

ENCOURAGEMENTS REGARDING THE BRETHREN
1 Thessalonians 5:14-15

Introduction

It is good to be back with you after being out sick the last couple of weeks. My case was more serious with my oxygen levels dropping into the low 90's and being borderline on developing pneumonia. However, the Lord was merciful by granting Diane the knowledge of what to do and allowing us to have connections that enabled us to get the proper medications. I am thinking about having some T-shirts made up that say, *"I beat COVID-19 despite our Governor,"* or perhaps, *"I Beat COVID-19 - Ask Me How"* to let people know there are many things you can do to take charge of your own health. You really do need to do that since government interference and pseudo-science has caused the health care in our state to break down which is why NY is #2 in COVID related deaths per million though only #32 in cases per million. Start by making sure your immune system is strong through proper exercise, diet, vitamins and minerals - especially C, D and zinc.

I will also remind you that Diane's research paper on the "COVID vaccines" is on our website or can be sent to you upon request. We strongly recommend you read the paper so that you can fully evaluate the risks vs benefits before you make a decision. Our own conclusion is that the unknown risks of being the lab rat for an experimental treatment method that has never gotten past the animal testing phases in the past or present is not worth it. Reduced symptoms, not immunity, is the only benefit claimed.

I also want you to let you know that for sometime we have been looking into increasing our disinfection efforts beyond what we have already been doing in cleaning our facilities before every usage. We signed a contract on Wednesday to add UV light disinfection into our HVAC systems so that all the air in the building is continuously decontaminated while the building is in use. I am also experimenting with a UV light pole I made for disinfecting harder to clean surfaces such as the chairs and carpet. We want to reduce any fear about being here to a minimum. This is a safe place to be.

I am very grateful to Randy Ryan and David Harris for preaching the last couple of weeks while I have been out sick. Randy preached on being gracious to one another with David's grace extended to Jonathan's sole surviving son, Mephebosheth, as the example. David preached from Nehemiah 8:1-12 about why God's people can be joyful based on His word and promises instead of grieved over their circumstances. Our source and purpose of life are bound up in God looking forward to eternity instead of the fleeting concerns of the moment. We have seen that same reality lived out by the Thessalonians as they rapidly matured in difficult circumstances.

The Thessalonian Example

The Thessalonian church was amazing in many respects starting with the fact that though they were a very young church, they had become a model for other churches to follow as Paul plainly states in 1:7 - *"so that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia."* They had developed maturity that often does not exist in churches that are decades old. They were already doing well as Paul states in 1 Thess. 4:1 & 10, but he wanted them to excel still more in walking to please God and their love for one another. In our passage today, we will see some additional areas in which they could excel still more in their relationships with one another. What Paul states in 1 Thessalonians 5:13-14 gives us an understanding of what God wants for us in our own relationships with one another.

What factors enabled them to mature so quickly? Two primary ones have come to my mind as we have been studying Thessalonians. The first is their response to the word of God resulting in their turning from idols to serve the living and true God. They were genuinely converted. Many professing

Christians do not mature simply because they have not had spiritual conversion. Perhaps they have a religious experience of some sort and set a course to improve their life, but those are self centered, and whatever “improvement” is made only goes so far as starting to live in the same manner as the religious social group they join. True conversion turns from self to the Savior with a radical change in the purpose of life. It is going from being spiritually dead to becoming spiritually alive. Jesus Christ becomes the focus of life, as Paul so well described in Galatians 2:20. *“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.”* Spiritual maturity cannot begin until you are born again. The Thessalonians had become true Christians.

The second factor is that this new faith they had in Jesus came about in a time of tribulation as I have pointed out many times in our study. Recall that Acts 17 records that the unbelieving Jews had formed a mob and created such danger that the brethren sent Paul and his companions away to Berea. These evil people then turned their attention to these young believers so that they *“endured the same suffering”* as Paul and his co-laborers had experienced in other places (1 Thess. 2:14).

