

Today - Exhort One Another

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[0:00] On my desk at work I've got a desk calendar and I flip the pages each day to a new day! And it looks a bit like this little picture here. Today, today. I'm asking you to do something! Today. Today. We only have today. Tomorrow's gone. Yesterday's gone, rather. Yesterday's gone. And tomorrow hasn't come yet. So we've only got today. Amen? That's all we've got, isn't it? And it's a saying that people have when they're planning to do something to break a bad habit or to reinforce a good habit. We've only got today. Just today I'm going to decide to do this. And every time that I get out of bed in the morning, we can say the same thing.

Just for today. I'm going to make this decision to do this today. Today I'm going to commit to doing this. This thing. Just for today. Now you say, yep, get to the point. We only have today to do this. I want to urge you, take the time, make the time to break a bad habit today, to make a good habit today. Make it your decision today. And while it is called today, I exhort you to do this. To exhort. Exhort one another daily, constantly. Here's the scripture, Hebrews 3. If we can just get this implanted, embedded in our minds, our hearts, our souls, our souls, that it becomes natural for us to do this one thing. Hebrews 3.13, but I exhort, but exhort one another daily. While it is called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. Notice you can't do this on your own. It takes you plus others. Interacting with other human beings. You and the other people in your life.

That's what it's talking about in this verse. Very simple really, isn't it? You could just dwell on this one verse and get this one point today. It's one of the purposes for which we are called together, exhort one another. That simple. Exhort one another. It's one of the purposes for which we're called together as a church, to be the church. It's God's blueprint for the church, God's pattern. What? To exhort one another. It's not meant to be that the pastor does all the exhorting. Exhort one another. It's the body. It's us. We are to exhort, it says. How do we show this? You might say, preacher, how can I exhort people? Care for one another.

Encourage one another. Communicate the word of God to each other. Bless one another. Teach one another. Pray for one another. In Psalms and hymns, admonishing one another. Teaching one another. Do this today. You know, the Bible is full of these one another's. There's many one another's through the word of God. It's right through. From cover to cover, we see one another. You can't do Christianity on your own without really considering one another. It's about one another. It's about each one reaching one and another. And this must continue as long as it is called what?

Today. As long as it is called today. The word here, exhort, is variously translated with the meanings of comfort, console, give encouragement, in other words. Give encouragement. Now, to encourage, encourage, it means to put courage into someone. Encourage. Put courage into people. Courage to do what? The courage to trust God. The courage to obey God. The courage to follow God. Our text tells us here that we are to exhort. Why? Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. You know, sin hardens people. They get hard. A stony, steely hardness towards God. And sin is deceitful. It hides. It disguises itself. And the heart can get hardened by sin. Happens over time, doesn't it? Things get hardened. You know, particular materials in the sun, they get hardened, don't they? Over time. They were once soft and they become hardened and brittle. And it's like that with people. It doesn't happen overnight.

[5:16] But as we exhort one another today, today, today, day after day, one another, one another. Softness towards God, hopefully. There's a tenderness there, the sensitivity. And why do we exhort?

We exhort because we care for souls, the souls of others. I want to see people getting tripped up and trapped as captives in sin. But to set people free, to liberate people, to give people that joyful liberation, that freedom, that victory, to set them on the right pathway to peace, to live. Now this

word, this most common word for encouragement or exhorting, is the word parakaleo, if you're a Greek. That's what it would be. Para, which means beside or near, alongside. And kalio, which means to call or summon. Sounds alike to us, don't we? Kalio, call. To call beside. To call someone alongside to help. To call someone alongside to counsel. To call someone alongside to encourage. To call someone alongside to bring comfort. Now isn't it nice when you've got someone to just put an arm on your shoulder and your arm on their shoulder? Someone to call alongside to help. Someone to come alongside you. Someone to come beside you. To help. To encourage you.

We all need that. I need that. We need that. Each one of us need to call someone alongside to help. That's the sense of it here. When we get together, we can exhort one another. We can call one another alongside to help. We can be a shoulder to lean on for someone else and lean on someone else when we need to. Amen? I need to sometimes. We need one another.

