

Consider One Another

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Preacher: Rev Malcolm Macdonald

- [0 : 00] We shall sing now from Psalm 89, reading from the beginning and singing from verse 3.
- Psalm 89, reading at the beginning. God's mercies I will ever sing, and with my mouth I shall thy faithfulness make to be known to generations all.
- For mercy shall be built, said I, forever to endure thy faithfulness even in the heavens, thou wilt establish sure. I with my chosen one have made a covenant graciously, and to myself and to my loved, to David sworn have I.
- That I thy seed establish shall forever to remain, and will to generation all thy throne build and maintain.
- The praises of thy wonders, Lord, the heavens shall express, and in the congregation of saints thy faithfulness. For who in heaven with the Lord may once himself compare, who is like God among the sons of those that mighty are.
- [1 : 13] We're going to sing from verse 3 to verse 8. I with my chosen one have made a covenant graciously.
- I with my chosen one have made a covenant graciously.
- I with my chosen one have made a covenant. I with my chosen one have made a covenant.
- I never will remain, and with your generations on, I just feel, and in pain.
- The prices of thy one, God's slow, the heavens shall express, And in the congregation of sins thy faithfulness.
- [3 : 14] For who in heaven with the Lord may once and ever come here, Who is thy God among the sons of those that mighty are?
- Do it here in meeting all the saints, Is due unto the Lord, And he of all love and redemption, With reverence be adored.
- O thou that God the Lord of hosts, What your mightiness is right to thee, Who compass my heart with thy faithfulness.
- We turn now for a short while to Hebrews chapter 10, And we can read again at verse 24.
- And let us consider one another to provoke and to love and to good works, Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, As the manner of some is, But exhorting one another, And so much the more, As ye see the day approaching.
- [5 : 43] You will all doubtless know that the writer of this epistle Has spent a great deal of time Lifting Christ up before the reader of the epistle.
- And the opening words of the epistle are themselves, Words that merit consideration, And further consideration and reflection.

And I don't suppose that any time spent on it is misspent. God, who at sundry times and in diverse manners Spake in time passed unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, Whom he hath appointed heir of all things, By whom also he made the worlds, Who being the brightness of his glory, And the express image of his passion, And upholding all things by the word of his power, When he had by himself purged our sins, Sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.

Are these not truly remarkable words? It tells us a lot about Christ, Who he was, what he did, What he did when he came in the fullness of God's time, As the redeemer of the lost God's elect, And what he continues to do at the present.

Adolf Seyfer, a converted Jew, Who had much knowledge of the Old Testament dispensation, In his opening remarks on the book of Hebrews, He says, Here we have a contrast being made between the Old and the New Covenant.

[8 : 17] And he maintains that the contrast is made not to diminish the Old, So that the New is exhorted, But to help realise that God was the originator of the Old Covenant, As much as he is the originator of the New.

There is a contrast to be made between what was and what came to be, But there always has to be an understanding of the unity that exists between a covenant That is seen in the Old dispensation, And the covenant that is brought to light in the New.

He says, Beautiful is the night in which the moon and the stars of prophecy and types are shining, But when the sun rises, Then we forget the hours of watchful expectancy, And in the calm and joyous light of the day, There is revealed to us the reality and substance of the eternal and heavenly sanctuary.

Very discerning remarks. The beauty belongs to what God has foreordained for his own glory.

And yet here, as the epistles open out to us, The greatness of Christ is highlighted.

[10 : 22] He is greater than the angels, He is greater than Moses, His priesthood is eternal, Unlike all other priests that existed.

His sacrifice is not to be repeated, Unlike the sacrifices offered by a myriad number of priests.

And Robert Murray MacJane, In his own remarks, He says, The Christian dispensation was the full flower of which the mosaic was the bud, The substance of which the mosaic was the shadow.

And that is how we must approach the explanation that the apostle is giving to us, Through lifting up Christ to us in that respect.

