

September 2, 2007

“The Call to Community: Consider One Another”  
Hebrews 10:19-25

FCF: Aimlessness to our days

**PROPOSITION:** (anchor) Because of the “definitive possessions” we have in Christ,  
(magnet) we must consider one another.

**SCRIPTURE INTRODUCTION:**

Far too often for far too many of us, there is an aimlessness to our days. Little direction. Little drive or meaning. We identify all too well with Karen in “The Big Chill.” We wake in the morning needing coffee, moving like zombies about the house asking, “*What’s today? What time is it?*” Truth be told, it’s not just coffee we need but cause. We drift like dead leaves in the wind, asking, “*Who am I? Why am I here? What’s the point?*” Slumping through the day, looking for the latest, greatest distraction.

We were not created to have no purpose, no goal, no direction. God intends so much more for us. And His intentions are laid out clearly and beautifully in His Word.

**SCRIPTURE READING:** [Hebrews 10:19-25](#)

**PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

**SERMON INTRODUCTION:**

The author of Hebrews assures his readers they have two things, two “definitive possessions.” First, the confidence to enter God’s presence. Believers in Christ have an open door before them. A “new way” that was not there before. A “living way” that will be there forever. Then, secondly, with that great confidence is our great high priest. Jesus, the One who has opened and secured the way for us to the throne of God, is there Himself, ushering us into God’s very presence, assuring us that, because of Him, we belong there. Two definitive possessions – a great confidence and a great high priest.

This then is the basis, the grounds, and reason for the threefold response described – driving, compelling, impelling us in a way nothing else could. A response not unlike a three-legged stool (each vital and necessary) or a three-strand fabric (none able to hold together without the others). Verse 22 – upwardly, in terms of our faith, we are to draw near to God. Verse 23 – outwardly, in terms of our hope, we are to hold fast to truth. And then verses 24 and 25 – inwardly, in terms of love, we are to “consider one another.”

It’s on the third we’re focusing this morning. What does it mean to “consider” one another? We get some idea as we look at the one other time the author of Hebrews uses this term ([READ Hebrews 3:1](#)). To “consider Jesus” is to look at, to think about, to study, to let your mind be occupied with Him. Which then tells us what it means to “consider one another.” Part of this threefold response to the manifold grace of God in granting us these rich and privileged possessions entails looking at, thinking about, studying, letting our minds be occupied with one other. It’s not just about us. It’s about all of us together. Now what shape are these relations to take? What is the goal we are striving for? What is the means by which we will attain it? Look with me at the text.

**I. OUR GOAL – WHAT WE ARE TO DO**

What is it we are called to do? What are we to be striving for? What is our goal? In terms of our relationship with one another, what are we told? ([READ Hebrews 10:24](#))

*A) To Stir Up One Another*

We are to “consider,” to focus, to commit ourselves, to “stirring up” one another.

1. What it means

That is, we are to incite, to provoke, to stimulate one another. Others should experience something of this because of our presence in their lives – our example and our counsel.

## 2. Why it's needed

Why? Why would we be called to stir up one another? Well, what sorts of things need to be stirred up? Things that are sitting still. We need each other that we might be moved.

### *B) To Love and Good Works*

But moved towards what? We see that here as well – “to love and good works.”

#### 1. To love

To “agape” – to selfless concern and interest for one another, to costly affection and good will towards each other. To that which Jesus has so clearly shown towards us.

#### 2. To good works

Which must go beyond mere sentimental feelings to sacrificial actions – to “good works.”

We are called to “stir up one another” to these things – “to love and good works.”

### *Application:*

And it is on this endeavor we are to “consider,” that we are to focus and give ourselves towards. It is towards this the author of Hebrews is saying we should think and plan and move with intentionality and purpose. We are to ask ourselves, “*This person is, like me, a member of the body of Christ. How can I incite love in them? What do I need to model and encourage that they might be provoked, stirred up, to good works?*”

That’s why we’re here. Not to say we are to be judgmental meddling busybodies but brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers, in the faith taking a lively interest in one another’s lives. None of us are islands. We are our brother’s keeper. And we are to “consider” one another in such a way that we take seriously our impact on one another.

## **II. THE MEANS – HOW WE ARE TO DO IT**

That is our goal – what we are to do. But what of the means? How are we to do it, to work towards this goal? We see that here as well (**READ Hebrews 10:24-25**).