[7:08] And that's why we get together. To call one another. To come beside one another. To come and help one another. To get together. To be a part of what this is. The church. It's fellowship. And it's that chance that we have to exhort one another. You know, you can stay at home and watch some really good TV preachers. There are some out there. But you can't exhort one another watching the TV or staying at home. That's why we get together, isn't it?

We get together because we need one another. I need you. You need me. We need one another. You need your brother. You need your sister. We need one another. Exhort one another. Hebrews 10, 24 through 25. And let us consider one another. To provoke unto love and to good works. That's why we need one another. I need to be provoked. You know, there's some provocative people in this church. They're provocative in a good way. That's what we need. I need some provoking. I need some good provoking. You need some good provoking. Unto love and to good works. And it goes on, of course, that familiar one. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is. Don't forsake this, but exhorting one another.

Exhorting one another. That's why we're here today. And so much the more as you see the day approaching. This verse tells us that we are to be about this. Exhort one another. And so much the more as you see the day, the day approaching. You know, the day is closer than it was yesterday. The day is talking about the day of the Lord. It's the day of his coming.

We see the day approaching as the Lord Jesus is coming back. He's about to step back onto this planet and to come back for his people. Are people ready? And so meantime, let's take time to exhort one another. In other words, how can we put this into action? You might say, okay, exhort one another. How do I do that? Take time to exhort one another. Talk to people before the service. Get here early enough that you can talk to somebody before the service.

And after the meeting, take time to hang around. You might be able to see someone who needs some comfort and care and prayer and a word from your lips to lift them up. Don't head for the door too quick without taking that time to exhort one another and be exhorted. And it's not just what comes across from here. It's one another. One another. And so take time to linger after the meeting to exhort someone. Listen to people and pay attention to their needs. Get out of yourself and look at other people and see their needs. It's what the Lord Jesus did, isn't it? He saw the multitudes and he was moved with compassion. He cared about others. Let's have a heart for others. You know, when you come to church fellowship, it's not all about you getting something. It's about giving. It's about giving of yourself. Taking time to talk, to care. And go to people who can't come easily to you. There's some people who can't come easily to you. They're less mobile. They've got mobility issues. There's people that is not here this morning but is in a wheelchair. He can't get up and come to you. Go to him. Go to him. Take time to care. Don't be so selfish that you neglect the opportunity to care. When you see someone who can't get out of his seat to come to you, go to him.

[10:48] Exhort one another. Take time to be unselfish. And this exhorting one another is something we are to do today. Put yourself out and show that you care. Don't be selfish. Step out of your comfort zone and be the church. Be the church. And this exhorting one another, it goes beyond Sundays. Every day that is called what? Today. Today. Today. You know, I'm not a seventh day Adventist, but I'm a seventh day Christian. Amen. That's what we should be, isn't it? It's not about being a Sunday

Christian. It's being a Monday Christian, a Tuesday Christian and so on. A seventh day Christian. Every day that is called what? Today. Today. So that's seven days a week. Take time to contact people and be hospitable. I was glad when someone volunteered here to make some phone calls for me. I've had some very long days with work commitments and I've not been able to get to the phone even. I say that to my shame. I don't want to be living like that.

I want to have time to phone people. But even making a phone call is hard for me sometimes. Every day that is called today, let's be the church. Be the church. Take time to contact people, to be hospitable, to be a friendly church, a friendly Christian. People who may visit a church can often be, make a judgment call. There was someone who came last week and I tried to reach them and say, I'm glad that I saw you last week and would love to see you again. And she just gave a one line answer, you won't see me again. And she cut off the means of contact Facebook. So I say, look, I'm sorry. What happened? What did we do wrong? What did I neglect to do? How did we fail you as a church? And I find out why. And I'm just like, oh, what happened? Did someone offend her?

Was it someone who sat next to her who didn't care for her? Who didn't take the time for her? Who was so consumed with themselves that they didn't step out and be a friendly Christian to her? You know, people can make that judgment call when they visit a church, can't they?

It's whoever sat next to them. Oh, they didn't care about me or no one said hello. No one offered me a cuppa or whatever it be. And they walked through the door. I'm not back there again. They can make that judgment call just about how we respond to people as a church.

They can make that judgment call. I'm not going back there again. They weren't friendly enough, whatever it be. It's not a good reason to have really, but it's the reality, isn't it?

