

“Provoking One Another”

Gal. 5:26

Introduction:

- A. Should Christians provoke one another?
 - 1. If the text were the only verse on the subject, answer would be “no, never!”
 - 2. However there are good provocations as well as bad. (Heb. 10:24).
 - 3. Unfortunately, too much bad and not enough good.
- B. We need to study some areas where we should be provoking one another.

Discussion:

I. Provoking Unto *Jealousy*. (Rom. 11:14)

- A. Such a thing as *godly* jealousy (2 Cor. 11:2)
- B. Paul tried to provoke Jews to jealousy of Gentiles' blessings in Christ. (Rom. 11:11-14).
 - 1. So that they would want to emulate them.
 - 2. We need to stir up all those out of Christ to this kind of godly jealousy.
- C. We need to be provoked to jealousy for the spiritual welfare of brethren (2 Cor. 11:1-5).
 - 1. Jealousy guard against corruption from simplicity of gospel. (v. 3)
 - 2. Jealousy guard against influence false teachers. (v.4, 13-15).
 - a. Such corrupt faith.
 - b. Such wolves in sheep's clothing catch and scatter sheep. (Mt. 7:15; John 10:12)
 - (1) Caught by deception of false doctrine.
 - (2) Scattered by tactics of factious men. (cf. Tit. 3:10)
 - 3. Jealousy guard own influence among brethren for good. (vv. 5-15)

II. Provoking Unto *Love* (Heb. 10:24)

- A. Verse 24 stands in contrast to verse 25.
 - 1. "Provoking unto love and good works" (v. 24) equals "exhorting one another" (v. 25).
 - 2. Assembling together furnishes occasion for provoking and admonishing.
 - a. Most churches do this at least 3 times a week.
 - b. Need to use these times effectively.
- B. This love is "agape" or a love of deep commitment.
 - 1. For the Lord. (1 John 5:3).
 - 2. For Christians. (1 John 5:2).
 - 3. For enemies. (Matt. 5:43-48).
 - 4. Love best seen by its actions. (1 Cor. 13:4-7).
 - 5. Can even "love" those don't particularly like - differs from "philo" love.

III. Provoking Unto *Good Works*. (Heb. 10:24)

- A. Good works a reason for being a Christian. (Eph. 2:8-10).
- B. Good works are scriptural works. (2 Tim. 3:16,17).
- C. Good works sometimes depend of ability and opportunity. (Gal. 6:10).
- D. Our zeal for good works will provoke others (2 Cor. 9:1-2)

Conclusion:

- A. Let us provoke others to do good.
- B. Let us not provoke anyone to do evil.
- C. Could I provoke you to obey be saved today?