But in immediate context, That of the passage that we're looking at this evening, The apostle has listed some of the many blessings and privileges that are enjoyed by the believer in Jesus Christ.

[11 : 49] Not only are they given access to God by way of the cross, They are also endowed with gifts and graces that belong to those, And those alone that believe in that Christ.

And he teaches us that these believers are nurtured, And they are encouraged in their faith, So that their lives are spent in a wholesome way, And in a God-honoring way.

But that teaching is not a teaching that was relevant purely in the days of the apostles, When this epistle was written.

That teaching is relevant to the current generation. Where we are today, Regardless of who we are, Where we live, If our relationship is with this Christ, If we are indeed participants and partakers of the blessings of the new covenant, Then we are indeed most privileged.

And we have to remind ourselves of that. One thing that I was thinking of when I was looking at this passage is something that I've said often, And I don't mind repeating it, Is that very often we do hear people say that our day and our generation is unlike any other day or generation.

[13 : 54] We are eyewitnesses to wickedness. We are eyewitnesses to wickedness at levels perhaps we did not think possible.

And yet we are wrong if our conclusions lead us to think like that. For the world in the world is a world that is embedded in sin.

All manner of sin. And it will come out in one way, shape or form, wherever it is to be found. When you think about C.H. Spurgeon in his own ministry in London, At the time at which he ministered, It wasn't to a people that were righteous.

We often hear quoted that this nation of ours was a nation of the book. It was spoken of as a book, the people who gave place to God's word.

But in that generation where these words were identified as being attributable to that generation, The same people who were the people of the book who had access to God's word, Who heard the preaching and proclamation of the word, Who attended the means of grace in their hundreds and in their thousands.

[15 : 27] Within these environments existed all manner of human depravity. The London that Spurgeon ministered to was a London where all manner of debauchery was witnessed.

There was prostitution. There was child slavery. There was all kinds of wickedness and malice that affected the society in which they lived.

We live in a drug-ridden society. Well, London 150 years ago was no different. They were exposed to drugs that came in from the Far East.

And people soon became addicted to them. And there were smoking, dens for opium. And then you never think about that.

Now, why do I mention that? Well, the reason is that when we think of ourselves today as if a situation is unique and novel and never before have we had to put up with all kinds of sinfulness that we see, we have to remind ourselves that these sins existed going right back to the fall of man where God himself saw that this world was in a state of desperate wickedness.

[17 : 11] Some of you will have read or heard of man, Thomas Robert Trail. Robert Trail was a Scottish Puritan.

He is described by some as a scholar, a preacher and a saint. Now, how do I describe him as a Scottish Puritan?

Well, this is what is said of him in his biography. And he lived. I think this is relevant.

He lived in 1642 to 1716. And in the flyleaf of his works, we are told of him he was a friend of William Guthrie.

He was an attendant at James Guthrie's Stirling Scaffoldy, where James Guthrie was put to death on the scaffold.

[18 : 14] He was one of his attendants. He was the son of the Greyfriars Church, where in 1638 the National Covenant was signed.

He was a Scot, ordained in England, exiled to Holland and imprisoned in the Bass Rock. That's the man, Robert Trail.

But I don't doubt for a minute that he was a good man, a spiritual man, a godly man, used mightily by God.

But this is the observation of his own day and generation. I consider, and he was speaking about this passage, and that's how I came into contact with the biography.

I consider these two things, love and good works, are so very scarce, and that Christian fellowship is so worn out of use amongst them that are called Christians.

[19 : 24] Now he's writing 300 years ago. And his observation was, in this godly nation, the nation that signed the covenant, the nation that saw many saints go to the scaffold because of their faith, the very existence of executions tells you that there was wickedness in the heart of man.

The very existence of people putting into the dungeon because of their faith tells you there was wickedness in that society. The very fact that he was chased out of Scotland and having to preach elsewhere tells you that that was the kind of nation that he belonged to.

But he is not speaking about the world. He's not speaking about the wickedness that exists in the world. He is speaking about the words of this passage and telling you something about the people who are part of the Church of Christ.

