

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon
Wednesday, March 27, 2024

Romans 12:9–16

⁹Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. ¹⁰Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; ¹¹not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; ¹²rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; ¹³distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.

¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion.

Truly Reformed Love

Main idea: True love among believers is a law-defined, grace-sustained, providence-arranged life together.

Introduction: What does the mind of Christ, toward the body of Christ, look like in a member of Christ? Or: what will I (increasingly) look like if I am in Christ?

1. **True Love**, v9–10.
 1. Unpretended
 2. Defined by God (His character, and therefore His law)
 3. Complete (selfless, familial, affectionate)
 4. Deferential (unjealous, generous-spirited)
 5. Active (v11)
 6. Sympathetically responsive (v12–16b)
 7. Humble (v16c)
2. **Active Love**, v11
 1. Physical and emotional diligence. Working despite weariness.
 2. The fervent (bubbling up/over) spirit that produces diligence.
 3. The slaving unto the Lord that produces fervor.
3. **Sympathetically Responsive Love**, v12–16b
 1. Appropriate responses to each circumstance of providence, v12–13
 1. First for ourselves (but these are also for others), v12
 2. And then especially in others' difficulties
 1. Poverty
 2. Strangers
 2. Simple (though difficult/impossible!) response to their persecution.
 3. Sympathetic responses: share the mindset together
 1. In rejoicing
 2. In weeping

3. In being brought low
4. **Humble Love**, v16c
 1. Not shrewd in oneself
 2. Doesn't jump to conclusions
 3. Listens and learns

Conclusion: So, offer yourselves as the Lord's slaves for that work about which He most cares in this world: one another's lives, walking with Him.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 12 verses 9 through 16. These are God's words. Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor, what is evil? Cling to what is good? Be kindly affectionate to one another with Brotherly Love.

In honor giving preference to one another. Not lagging. In diligence fervent in spirit. Serving the lord. Rejoicing in. Patient in Tribulation. Continuing steadfastly in prayer. Distributing to the needs of the Saints. Given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you. Bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who Rejoice.

And weep. With those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things. But associate with the humble. Do not be wise. In your own opinion. So, for the reading of God's inspired, And an errandwort. Well, we're reminded or taught last week in the first eight verses of this chapter that when God by his grace by his Mercy lays.

Hold of someone brings them to Faith in Christ unites A sinner to the Lord Jesus so that he is Forgiven of his sins and made new in Christ. That what happens in that one? Is that the mind of Christ starts to be formed in him? He is no longer being conformed to this age.

He is being conformed to the son, the Eternal Son of God, who has Become a man that he might be the firstborn among many Brethren. Even as God's love desired, should be done to us and and his will decreed should happen to us that we were predestined to be conformed to the image of his son.

And what did his son, do his son, loved the elect and gave himself up for them and As a sweet Aroma unto God, a sacrifice unto God in his death. And so we in our lives, if we are being conformed to Christ will love those who are, Christ's the adopted children of God, those United, to the Lord, Jesus, and indwelt by his spirit.

As in God's Providence, tomorrow's passage in first, John also will be holding before us. So what does it look like in the life of a Christian? When he knows that whatever his role is in his household, whatever his role is especially in the household of God is a gift.

Yes, a gift that is to him but not for him. A gift that is from Christ for the church. What does it look like when we live that way? And that's what we're coming to hear now in verses 9 through 16 and what it looks like is true love.

What will I look like? What will I increasingly look like and perhaps that will help us since we all are acutely aware, sharply aware that we do not look like this. Like we should what will I increasingly look like if I am in Christ, what will my life increasingly look like?

And it will look like true love for the members of the church. True love for our Brethren in Christ. The first heading there. If you have an outline, true love, that's really Uh, that's really a description of the whole passage. But that which defines truthfulness is really going to.

Is a truthful love, genuine, love. According to God is going to occupy us for the first part in verses 9, through 10. And then those other three aspects Of true love. We're going to hear about in more detail in the following three sections of the sermon by God's help.

That not only is it genuine by def according in its definition or its character. But it is active true. Love is active. True love is also sympathetically. Responsive it responds rightly to God's Providence. Feeling and going through with our brother, what he is going through in the Providence of God and therefore in the last place.

And really just that last part of verse 16. True love must be humble, which also featured very much in having the mind in us. That is in Christ. Jesus, that we heard about last week in the first verses. Uh, so as he, he has concluded this uh, List of gifts as it were.