[13:39] So, people can be very easily put off a church. Let's not be that reason. Let's not be that reason that anyone gets put off. Let's exhort one another. It takes a special kind of commitment.

We exhort because he calls us to. Patient with others. To take time for people. You know, it talks about the earlier scripture read before, forbearing one another. There's some people in my life that help develop my forbearing skills. Amen? Isn't that right? Oh, I can't stand that person. But, no, we don't. No, I don't really think like that. But, you know, there's some people that get under your skin, isn't there? And it develops your forbearing skills. It helps you that, oh, I've just got to, I'll love them a little bit more. It's hard, but I'm going to love them a little bit more. And he calls us to have that patience with people, that long-suffering with people. Do we stop and consider sometimes the impact that we can have in another person's life? You know, I look back as a young person, and I can remember some things my headmaster told me when I was eight years old. People remember things, don't they? Don't neglect the children. Do not neglect the children. The young people.

They will remember you. They will remember the words that you said. They'll remember that, oh, you know, get that noisy one, and the scowling face. Oh, when someone's a bit noisy in church, don't do that. They'll remember that. We want to bless them. We want to love them. We want to point them to Christ. We want to be glowing testimonies. We want to be joyful Christians. We want to be encouraging, exhorting one another. And that includes the children. Don't neglect them. Take time to smile, to care, to love, to show God's grace. Consider the impact you're making. We can neglect that. We can make a bad impact and blow it, and it's a lifetime impact, isn't it? Don't neglect it. Turn it around. Make a good impact from now on. And some people, friends, it's a reality. They do the opposite of exhorting, don't they? They are discouragers.

Discouragers, you know. They love to criticise. It's like they've got an anointing for it. You know, I've got people contacting me saying they want to come to see someone just to have a go at them, just to stick it into them, just to go and bash them, Bible bash them about some particular issue or whatnot. They've got this zeal to correct other people.

[16:21] And get them straight without thinking of themselves. It's their make-up. It's their DNA to be a critic. They're born whingers and complainers. Don't be like that. Life's too short, isn't it? Isn't it?

It's too short to be always on the lookout for the negative, to find fault, always on the lookout for what's wrong with everybody else without thinking what's inside this skin, what's inside here, my heart? They just want to look out for the fault of others. You know, I know a woman like this.

She's not present. She's got nothing to do with this church. But there's a mutual friend of ours and he likes to call this woman happy. Because she's not. She's not happy. She's really grumpy. You know, not happy, Jan, as they're saying. But no, that's not her name. But she's always negative. This woman, she's a negative person. It eats her up from the inside out. You know, when she's eating some food.

It's too hot. It's too cold. It's too spicy. It's too sweet. And she complains about people just the same way. About pretty much everything that's going on around her. Every word that comes out of her mouth.

[17:36] Something, putting something down, putting people down. Some Christians are like that. Let's face it. Let's face it. Some Christians are like that. Never a word of comfort or cheer. Never a word of encouragement or comfort.

They're selfish, mean-spirited people. Don't be like that. People of God, exhort one another. While it is called today. Today. Today. Today. The word says we are not to be discouragers, but encouragers.

There's no doubt about it that people like Happy need it. She needs it. She needs someone to encourage her. And I do try. I do try with her, but it's hard. Now, Philippians 2.14, it says, Do all things without murmurings and disputings. All things without murmurings and disputings.

1 Corinthians 10.10, it says, Neither murmur ye as some of them also murmured and were destroyed. With the destroyer. Don't murmur. Don't be a complainer, a fault finder.

Find something good to talk about. Amen? And that's not to discount this needful correction sometimes, of course. And it does take a certain boldness to exhort people to talk to a stranger.

[18:55] It means you're going to have to get out of your seat and go to talk to someone you may not have had any words with before. You don't know who they are. But, you know, some of you morning people have never met some of the night people.

And vice versa. You know, maybe it's time to get to meet them, isn't it? Wouldn't that be nice? You might meet some new people if you come tonight. And so, you know, sometimes we need to take the effort to talk to a stranger.

Someone who is down and needs a lift. Just check it out. Check out the people around you. Maybe they've got a word for you or you've got a word for them. You know, sometimes it can mean giving a word of challenge.