Hope That Transcends a Degrading Society

The idea of suffering persecution is not a pleasant thought, yet the Bible is clear that such trials and tribulations cause us to mature. James 1:2-4 is direct commanding, ² *“Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, ³ knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. ⁴ And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.”* Romans 5:3-5 expresses the same idea and ties the hope necessary to persevere directly to God’s love demonstrated in Jesus Christ paying the penalty of man’s sin by His own crucifixion.

The society we live in is rapidly changing and has now put on and ignited a jet engine to speed up the decline into depravity both morally and in the ability to think rationally. We are seeing advocacy and implementation of ideas that are contrary to reality in many areas of life. The “follow the science” people reject actual science in favor of using government power to enforce dangerous policies that will further their philosophical goals while making themselves rich. That is why HCQ (hydroxychloroquine), which has been safely used for over 65 years, was suddenly restricted and experimental mRNA therapies were given EUA (Emergency Use Authorization). That is why counseling to help someone overcome gender dysphoria or unwanted sexual attractions is suddenly restricted and approval given for minors to receive dangerous hormone blockers without parental authorization. Planned Parenthood alone is making a fortune in this.

There is no actual science to support the implementation of policies by the new regime to favor those with gender dysphoria regardless of either the unfairness it is to women in sports or the risks real women face in having men who self-identify as women invade their private spaces such as in bathrooms, locker rooms, changing rooms and shelters.

This is about basic morality, not politics. This is the rise of evil designed to persecute those who desire to do what is right, and especially Bible believing Christians. Expect tribulation to come, yet do not fear it, for this is the opportunity to mature as did the Thessalonians so that you will walk and please God and love one another. We can take heart because we have a hope that transcends this world. We also are waiting for the Son of God to return from heaven, even Jesus who will deliver us from the wrath to come (1 Thess. 1:10). We are seeking to *“abound in our love for one another so that He may establish our hearts unblamable in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with His saints”* (1 Thess. 3:13). We are comforted by the promise that both those that have already died in Christ and those who are alive and remaining at His appearing will both meet the Lord in the air and so always be with Him (1 Thess. 4:15-18). We are encouraged by the promise of the coming of the Day of the Lord for we are sons of light and day and God has not destined for His wrath that will be poured out them (1 Thess. 5:1-11).

Paul's requests and exhortations in 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28 are predicated on these truths he has already expressed in his letter. If you do not believe the gospel, there would be no reason to endure suffering for it. If you do not believe that Jesus is going to return and fulfill all the prophecies concerning the future including the realities of both heaven and hell, then what is the point of life and what does it matter how you live? If there will not be any eternal reward or punishment, then it is only logical to pursue whatever course of life you think will be best for you. The major motivations in life become selfishness and fear of man. Those are the opposite of the beginning of knowledge and wisdom which is the fear of God. No wonder our nation is in such trouble with utter foolishness being presented as wisdom, but that is the nature of those with depraved minds. Lying, cheating, stealing, exploitation, intimidation, murder, mayhem, fornication, adultery, sexual perversions, idolatry, hedonism, alcoholism and drug abuse all become legitimate means to the end goal for those that do not fear God.

Christians live in a completely different way for different reasons. What starts as fear of the Lord will become love of Him as you learn of Him and all He has done to redeem your sinful soul in Jesus Christ. As your knowledge of God increases your faith in Him and His promises also increase. The combination of faith and love result in a completely different purpose in life of glorifying the Lord instead of living for self. That is the reason for the commands Paul gives in this last section of 1 Thessalonians.

Review

In the last sermon, we covered Paul's encouragement to them to recognize and esteem those who toiled in ministry among the people giving leadership and admonishing as needed. They were to be held in high regard in love and treated accordingly because of their work (12-13). I sought to emphasize that it was this work of ministry that was the basis for this high esteem and not any official leadership position in the church. We make a mistake when we equate leadership in the church with a title instead of the actual work being done. A true leader will lead and toil among the people helping them to walk in godliness. A person holding an official church position should do that, but much too often those in such positions are placed there for reasons other than meeting the Biblical qualifications.