And he says of that people within this Church that there are two things, love and good works, that are so scarce.

And that Christian fellowship is so worn out of use amongst them that are called Christians. Now that's what's relevant.

[21 : 10] That's what's important for us to recognize. We may tut tut and look askance at the kind of sinfulness that we are made aware of in this world.

And we have to remind ourselves that we have far more access to media that allows us to be informed about these things than the people of the 19th century or the 18th century or the 17th century were.

And we might think ourselves to be above the need to execute those that we disagree with as happened in those days.

But you can understand that if they had the power to do the very same things would apply as applied then and vice versa.

But I want us to think about the words that we have here in verses 24 and 25.

[22 : 25] And there are four things, just briefly, that we can say something about. There is a mutual obligation. And that obligation belongs to every Christian who belong to the fellowship of believers.

In other words, it is directly pointed to this fellowship and those of us who are part of it. We have an obligation to one another that God has brought to bear upon us because of our profession, because of our partaking in the benefits of the Christ who secured these benefits for us.

Secondly, these obligations as we see them are pointed.

We are to consider one another in order to provoke one another unto love and to good works.

The third thing that we can say that he speaks of a particular danger that all who belong to the fellowship of believers may be exposed to.

[24 : 03] Whether they are exposed to that danger knowingly or if it is something that we fall prey to accidentally. The danger exists, the danger exists, it has always existed, that the body that is Christ, the people of God, are always in danger of falling off the edge, as it were, of the fellowship that is meant to convey to them.

The encouragement that comes by way of the teaching of God's word, the provocation to love and to good works. And the incentive that is, and the incentive that is, and the incentive that is, that we are here and we don't know how long we are meant to continue in this state of preparedness.

This is our lot, this is our lot, this is our portion, this is where we are at. And always on the horizon there is the purpose, there is the prospect rather of the approaching day.

This is our lot, this is our lot of experience. This is our lot of experience. That is, whatever our lot is at the present, whatever we have at the present, it is, we are in an ongoing, we are in a life situation.

We are here not to remain where we are. we are moving towards a sure and a certain destination as God has set it before us.

[26 : 01] First of all, in a mutual obligation, who is obligated? Who is obligated? Well, the answer is we are.

If you read the context, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, our bodies washed with pure water, let us hold fast the provision of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful, that promise.

Let us consider one another to provoke and to love and to good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some things.

The writer is directing his words to the Christian fellowship that are recipients of this word. As he is writing to ourselves, at this time these words come to us.

And what I would say to you this evening is that you, as a congregation, and in particular I lay heavy weight upon this, the number of you that are regular attenders at the prayer meeting.

[27 : 20] And you could argue that it is a very exclusive number. It is not made up of everyone who could be here. It is not made up of everyone who should be here.

But I could say to you that many of you, if not all, are regularly here in the house of prayer.

And you have clearly revealed by your constant attendance in this one service that your interest and your heart is in the things of God.

And the burden that is yours is yours willingly. It is not a burden that you can just give to anybody else on the basis of their profession.

Because not everybody who professes sees the burden or the duty or the privilege of gathering with God's people at a prayer meeting as something that they have a heart interest in.

[28 : 36] The words that we have here are an encouragement because you not only recognize but have a personal experience of what it means to be of this number.

Not because you think yourselves to be of that exclusive number but because you realize that you share with others that interest in the prayer life of the congregation and the fellowship that is used with the people who have that interest in the prayer life of the congregation.

You have a personal experience of the communion of the saints. We are all part of the body of Christ. We may be quite different in many respects and that is only right.

But what is true of us that marks us out is that we have this interest in the things of God and we have the interest of the things of God as they involve others.

It is not a unique clique. It is not a personal and me only interest that you have what's in it for me but something that you know that you can share with others.

[30 : 11] You have a sympathy and an empathy with the situations that others find themselves in knowing that you too will have occasion to have certain things ongoing in your life that you are thankful to God that others bear your burdens with you.