And you remember, some of them were things that That are all are for all believers gifts to all believers, and some of them are things that are specific to a particular office. In the church or if we can use that language. By analogy in the home. He comes out of.

Identifying that since these gifts are from Jesus for his church, that the one whom they're given to should be exercising them. Diligently, cheerfully, with a generous Spirit. As those who have had, Faith, measured out to us and therefore in humility. And then he says, love unhyprocritically. Uh, love unhyprocritically or unpretendedly true.

True love or truly reformed love. You remember, we referred to the end of chapter 11, as the truly reformed life, not the one who is full of himself, but who's amazed at God and dwarfed in himself. And so lives this life of thankfulness and worship. Well, now we have truly, reformed love.

That sees the ones whom the Lord is gathering into his church as the objects of this Everlasting plan of the Divine love, and the products of the almighty power of the divine grace. And if we begin to see our brothers and sisters in the church in that light and their connection to him as objects of his love and the products of his grace, then by the Lord convincing our hearts of that our love will not be a smile that we have to force on our face or a winner of speaking that we that we have to rigidly form by mere habit but doesn't actually reflect what's uh, what's going on within us?

No, it will be unpretended. Love it will be love that as as Is actually the expression of a heart of a mind that is being changed to agree with the mind of Christ to be like the mind of Christ. And so this is something that can be very convicting for us.

Because, Although we do not know our hearts as well as we ought only. God knows our hearts entirely, we can often be aware, can't we? That we are not genuinely loving from the heart that when we speak and act outwardly, like we should and we're not saying that we shouldn't we should speak and outwardly, like, we should.

But that love, which is coming from a changed life. And a changed person in Christ is not going to be merely outward. The inward is going to match more and more the outward, or at least it ought to. And when it doesn't, we ought to cry out to God.

And we ought to take Obviously those biblical warnings, let him who thinks, he stands, take heed, lest he fall, examine yourselves to see, whether you are in the faith, we ask the Lord to give us more true love for our brother and we realize that even that desire as a christ-given desire.

And so even as we're pleading for the help that we still need, if it Rings true with the work that he's done in us to to make that plea genuine. We are realizing that the only place that desire to love my brother. Truly from the heart could have come from is itself from the Lord Jesus Christ.

And therefore we are encouraged and strengthened in him and even by that Assurance that increasing Assurance stirred up to Greater love for our brother. And so, here is something that can be very convicting. But as we receive the command from the Holy Spirit and holy Scripture, and we follow it looking to

Helpful, command to us, love unpretendedly or unhyprocritically. Uh, in the second place though. This true love is defined by God's character and therefore by God's law. If we are loving in an unpretended way then we are going to abhor. What is evil. Now God himself is the standard of what is good and what is evil and we sometimes use The word, unrighteous meaning not straight according to what God has revealed in his law or righteous meaning strict according to what God has revealed in his law.

But that which is unrighteous is evil precisely because it is against and inconsistent with God and that which is righteous is good precisely because it is consistent and it is for what God is. Like he himself is the standard is is the origin of what is good. And that which is against him, is the definition of what is evil and so when he follows immediately love unpretendedly abhor.

What is evil cling to what is good? He's telling us that if we do genuinely, love from the heart with a love that comes from a from the Life of Christ. Ways that we can tell that that is what is happening in us, is because we hate whatever is against God, whatever is against his word, whatever is against his law.

We love or I'm going to prove of whatever is Consistent with God's character, whatever is consistent with his word, whatever is consistent with his law but not just that we disapprove of what is evil. But that we hate it. And not just that we approve of what is good but that we cling to it.

And so, unpretended, love biblical, true. Christian love is going to be defined by the Bible. And it is going to affect more than just our minds it is going to lay hold of our affections. It is going to lay hold of our Wills. It is going it is going to lay hold of you.

The Lord does not only instruct you so that you will agree with him about what is evil and what is good. But that you will be like him in hating. What is evil and clinging to what is good. This is what the Lord Jesus is producing in you whom he has redeemed this as what you ought to cry out to for from cry out for to him by his Unpretended love?

That is defined by God. It is going to be complete. We've already thought a little bit about how It's hating. What is evil and loving? What is good and affecting, not just the mind, but the affections and the will another way that the text brings us out for us, is by using, uh, all three common, New Testament words for love.

