



PathLights

*"Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path"
Psalm 119:104*

January 27, 2019

Considerate Brethren

by Frank Himmel

The author of Hebrews said Christians should consider one another (10:24). How considerate of your brethren are you?

Considerate brethren are concerned about how their example affects others. They are willing to "bend over backwards" to maintain a good influence. They say with Paul, "If food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again..." (1 Corinthians 8:13).

Considerate brethren patiently seek to restore those who are caught up in sin. They notice who is absent from assemblies and find out why. They sense when others are discouraged and do something to boost sagging spirits. They guard their tongues that "no unwholesome word proceeds from their mouths, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear" (Ephesians 4:29). They give timely words of encouragement.

Considerate brethren pray for each another, privately as well as publicly. They think about what others need and entreat God on their behalf. And their prayers are accompanied by deeds, doing what they can to help.

Considerate brethren do not distract others in periods of study and worship. They do not habitually come in late. They take crying babies out in a timely manner. They do not talk, pass notes, or parade to the water cooler, nor do they permit their children to do so. That supervision includes before and after services as well. The kids who run wild and tackle bystanders do not belong to them.

Considerate brethren gladly take their turn at whatever needs to be done. They do not depend on a few to shoulder all the load. They are conscientious about doing what they can financially as well.

Considerate preachers and teachers try to make their lessons interesting. They have something more to offer than what students could read at home in a workbook or a commentary. They try to challenge more advanced students without completely losing the beginners. Yet they never seek to entertain. And yes, they also respect reasonable time restraints.

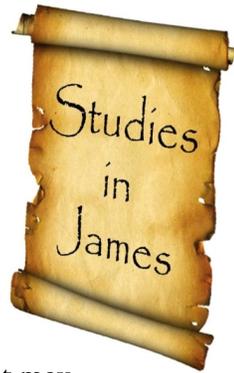
Considerate song leaders do not limit themselves to personal favorites. They select songs based on meaningful words, not just warm melodies or catchy rhythms. They wait for appropriate times to try new songs, when it is not a distraction. They do all they can to help the congregation make melody in their hearts to the Lord.

Are you considerate of your brethren? ■

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Keep It in Perspective

by Frank Himmel



How can we view our trials as “all joy” (James 1:2)? Part of the answer is to consider the good that may come from them (vv. 3-5). Another part of the answer is to pray for wisdom (vv. 6-8). Verses 9-11 present another component.

But the brother of humble circumstances is to glory in his high position; and the rich man is to glory in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. For the sun rises with a scorching wind and withers the grass; and its flower falls off and the beauty of its appearance is destroyed; so too the rich man in the midst of his pursuits will fade away.

Bible students typically take one of two approaches to this paragraph.

The first approach envisions a time when present circumstances will be reversed. The brother of humble circumstances—James’s kind way of saying he is poor—will one day be exalted to a high position, whereas the rich man will one day be humiliated (perhaps that was already happening if the trial in view was persecution). Any time we suffer a major financial loss, it is just a reminder of what will inevitably occur anyway,

as surely as grass and flowers wilting under a scorching sun. When that occurs before death, we may better learn the lesson of the uncertainty of material things.

The second approach is that James is describing the spiritual counterparts to our monetary status. One who is poor financially may nevertheless be richly blessed in Christ, and that is far more valuable. Likewise, even the wealthiest man must bow before God as a lost sinner and humbly accept Jesus’ atonement for him if he is to have eternal life. He can glory in that humiliation because it is for his own good, keeping him from trusting in his own resources, a course that will surely fail (1 Timothy 6:17).

Either way we view it, the practical application of James’s point comes out the same. Our outward circumstances per se do not matter; what matters is how we view them, how we react to them. Don’t make too much of your wealth or lack of it. Prosperity is not proof of divine approval. Money cannot buy happiness. And remember, even if your economic status lasts a lifetime, that isn’t very long compared to eternity. The fact is, everyone in Christ is both rich and poor, depending on how you look at it. ■

The elders are planning to use the first service time Sunday, February 3 to talk about our work. Let’s make every effort to be present.



Service Leaders for the Week

	Sunday	Wednesday
GREETER SONG LEADER OPENING PRAYER LORD’S SUPPER BREAD CUP CONTRIBUTION PRAYER SERMON/INVITATION CLOSING PRAYER	David Gray Gary Hagler Brian Wilson Carlos Garcia Stachys McLeod Justin Candella Frank Himmel Albert Harrison	John Baucom Albert Lee Harrison Greg Winget Adam Gibson