We will be examining the end of verse 13 through verse 15 this morning. In this section Paul gives encouragement and commands about how they are to treat one another. Next week we will look at the apostle's commands concerning personal behavior (16-22) before reaching Paul's final conclusions (23-28) the following week.

^{13b} *"Live in peace with one another. ¹⁴ We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone. ¹⁵ See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for all people."*

Live in peace with one another - 1 Thessalonians 5:13b

We begin at the end of verse 13. *Live in peace with one another.* "I hold to a minority view that groups this with the rest of the commands in verses 14-15 regarding how to treat one another. Most commentators group this with verses 12-13 surmising that the command is related to some sort of conflict between these hard working leaders and the people. Part of the reason for doing that is while this is the first imperative - command - concerning how they were to treat each other, it is separated from the six additional imperatives - commands - with a phrase that is not a command, *"And we urge you, brethren."*

I take the simple view that the commands concerning one another belong together. There were no imperatives in the previous sentences. They were encouragements and admonitions with a more narrow focus of how the people should treat the leaders working diligently among them. If there was conflict between the people and these leaders, this would be the only indication of it. It also would seem to be a stretch to think that conflict only existed between the people and the leaders so that they are commanded

to live in peace with each other, yet the six commands that follow in verses 14-15 appear to be specific ways by which such peace is achieved. I think there is a better fit in seeing the command to live in peace with each other as the general command and the six that follow as specific means of living in such peace with each other.

This same command (εἰρηνεύετε / eirāneuete) occurs in 2 Corinthians 13:11, *“Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.”* You may recall if you have read through 1 Corinthians that the church in Corinth was full of factions, so commands for them to be like minded and live in peace makes a lot of sense and would take some hard work for them to achieve. The Thessalonians were not fractured into contending groups, yet the potential for conflict to arise and divide is always present, so effort must always be made to be at peace with one another. In fact, this striving for peace is a quality that should mark all Christians. Paul uses a participle form of this same verb in Romans 12:18 stating in contrast to seeking revenge, *“If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.”*

The idea of the root word for peace here (εἰρήνη / eirānā) is much more than absence of conflict. If that is what Paul had meant, he could have said “don’t fight with one another” in any of these passages. Peace encompasses being in harmony so that there is mutual cooperation and tranquility. That takes work to achieve and to maintain. Anyone can keep from fighting with others by simply agreeing to set boundaries and staying within those boundaries. Even belligerent neighbors can do that. The peace spoken of here involves living with or among each other, not just nearby. This is a peace that Christians can have with one another because it begins by having peace with God.

Paul states in Romans 5:1-2, ¹ *Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,* ² *through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand.* Having been brought to repentance so that we believe God and have our minds and hearts changed to be in harmony with Him, we can also walk in unity with one another because we become of the same mind, same love, united in spirit and intent on the same purpose as expressed in Philippians 2:2. The humility that develops from our mutual faith in Christ as we walk in His Spirit moves us to put the interests of others above our own (Phil. 2:3-4). This was already seen among the Thessalonians in their love for one another, but Paul now encourages them to go further in practical ways to further develop and maintain this peace.

Paul’s Urging - 1 Thessalonians 5:14a

Paul leads into his series of six commands with a transitional statement, *“we urge you, brethren.”* The conjunction used here, (δε / de), is continuative instead of adversative showing what follows is directly connected to the command to live in peace. Once again Paul calls the Thessalonian believers his “brethren.” This time it adds another element of why they can live in peace. They are all of the same spiritual family. They are brothers. The term translated as “urge” or “exhort” is once again παρακαλέω / parakaleō which we have seen Paul use multiple times in this letter. It means to come alongside to call like a coach might in motivating an athlete to action. Paul’s commands are neither arbitrary or authoritarian. They are commands coming from a close mentor who is directing them in how to achieve their goal. In this case, it is to how live in the peaceful harmony that should exist within the family of God.

