

"And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:" Heb. 10:24

A man lives by the water and his family is hungry, but he is not a fisherman and he's afraid of the water. Rather than berate the man for his lack of courage and skill, wouldn't it be better to buy him a brand new rod and reel with a fully loaded tackle box, and invite him to go



fishing with you? This situation is hypothetical, but the application is practical. As Christians we're to "provoke" to good works. Give people a reason to want to do good. Don't tell folks they need to go to church, invite them to go with you. It's always easier to do new things with someone else. The devil knows this well. How many people started smoking, drinking, and doing drugs by themselves? Your own conversion story is your best tool for spreading the Gospel. If it isn't worth anything to you, how do you expect others to place any value on it? If we really believe what we say, we would not hesitate to share it with others. Live Forever? Defeat Death? Streets of Gold? Your witness is only as real as your faith. If you don't believe it enough to live it, you don't really believe it. Most of us fear rejection. We need to realize that for others to believe us, we must faithfully "practice what we preach." Why would someone want to do something that we don't do? Our lifestyle is not our testimony, but it gives our testimony credibility. If we don't believe it enough to practice it, we need to repent and get right with God. We need to remove the beam from our own eye before trying to get the speck out of our neighbor's eye. I can't convince someone to do something I'm unwilling to do myself. It wouldn't make sense to try to get someone to smoke dope unless I "show" them it's OK by doing it with them. Now, I don't believe smoking dope is good, but you get the picture. Lead by example. To put a finer point on it, older Christians in the faith ought to help younger Christians want to live "by faith" by doing it and enjoying it. Christ provokes us with His Love. Paul said, "*The Love of Christ constraineth me.*" Jesus leads by example. It will require suffering on our part, but "*great is our reward in heaven.*" Love "*endureth all things.*" "*Consider one another.*" What does my fellow laborer need to do the task better and easier? The best part of loving is giving.

*"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."
John 13:35*

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