



"Advice is a dangerous gift, even from the wise to the wise, and all courses may run ill."
—J.R.R. Tolkien

07-Jun-19

Each Other (Part Three)

Through Parts One and Two, the focus of our attention has narrowed to the instruction in [Hebrews 10:24-25](#). It is the author's advice to a people who, though they had long experience in God's church, had begun to neglect the awesome opportunity [God](#) had given to them:

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.

Verse 25 provides a concrete way in which we can "consider one another." He contrasts "forsaking the assembling of ourselves together" with "exhorting one another." They are opposites. We cannot exhort others if we have withdrawn from them. We should assemble with the rest of the Body where possible, and the reason the apostle gives is for exhorting others in the fellowship. He could have provided many reasons for us to assemble, but the one he singles out is that we can practice exhortation.

But what does this mean?

The common definition of *exhort* is "to strongly encourage or urge someone to do

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something." In the New Testament, the word translated as "exhort" means "to call near," in the sense of inviting or imploring. It can mean "to comfort" as well as "to urge to action." The word can also connote "to give consolation" as well as "to advise earnestly." Even though an exhortation may not always contain the word "please," it typically carries that sense because it is an invitation. If someone is heading in the wrong direction, we can "call him near" to plead with him to choose a different path. Doing so is an act of love.

If we see someone losing [hope](#), we can comfort him by imploring him to remember God's sovereignty, His providence, and His love toward His children. If we see someone stuck in a repeating cycle, we can invite him to consider things from a different perspective, perhaps by encouraging him to remember a scripture or a principle that could help. While an exhortation can be powerful, it is not dictatorial, officious, or meddling. Instead, it is an invitation, an entreaty, not a rebuke.

It should be emphasized that the focus of the exhortation is outward, on helping other members of the Body. It is an act of love to comfort, to console, to urge another to keep fighting the good fight, to encourage him to keep [seeking God](#) or to plead with him to change to a better course. The purpose of exhortation is not to make ourselves feel good but to aid a brother or sister in walking toward the [Kingdom of God](#).

To complete this picture, however, we must also understand where true exhortation comes from. In short, it is a product of the first two cords: our [faith](#) and our hope. We can truly exhort only because of God's workmanship in us ([Ephesians 2:10](#)). God's work in our lives gives us the experience, understanding, empathy, and foresight to be able to exhort a brother or sister in Christ with greater wisdom.

If God has been active in our lives—if we have had our minds opened; if we have witnessed His intervention; if we have prayed and fasted about an issue and saw it resolved; if we have studied our Bibles and understood them; if we have experienced the effects of [sin](#) and the blessing of forgiveness—then we have the basis for exhorting other members of the Body and helping them to see the things that will make a difference. We can walk outside and be reminded of the physical creation, but exhortation invites others to remember God's ongoing spiritual creation and urges them to align themselves to it.

Exhortation bears an additional fruit. Recall that the command to the Hebrews to exhort one another appears in the context of avoiding or preventing willful sin. This section shows that our consideration of others, our assembling together, and our exhortation of others (in conjunction with faith and hope) is the way that we—individually—guard

against willful sin. The same spiritual process that enables us to exhort others and help them also gives *us* spiritual strength!

It is a well-known principle that one of the best ways to learn something is to teach it. Anyone who has given a sermonette or written an article knows the spiritual benefit that comes from the process. Even if we are not writers or speakers, we have probably experienced God's inspiration in giving the right words at the right time. God enables us to exhort, and in being conduits of His words, we learn, grow, and have more life-experience with Him. When we exhort, it causes us to remember what God has done in our lives, what He has taught us, what He is like, what His character is, and what His standards are. This process encourages us to remain stirred up spiritually and always looking through a spiritual lens. Thus, when we exhort, we, too, are exhorted.

Along the same lines, if our exhortations have their source in God, they will always have the effect that He wills because His words do not return to Him void ([Isaiah 55:11](#)). We do not always know what the result will be, nor do we know when it will happen. Notice, though, that the instruction in Hebrews 10 does not say anything about our exhortations' outcomes—it simply says to do it because exhorting each other is an act of love.

Finally, exhorting the brethren is not about changing them. It may seem like our exhortations have no effect at all, but that is not necessarily true. We are just not privy to all that God is doing. However, if our faith and hope are in God, we can let go of the outcome because we trust that He will sort it out.