Each of the six commands exposes a potential conflict that can naturally arise within any group because of differences in personality or maturity of those within it. Each of these commands enables the potential conflict to be overcome before it disrupts the harmony and peace that should exist among God’s people. Each of the commands is given in the second person plural - it is given to all of them.

Admonish the Unruly - 1 Thessalonians 5:14b

The command here is νουθετέω / noutheteō which is translated as admonish, rebuke or warn. This is

actually the same word as at the end of 5:12 where it was translated as instruction in the NASB. It is a compound term joining the word for “mind” with the verb “to place.” It means “to impart understanding,” but with a corrective element and hence “to have a corrective influence on someone.” TDNT explains this word *“describes an effect on the will and disposition, and it presupposes an opposition to overcome. It seeks to correct the mind, to put right what is wrong to improve the spiritual attitude. The basic idea is that of the well-meaning earnestness with which one seeks to influence the mind and disposition by appropriate instruction, exhortation, warning and correction.”* This includes confrontation and correction in the effort to reclaim an erring brother, but it is not yet a disciplinary measure. According to Titus 3:10, the factious man is rejected only after a first and second admonition.

This idea of corrective instruction is further seen in the description of who is to receive such admonishment. The word here, ἄτακτος / ataktos, is translated as unruly, idle, irresponsible and disorderly. It was used in military settings to describe those who were out of ranks and for disorderly retreats. It is someone who has deviated from the prescribed rule or order. Paul uses the adverb and verb forms of this word in 2 Thessalonians 3 to describe those who were acting in an undisciplined manner and being busybodies instead of working and following the traditions they had received from Paul and his missionary companions. Paul had already given an admonition to these people in 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 that they were *“to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.”* This became serious enough that in 2 Thessalonians 3:6 Paul commands the believers to keep away from every brother that persisted in such an unruly life.

Just as described in Matthew 18:15-17 and Galatians 6:1-2, when a brother strays in their walk with Christ, fellow believers are to confront him seeking to persuade with the truth and assist him into walking properly again. The goal is to win back your brother. Those that continue in sin after a first and second admonition are eventually removed from the fellowship of believers.

Encourage the Fainthearted - 1 Thessalonians 5:14c

The unruly need admonition, the fainthearted need encouragement. The word translated here as fainthearted, ὀλιγοψύχος / oligopsuchos, is also translated as discouraged, disheartened and feeble-minded. It is a compound word combining the word for little with the word for breath or soul and hence literally “short of breath” and figuratively someone whose soul is lacking resources. This is a good description of those who are immature in the faith and so are subject to being overwhelmed by circumstances since they are still learning how to trust God when things become difficult. Those who are stronger need to comfort and encourage them.

The word for encourage here, παραμυθεομαι / paramutheomai, is used in John 11:19 & 31 for those that had come alongside Martha and Mary to console them over the death of Lazarus. It was also used by Paul in his earlier description of how the missionaries treated them stating in 1 Thessalonians 2:10-12, ¹⁰ *“You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; ¹¹ just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, ¹² so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.”*

Those who are straying in their walk with the Lord need to be admonished. Those who are immature and therefore fainthearted need someone to come alongside them and speak in a way to comfort them in their fears and encourage them. That is done by a combination of pointing them to the truth about God and His promises and walking with them as they go through it. Paul did that in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 with those that were grieved over the death of their loved ones. He pointed them to the truth that they would also be included in the rapture which was a mutual hope Paul also shared in common with them. The truth brought them comfort. Keep in mind that sharing stories of God’s faithfulness to His promises can be very helpful in this since it gives practical examples of the application of truth.