You know, as a Christian, as we exhort one another, sometimes you've got to give a little bit of a, hey, come on, get back on track. Here, help me lift you up back on the racetrack again. Help me lift you up and get you back in the race again.

Sometimes there's a need for rebuke. And some people need to be guided and pointed to the saviour, to truth and away from error. And the righteous are as bold as a lion.

[20:02] Don't be afraid. A gentle rebuke. A tactful rebuke. A rebuke because you care. A correction because you love. Speak the truth in love.

And there's an exhorting that challenges people. I need that. We need that. Nathan exhorted David. That wasn't easy for Nathan, was it? When he exhorted David, David was in sin.

He was the king. He was the authority. But Nathan was forthright and said, David, this is not right. It was a life-giving rebuke, wasn't it?

As David received the rebuke and acted on it, and he got back on track. It can be hard to be an exhorter. It can be. Sometimes the exhorters need some exhorting and some encouragement. And many of us would rather keep quiet. It's the easy thing to do, isn't it? You might think, well, I'm not going to do it today, but I'm going to think about doing it tomorrow.

[21:03] But what do they say? Tomorrow never comes. And so it's easy to keep quiet and to lack that certain boldness that we need, to go out of your way to give a word of encouragement.

And you might see nothing for it. You know, you might take the trouble to care, to exhort, to encourage a fellow Christian, and they might just cut you off and slam the phone down on you. I've had that happen. Just trying to care. But it doesn't stop you trying again. Don't let it stop you. Don't let it stop you. You might go out of your way to show that you care and see nothing for it and just get shut down.

But you are sowing seeds, aren't you? You are sowing seeds every day today. You may not see the results today, but you're sowing seeds. And it can take a while for the results to show.

So sow seeds in life. Sow seeds of encouragement in your marriage. Sow seeds of encouragement in your home, in your family, in your relationships, in your workplace.

[22:15] Even if it seems like it's a waste of time, just keep sowing the seeds. Amen? And be prepared to stand alone. Now, the Lord challenges us.

And we are called to be others who challenge at times, to be like coaches, to help others. You know, you see, of course, at this time of year, the Olympic athletes, they've got people coaching them, taking time to challenge them.

You can go a bit faster. You can work a bit harder. You can go a bit further here. And we're called to exhort people like coaches, exhorting people in their worship, exhorting people in their walk, in their witness, in their ministries.

We're all called to this task. Exhort one another. One another. That's you. Us. We. Exhort one another.

As messengers for God's glory, communicating his truth, his word. Exhort one another. In other words, spread good gossip. Gossip. You know, people in your life, they just love to gossip.

[23:25] It's always negative, isn't it? Oh, what's he going to tell me this time? Or she. You know. Gossip some good gossip.

Say something good about somebody. Counter that with something good. I like to do that sometimes. You find something good to say about them. Even, not as a scratch a bit hard to find it with some people, but you can find something good to say.

You know, there's a man who was such a man in a town and he had this reputation in this town that he never said anything unkind about anybody at all.

Every word that came out of his mouth was encouraging and positive. I've known people like that in my life. Haven't you? They don't have a bad word about anybody. They're encouraging.

They're positive. And people in the town couldn't stand this man. They couldn't stand the way that he, because he liked to talk about people, they liked to talk about people. And they didn't like this man because he had nothing bad to say about people.

[24:31] And one day there was this vicious dog. I guess it must have been a place where there's rabies, you know. And there's this vicious dog who terrorised people and was a horrible dog. And it was just a mangy, mean, barking, biting dog.

And the people were really terrorised by this dog. And one day the dog died. And the people in the town, they got together and they're all sharing their horror stories about this horrible dog and all the bad things that this rotten dog did to them and what a public nuisance this dog was.

And after a while the people went over to this nice man's house and see what would he say about the dog. There's nothing good that anybody can say about this rotten dog.

And they knew that he could say nothing good about the dog. And one of the townspeople came up to the man and they asked him, what do you think about that dog?

And he paused for a while and then he said, that dog sure did have pretty teeth. You know, he found something good to say.

[25:43] He couldn't say something bad. And what about you and me, people of God? Exhort one another. Find something good to say. Amen? Find something good.