### *A) Not Neglecting to Meet Together*

Negatively, we reach that worthy goal by not neglecting to meet together.

#### 1. What it means

And the implication of what is said is that some had indeed fallen into this and it had become their habit. Whereas once they had been enmeshed in the life of the community, now they had become comfortable and complacent somewhere on the outside.

#### 2. Why it happens

And it’s not hard to see how this happens. Other things, perhaps even good things, crowd out the better things. Priorities get shifted, decisions are made, and commitments change. And comfort and complacency towards community life – a shared life together – settle in. Which is why some of you even now are uncomfortable with this renewed challenge.

### *B) But Encouraging One Another*

But the goal of stirring one another up towards love and good works will never be reached if we neglect to meet together. And so we are told to encourage one another.

#### 1. What it means

To speak the promises of God to one another. To tell the stories of His work in our lives. To come alongside and pray with and for each other in earnest that our faith to draw near to Him might grow and that our hope and resolve would become strong.

#### 2. Why it's needed

Doing so “all the more as (we) see the Day drawing near.” This is the Day of Christ’s return – a Day He has told us will be preceded by an age of stresses and troubles and dangers. A Day of gathering intensity meaning a greater need for gathering together.

And we're just kidding ourselves and hampering one another to think otherwise.

*Illustration:*

Some of you may remember the story of Eric Moussambani from the Summer 2000 Olympics. It's quite a story. And it makes the point ([READ IV2 Viewer](#)):

*Eric "The Swimmer" Moussambani of Equatorial Guinea was an unlikely hero of the Sydney Olympic Games. The 22-year-old African had only learned to swim (that) January, had only practiced in a 20-meter pool without lane markers, and had never raced more than 50 meters. By special invitation of the International Olympic Committee, under a special program that permits poorer countries to participate even though their athletes don't meet customary standards, he had been entered in the 100-meter men's freestyle.*

*When the other two swimmers in his heat were disqualified because of false starts, Moussambani was forced to swim alone. Eric Moussambani was, to use the words of an Associated Press story about his race, "charmingly inept." He never put his head under the water's surface and flailed wildly to stay afloat. With ten meters left to the wall, he virtually came to a stop. Some spectators thought he might drown! Even though his time was over a minute slower than what qualified for the next level of competition, the capacity crowd at the Olympic Aquatic Center stood to their feet and cheered the swimmer on.*

*After what seemed like an eternity, the African reached the wall and hung on for dear life. When he had caught his breath and regained his composure, the French-speaking Moussambani said through an interpreter, "I want to send hugs and kisses to the crowd. It was their cheering that kept me going."*

That's what we see in Hebrews – the encouragement of one another that keeps us going.

*Application:*

And it is this we are to "consider." Hear me. Sunday morning worship, important and vital as it is for our spiritual health and growth, is not enough. Sneaking in and out each week is not enough. Even hanging around here for an extra few minutes is not enough. There is something reciprocal being spoken of, something interpersonal, something that clearly demands smaller gatherings – something along the lines of what we're endeavoring to begin even here, the ministry of community groups. There we have the opportunity to learn to be in the Word together, to pray and be prayed for together, how to share life together – which we cannot do any other way but by being together.

**CONCLUSION:**

Last week, we were reminded we are like porcupines huddled together in a storm – needing but needling each other all the while. Absolutely. We are also much like coals. You've probably heard the story of the pastor who went to visit an oft-absent member. Once inside, the pastor said nothing but walked over to the fire, took the tongs, pulled one of the coals out and set it aside. It soon grew cold and went out. The host got the point from this silent but fiery sermon. And the point being we need the warmth of others lest our faith and hope grow cold. But there is another side to it. They need yours as well. What, after all, does Hebrews show us but that the aim is not just loving and doing good works ourselves but helping to stir up others to love and good works as well?

And the need for all this is real because the struggle is real. It is not some fictional tale told to keep us in line. It is a real battle on a real front with real casualties – not always seen but always there. A battle, a struggle, for faith to be felt. A battle, a struggle, for hope to be held. And God, in His wisdom and grace, has given us one another to love that those things might grow. And they're worth growing. For we really do have these definitive possessions. We really do have this access to God. We really do have this great priest in Jesus ushering us in. And so we should consider one another.

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