I say three, there's a fourth, uh, the word that is behind romantic love. But the first word in verse nine that love is, is a word that many of you will be familiar with it's Agape, that selfless entirely, uh, unconditional, not dependent upon anything in the object. That goes out from.

The that is based upon the source of the love and so it's love it. It is love because one is loving and therefore it is very similar to isn't it? And it is the word that we commonly use for the great love. The unconditional love of God, but the the word that's translated kindly affectionate in the first part of verse 10 is storgay and that is that familial love.

That is stronged because of the connection between uh one person and the uh and the other. So when it says kindly affectionate uh you know go back to the translation behind the new King James and go back as you go back. Several hundred years now you can hear the word Kindred in the word kind there.

Of someone because of the connection that you have with them and you have a stronger connection with your brothers and sisters in Christ than you do even by the blood, or the biology of those who are in your own household. And so you want. And the ordinary way we know from scripture is that those who are in your household, if it's a Christian household, you're going to have this double connection with.

And so it's not one or the other, but both. And but for the whole household of God, we are bound to them by faith. In Jesus Christ, we treat them with a judgment of Charity. We don't look around in the congregation and say, well, so, and so doesn't seem to be speaking very well.

And so, and so doesn't seem to have Be making any progress in his theology. And so, and so seems very badly behaved. No, we don't do that. We, we take what God says, about them covenantally and visibly as members of his church as determinative for us. When we say the Judgment of Charity, we don't make ourselves the judges of whether or not, they are converted, we're just commanded to teach or to treat them.

We're commanded by scripture to treat the members of the church, those who are members of the church in good standing as Saints. Have that that strong familial connection of being those with the those whom God has set apart to himself in the world set apart from the world and to himself in in the church rather.

And so there's not just that agape love and that connective love but also that brotherly love that affection that uh and the word behind that the verb behind that is filetto and that's what you have. Uh as described as brotherly, love there in verse 10 and that's all the warmth of fellow feeling uh that comes Not just from having the connection but having experienced and felt that connection and gone through things one with one another and spent time with one another and, and that, which increases over time by the inclining of our hearts towards one another.

And so by taking all three of these words in such short Compass, you can hear how he's saying. True, love is not just unpretended and true. Love is not just defined by God and his word, but it's going to be complete. It's going to have all of these different aspects, uh, aspects to it.

And so, the first thing that we see of what Look like in the church when we are being conformed to Christ is that they are characterized by true love. Now, the fourth characteristic of the true love or the next main heading is that it is active love. Just because it is loving, doesn't mean that it is easy.

Because we see, even in the way that he teaches by good and necessary, consequence, that it's active that it's difficult, not lagging in diligence. Well, praise God. That true love is not just some kind of inflammation that you contract in your soul where everything gets, uh, gets, uh, hot and tense.

Because we don't experience it that way. That's why people use this horrible language of falling in love and falling out of love. They don't realize that love is often something you have to be diligent in. It's something that is. That we may grow tired of even physically tired of for instance, in today's passage in Isaiah.

When he asks, whether a mother can forget the baby that she is nursing. And many are very tired and sleep. Deprived mama has been shocked at what came out of her heart in the disposition, even toward the child and immediately repented or at least we hope. So, for believing mamas and inclined their affections towards that.

Child, all the more love can lag in diligence. We get tired physically, we get tired emotionally. We get tired of feeling as intensely as we should, we get tired of serving as consistently as we should even our, our flesh will be wounded by not being appreciated. Like, we ought to there are many ways in which truly loving can be challenging.

And so, as we hear in verse 11 about how active our love should be, the very first thing, he says not lagging in diligence. Well, how Can our love keep working. Keep doing the work of love, not just feeling the affections of love and recognizing the connections of love, but how can our love keep doing the work of love, despite its weariness.

And the answer is by what the Lord does in our spirit that he would make us. Fervent in spirit. Now, the the word means and this is actually A kind of fun thing, if you've ever had to tell a child to stop blowing bubbles in his or her milk.

It's it's a word that means fizzing up or bubbling over that the way that we are going to be maintained in diligence towards one. Another is by the gracious work of God, on our spirit to keep the Fizz coming to to keep us boiling. Maybe even better here that we would always stay on the burner of the grace of God and keep that rapid boil of the spirit going so that when the body is weak.

