

Wisdom and Patience in Admonishing for the Peace and Health of the Churchclick bit.ly/3sYYSkq to hear this lesson as taught (or scan QR code→)**Thursday, May 26, 2022 • Read 1Thessalonians 5:12–15**

Questions from the Scripture text: In what three ways are elders (and maybe deacons) described in v12? What does the apostolic term call the Thessalonians? But what are they to do with their elders? And what else in v13? How much? In what manner? For what? What command does this enable them to keep with the elders and the brethren? Now concerning whom does the apostolic team instruct them (v14)? What are they to do with these unruly (idle) people? Concerning what three other types of people are they instructed? Which specific command applies to which specific people? What will this keep them from doing—which they mustn't do (v15a)? what must they do instead (v15b)? For whom will this be good?

Why should we acknowledge, esteem, and love those whom the Lord has set over us? Pastor leads his family in today's Hopewell @Home passage.

1Thessalonians 5:12–15 looks forward to the second serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these four verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that the Lord expects us to customize wisely our interactions with each type of person in His church.

"Be at peace among yourselves"

Thus closes v13's instruction about how to interact with those who are over us and admonish us. Then, in vv14–15, the Spirit describes various types of admonishment with which to respond to various types of believers in the congregation. The connection seems clear: if we learn to receive admonition well from our elders, and if we learn from our elders how to give good admonition to others, then the whole body will be better equipped to be built up in a way that "is good both for yourselves and for all" (end of v15). So, what types of people in the congregation require what type of response from us?

"Recognize those who labor among you"

The type of labor is spelled out in the next couple phrases: oversight and admonishment. For those who are called to this labor, they should recognize it as "work" (v13a) for the "peace" (v13b) and "good" (v15) of the church. This will keep them from lording it over those whom they are called to serve by authority. If they do not "labor" and "work" in this way, those who are in authority will have themselves to thank when they are not recognized, esteemed, or loved.

And for those who are under the authority, recognizing the nature (labor/work) and purpose (peace/good) of the authority that is over them is needful. If we do not "recognize them" and "esteem them very highly" and "love" them, we will find ourselves resisting their authority and failing to get our benefit from them.

"Warn those who are unruly"

The word is a military term that literally means "untactical." Anyone who is idle, lazy, unprepared, undisciplined, or disorderly falls under this term. It may be tempting just to work around such folks, but they are a danger to themselves and others. They need to be warned. A congregational culture of healthy giving/receiving admonishment enables us all to be helpful not only to the unruly one, but to the entire congregation, within the various relationships and closeness that God gives us in the church.

"Comfort the fainthearted"

Sometimes church members know what they ought to do, and have some skill and ability in doing it, but they grow weary in well-doing. Perhaps a perceived lack of fruit has discouraged them, or perhaps it has gotten more difficult, or perhaps plugging away in the same role for a long time has just "gotten old." The overseer-admonishers whom the Lord has set over us should lead the way in consoling and encouraging such weary members. And the more we have been receptively on the receiving end of such encouragement and consolation, the more we will be equipped to be brother-consolers and brother-encouragers.

"Uphold the weak"

Sometimes, church members simply aren't that far along yet in knowledge or maturity. Sometimes their ability is just small—physically, mentally, emotionally, spiritually. They need more than encouragement. They need someone with more strength to pull them along. And the instruction here is literally to "keep holding on to" them. If someone in the church needs you to pull them through, don't let go when your own strength seems to sag! Those in leadership must set their faces like flint, and doggedly depend upon the Lord, in order to keep pressing on. And it will be in those moments when they most feel like they themselves can't go on that it will be most necessary for them not to let go of those with less strength. This culture of being devoted to helping the weak, rather than despising the weak, is one that starts at the top—both in heavenly terms (almighty God never letting go of us powerless men) and in earthly terms (elders/husbands/fathers not despising the weak but rather bearing even more of the load for them).

"Be patient with all"

In all things in this life, we fail much. Following the instructions in this passage will not be a one-time or one-off. It's something that we will have to do. And keeping doing. And do again. When the Lord has to command us to be patient, we should admit that it will be our natural (fleshly) inclination to be impatient. To say, "I think I've done enough of that for them." But we mustn't. We must be patient with *all*. Every single other member will test our patience at some point. AND WE will test the patience, at some point, of every single other member.

"See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone"

We can see by the "no one" and "anyone" that this instruction is the twin of "be patient with all." At some point, we are going to feel the urge to do worse than just give up on someone. Something they do will positively harm us (or appear to us to do so) or offend us. And we will be tempted to render evil for evil.