Help the Weak - 1 Thessalonians 5:14d

The word translated weak, sick or infirm here, ἀσθενής / asthenās, literally means “without strength” and is used in reference both to physical weakness such as those who are sick and to immaterial weakness such as immature faith (Romans 14:1), an untrained conscience (1 Cor. 8:7), the desires of the flesh (Romans 6:19), those in inferior positions (1 Cor. 1:27) and general human moral weakness because of our sin nature (Romans 5:6). While Christian compassion compels us to help one another when we are physically weak or sick, that does not fit well with the context here. It is more probable that he is referring here to those that are lacking in moral strength, courage or will such as those he addressed in 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8. Sexual immorality was part of Greek culture and included in their pagan worship. Paul had to remind them that God’s will for them was their sanctification. They were morally weak and needed to be helped.

The word for help here, ἀντέχω / antechō, also translated as sustain, uphold and support, means to “hold before or against.” It is the idea of holding onto and not letting go. It is used in Matthew 6:24 and Luke 16:13 to describe being able to be devoted to only one master and in Titus 1:9 to the requirement for Elders to be “*holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching.*” Those who are weak need to be held onto by those who are strong and assisted. That is certainly demonstrated in dealing with those prone to sexual immorality including pornography because accountability is one of the main protections against stumbling back into it.

Be Patient with All Men - 1 Thessalonians 5:14e

Paul concludes this verse with a command that complements the previous three because regardless of the particular problem there needs to be patience with all men as we admonish, encourage or help as needed. Patience here, μακροθυμέω / makrothumeō, means “long to burn” and signifies being slow to anger, longsuffering, patiently bearing offences and injuries caused by others, being even tempered while enduring trying circumstances. It is a quality of love (1 Corinthians 13:4) and was a characteristic of Abraham as he waited for the Lord’s promises to him to be fulfilled (Hebrews 6:15). It is a characteristic of farmers as they wait for their crops to grow and produce a harvest (James 5:7), and it is one we must have as we wait for the Lord’s return (James 5:7-8). Paul states here this is a characteristic we are to have in dealing with others as they move from immaturity to maturity, from being unruly to being righteous and responsible, from being fainthearted to being bold and courageous, and from being weak to being strong in faith and character.

The need for this kind of patience is fairly obvious because most people do not respond quickly to correction. It can take awhile to get someone who is unruly to understand and apply the truth so that they get their lives back in order. It will also take time for someone who is overwhelmed by circumstances to learn to trust God and overcome being disheartened. That may take continual encouragement. The weak do not become strong overnight, so those helping them will have to be committed to the work involved. All of these take persistence, but that very fact reveals that dealing with those that are slow to grow can be frustrating. That is why patience is necessary. You don’t want to hinder the work you are doing with someone by your own expressions of anger, for *the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God* (James 1:20). Patience is the grease that allows the wheels of spiritual growth to turn resulting in true peace in the body.

See that no one Repays with Evil for Evil - 1 Thess. 5:15a

Paul concludes this section with two opposite but complimentary commands. The first is a prohibition which is a negative. It tells you what you are not to do. The verb “see” used here, ὁράω / horaō, is used in its figurative sense of “take responsibility for causing something to happen.” We can use the English word the same way when instructions are given followed by a command to “see to it that it is done.” That is the idea here. Christians are to take responsibility to ensure that no one

recompenses or repays evil for evil. Doing something bad to someone else because they did wrong to you only increases evil and creates strife instead of peace. That is also the opposite of patience which endures evil done against it as well as love which does not take into account a wrong suffered. We are not to take revenge for vengeance belongs to God (Romans 12:19). In fact, we are to do the opposite as stated in the final command.

Always Seek after that which is Good - 1 Thess. 5:15b

This final command is a prescription. It is a positive statement about what you are to do. “Always” means at all times, on every occasion. It removes opportunity for exceptions in the quest to do good. The word “seek” (διώκω / diōkō) is to “*do something with intense effort and with definite purpose or goal.*” The pursuit of doing good for one another and for all people is intentional, not something that is haphazard or an afterthought. This effort is to become a characteristic of every Christian. Good, ἀγαθός / agathos, is a general term for positive qualities and here it is used as a contrast for evil, so it is referring to what is characterized by being morally upright and honorable. It is to do what is pleasing to God. This is behavior Christians are to have not just for other believers but for all people.