And you have that knowledge and you have that experience while others may talk about it while others may look at it from afar whether it is joy or the need for sympathy or the need for empathy.

Remember the Apostle Paul when he is writing to the church in Rome he is conscious of the way that God's people sometimes have to deal with situations that are difficult to deal with but he tells them and he tells us the same that he tells them that the world and our part in it is affected by a relationship with Christ.

We being many are one body in Christ and everyone members one of the other having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us whether prophecy let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith or ministry let us wait on our ministry he that teacheth on teaching he that exhorteth on exhortation he that giveth let him do it with simplicity he that ruleth with diligence he that showeth mercy with cheerfulness let love be without dissimulation a power what is evil cleave to that which is good be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love in honour preferring one to the other so on there is a symbiotic relationship that exists between the people of God one to the other God's goodness to his body to his church is seen in the way that we are able to minister one to the other there are differences between the gifts and the graces in the amount that they are bestowed upon us

I can imagine that there are but there is a corporate nature of the body which has to be preserved we should jealously do so we should jealously think about how what we do affects others we should jealously be aware of what our words do to others and bite our tongue if necessary if there is something that needs to be said let it be said directly personally and with grace always remembering that we are doing what we are doing as part of our ministry to the body of Christ John Murray in his own words tells us as far as the church and believers within the church is concerned the words that I've often thought about the Christian people the Christian believers they have property in one another and therefore in one another's gifts and graces in other words if God endows one person amongst you with a particular gift and a particular grace and a particular ability are you going to view that person with envy or jealousy and think well he's too big for his boots or she's too outspoken and she should be quiet no you should thank the

[34 : 29] Lord that God has seen fit to supply the body with someone with such gifts and you are able to derive blessing and benefit from them because God intends it to be so it's not something that he means you to keep for yourself it's not something that he means you to share elsewhere and to keep from others within the fellowship that is yours if God gives us a duty we cannot fob this duty off to somebody else this is all that we have and this is God's doing this is what he has given us to do whatever it may be what is the precise reason that he gives to us in this passage let us consider one another he says to provoke and to love and to good works the word provoke is usually a word that we associate with a negative context a negative application sometimes we are provoked that means somebody somewhere has done something and it has stimulated anger within us or it has made us do something that we should not wisely follow provocation is usually something that is negative but the word that is used here in the original Greek is only used twice in the

New Testament and it's always in a positive sense and here the positive sense is we are required to encourage and to support each other to exhort and to build up whatever way that we are able to do that it is a good thing to do but the thing is it's all very well to explain more what words mean the thing is we are to do it we are to do it let us consider one another to provoke and to love and to good works I suppose that is the nitty gritty that is the difficult thing what is it that we are to do well first thing is we don't leave it to somebody else to do it's not somebody else's business it's yours if you are part of the fellowship if you belong to the body if you belong to this congregation if you belong to this unique privileged position who recognise the power of prayer who recognise the centrality of prayer who recognise especially as you embark on a new experience for some of you and for a different experience for others when you prepare yourself to look for a new minister when you prepare yourself to go on for a period of vacancy

God only knows how long that may last and the challenges that involves as I've told you I've been involved in vacancies in various congregations and we have to understand that it is not always plain sailing that it is not always something that you enter into and the things that you expect that they'll pan out the way you expect them to and if you do go into it with the mindset that it is my will be done then you're going to come into choppy waters but if you are if you are energetic about the Lord's business and that you take it seriously and you take it prayerfully as the writer of this epistle takes it seriously you well he says it's a strange word to use in this context but he says that we are to provoke and to love now it would be easy enough to see how you could provoke good works