Look for opportunities to encourage people, to bless people, to uplift people. You know, we sure could use a word of cheer in these gloomy days at times. And when someone does something good in your eyes, simply tell them.

It will make a world of difference to that individual. Determine to look for the best in people. Find something good to say. Something that will lift up the downtrodden.

Something that will impart hope. You know, sometimes Julie and I, when we go shopping, we're a bit radical sometimes. Julie and I, we go shopping and we notice something in the shop.

And sometimes I'll go up and I'll go to the checkout and I'll say, where's the store manager? I want to talk to the store manager. And I find the store manager, the manager of the shop, and I'll say to them, are you the manager?

[26:44] And they'll say, yes. And I'll say, I'd like to give you some feedback. Some feedback about one of your staff. And then they start to look a bit uncomfortable. And they say, oh no, what have they done this time?

You know, I'm like that at work sometimes. You only hear the bad stories. But here's the manager and they start to feel a bit uncomfortable. And then I share about how the staff member was particularly helpful.

And they went out of their way to serve. And they gave us, they had a smile. And they were polite and courteous. They said, please and thank you. And it just blows them away.

It just blows the manager away. Wow! I've got staff like that. There's something good about my staff. It gives them a reason to actually maybe compliment their staff and appreciate them a bit more.

Maybe give them a bit of a pat on the back. You know, it gives you a buzz being an encourager, doesn't it? It gives you a buzz being an encourager. You know, exhort one another. Find something good to say and say it.

[27:46] You know, if... In church, if someone's prayed a prayer you like, if you enjoyed their prayer, tell them. If they said something that you're encouraged by, tell them.

And if someone becomes a Christian, encourage him or her in their faith, especially the young Christians, new Christians. If someone does a good work, acknowledge it, tell them. If your children do something good, give them praise.

Don't neglect the opportunity to praise them. Acknowledge them. Look for those opportunities and take them. You know, children constantly need encouragement because it helps to build their character and exhort people.

Exhort people. Exhort one another when? Today. And exhorting one another. It's more than just words. You know, in Galatians 6.2, it says, bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ.

Find a way that you can bear someone's burdens. You know, I find it hard sometimes. I do hope and try to encourage people. Sometimes I don't have the words to say. I don't know what to say.

[28:51] You know, you hear about grief, about loss, about hardship, about break-ups. And it's hard to find the words. I really struggle. I'll be honest with you people, God.

But let's try to show it. Find some way to show it. Find some way to bear one another's burdens.

You know, it says in the word, do good to all men, but especially those of the household of faith.

When you exhort people, it brings glory to God. When you exhort people, you can encourage them to be authentic Christians. Encourage them to be solid. Encourage them to fellowship.

Encourage them to witness, to study, to serve. Encourage them by helping them to become who God wants them to be. The opposite.

Discouragement destroys, doesn't it? Discouragement destroys. It puts people down. It just, it's such an empty thing.

[29:47] But encouragement lifts them up. And we all need that. You know, sometimes encouragement helps a person to try harder and be a better person. Like I said, those extra yards on the Olympic arena, it's because sometimes someone encouraged them when they were young.

They could, someone could have said, ah no, forget that, that's a pipe dream. Forget that, you're never going to make it. You know, that's how I was like in one job actually. I was told, you're never going to make the next level.

You know, they said, give it up. You know, and he was being serious, so I just didn't have what it took. So I got what it took. And I went to the next level, the next level, the next level. Because you don't take what people say.

You know, you're never going to make it. Well, I'm going to prove you wrong. But, you know, encouragement is what we need. How much better it would be that someone encourages you and says, yes, you can do it.

You can do it. I believe you can make it. And encouragement, it's what makes people make it on the racetrack and in life. You know, there's going to be hard yards there. There's going to be

discouragement.

[30:49] But we can all reach that potential. If we just urge others to keep on going, despite the effort, despite the setbacks, and we'll see the results. Maybe not today, but tomorrow we'll see the results.

And the Lord is patient with us, isn't he? Think of the artist shaping his creation. It slowly takes shape over a lifetime. But half the time it's just clay being squished and squashed and it just looks like nothing.

But if we will be but clay in the potter's hands, he will make us who he wants us to be. You know, when a sculptor carves a statue, it's done in secret, and it's only really in the sculptor's mind what that can be.