Though these are two separate commands calling for opposite reactions and actions, how you behave toward others, especially those that do wrong to you, will reveal your own character and relationship with God. Jesus addressed this in the Sermon on the Mount in which He distinguishes the characteristics of those who have true righteousness. In Matthew 5 Jesus contrasts the teaching of the scribes and Pharisees with what God had actually commanded. The final contrast presented in verses 44-48 compares how others are treated.

Matthew 5:43-48, ⁴³ “*You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.’*” ⁴⁴ “*But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,*” ⁴⁵ “*so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.*” ⁴⁶ “*For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?*” ⁴⁷ “*If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?*” ⁴⁸ “*Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*”

Conclusions

Christians are radically different from non-Christians because we have been converted by the Holy Spirit and transferred from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. While adoption into God’s family is instantaneous, it does take time to learn, grow and develop the characteristics of righteousness that are in keeping with faith in Jesus Christ and part of being a child of God. Our increasing love for God prods us forward to become more like Christ both as individuals and in helping one another do the same. Our love for one another marks us as disciples of Jesus Christ.

One of the ways that love is expressed is in keeping these commands given by the apostle Paul here in 1 Thessalonians 5:13-15. We live in peaceful harmony with one another as brothers and sisters in Christ because we care enough about each other to be personally involved with one another and patiently admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, and help the weak. We desire to see everyone in the body mature. We are longsuffering and persistent in doing good for one another and all people for we are kin to Christ and follow His example. We refrain from treating those who treat us badly as they have treated us because 1) we trust God to bring about justice and so will leave vengeance in His hands, and 2) we desire to see our enemies repent, be converted, and become beloved brothers or sisters in Christ.

Christian, do not be discouraged if you are not as mature as you know you should be. We are here to help one another, and Jesus is faithful and will complete the work He has begun in you. Continue to strive forward into increasing righteousness.

If you do not yet know that heaven is your destiny for Jesus will be returning to take you there, then today is the day of salvation. You need to turn from your sin and pursue truth so that you can overcome whatever is the cause of your unbelief. Jesus invites you to come unto Him (Matthew 11:28-30), but that does mean you have to change direction and go to Him. We are here to help assist you in that in any way that we can. Talk to any of our church leaders.

Sermon Notes - February 21, 2021
Encouragements Regarding the Brethren - 1 Thessalonians 5:13b-15

Introduction

The Thessalonian Example - 1 Thessalonians 1:7

Though a young church, they already showed great _____

They had responded to the word of God with genuine _____

Their faith and been forged in a time of _____

Hope That Transcends a Degrading Society

Tribulation brings about _____ - James 1:2-3; Romans 5:3-5

Our society is abandoning truth for depraved immoral philosophies that are _____ to reality

We do not need to _____ coming tribulation for it will cause us to mature and our hope transcends this life

The commands & exhortations in 1 Thess. 5:12-28 are predicated on the _____ Paul has already expressed

The major motivations for those that do not fear the Lord are _____ and fear of man

The combination of faith in and love for God result in living for God's _____ instead of for self.

Review - 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13

Appreciate and esteem highly those who diligently _____ among you in ministry

Live in peace with one another - 1 Thessalonians 5:13b

Commands concerning one another belong together & the peace was to be between _____ & cooperation

It takes work to achieve & maintain this kind of peace - but Christians can do it for we have peace with _____

Christian unity (Phil. 2:2) develops from mutual _____ in Christ & the resulting humility to love one another

Paul's Urging - 1 Thessalonians 5:14a

A transitional statement to six commands that will enable the command to live in _____ to be fulfilled

Each command exposes a potential for _____ & how to overcome it before it disrupts the peace

