



26-27 APRIL
NORTHAMPTON

Consider one another

Taught by Simeon Forder on Friday 26th April 2024 @ CCUK Men's Conference, Northampton

Reading: Hebrews 10:19-25

Introduction

Good evening! For those of you with wives that are healthier eaters than you, you can tell them after this evening that you had three lots of lettuce at this men's conference. That may give a false impression though, for we're not going to be having actual lettuce, but instead something far better, and far more helpful. For in the passage we're going to read this evening, there are three "let us" statement to take note of:

- Let us draw near
- Let us hold fast
- Let us consider

So I encourage you to keep an eye out for them. Now in all seriousness, if you have your Bibles, please turn, flip, or scroll to Hebrews chapter 10 — a pivotal chapter in this great book of the Bible, in which we're going to spend most of our time this evening. And first I'm going to read to you from verses 19-25:

Hebrews 10:19-25

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

In this passage in Hebrews, the writer (whom personally I believe to be Paul for few reasons), draws several conclusions, and first calls our attention to the access we now have to God Himself, because of what Christ has done for us. Let's read the first 3 verses of that again:

Hebrews 10:19-21

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God,

He goes on of course, but what he's saying here is *therefore*, given *all* the opening 9 chapters of Hebrews say about Jesus, our High Priest (who has purchased our access to God through His sacrifice on the cross, who shed His own blood for you and I, and whom has torn the veil of the temple in two (indicating we now have complete access to God) — *therefore*, in light of that, let's enter in with boldness to God's presence.

You see, we could never have *approached* God before, because God (who is just and holy) cannot allow sin in His presence, and our own works could never have been sufficient to cover that sin. But now we *can* enter boldly, because He sees us as if we were His Son, because He looked up on His Son as He were us (as He died on the cross and rose again, that we might be forgiven of all we have done).

And we now enter not through works, but by faith. And since faith is reliant not on the individual, but on the object of our faith, and Christ's sacrifice for us is entirely sufficient. Then we can enter in full assurance of faith. There is nothing that is going to undermine or change what He has accomplished for us. And so;

Hebrews 10:22

let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

So then, *first* let us draw near to God, knowing as we read in James 4:8, that as we do so, He will draw near to us! What promise that is! And we can do so in *full assurance* of faith, knowing that our salvation, our forgiveness, is reliant on Him (the object of our faith), and not us. Now, we have a personal *relationship* with Him. We can go to Him about anything in prayer (and indeed we should).

But what should we do next? Well, James goes on to say *"Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."* And here in *Hebrews* we read *"having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."*

It's not that we need to take a shower, but rather we should purify ourselves spiritually. How? By the washing of the water of the Word. That is, through the reading and study and application of the Bible to our lives, that we might live in a way that pleases God. Not to earn our salvation, but in response to it. For how can we any longer indulge in the sin that required Jesus to die for us?

Now, having drawn near to God in *faith*, what are we to do next? We read the next conclusion, in this passage, the second of these three "let us" statements, which says:

Hebrews 10:23

Let us hold fast the confession of our **hope** without wavering, for He who promised is faithful.

That is we are to look for our blessed *hope*, for Jesus return. Longing to see our Saviour, knowing that His promise is sure — that He *will* return for His bride, the church. Indeed, so sure is our hope, that we read earlier in *Hebrews*, that;

Hebrews 6:19-20

This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

Again, our hope we have is the anchor of our soul — let us hold fast to it, for God is faithful. But as with that first conclusion, there is to be a response to it. We read in 1st John:

1 John 3:1-3

Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. And everyone who has this hope in Him purifies himself, just as He is pure.

That is, given this hope, we are to continue in purifying ourselves. That we might be holy, as He is holy. Likewise, we read in Paul's letter to Titus:

Titus 2:11-14

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.

So again, all this is done, not in hope of earning our salvation, but in response to it. In response to God's grace. And the end of that grace that God has shown us, we read, is that God might "*purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.*"

And that is the third conclusion here in Hebrews too, with verse 24 saying:

Hebrews 10:24-25

And let us consider one another in order to stir up **love** and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

So then, here we have it: faith, hope, and now; love. And the greatest of these is? Love. And we are told to consider one another. Why consider one another?

Well, first of all, to **stir up love**. To provoke or excite each other into loving. That there might not be any division between us, and rather, that we might value each and every Christian brother and sister we meet. We read in 1 Corinthians of course:

1 Corinthians 12:20-26

But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. And those members of the body which we think to be less honourable, on these we bestow greater honour; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, but our presentable parts have no need. But God composed the body, having given greater honour to that part which lacks it, that there should be no schism in the body, but that the members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

And Paul goes on to write to the Christians in Corinth, and to us, just a few verses later, about the importance of love, in chapter 13, saying that if we are to grow up, and put away childishness, we must love. But if love is the most important thing, why not start with that? Because love is fruit of the Spirit, that grows depending on our closeness to Jesus. That is, if we are not drawing ourselves close to God in faith, and if we are not putting our hope in Him, then we're going to be set on our *own* affections, our *own* desires, and looking for what we can *get*, rather than what we can *give*.