I think it's easy to see that you encourage people to do the right things you encourage people to behave the right way you encourage people to live according to their profession ■■■■ that's a good provocation can you be made to love can you be made to love against your will can you be made can you create in you a loving spirit well I think that the way that the apostle sees this is that it is very much a practical instruction that he is given and if you go back to the original scenario that's painted for you it all comes down to Christ and the greatness of Christ and the fullness of Christ and the ministry of Christ and the provision of Christ and greater love has no man than this than that he did own his life for his friends the example of Christ is set before you and it's an example of love and we are directed to it to learn from it

Paul's desire if you remember as it is expressed in Romans the very beginning of that epistle it's a very hard opening chapter we have there I think but he still finds it necessary or rather he's able to say it when he's writing to the church in Rome I long to see you that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift to the end that ye may be established that is that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me so what Paul is saying there I think is that by doing this thing by sharing with others the example of what loving behaviour is you are encouraging them to follow that example of love and to experience it within the body and to go beyond the body and claim for the body those that would experience the love of Christ for themselves would you say that the experience of prayer is an experience of love but then what about the experience of being prayed for

[42 : 31] I think if you think of prayer what motivates prayer you understand that it is in and through the passion of Jesus Christ that you approach a throne of grace a way that and a new living new and a living way that has opened out to you through the gospel and prayer is your approach to God your worship of God your declaration of your interest in God your dependence upon God your willingness to discover more often prayer is a broad subject anyway but within it there is this understanding that what you pray for and what you receive by way of prayer others can experience and receive by way of prayer you know when we think about the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ

I was reading this in the afternoon how looking at the Lord's prayer and you find that parts of the Lord's prayer might seem to us to be you know less important than other parts of it you would think that these parts that are more necessary but is there a part of the Lord's prayer that you would consider to be less important surely not it's Christ instruction to the church and if he says in his prayer thy kingdom come where does that take you oh you're saying thy kingdom come it takes me to the mission responsibility of the church well if you read your larger catechism that's not where the divines take it their expansion of the kingdom begins in the heart of the individual the coming of the kingdom is seen in the life of the Christian the life that you have through Christ and it's your desire and my desire that others would have that as we pray for it and as we seek that through God and his grace we are so self-sufficient in many ways today but we can't afford to be in this area we can't afford to be like that when Paul is writing talking about his own experiences as he writes the epistle to the Philippians you know he talks about the kind of person that he was before he gets to that he says

I thank my God upon every remembrance of you always in every prayer of mine for you all making requests with joy for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day till now being confident of this very thing that he which began a good work in you would perform it until the day of Christ Jesus an interest that goes beyond his own personal interest an interest that he would see the growth in grace of all who are part of the body that they are encouraged and that he is encouraged to see them encouraged what is the danger well briefly it is specified in verse 25 A.W. Pink thinks that what Paul is what the writer of this epistle is saying is that what is in his mind is total apostasy of the believer not forsaking the assembling ourselves together as the manner of some is that those that he has in mind have gone away entirely from the church from the body of Christ but you don't have to do that entirely you don't have to separate yourself completely but you can put yourself at risk if you distance yourself from the fellowship if you distance yourself from the place that prayer was want to be made if you separate yourself from the people that you know to be praying people if you find yourself unable to sustain a relationship with them because of the coldness that has crept into your soul if you find yourself drawn away from the fellowship by other interests which are not

God glorifying the writer says don't don't forsake the assembling of yourself together but exhort one another and so much the more if we we can't do this you see without being in the same in the same mindset as those who are with us that's the biggest trial we have as a church the biggest difficulty we have if we speak to somebody and challenge them as to what they are doing what right have you to say anything to me what right have you to correct me what right have you to rebuke me what right have you to even encourage me can I not live my Christian life in the way that suits me we cannot and should not take liberties with the liberty that God has given to us but if we are going to speak to someone we have to earn that right we have to earn that right and you can't do it you can't do it with you separate from you can't do it from outside you can't snipe from a distance the coals that are in the fire they burn brightly when they're collected together in the in the fireplace in the hearth the fallout you've heard the illustration often enough these coals will go cold by themselves and if all we are whatever our fellowship is are lumps of smoke and coal sitting side by side but not touching not speaking not dealing with the issues that are issues honestly earnestly explaining our fears describing our fears elaborating on them and wanting light why should we be embarrassed if there's something we don't understand why should we be afraid to speak to others who are brothers and sisters in the Lord about our experiences will they not accept us if we tell them that we're confused we're afraid maybe that's the fear that prevails amongst the people of