To bring it full circle, then, when our focus is outward and on helping others finish their course, the likelihood of our entering into willful sin plummets. Yet, when we start withdrawing and focusing inwardly, the three-fold cord has an opportunity to unravel. As we see the Day approaching, remember that despite our inability to save others—or for others to save us—as we help others with their spiritual race, we receive help as well.

- David C. Grabbe

World News Highlights

['Wake up Call': 1m New Std Infections Daily](#)

The Washington Examiner 06-Jun-19

[Number of Homeless People Jumps 12% Across L.a. County to Nearly 59,000](#)

KTLA 04-Jun-19

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[Most Violent Weekend in Chicago This Year: at Least 52 Shot, 8 Fatally](#)

The Chicago Tribune 03-Jun-19

[Sexually Transmitted Superbug Warning as Infections Soar 26% in a Year](#)

The Independent 04-Jun-19

[For the U.S. and China, It's Not a Trade War Anymore — It's Something Worse](#)

The Los Angeles Times 01-Jun-19

[Bill to Legalize Assisted Suicide in Maine Goes to Governor](#)

Associated Press 04-Jun-19

[The Number of Americans Working in Their 70s Is Skyrocketing](#)

Quartz 03-Jun-19

[Mass Shootings Transform How America Talks, Prays, Prepares](#)

Associated Press 03-Jun-19

[Humans Consume 'Tens of Thousands' of Plastic Pieces Each Year](#)

Yahoo/AFP 04-Jun-19

[Poll: Over 75% of College Students Support Abortion in Most or All Cases](#)

Breitbart 03-Jun-19

New Transcripts

[1005c: Crisis of Leadership](#)

Given by Richard T. Ritenbaugh on 07-Aug-10

[1008c: God's Simple Commands](#)

Given by John W. Ritenbaugh on 28-Aug-10

[1490c: The Answer is in the Bucket](#)

Given by John W. Ritenbaugh on 01-Jun-19

Prayer Requests

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New prayer request updates have been posted for the following people:

[Brethren in Alberta, Canada](#)

[Lance Bergstresser](#)

[Delicious DeBlair](#)

[Gary Montgomery](#)

[Gary Montgomery](#)

[Gary Montgomery](#)

[Deborah O'Gainey-McTernan](#)

[Deborah O'Gainey-McTernan](#)

[Trish Plunkett](#)

[Kondwhani Sakala](#)

[Mary Tisher](#)

[Paulette Williams](#)

[Paulette Williams](#)

From the Archives: Featured Sermon

[Exhort One Another Daily](#)

by Ronny H. Graham

Ronny Graham, reflecting on the phrase "we are family" used over and over after Herbert W. Armstrong's death, a phrase used so often it almost lost its usefulness, nevertheless, in our scattered state, we are still family, but at this time we need to exhort one another to stay firm in the faith. Satan hates the family of God and wants to kill us. Consequently we need to encourage and exhort one another to stand firm realizing that the spiritual roller coaster ride will not last forever. We can also encourage each other by listening and then protecting those things spoken to us in confidence. We should be strengthening those who are spiritually immature, diplomatically warning those who are unruly. As John Donne once stated, no man is an island- isolated from one another. We are the family of God.

From the Archives: Featured Article

[No Greater Love](#)

by Staff

Christ says in God's Word that we can show no greater love than in sacrificing our lives for our friends. How do we do this? We must come to the point where we are doing this daily!

Featured Audio Schedule

Friday Night Bible Study

The next Bible Study will be **Matthew (Part 4)**, given by **John W. Ritenbaugh** on **Friday 07-Jun-19**. The Bible Study will be continuously available from **6:00 pm Friday** until **12:00 pm Saturday (EST)**.

Daily Audio Programs

Hear previous sermons, sermonettes, and Feast of Tabernacles messages, **Sunday through Friday**. [Available from the homepage.](#)

Date	Title
Sunday 09-Jun-19	What Does God Really Want? (Part 6)
Monday 10-Jun-19	Go Not Out of the House
Tuesday 11-Jun-19	Are You Worthy of Your Calling?
Wednesday 12-Jun-19	Manoah, Father of Samson
Thursday 13-Jun-19	Mercy Triumphs Over Judgment
Friday 14-Jun-19	God In Us

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