In fact, we'll likely think that this is the one time that this is permissible. The special case in which they have just gone too far. Not so fast, my brother! The Spirit anticipates such reasoning and says, "See that no one" does this: you are not a special one who gets to do this. The Spirit anticipates such reasoning and says not to do this "to anyone": they are not the specially bad one against whom this would be excusable. No, we must *always* pursue what is good. As the apostle says elsewhere, "Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is *possible* as much as depends on you, live peaceably *with all men*." Keep doing good not until you've exhausted your inclination to do so, but until you've done all, and the peace just wasn't possible!

Truly, it's a profoundly loving and forgiving congregational life (cf. Eph 4:25–5:7) that is meant to be produced by submission to proper doctrinal oversight and admonition (cf. Eph 4:1–24). A biblically faithful ministry of oversight and admonition is a great gift from Christ! We should highly value it, and seek to avail ourselves under it until we all thrive by it.

With whom have you especially needed to exercise patience? In what types of interaction with them? What helpers has the Lord given you for establishing and building this patience?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for encouraging us, for warning us, for helping us in our weakness—and for persisting with us in everything that we need from You. Forgive us! For, we are not like You in these things, but are often impatient with one another and find our remaining fleshliness quite ready to repay evil for evil. But Christ has responded to our sin by dying for us, so that we might be both forgiven and cleansed, which we ask through Him, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP32AB "What Blessedness" or TPH409 "Blest Be the Tie That Binds"

For more Hopewell @Home devotionals, please visit bit.ly/harpCHAH

(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 referenced above)

First Thessalonians chapter 5 verses 12 through 15. These are God's words and we urge you brethren to recognize those who labor among you and our over. You in the Lord and admonish. You and to esteem them. Very highly in love for their works sake. Be at peace among yourselves.

Now we exhort you rather than warn those who are unruly comfort, the faint-hearted, uphold the weak be patient with all, See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone but always pursue what is good? Both for yourselves and for all. So, for the reading of God's inspired and then Aaron toward

Well, the first two verses of this short little passage. We've just got five verses in front of us and the first two verses urge us to esteem. Very highly in love those who labor among us are over us and admonish us. So the ministry of the Gospel is described as hard work and oversight and accountability in the word admonishment.

And one of the reasons for that is that as we love one, another as we seek to have peace among ourselves, which is how the first two verses conclude be a beast among yourselves. There are different kinds of admonishing that we are to do to different members of the body.

As we love our brothers and sisters in the church. As you love your brothers and sisters in the church. In this house, There are different ways that we are to respond to particular, people and particular personalities, or a habits places of growth character traits in different people. In other words, we are to interact with everyone wisely according to where they are and their walk with the Lord, knowing that it is the Lord, who has begun the work?

It is the Lord, who is doing the work, the Lord will bring it to completion in the last day. All of these have been themes of the letter first Thessalonians so far. And one of the things that I'm sure the apostle hopes that they have recognized, by the time they get to verse 12.

And verse 14, is that just as Paul and Sylvanus, and Timothy exhort you brethren, etc, and versus 14 and 15. So also, the Lord has set among them. These ministers of the gospel, these elders who are exhorting them weak by week in assembly just as the apostle. Now has written one of these what we must suppose are comparatively rare letters.

I doubt they got a different letter and the Church of Thessalonica from the Apostle Paul every week. And so, the Lord has given us this, these men whom he has called to work hard and to govern and to admonish. And if I was talking to ministers and maybe my boys one day you will be ministers of the gospel in the church but I hope that you will one day, certainly be ministers, to your wife wife, your one wife for each of you and your children and I do hope that in another but a very important way.

You my dear daughters will be workers and governors of and admonishers of your children, my and your mom's grandchildren. And so we should recognize those who have this office that is described in these three activities and we should seek to stir up in accordance with their work, for their works.

Sake. Verse 13. This very high loving Esteem of them. It's an important work that God has given them to do, and it's not so much for their own sake. Unless they become puffed up And we should be careful when people are complimenting us that we do not become puffed up, But it is for their work sake.

So that the work might be promoted prospered multiplied. Encouraged made more and more effective, and the result of that work should be, that, the congregation would have peace among themselves. Now, this doesn't mean that nobody ever notices anything wrong with anyone or says anything about it because he's about to spend three verses talking about how to do that.

What it means is that the Lord has called particular people to the particular work of taking the lead in this and setting the example in this. So a lot of writing on your elders being godly and patient and wise and how to interact differently with each one. According to the wisdom that the Lord commands here and may made the Lord grant to me and to the other elders to grow in this, and you should desire that and pray for your elders, which is also desire.