And it's like that with the church. We're a work in progress, all of us. God's got his plan for his church and he'll achieve it one day. When God's plan is perfected, is completed, then we'll see what he's been doing with us all this time and we'll realise what work he has done and through those hardships and hard times in eternity, we'll look at eternity past and we'll realise God was working and doing his work right then.

And so let's not be discouraged but encouraged. Now when the work of art is there being chipped away and fashioned and shaped, it's hard to conceive what it will become.

[32:12] But God is working all things together for good, for those who love God, for those who are the court according to his purpose. And you might feel, wow, I just don't understand.

One day we will. One day we will. Even the hard things, even the most difficult things of life. God is working all things together for good, for them that love God, those who are the court according to his purpose.

And really the Lord is the ultimate encourager. In 2 Corinthians 1 verse 3 it says, that he is the God of all comfort. Now this word comfort is the same word encouragement, exhorting.

It's the same word, the paraclete, the Holy Spirit, the God of all comfort, the God of all encouragement. That's what he is. He lifts us up. And God has brought each of us together to be that dynamic expression of his people on this earth at this time in this place today.

So while it is called today, exhort one another, exhort one another, encourage one another. Now sometimes people discount people. They've got certain people that they're comfortable with and everybody else gets excluded.

[33:28] They discount people. We can make that mistake. What, you know, I've got hang-ups with how people look sometimes or what people do. I've got to go against the grain and love people.

Love people. Don't discount people. Don't look down on others. You know, everyone comes in different shapes and sizes, don't they? If you're all clones of me, I'd be really worried because, you know, I think that'd be a terrible thing.

But, you know, some people, they come from the wrong side of town, they think. Or they come from the wrong background, the wrong culture, the wrong family. You've got the past against you. You know, you've got this and that that's going against you.

And some people can look down on people like that and put them down. Oh, they've got this and that. I don't want to hang around people like that. And some people, they look at people in this church and they rubbish them.

Where we live, they rubbish the place we live. Just a place we live. It doesn't change who we are or what God can do with us and with this place, with this city, with this community.

[34:39] And we need to stand up. And no one rubbishes God's people to me. I refuse to look down on anybody. And I see people as God's raw material.

I'm still God's raw material. He's not finished working on me yet. He's still working on all of us, isn't he? And he's not finished with me yet or with you. And so there's a latent potential in everybody.

And sometimes it just has to be honest. We need to see past the things that we would discount, would cause us to discount them and see everyone as a human soul that's precious to God.

Precious. Someone unique. Everybody's different and we're something God can work with if we will but be clay. But be clay in his hands.

And so people, there's a precious soul. Every precious soul is of infinite value. Don't discount anybody. We're all God's treasures. And the master artist is still working on all of us.

[35:44] So for the meantime, let's play our part to exhort one another today. Exhort one another to be the people that God is shaping them to be according to his perfect plan and in accord with his glorious design.

God's raw materials. That's what people are, isn't it? God's raw materials. Whoever comes through that door, so to speak, they're God's raw materials.

Everybody who loves God. You know, earthen vessels that God wants to shine his glorious power from. Raw materials that God wants to shine through and in.

And so for the meantime, we are to exhort one another. Do that. Do that. If you see someone who needs a lift, you know, step outside of your own skin and think about the people that are sat around you today.

the people that are in your life and find something to say, something to show, even if it be a smile, a handshake, a hug.

[36:51] If someone's struggling in their walk, exhort them. They need you and you need them. We need one another. Exhort, encourage, it's the same thing.

So if you see someone who is backsliding, even more so, isn't it? Now, sometimes people think, oh, that person's a backslider, I'm going to write them off, nothing to do with them.

I mean, there is a certain cutting off, but restore them. Restore them in love. That's what the word says, isn't it? Exhort them.

Now, God's nature is to exhort us. Think of his patience, the long-suffering of God, that he would bother about me. He's the God of all encouragement, isn't he?

And he provides us guidance and counsel and comfort and correction and love, long-suffering, tenderness, loving-kindness, warning, rebuke, direction, redirection.

[37:57] He is the God of all comfort. And he calls us to encourage others who are needing comfort and encouragement in all their tribulation.

That's why he's led us through some things.

