

Stimulate One Another

Franklin Church of Christ
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PM Worship

Introduction:

We have had lots of sermons on **Hebrews 10:25**. Such that, we may think the most important lesson in the Bible is to attend the assemblies. While that lesson is important, **vs. 24** is more important. **Hebrews 10:24** says, "Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds."

Discussion:

- I. Our goal is love and good deeds.
 - A. According to **I Timothy 1:5**, the goal of our instruction is love. We are to love God (**James 2:5**). We are to love each other (**I John 4:7**). We are even to love our enemies (**Matthew 5:44**). We are to love. As we gain this love, we become more like our Father in heaven.
 - B. When we grow in love, good deeds follow. According to **Ephesians 2:10**, when God saved us, He recreated us to walk in good deeds. When Paul wrote Titus, one of his repeated themes was good work. In **Titus 2:7**, he exhorted Titus to be an example of good works. In **2:14**, he said Jesus died to redeem us from lawless deeds and make us zealous for good ones. In **3:8**, he claimed believers should be careful to engage in good deeds. In **3:14**, he said "our people must also learn to engage in good deeds." Of course, our good deeds are not about us. According to **Matthew 5:16**, our good works are to cause others to glorify God.
- II. We must stimulate one another to love and good deeds.
 - A. One of the natural problems with love and good deeds is burn out. The path of love and good deeds is narrow and difficult. Many times we love those who will not return our love. Often we cannot see the results of our good deeds for a long time. No wonder Paul exhorted us to "not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary" (**Galatians 6:9**).
 - B. To keep from losing heart, we need to stimulate one another to love and good deeds. We are to be a stimulant that rouses and incites others to action. "Stimulate" is the word used by the New American Standard translators. Some of the other translations are very interesting.
 1. The King James Version says to "provoke" one another to love and good works. Most of the time, when we speak of provoking someone we mean we have made them angry. Here we are to provoke one another to love and good deeds.
 2. The New King James says to "stir up" one another. Most of the time, when we say somebody stirred up something we mean they caused some trouble. Here, we are supposed to stir up love and good deeds.
 3. The New International Version says to "spur on" one another. That may not be often used in a negative context. However, have you thought about what it means to be spurred on? We spur on a horse by jabbing it in the flank with a sharp metal object.
 - C. The Greek term translated here is also interesting. The only other time the root word is used in scripture is **Acts 15:39** in which Paul and Barnabas had a sharp disagreement. The word used in **Hebrews 10:24** is translated "sharp disagreement" in **Acts 15:39**.
 - D. In **Hebrews 10:24**, we see a picture of Christians actively making sure other Christians are growing in love and good deeds. We see a picture of Christians getting actively involved in each others' lives, challenging one another, jabbing one another in the flank with sharp objects to push them down the path of righteousness. It is almost as if the Hebrew writer says we ought to be getting in each other's faces and saying, "Look here, I am not going to let you be a loser Christian. Buck up, get off your backside and start loving and growing in good deeds."
- III. We must consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.
 - A. Before we just set about getting in others faces, however, we need to consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds. Fulfilling this passage will not take place on the spur of the moment. We need to give consideration to one another. That is, we must pay careful attention to the spiritual needs of those around us. Based on that careful consideration, we need to determine what is most needed to help our brethren grow in love and good deeds.
 - B. Let us consider what will stimulate us to love and good deeds. Clearly, the Hebrew writer provides one avenue through which we can stimulate one another. In **Hebrews 10:25**, he says

we need to maintain the habit of assembling together. However, that is only one way. How else can we stimulate one another to love and good deeds?

- C. While we could brainstorm many specifics, we will note the threefold approach given in **Titus 2:14-15** to spur others on to be zealous for good works in Jesus Christ. He said Titus should “speak and exhort and reprove.”
 1. “Speak”—Sometimes, to stimulate one another, we need to simply open our Bibles and teach one another what is found within them.
 2. “Reprove”—Sometimes, to stimulate one another, we need to reprove and rebuke one another, exposing error and challenging each other to repent. When we take this approach we are to do so gently, looking to ourselves to be sure we do not also sin (**Galatians 6:1**).
 3. “Exhort”—Sometimes, to stimulate one another we need to encourage one another. This is perhaps the most overlooked approach to stimulate one another to love and good deeds. We need to catch one another doing things right. It is so easy to constantly pick apart all the bad things others need to change. We need to spend more time complimenting and encouraging the good things we see in each other.
- D. Finally, as Paul encouraged in **Titus 2:7**, we can stimulate one another to love and good deeds by being an example of them.

IV. We must stimulate one another to love and good deeds.

- A. Please notice that the Hebrew writer did not say, “Let the elders consider how to stimulate you to love and good deeds.” He did not say, “Let the deacons consider how to stimulate you...” He did not say, “Let the Bible class teachers consider how to stimulate you...” He did not say, “Let the preacher consider how to stimulate you...” He said, “Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds.”
- B. We are equally responsible for stimulating one another to love and good deeds. This is your job. This is my job. Not because we are elders, deacons, preachers or Bible class teachers, but because we are Christians. According to **Ephesians 4:12**, God did not give some to be elders or evangelists in order to do the work of ministry for saints. He gave elders and evangelists to equip saints for the work of ministry to build up the body.
- C. We must approach this responsibility practically. For the most part we cannot have this kind of relationship with every member of this congregation. How could one Christian possibly know what more than a hundred other Christians need to grow? To accomplish this, we all must purposefully and intentionally get involved in stimulating relationships. You will never be able to stimulate everyone else. Further, you will rarely be stimulated by everyone else. However, you should be stimulating some and some should be stimulating you. The questions we must ask are: Who is stimulating you to love and good deeds? Whom are you stimulating?
- D. One final thought on the one another nature of this responsibility. We might all find it easy to try to stimulate others. However, we must learn to accept stimulation, provocation, spurring on and stirring up from others first. Before looking around to see who you can spur on to love and good deeds, look for people to stir you up.

Conclusion:

Can I stimulate you right now? Please do not go home and let this lesson slip into mental oblivion. If you do not already have multiple brothers or sisters who are purposefully and intentionally holding your feet to the fire and challenging you to grow in love and good deeds, think of some who can and call them this week. Find others who will push you and challenge you to grow. The Hebrew writer explained how important it is to fulfill this exhortation when he wrote, “For if we go on sinning willfully after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries” (**Hebrews 10:26-27**). This is important. Who is stimulating you to overcome sin and grow in love and good deeds?