God today this thought came to me when I was preparing this finishing this off Peter he denied his Lord and he went away into the dark where did he go where did he go in between the time that he left the Lord and the time that we read of him being in the company of God's people I don't think we're told but we know that the Lord sent others to him go and tell the disciples and Peter Peter was included in that statement but why separately it would surely have been enough if Peter was with them at all times to send the message to the disciples knowing that

[51 : 51] Peter was there yes he was restored yes he came back but how long did he feel that he couldn't and sometimes we have to be so alert to the hurt and the feelings of others and even the wrongs that others have done so that we won't perpetuate that wrong by making them feel that they don't belong when you read the writings of the apostle Peter I think he learned from his lessons that many times you find him saying something and you say to yourself that sounds as if Peter was somewhere in his heart and in his mind rising out of where he came from Jesus Christ whom having not seen you love in whom though now you see him not yet believing you rejoice with joy and speakable and full of glory receiving the end of your faith even the salvation of your souls of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you searching what or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did signify when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow and to whom it was revealed that not unto themselves but unto us that administer the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the holy ghost sent down from heaven which things the angel desire to look unto

Christian experiences is often fed into from various experiences good and bad and Peter walked out into the direction of the spirit did that very thing finally there is this there is the incentive of experience the incentive of the understanding that God has promised that well here we have no continuing city but we have a sure and a certain destination and destiny awaiting to the Lord's people I think when Peter spoke somebody described it he spoke of a love that was the people of God's love and the same word that he used about love or the love of God's people echoed echoed the love that

Christ had when he was in the garden of Gethsemane and when he was in the grip of the deepest intense longing for God's people for the church that he was in the world to make his own love and the intensity that Christ expresses in that situation is the intensity of which the love that Peter experienced in his own life he understood it in that way but finally there is this there is the day that is approaching there is understanding well whatever we have here whatever we enjoy here whatever the privileges that we have whatever we are called to endure whatever the changes that we must encounter and embrace they are but a means to an end they are not the final story they are not the chapter and

God has a purpose for his people and he intends his people to be where his son is and his son intends us to people to be where he is whatever that will involve for them the God encourage each one of you to continue as you are as a fellowship of God's people bearing the burdens that you possess yourselves collectively sharing them carrying the burden of the congregation if needs be in prayer and to do so diligently forget looking at what others are doing you do your own duty do what's asked of you and ensure that you continue with God's help knowing that he is the one who is glorified by us and through us let us pray blessed God we give thanks that you do give to us lessons to learn and teachings to engross in our hearts so as to apply them to the areas of life that we are meant to live to the glory of

God here in this world bless our homes our families our loved ones bless the congregation here watch over them to all that belong to those who are part of the fellowship of believers those who are alongside them may they come to a greater knowledge a more complete knowledge of Christ the great high priest of his people the saviour of souls forgive us in his name amen our closing psalm is psalm 133 we're singing and garlich the last three rashes and look the whole son o fern gemäte machene gemäte and wach fare braden bin an honig nah im schies in keel kö mar frisch on erich haunt gu jure jesak schies er fe sa garon er vis ruh gu hummel et dich rich mar jalt der he man smaren ruh k schlief juh hih hih hih juh juh juh mjammm go vaj hih jure roon o vee kuneet macheneesh oh

[58 : 37] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. nós o Al-Fatihah Al-Fatihah

Al-Fatihah Al-Fatihah Al-Fatihah Al-Fatihah Al-Fatihah Al-Fatihah Al-Fatihah Al-Fatihah
Al-Fatihah Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[62 : 15] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[63 : 52] Thank you.