

Preference:

Putting another first, considering them more important.



Giving preference, or preferring another over ourselves is a Biblical mandate for all Christians. Romans 12:10 (KJV) says to “give *preference* to one another in honor.” The ESV translates this verse as to *outdo one another in showing honor*. Often, newly in love couples do seek to outdo each other in demonstrating their love for each other, but after they are married for a few years, they stop and begin looking after themselves, rather than their spouse. Putting others first and considering them more important than ourselves is not the norm in society today—in fact, it really never has been a part of human interactions. It all ended very quickly when Adam and Eve didn’t think twice about blaming others for their sinful choice in the Garden.

Philippians 2:3 also admonishes us to “in humility consider others better than yourselves.” Another translation says to count others as *more significant* than ourselves. Do we do this? Is it even possible to consider our spouse as better or more significant than ourselves? What would this look like? I have to tell you that for most of my 36 years of marriage, I would not know how to answer those questions. I do today: No, we don’t usually do this. Yes, we *can* prefer our spouse over ourselves. And as for what does this look like? It is always considering our spouse first before we do things. Even considering them before we get something to drink or eat. If I’m hungry, there is a good chance that my wife might be hungry also. Why not ask her if I can get something to eat as I am getting myself something?

It goes further than quenching our thirst or hunger though. It is seeking to meet his or her needs, even if my needs are not being met. It is *always* looking out for their best interest, even if they don’t deserve it. It is developing the habit of thinking of our spouse first before ourselves. Perhaps, it can start with the food and drink, but then continue on to cleaning up around the house—even cleaning up after our spouse! It is putting their needs and even their desires before our own. In short, it is dying to self. *In humility*, consider your spouse better than yourself. Prefer your spouse; put him or her first in all that you do. I believe it will improve your marriage and help it be a positive testimony to others.

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

Articles to check out:

Harmonious Relationships by Steven J. Cole - bible.org

The Unselfish Marriage by Rick Warren - pastorricks.com