So that when because of remaining sin, even our Spirit. Our soul is weak yet by God's spiritual work in us continuously applying Christ to us by the means of his grace. Our love will keep bubbling keep boiling keep producing that diligence that we so long for in response to the first part of verse 11.

And this means that one of the most important things you need to do in order to not lag, in diligence for your in your love. Whether it's for your Christian child or your Christian spouse or another less nearly related uh brother or sister in the household of God. One of the primary things that you must do is attend upon the means of Grace.

Able some other way to sort of maintain affections and maintain connections and keep serving even when you are not spiritually. Well, then a very subtle shift is going to take place and you're going to be basing the way that you love the Brethren on something else. Maybe something that you have in common or some other activity that you do together or a demographic similarity, or whatever it is.

But we must have our love for one another based upon and flowing out of the gracious work of the Holy Spirit, applying Christ to our hearts. And so we need to keep attending upon the means of his grace and trusting him to do the work of his grace on our souls.

So that our love for one, another will flow out of that. We are doing that when we are attending upon his means. And when he is doing that, when he is applying that them to us, how will we see ourselves end of verse 11? Slaving unto the Lord. Uh, here not The word that you often see translated for service.

The word from which we get deaconed, not another word that you often see translated service the word for liturgy, which we have at the end of verse one, but the word that means bond slave, that means slave one who is entirely owned by God and not just owned by God.

But another happy difference between, uh, the Dew loss and the diaconos, or the diaconon That he has provided for by God. He's a part of the household. And so God, attends to all our needs as his household slave as it were. And so we see ourselves entirely purchased by God for his purposes and what are his purposes?

Of course, to do his church good to gather his elect to himself, gather them into the church and to perfect them in Christ to grow them by the grace and the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. And so if we are slaving unto the Lord, then he is the one who is providing the resources for us on the one hand.

And he is the one who is determining, what we must do with the resources that he provides on the other hand. And so I hope you can see how those three things go together. Then in verse 11, not lagging in diligence ferventant. That happy slavery of the Lord's slaves and so true.

Love verses 9 and 10 Act of Love verse 11 and then 12 almost to the end. Of the passage. Our true Christian love is going to be sympathetically, responsive love, responding to Providence. Now we might think in verse 12 that we have turned a corner and we're just dealing with God's Providence in our own life.

But then when we come into verses 13 through 16, we find him talking about his Providence in the lives of our brothers in Christ. Whether they be needy, whether they be a stranger, Uh, in the area, whether they be rejoicing, whether they be weeping, whether they be humbled and brought low or even whether they be persecuting us, That too, is something that we are to respond to in our brother or sisters.

Life under the Providence of God. So verse 12 is describing what we should do when God's Providence does. Make us sure of a good thing that we don't see yet for who hopes for what he sees. But when we've come into that certainty, that biblical hope is it's not this wishfulness, but this certainty of the good thing that we don't yet, see When we come into that, we should rejoice in our hope and when our brother comes into that, we should Rejoice with him in his hope, it's a subclass, isn't it of what he says, a couple verses later Rejoice, with those who Rejoice and then another subclass, this time of weep with those who weep is, when we are in trouble, when we are in trouble, we want to persevere to endure.

In in our trouble. But this is something that is much more easily done with another. Just like when you Rejoice over something, Perhaps you can remember something recently or maybe not. So recently some news that you received that was so glad and you couldn't wait to share it with those whom you loved rejoicing in Hope.

But so, also when, when we are in the midst of trouble and needing to persevere in it, how much How much we are strengthened and encouraged and enabled to do that when we have someone else persevering with us and oh, that we would receive the The trouble of a brother or a sister, as a providential assignment to set ourselves to persevere with them, to be with them in it, first of all, but also to persevere with them in it.

Not to. Not to reinforce their flesh. Their flesh is going to be reinforced enough by itself and by the world, but to come alongside them and remind them of the promises of scripture that we are to be strong. And courageous that the God who was with Moses and the God who was with, Joshua has now adopted us and United us to Christ and indwelt Us by his Spirit.

And this is something that our brother or sister. May not remember so easily. And so we are enduring with them in Tribulation and then when we have something that the Lord has given us to pray for, That we would not give up in prayer, but that we would continue steadfastly in prayer.