Now, the second reason we're told to consider one another, is to **stir up good works**. That is as we show love to one another, that will encourage us as the body of Christ to press on in serving Him, in doing good, in showing love in practical ways. Indeed we should specifically encourage one another to show hospitality, to give to those in need, to be good employees and employers, good husbands, good fathers, good sons. And to show integrity in both action and doctrine.

This passage in Hebrews 10 then goes on to say in verse 25, that part of considering one another is:

Hebrews 10:25

not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

And that seems obvious in some ways, right? For how can we show love to one another if we don't see one another? Yet this is one of the greatest challenges in the church today, for it is so easy to find excuses. There are so many draws on our time — from our jobs to our families to our hobbies to our friends to our favourite TV shows, sports, podcasts, movies, music and more.

Yet, we're told plainly here, that **we must not forsake the assembling of ourselves together** — even warned that there are those around us that will do exactly that. So we can't use the excuse of saying "*oh, well that person skips church every now and then, so why shouldn't I?*". We're told here that the measuring bar isn't those who don't show up, but those that do.

Unsurprisingly, commitment to a local church looks like *commitment*. It looks like being there, with *at least* as much vigour as you would commit to anything else. Sure, there's times we're sick. There may be other genuine reasons we *cannot* be there, such as your line of work may dictate. I'm not talking about being unreasonable. But just as you shouldn't conclude that you only go to work if you feel like it, or if there's no better option, neither should you treat church attendance as if it were something optional. Because as a man of God, you need it.

And first, this is for your own benefit — for without attending church, you don't get to see others lives. You don't get to see the life of your pastor or elders, or other Christian men steeped in the Word of God. And you need that. Look at what Paul wrote in his second letter to Timothy:

2 Timothy 3:10-11

But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra—what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me.

Timothy didn't learn from a textbook. He learned from the Word of God not only taught, but lived. He saw Paul's life up close and personal. And that's what we each need too. There's a worrying trend today of folks thinking they can '*do church*' at home, listening to a podcast or online sermon. But as useful as those things *can* be, that gleans none of that personal example that can *only* be seen by walking through life *with* someone, seeing how they live, allowing them to encourage and exhort you. Not remotely, and nor only from a pulpit, but personally.

That's not to say you're failing if you are housebound, and we can talk about that further another time, but given the possibility that we may each be in the position of being housebound someday, then how much more important is it for our own good, that we fellowship in person now while we *can*?!

But here in Hebrews we are told not to forsake the assembling of ourselves *together*. And that's the idea of the complete body coming together — not just some of it, but the whole body. Each part doing it's share. And that is the second reason that we are to gather. For it's not just about you! Indeed, a major reason you and I should attend church with regularity and commitment is for the sake of *others*. That is, you each have a part to play in the spiritual growth of other individuals, encouraging them in their walk with the Lord, and, as we *read* in verse 25, to **exhort one another**.

So what does that mean? It means *to strongly encourage or urge (someone) to do something*. In the case of the Christian, it means urging others to walk worthy of the Lord in *all* things, such as we read *throughout* the letters in the New Testament, providing us an example in what we must exhort others in, such as we find in 2 Corinthians, which speaks of our giving. We read there:

2 Corinthians 9:5

Therefore I thought it necessary to **exhort** the brethren to go to you ahead of time, and prepare your generous gift beforehand, which you had previously promised, that it may be ready as a matter of generosity and not as a grudging obligation.

And then in 1 Thessalonians, regarding our sexual conduct:

1 Thessalonians 4:1-8

Finally then, brethren, **we urge and exhort** in the Lord Jesus that you should **abound more and more, just as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God; for you know what commandments we gave you through the Lord Jesus.** For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one should take advantage of and defraud his brother in this matter, because the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also forewarned you and testified. For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness. Therefore he who rejects this does not reject man, but God, who has also given us His Holy Spirit.

And in the next chapter, regarding our treatment of others:

1 Thessalonians 5:14-15

Now **we exhort you**, brethren, **warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.** See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.

