

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study – January 28, 2021

Prepared & Presented by: Pastor James G. Austin, Jr., PhD, D.Min.

Title: “Isolation – A Tool The Devil Uses to Discourage People”

Scripture Reference: Hebrews 10:24

“And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:”

I. Introduction

A. I want to share a little story with you about a husband and wife Missionary Team, who had heard from various people about a young missionary lady facing depression and discouragement.

B. When the missionary couple heard about the young lady being depressed and discouraged, they were both shocked. They were shocked because this young lady seemed to be so full of positive energy about everything.

C. The young lady always had a big smile on her face, her voice was always so up-beat, and again, she just seemed so full of energy.

D. When the missionary couple were told that the young lady was struggling, they immediately made an appointment to talk with her and to see how they might encourage her in the Lord. After all, they too were missionaries, far away from home.

E. When they finally met with the young lady, they asked her if she was all right? They also wanted to know if there was anything going on with her that she would be willing to share with them?

F. The young lady told the couple - “I’ll be all right; It’s just that I give, give, give and give every ounce of my strength to people,

and it just seems like no one ever gives back to me. I have been pretty lonely, and that has made me feel very discouraged.”

Observations:

1) With some people, it is easy to know when they are discouraged.

However, when people are full of energy, vibrant, and always appear to be full of life, it becomes more difficult to discern when they are struggling with discouragement.

2) People like this project such confidence and victory that we may tend to forget that they have feelings just like everyone else.

Unfortunately, we often wrongly assume they don't need anything. When in fact, they are very needy.

G. This is why we should pray for sensitivity to recognize the needs of those around us.

A question for thought: Why not stop right now, and ask the Lord to give you the sensitivity to recognize those times when the people in your life need an encouraging word, or just a listening ear.

H. The young lady in this story was ministering to everyone around her, but she was feeling isolated and secluded.

I. Because she was perceived to be so strong, no one dreamed

that she was discouraged. As a result, no one reached out to her until her discouragement was already a reality she struggled with in her life.

II. Exposition [Part I] – Everyone Needs Encouragement

A. With the awareness that everyone needs encouragement, the

Hebrew writer exhorts us to “ ... **consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works.**” (Hebrews 10:24)

B. The word “**consider**” is the Greek word ***katanoeo***, a compound of the words ***kata*** and ***noeo***.

C. The word ***kata*** is a preposition that means **down**. It describes something that is moving **downward** and can also describe a **dominating force**.

D. The second part of the word is the Greek word ***noeo***, from the

word **Nous**, which refers to the mind.

E. When the two words are linked together, it means to

thoroughly consider something; to think something through from the top to the bottom; to think hard about something; or to deeply ponder a matter.

F. In other words, the word katanoeo does not represent a

momentary shallow thought. A person engaged in this type of thought process is focused and concentrated. Their attention has been completely captured, and they are seriously contemplating the matter at hand.

III. Exposition [Part II] – Everyone Needs Encouragement

(Continued)

A. When God tells us to “**Consider one another**,” He is saying we

are to be so concerned about each other’s welfare that we take time to regularly and seriously contemplate how we might encourage one another.

B. If we truly care about the people in our lives, we should notice

when their countenance (i.e., disposition) has changed, when they don’t seem as “up” as usual, or when they begin to skip church service or other times of fellowship.

Comment: I can imagine someone reading this might be saying: “You don’t know a certain person or certain people like I do, but they are just so moody.” Ok – I hear you. However –

c. Because of our genuine care for others, we should make it our

aim to think through how we might become a greater source of blessings and strength for others. [Think on these things!]

IV. Exposition [Part III] – Be a Blessing to Each Other

A. The local church is designed by God to be a spiritual family,

where people sincerely love and are mindful of each other’s needs.

Comment: I realize that it is awfully hard for some people to allow others into their inner circle of thoughts and needs. When I say this, I also recognize that everyone deserves to have their privacy. However, without everyone getting into our personal business, is there some Christ-centered person or persons that you would feel comfortable sharing with?

B. Let us be prayerful and sensitive without being adamantly

intrusive, when we perceive that someone is starting to sink into despair and let us lift that person back up to a place of strength.

Therefore, Hebrews 10:24 may be further understood as –

“Carefully observe one another, contemplating each other’s situation and needs, and contemplating how you can stir him or her to love and good works.”

c. We all like to be cared for and appreciated, but let us not

forget that there are others around us who need encouragement just as much as we do, some even more.

Everyone who smiles isn’t always happy!

d. If you are sensitive to the Holy Spirit and genuinely concerned

about the people who are close to you, God will show you when they need a special word of encouragement to lift them up.

A Prayer To Ponder

Lord, forgive me for being so self-centered that I forget to think about other people’s needs. I get so fixated on my own problems that I forget I am not the only person in the world with a situation. Help me to take my eyes off myself and to look around me to see who needs a special word of encouragement. Holy Spirit, open my eyes and help me to be sensitive in my spirit to recognize people who need a tender touch.

I pray this in Jesus’ name,

Amen!

It is once again interactive time. Please fill in the blank spaces to complete the Scripture passages that follow. All passages have been taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible.

“Let _____ be done through strife or _____; but in _____ of mind let each _____ others better than _____.” **[Philippians 2:3]**

“_____ and it shall be _____ unto you; good measure, _____ down and _____ together, and _____ over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same _____ that ye mete withal it shall be _____ to you again.”
[Luke 6:38]

“_____ words are as an _____, sweet to the soul, and _____ to the bones.”

[Proverbs 16:24]

“My little _____, let us not _____ in word, neither in _____; but in _____ and in _____.” [John 3:18]

QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO CONSIDER

1. Have you ever felt isolated and lonely and wished that someone would reach out to check on you?
 - a. If yes, did anyone check on you, or did you feel abandoned in your time of need?
2. How long has it been since you checked on someone, especially during this COVID-19 Pandemic, and let the person(s) know that you have been thinking about them?
3. What can you do today to communicate that you are concerned about someone else's welfare?

A Closing suggestion: How about extending a random act of kindness to someone by writing them a note of encouragement, or, calling someone on the phone and extending some words of encouragement. You may even think of some other ways to show that you care.

My prayer is that you have been blessed from this study and please feel free to share it with others.

Jude 3

Pastor Austin