And as we pray for one another, and as we know what our brothers and sisters are praying for that, we would continue steadfastly. And this is one of the reasons. Why things end up on our prayer list for so long? Part of the reason is because I don't follow up and ask.

You know, whether there's any change or can we still keep doing it. But until I hear otherwise, I think that we should all persist in prayer. We can't. It would be Dreadful if we said, well, you know, we've been praying for pastor Yi, for four years of his imprisonment, in China.

I'm kind of tired of that one. Let's let's leave off praying for him. No, we must remember him. As though, imprisoned with him says, the Bible. God has given him something to pray about and surely the the Lord is keeping him continuing steadfastly in his praying. Well, ought we not continue steadfastly with our brothers and sisters in prayer.

And and so when our brother or sister has something that they're pleading for who you think of the the father of an unconverted child or the mother of an unconverted child and how they are going to pray, like Monica for Augustine. The Lord converts them or until they draw their last breath and they'll pray with that breath.

Well, let us continue steadfastly in our own praying and then with our brothers praying and then when our brother comes into some sort of need and not just our brother in our own congregation but we hear about the Saints in another congregation like the Saints in Macedonia and the Saints in Ikea heard about the need that.

God brought the Earthly need that. God brought into the lives of the Saints in Judea and suddenly they had A, an assignment from God, the neediness of those Saints was An assignment for them. And so, as as we are connected, uh, more nearly to various Saints, the Lord gives us the assignment of Distributing to their needs, or sometimes he gives you providentially the assignment of being the needy Saint, but how are your brothers and sisters going to know to contribute to your needs?

If you don't tell them, And so there is a duty there as well that we receive Providence as a joint assignment. The, the individual Providence, and then in the end of verse 13, persecuting Hospitality. And now he's here, the word persecuting because it is the exact same word. Well, the exact same verb.

In the end of verse 13 as it is in the next phrase. Or the next Clause in verse 14, bless those who persecute you, which is to say that we are to aggressively love strangers. Not to be aggressive with strangers and call it love But to aggressively love strangers to be, always on the lookout, always on the hunt, always ready to catch.

Someone just not having a place to stay, just not having connections not having employment in this area. The idea of hospitality and the word does is just the the word for Brotherly. Love with

the word for stranger and loving a stranger like a brother. Is one way of quickly defining it in that way.

The word Hospitality to us. I'm afraid usually just means having someone over for a meal. Uh, but the culture into which this was written, they really did not have hotels and motels. Whatever public houses they might have. Had were generally places of ill, repute. And even if they weren't, they were, they were fairly dangerous places.

And so, if a Christian came to a new city where he didn't know anybody else, he didn't have family there, he didn't have friends there. He didn't have connections to get a job. He didn't know where to, uh, where he should purchase things. All those things. The the believing congregation that was there already.

Should love that. Stranger like he's a brother open. Their this is talking about opening their home for a temporary resident and sometimes temporary is extended to Temporary bringing them into the household, finding them employment, introducing them to people, so that they can make their connections, loving The Stranger. And this is especially loving The Stranger.

And with the stranger who's a Believer, we persecute Hospitality being aggressively hospitable. Um, however. One of the things that we will find in the church, Is that it's full of Sinners. We ourselves have been thinking about and hearing about the love that we ought to have for our brothers and even as we heard it, preached, even as we preached it and read it and and thought about it, meditated upon it, we were crying out to God, that we do not love our brother like we should.

And indeed, sometimes you will find that someone acts hatefully to you even in the church. And so, he says, bless those who persecute you bless and do not curse them, praise God, he puts verse 14 right in the middle here, so that when we get to verse 15 and verse 16 and we're still, excuse me, we're still one anothering in verse 16, we'll realize that the persecutor in verse 14 is not the all men in verse 17 and following the persecutor in verse 14, is someone in the church.

Will say things that are hurtful and do things that are hurtful or Overlook you in ways. That are hurtful. We are sinners. And we are finite. So not only is there sin on their end where they might actually be doing something in hostility, but there's finitude on their end where they are just forgetful or weary or and then there's sin on your end where you might be misinterpreting and often just a few plain questions, you know, it seemed like And you've, you know, looked or spoke, or did this this thing did, what did you mean by that?

And you could discover that, you know, they were just intestantly ill or thinking about something else altogether. Thankfully, none of you have. Have had the experience of being a minister. A very tight-knit, small town and had someone. Leave the church because you didn't smile at them at a stop sign.

