
Words of Truth

Hebrews 10:23-24

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We are clean and able to come before God in full assurance of faith (Hebrews 10:22). From those beautiful points, we read this: *“Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works”* (Hebrews 10:23-24).

Earlier in this letter the point was made that the people of the Lord need to hold fast the confidence to the end (Hebrews 3:6; 3:14). The point was also made, as it is here, to hold fast to the profession [confession] the faithful have made (Hebrews 4:14). When you do a word study on “hold fast” (Strong’s # 2722) you see the same word translated in other Scriptures as “seize” (Matthew 21:38), “keep” (Luke 8:15, I Corinthians 11:2, and I Corinthians 15:2), “retained” (Philemon 1:13), etc. That should help us understand what it is to “hold fast” to something. That something in our current study, is the profession [confession; acknowledgement; cf. I Timothy 6:12-13] of our faith.

If we stand in the faith that we have confessed we will not waver. Wavering was a huge issue then as it seems to always be. In a context looking forward to the ending of spiritual gifts (Ephesians 4:7-16), Paul wrote this to the saints in Ephesus: *“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive”* (Ephesians 4:14). When Elijah was a prophet and the children of God at that time wavered, notice what was said: *“And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word”* (I Kings 18:21). Whether then, the first century, or now; Christians need to be steadfast and unmovable (I Corinthians 15:58).

One of the things that keeps us from being moved is that we know for sure that God is faithful. The word translated “faithful” means, in part, that God is sure and true (Strong’s # 4103). We have seen this point made earlier in this letter (Hebrews 6:16-18). It is not in God’s nature to lie (Titus 1:1-3). God’s word accomplishes what He pleases (Isaiah 55:10-11). When the prophets prophesied something to come, though it may not have happened immediately, it was surely going to come (Habakkuk 2:3). We can study the Scriptures and see that. Jesus was a testimony of God’s faithfulness in this manner (Luke 24:44). Therefore, we can stand firm knowing that God will keep true to what He has said. We can live with confidence in that!

One of the tools that the Lord has given us to help us be steadfast is each other (Galatians 6:1-2 and Hebrews 3:13). The word “consider” appears in this context and it is a huge part of how we help each other. The Greek word translated “consider” [κατανοέω] means: “To observe fully: — behold, consider, discover, perceive. To perceive, remark, observe, understand; to consider attentively, fix one's eyes or mind upon” (Strong's # 2657). I have long preached and have taught that we need to know one another to be able to help one another. This is what it takes to do things such as be fruit inspectors (Matthew 7:15-20) or to even know when our brethren need our spiritual or physical help. To consider one another properly, the right motives have to be in place (Romans 12:10-16 and Galatians 5:13). When the right motives exist we will use what we see in one another to properly aid one another.

The Greek word in Hebrews 10:24 translated as “provoke” [παροξυσμός] means: “(paroxysm); incitement (to good), or dispute (in anger): — contention, provoke unto. An inciting, incitement, irritation” (Strong's # 3948). So, when we come together we need to sometimes irritate one another into the right actions. Think about that. Whether we are comforting one another or warning each other, we have responsibilities one toward another as brethren (I Thessalonians 5:11-14).

We are to provoke one another to love. That is very broad. We are supposed to walk in love (Ephesians 5:2). Christians are to be clothed in charity [love] because love is the bond of perfectness (Colossians 3:14). We are supposed to love God with all our heart, mind, and soul (Matthew 22:37). That love is shown by action. God and man knows we love the Lord when we keep His instructions (John 14:15 and I John 5:2-3). We are supposed to love one another as Christ loved us (John 13:34-35 and John 15:12-13). Our love one toward another, just as our love for God, is shown through actions (I John 3:10-18). We are taught to love our neighbors as we love ourselves (James 2:1-13). We are taught that those who do not love the truth will perish (II Thessalonians 2:10). We could go on and on with individual applications (i.e. Ephesians 5:25). The responsibility here is to get on each other to love the right things the right ways.

In addition to love, we are to provoke one another to good works. We know that faith without works is dead (James 2:14-26). Like love, good works are visible (Matthew 5:14-16 and I Peter 2:12). However, good works are not supposed to become a show for others to see (Matthew 6:1-8). We were created in Christ Jesus unto good works (Ephesians 2:1-10, Titus 2:11-14, Titus 3:8, and Titus 3:14). The Scriptures furnish us to these good works (II Timothy 3:14-17). That doesn't mean all of our good works are going to be visible though. Just like the sins of some, the good works of some will not be known by many in this lifetime (I Timothy 5:24-25). There is one other thing about visible good works that I want to mention here. Remember that visible “good works” can be deceptive (Matthew 23:5; 23:27-28). That is where examination of the fruit of what appears to be good works comes in. So, let's push each other to do good works for all the right reasons!