So we are called to this, to exhort one another. Think of, really, I could have given you hundreds of scriptures, really, to talk about this subject today.

Exhort one another. Exhort one another. You know, there's many exhortations right through the pages of this book. Exhort one another. The exhortation to godly living.

Now we see, for example, Acts 14. Here's one here. Paul went to a place and he was confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith that we must, through much tribulation, enter into the kingdom of God.

Now we all need exhortation. They needed it back in Acts 14. They need it now. They need it today. We need it now. When the tough times come especially, the context there is much tribulation.

[38:58] Paul's saying, hey, continue in the faith and you're going to go and prosper and have a wealthy life and have everything rosy and fine and have this, that, and this blessing and this and the other.

No, he's saying, I'm exhorting you to continue in the faith because we must, through much tribulation, enter the kingdom of God. He's saying, get ready for some tough things.

We need to be exhorted and to exhort one another, to continue in the faith. You know, find someone who is in tribulation. They need you. They need to hear from you and exhort them.

People are in trouble and in strife. Encourage them. Make yourself available. You know, I write in the newsletter, if you want to make an appointment, let me know.

I need to know. I'm here, ready, to make an appointment with you. Let me know. And let's be like that with one another. Find people, look, I'm available.

[39:59] I'll drop everything and come to you if you need me. I'll take time off work, whatever it be. I'll make the time, take the time, to care. And be like that too. Exhort one another.

It's not just the pastor's job. Spur one another on in the faith. There's many exhortations in the word. As I say, I could dwell on this, I could give you hundreds of scriptures. You know, look through your concordance.

You've got the strong, you know, the paraclete, the paracletos and similar words. It talks about exhortation, exhorting, exhort, beseech. It means comfort.

It means encourage, exhort. And we think of that great scripture that our Lord talks about his coming in the air for his church. It says, you know, that he'll catch us up together to meet him in the clouds in the air.

Wherefore, comfort one another with these words. That word comfort is exhort. It's saying, wherefore, exhort one another with these words. Exhort one another with these words, the word of God.

[40:58] Really, the scriptures are our ultimate source of comfort, of exhortation. And the paraclete, the Holy Spirit, works through his word. Romans 15, 4, it tells, whoops, Romans 15, 4, I've lost it there, but it says, for whatsoever things will return, for our learning.

We, through comfort and patience of the scriptures, might have hope. You know, one of the best ways you can exhort one another is take your King James Bible and memorize some verses. Hide it in your heart so that you've got it in your heart, you've got it in your mind, you've got it in your memory, you've got it on your tongue, and God can give it when he needs you to use it, to deliver it. Through patience and comfort of the scriptures, we might have hope. There's comfort of the scriptures that we can impart to people who need it. So, put the word in your heart.

There's many exhortations, again, exhortations to prayer, for example. Paul says to Timothy, I exhort them, you pray, pray. There's exhortation to sound doctrine.

In 2 Timothy 4, he says, preach the word, be instant, in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine. We can use the scriptures, we can use doctrine.

[42:12] Exhort one another, encourage one another, preach the word. These are words of life, words of healing. These are the words of God. We can hide them and we can deliver them.

Exhort one another, exhort one another. These are words of comfort, don't hold them back. Now, what a comfort it is when you have the opportunity just to write a word of scripture.

Write a word of scripture and mail it to somebody. Put it on Facebook. You'll lift people up. These are words of healing, words of comfort. Don't hold them back, impart them.

And so, what am I saying? Exhort one another while it is called today. Daily. Exhort one another daily while it is called today, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.

Can you determine in each day that you have that is called today? You know, how hard is it to say, I'm going to give today to this purpose.

[43:16] I'm going to make a determined effort just today, just for today, just for today. When you flip over that desk calendar, if you like, and it's today, which means all the time really, isn't it?

And while it is called today, I exhort you to do this. Every time you get out of bed in the morning and you start a new day, today, I'm going to exhort one another.

I'm going to find someone who I can encourage daily, day by day, constantly, every day, while it is called today. Has God put someone on your heart? You know, you might be going through the week and you think of somebody.

Maybe God put that name on your heart. Maybe God brought that person to your remembrance so that you can make that call today. Today.

Let us pray. Amen.