Lord knows what this hypothetical Minister was thinking at that, stop sign, but he certainly wished later. He had just wore a painted smile the whole time. But there will be those in the church who persecute you. And so we have a simple. Impossible command. But you should not be discouraged by that.

The whole Christian life is impossible to your Christian, bless God, when it is simple. And as soon as you are persecuted by someone, or you just feel persecuted about someone, you have your marching orders. I know what to do with persecuted persecuting. I know what to do with persecutors in the church.

I'm supposed to bless them. And I also know what I'm not supposed to do with persecutors in the church, I am not supposed to curse them. And so you begin your blessing of them by blessing them to God. You pray for those who persecute you, isn't that what the Lord Jesus told us to do in Matthew chapter 5?

And so we bless them. And, with our lips, we pray for them. We speak well of them to others. As soon as we, we feel that we are persecuted by them. Our guard goes up. Because we know that the prohibition here against cursing, them is recognizing something that is in our flesh.

And our remaining sinfulness that, we will want to speak against them. We will want to work things into the way, we say things in conversations, that will diminish them in other people's opinions. And so we must be on our guard against that do not curse. Applying our hearts towards them and we pray for them and we bless them.

We bless them to their face. We bless them behind their back. We watch out for any good that we can do for them. We think. Oh this is this is someone with whom. I'm gonna have more difficulty obeying, the rest of this passage and so we find out what they're rejoicing in and Rejoice with them.

We find out what they're weeping over and we weep for them like the psalmist. He does that he does believe in. It's, it's in Psalm 34, where when they are afflicted, he he Grieves for them like his brother or like his mother. And is humbled with prayer and fasting before God on their behalf bless those who persecute you bless and do not curse.

And, of course, the rejoicing and then the weeping. And the last part of this sympathetically, responsive love, when our brother is brought low. When our sister is brought low. That we be brought low with them. That we be afflicted. With them. He says be of the same mind toward one another, do not set your mind on I things.

But associate with the humble. You see your brother or sister when they are, are brought low, don't need you to be Uh, cheerful with a loud voice. Which is like, Salt in the eyes and vinegar in the teeth. Just if it's too early in the morning, According to the proverb.

Um, But unseasonable over cheerfulness and boisterousness says, no, we have the same mind with them. Match where they are. Come and be where they are and hopefully that will help you not be. Like job's friends. Who are wise in themselves. They sat with job where he was but they were not with him where he was effectively and emotionally, they kept their mouths, shut out of respect for his age and his wisdom and his having been an instructor of others.

But boy, were they ready to instruct him? And once the mouths opened, they didn't stop, did they till they ran out of gas in Alihu? The youngest gave the longest speech. Of the book. Don't be wise in yourself. Don't be wise, literally in yourself here. Or as it's paraphrased in the new King, James do not be wise.

Um, in that, which is in your own opinion. As with the new King James says, Because you see in the last place. True love is humble love. It's not sure of itself. It doesn't jump to conclusions. About others. Uh, it doesn't immediately give you the answers. We've all known that person.

Some of us have been that person or trying to grow out to being that person. Uh who can't speak a word of sympathy because they're too busy giving you their seven words of solution. They don't take the time to be. Of the same mind with the Afflicted, humbled, brother.

Um, they always have the answers. They're wise. In themselves. And this is Dreadful for us. Because not only does being wise in yourself, make you unhelpful, miserable counselors, all as

job said of his friends. But being wise in yourself is dangerous for yourself. Proverbs after 26 chapters. Of warning about how dangerous it is to be the fool.

Comes in chapter 26 and says, do you see a man who is wise in his own eyes? There's more hope for a Than there is for him. And so one of the things that God does for us when our brother is brought low, As he gives us an opportunity to be brought low with him.

To experience some humility before God with him. To feel. Are creatureliness and our continuing sinfulness our neediness. And to know God's abundance for our need. And his goodness and his grace. Which is the sort of knowledge that doesn't, puff us up. But it meets us where we are, not that we shouldn't have wisdom.

But the wisdom should not be. Or from within us. It should be before God, as those who are under his words together. That we might share our brothers low condition. So, my dear congregation, Offer yourselves as the Lord's slaves. For that work about which he most cares in this world.

One another's lives. Our walk. With him.