I'm in agreement that this or that is going to be done.**

It is in this process that the two actually become like one. All the decisions, plans, scheduling, dispensing of funds, purchases, places to go, times to be there, expectations, vacations, all of life's issues, bills, etc...**are decided between the two of you** and **then others, if necessary, are informed.** If a husband or wife is still discussing, planning, or deciding anything with someone else other than their mate, *this is a violation of the marriage covenant.* Someone else might be a good friend (notice I didn't say best friend? Your best friend is your mate), or it could be a parent who hasn't let go.

When this process of consideration is fulfilled, there are no surprises and **trust is built.** Most importantly the final result is **God's blessing.** God will not bless a mate or marriage that is short circuiting this process *for their "own" interests.* **We want God's blessing and it comes through honoring each other in the marriage.**

God also uses this process to **lead** us. We shouldn't make a decision without the blessing, understanding, and inclusion of our mate. If we can't decide on something, don't do it. God is not in the confusion that remains because the couple can't or won't come to terms, or agreement. The result of making a decision without your mate is alienation, isolation, a sense of disrespect, and pulling away...

This process will keep the lines of communication open, **honoring the most important person in our life, our mate.** The **sensitivity that it will produce** will have

lasting effects. We maintain our marriage by keeping this process alive, active, and subjecting ourselves to it. It also provides great peace and developing trust that brings fulfillment in our marriage—I am we are in covenant like this *with no other person!*

I want to give you some examples.

- 1) When we used to visit my side of the family in Virginia (when they used to live there), we'd come with Ryan, Greg, and Julie. While we'd visit my older sister who was unmarried at the time would suggest to Valerie that they go shopping. Valerie would say something like "That's sounds like a good idea; let me go and ask Dayle." My sister would balk at the idea that Valerie had to ask me. She would mock her as if she were my child or something else totally missing the point. Valerie needed to ask me so as to be considerate of me. She needed to ask because we are married and in covenant with each other. It would be rude and inconsiderate if she'd just left the house telling me she was going shopping having decided the matter with my sister and not me.

My sister wasn't married and had no one to answer to; she could just get up and leave. What happened though is that Valerie said, "I'm asking Dayle because he'd be responsible for the kids and I wouldn't want to do anything he didn't know about and further, I would feel guilty of just taking advantage of our relationship." Valerie came down into the family room and asked, "Do you mind if I go shopping with your sister?"

I said something like "...that's fine with me and I recognized that the kids were now my COMPLETE responsibility, but that I would manage somehow." We also discussed our budget as to how much she was going to spend, remember no surprises! She said she had no intention of spending money she was just going along with my sister. I said something like, "Well, I guess you could spend a dollar or something..." No, I said, "I would be uncomfortable with anything over forty dollars at that time. We agreed and she was able to go shopping free of any guilt and knowing she had my blessing...and consequently God's blessing.

- 2) I like to play golf but golf is expensive and time consuming. There is no way I could just say, "I'm the man, the head of the house, I'm going golfing!" Well, that may sound brave and tough but it is really inconsiderate and rude. It is not treating my wife (My best friend) like I'd want to be treated. Furthermore, if I were to do that God would not be pleased with me. My golf game would suffer and I'd feel guilty—because I would be guilty of pressing my own way and will. No, I can't remember a time that I went to play golf without checking with my wife first. If she said no and didn't agree, I didn't go. There were times when money was tight or she needed help, or other plans had already been made, there could be a number of reasons for not playing golf...although at times I can't think of any good reason...Anyway, if after I considered her, we discussed it, we agreed that I could play golf, I was a happy man!

What is it that the world says about such things? Well, one comment might be, “You are hen pecked!” or “You have a ball and chain around your leg!” And another, “You are tied down man!” With everything in life there are pros and cons to any behavior. For the footloose and fancy free single there is no one to answer to that may be a positive for many; yet, that same person has no one to call their own, no one to share love, companionship, a home, and mutual responsibility—marriage. That single person may have more money, more freedom to do whatever they want, they may not have any responsibilities, no one restricting their behavior, no one telling them what to do, no one holding them accountable, no one...hey, that doesn’t sound half bad...Well, the truth is that life belongs to God not to us. With such freedoms is also rampant loneliness. Love isn’t about doing one’s own thing it’s about giving, sharing, helping, holding, caring, being there, and growing together...now that I think about it, I’ll take what I have in my wife and family over all the opportunities the world offers and that singles claim as the life worth living—it’s not for me.

Marriage then, is two becoming one; yet, that is not an easy task it takes work. This process of consideration helps maintain that game plan. It helps us keep the focus of our lives on “Us” not me.

Along or implicit with Consideration is a **mutual submission to one another**. No one is the boss, no one is a doormat; there is mutual respect and appreciation. There are times when a husband is supposed to provide leadership, a servant leadership and with that our wives are to submit to that leadership in the Lord. That leadership never takes on a dominate or dictatorial sense. Mutual submission and the roles of husbands and wives in marriage are both active and brought together in a balanced tension.

Mutual submission to one another is a sound basis for friendship. Marriage is supposed to be best friends marrying each other (male and female that is...).

This friendship is always considerate based on three major factors, evidences, or fruits:

- 1) Friendship is for **fellowship**, sharing, communion, love...
- 2) Friendship is for **protection**, no back biting, no gossip, no exposing of the other’s weaknesses to others outside the marriage, this is the “watching out for each other’s back” idea...
- 3) Friendship is for **“embetterment”**(my word) the improvement of our lives in Godly character, trust, peace, rest, we are better people not worse because of our marriage...

Note: Consequently, Jesus is the best friend we have...He came that we might be made one in fellowship with the Father, a oneness in communion, personal, alive, real, not alone or isolated any longer. Jesus came to save us from ourselves and the wrath of God upon sinners...by His blood we are forgiven... Jesus came to save us and redeem us from depravity to new life in His name. We are saved in order to be born again, renewed, and conformed into the image of Christ...

Marriage is God’s idea; made from heaven...**the problem is that this Holy Spiritual Institution of God’s requires Spiritual life to work.** *If we live in this*

*institution by the flesh, by our sinful selfish nature, it will not work...the marriage will be in opposition to its design...selfishness cannot love...and marriage is built on love...therefore if we recognize our sin problem we will see that we need God's Grace to have a successful marriage. **For it to work we must grow in the Spirit life**, know God's word, know God, and be filled with the Holy Spirit.*