Admonish the Unruly - 1 Thessalonians 5:14b

Admonish (νουθετέω / noutheteō) is to impart understanding to have a _____ influence on someone

The unruly (ἄτακτος / ataktos) are those who have _____ from the proper order, they are "out of ranks"

Paul had admonished those who were being _____ instead of working in 1 Thess. 4:11-12

1 Thess. 3:6; Matt. 18:15-17; Gal. 6:1-2 - admonition can _____ to discipline & disfellowship

Encourage the Fainthearted - 1 Thessalonians 5:14c

Fainthearted (ὀλιγοψύχος / oligopsuchos): "little of soul" - those lacking spiritual resources, _____ faith

Encourage (παραμυθέομαι / paramutheomai): come alongside to speak comfort, console, overcome _____

Walk with them pointing to God & His _____ as Paul did in 1 Thess. 4:13 for those grieving

Help the Weak - 1 Thessalonians 5:14d

The weak (ἀσθενής / asthenās) are those without strength - either physically or _____

Those lacking _____ strength, courage or will - such as those prone to sexual immorality in 1 Thess. 4:1-8

Help (ἀντέχω / antechō) is “to hold before or against” - _____ on and don’t let go (Matt. 6:24; Titus 1:9)

Be Patient with All Men - 1 Thessalonians 5:14e

Patience (μακροθυμέω / makrothumeō) - “long to burn” = slow to anger, longsuffering, _____

A quality of _____ (1 Cor. 13:4), a characteristic of Abraham (Heb. 6:15), farmers (James 5:7), Christians

People can be both resistant to and slow to grow, so patience is needed to overcome the _____ generated

See that no one Repays with Evil for Evil - 1 Thessalonians 5:15a

See (ὁράω / horaō) used in figurative sense of “take _____ for causing something to happen”

Returning evil for evil increases evil & strife, the opposite of peace. Vengeance belongs to _____ (Rom 12:19)

Always Seek after that which is Good - 1 Thessalonians 5:15b

Seek (διώκω / diōkō) is to “do something with intense _____ and with define purpose or goal.”

Good (ἀγαθός / agathos) is used here for what is characterized by being _____ upright and honorable

How you behave toward others _____ your own character and relationship with God

Matthew 5:43–48 - Christians are to behave the _____ way of non-Christians

Conclusions

Christians are different because they are _____ by the Holy Spirit into children of God who love others

Christians can live in peaceful harmony because they _____ enough to carry out 1 Thess. 5:14-15

As kin to Christ, we trust God to carry out justice & desire enemies to _____ & become beloved siblings

KIDS KORNER – Parents, you are responsible to apply God’s Word to your children’s lives. Here is some help. Young Children – draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. Older Children – count how many times “command” is mentioned. Talk with your parents about the commands Paul gives in this passage and how to carry them out.

THINK ABOUT IT – Questions to consider in understanding the sermon and its application. Why did the Thessalonians become so mature so quickly? How does tribulation cause Christians to mature? Explain. How do we know that we will be facing tribulation? What is the relationship between the commands in this passage and what Paul had already written? What does it mean to “live in peace with one another?” What is the relationship of this command with verses 14-15? Who are the “unruly” and how is “admonishment” supposed to change them? What instructions did Paul give in 1 Thess. 4:11-12 to those that would fit this description? Who are the “fainthearted” and how are such people to be “encouraged?” How did Paul encourage those grieving in 1 Thess. 4:13-18? Who are the “weak” and how can they be helped? What relationship might there be between this and the instructions Paul gave in 1 Thess. 4:1-8? What is the meaning of patience in 1 Thess. 5:14? What is the relationship of that patience with the other commands in this passage? How does this patience promote peace? What is the result of repaying evil for evil? What enables Christians to avoid falling into this sin? What does it mean to “seek after that which is good?” How should Christians respond to those who sin against them? What will enable them to respond that way? How do you see God changing you?