It also means that we should be urging one another to work well, being exemplary in our behaviour in the workplace, such as Paul wrote to Timothy, saying:

1 Timothy 6:1-2

Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and His doctrine may not be blasphemed. And those who have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather serve them because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. **Teach and exhort these things.**

Further, as we read earlier in that same letter, exhortation is needed to pray:

1 Timothy 2:1-2

Therefore I **exhort** first of all **that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.**

And earlier in Hebrews, we read again this clear command to exhort one another, that we might keep from sin:

Hebrews 3:12-13

Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; but exhort one another daily, while it is called "Today," lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

You can't do this daily, if you're an occasional visitor to a church. And it's doubtful you can do it properly if you only go to church on Sundays, and ignore the other opportunities you have to meet together. So, commit to a local church. For if you are not part of one, you won't receive the encouragement and exhortation you need, and you won't have the accountability you need. And you do need this. *I* need this. We each need others who will speak the truth of God to us, who will exhort us, correct us, even rebuke us where necessary. There's no substitute for true Christian fellowship.

And secondly, if you are not regularly and consistently part of a local church, then frankly you're missing in action, not doing your part. Indeed, even your very *presence* is important, especially if you are a husband or father – for it is your responsibility to lead, to set the example. Indeed, if skipping church for sports, or family events, or because you have friends round for dinner is acceptable to you, then it will be to your family. If your children don't see your actions say that church is *vital*, then they will likely not see it as vital either.

But of course, this assembling of ourselves together is so much more than turning up to the same venue as others. Indeed, when we look at the early church we see time-after-time how they continued in one accord, in prayer, in supplication, in breaking bread, in praising God.

So I urge *you*; turn up to prayer meetings. And I'm serious. We look at great preachers like Charles Spurgeon and talk of how wonderful it would be to see God work today like He did then. But God didn't change! We did. We have neglected corporate prayer, failing to note details such as how Spurgeon's preaching was much supported by prayer, with up to 300 people praying in the basement of the metropolitan tabernacle *while* he was teaching. And today, in most churches, prayer meetings are considered optional at best, and are unattended by many at worst. This ought not to be the case.

And as we read in Acts 2:42, continue *steadfastly*, not only in prayer, in doctrine and in the breaking of bread, but in fellowship too. And by fellowship, I don't mean socialising — they are not the same thing. For even our non-Christian friends or colleagues would be happy to stand around after a service talking about sport, or the news, or our jobs.

But as Christian men, let us take time to truly fellowship, to talk about our spiritual lives, to check in on each other and see how our personal Bible reading is going, to talk about the things we don't understand, as well as the things we do. To make a point of knowing how we can pray for one another, and then actually doing it — there and then, or by having a prayer partner, triplet or prayer square where you can seriously and prayerfully bear one another's burdens. Let us draw *so close* to one another in *love* that we can actually disciple one another, leading each other closer to the Lord. And let us rightly and helpfully hold each other to account.

Now, lest we miss the point of this passage, let us be diligent to note that we cannot do these things in the absence of love. Rather, we are to stir up love — not forget about it. And so we must show much love and kindness, especially as we exhort others. But we must also show much love and kindness when we are exhorted *by* others. For, if we over-react, we may not only cut off further necessary blessing to ourselves from that person exhorting us again, but we may instill such fear into them that they don't exhort others, when indeed they need to. Let all we do be clothed in love. May we show love by exhorting others. And may we be loving when we are the ones being exhorted. May we indeed, remain teachable at all times, always open to what God's Word says in regard to our daily lives.

Now returning to our passage, let's read verse 25 again, which says:

Hebrews 10:25

not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

That is, we are to gather as whole church, each part willing to do its' share and exhort (just as we've seen from scripture), but as if to underline this, we read that we are to do this even more as we see the day approaching? What is that Day? It is the Lord's return.

And why does that make it more needful? Simply, because we read in 2 Timothy:

2 Timothy 3:1-5

But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!

And what an accurate description this is of our world today! If ever there was a time where we need each other, where we need Christian brothers who will exhort us, even correct an rebuke us, it is this day, where we are surrounded by temptations, by snares, by vices that would entice us away from the Lord. We need each other.

Summary

As I draw to a close, and in light of all we've looked at, let's read our passage once more:

Hebrews 10:19-25

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.


Are we going to do that? Are we? Is anything going to change? Are you going to change? My hope and prayer is that we would not leave this place the same. But furthermore, as we go home to our various churches, that those church families would not remain the same — for each one of us that is here this weekend, there are I'm sure at least 2 more men in our own churches that are struggling in their faith, who have grown cold, who have forgotten their first love. And they need us as godly men to exhort them. Sure, we can talk about the weather, our work, and the football with them — but they can get that in the pub. What they won't get anywhere else is faithful, loving, godly exhortation to leave behind the things of this world, and pursue Christ with all they have.

Application questions

Finally then, as we each seek to apply this to our lives, let me give you some questions to think on:

- Are you drawing near to God in **faith**?
- Is your **hope** rooted in Him? or in your career? Or family? Or the latest thing?
- What are you doing to draw near to others in **love**? How might you do more?

For additional studies, please see the DCF web site:

 Deal Christian Fellowship
Simply teaching the Bible, simply

 <https://dcf.church>