It and pray it for yourselves. So, we're going to be at peace among ourselves by recognizing those who labor among us in this ruling over this governing. And this admonishing and one of the things that we're going to learn by recognizing them and esteeming them is to warn those who are unruly think.

My eldest son will enjoy the fact that the root of this word that we have a form of here. Translated, unruly is aw tac toss or is it tactical costs? I think it's just talk toss. It's literally and you can hear it. Untactical, There are people who are undisciplined, They are lazy unprepared, idle disorderly, All of these, all of these character, traits fall under this term.

That is translated here unruly. Now, it may be tempted tempting just to work around such folks. It is, it can be very frustrating to depend upon interact with work. Alongside someone who is unprepared or idle or lazy or undisciplined, they are a danger to themselves and to others and so you can't just work around them or they'll continue being a danger to themselves and to others.

So the Lord tells us here to warn them. A congregational culture in which we are all being patient with everyone else. You know that, at the end of verse 14, no matter what customized interaction, each person needs. The one thing that belongs to every customized interactionist patients but a congregational culture in which we have in, which we're all exercising.

This patient's and in which we give and receive the various admonishments that we need and we recognize those as duties from God when we are to give them and blessings from God, helps from God. When we are to receive them will enable us to warn the unruly will be helpful, not just to the unruly one, but to the entire congregation because they're not just a danger to themselves or a danger to others as well.

Well, there are other people who are dangerous and different ways or bring the congregation down in different ways. The untactical unruly guy was one. The next guy that we see in verse 14, is the faint-hearted guy that easily discouraged weak in the person who There's always worried or fretting, or just doesn't have it in them to, to try.

We're going to come to the weak person in the next phrase, who uphold the weak who is trying. But can't but the faint-hearted person they're not weak in their execution, their weak in their attempting. They don't even can't even bring themselves to attempt. What they are supposed to do these, perhaps know what they ought to do, and may even have some skill and ability in doing it Once they get going.

But perhaps, they've grown weary and well doing or lack of fruit or results as discourage them, or maybe, what they've been doing is getting more difficult or

perhaps plugging away at the same things day after day. Week after week year, after year has just gotten old, whatever. The thing is, for this faint-hearted person, they don't feel like trying anymore and we are to comfort them or encourage them.

Now, the overseer admonishers, we were just thinking about in verses 12 and 13 should lead the way. They should be examples to us of consoling and encouraging. Those who are finding it difficult, even to try anymore, the depressed and the discouraged. One of the things we read of the Lord, Jesus is the bruised reed.

He does not break and the smoking wick, the smoldering wick. He does not snuff out and so the leaders in the church need to be like the Lord Jesus. In this, The fruit of the Spirit is gentleness, it's one of the most necessary graces that a man needs to grow in for his leadership both in his home.

And if the Lord blesses him in his home, then also in the household of God and we should learn from them, we should take a cue from them as you see. And hear you're elder comforting and encouraging. The one who has not been able to get themselves going lately.

Who are faint hearted and then the more that we have been receptively on the receiving end of such encouragement and consolation and we can remember not feeling like trying anymore or feeling like just giving up and how the Lord brought an elder or a brother or sister with that word of encouragement that comforted us by who the Lord is and what he has done and how this all ends and the privilege that we have of being used by Him.

The joy that we have just in serving him. Even if we don't see the fruit knowing that he is glorified knowing that there's always fruit that we can't see and that we can't see all the fruit that there is. And the more that we have been on the receiving end of that, the more we will be able later to comfort and encourage the faint hearted.

Well, then, then the next place as we've already started to mention. There are those who are simply not that far along yet and knowledge or maturity, they have small ability, They try. But they can't They are they may be physically weak or mentally weak or emotionally, weak or spiritually weak.

There's there's starting, but not finishing, there's attempting but not success, There's intentions, but not follow through These. Need someone with more strength to pull them along to come in alongside them and he says uphold the weak. Incidentally when the Lord Jesus, It says that if you are weary and and heavy laden you should come to him, he says, for his yoke is easy, and his burden is light and then you read about all the stuff that we are supposed to think and feel and do and you say that's easy, that's light and we've missed that.

He says, my yoke is easy and burden is light. In other words, what they had were these two walks and teams and and Jesus says, come to me you who are weary and heavy laden get hooked up in my team and that which is left for. You is easy and light because you are yoked in with me.

Now we can't be Jesus to somebody else, but he does call us here to something that is analogous or similar to uphold the weak. Not to tell them about how much stronger. They can be one day with the implication that they may be like you, but to get in there, alongside them, in, whatever it is that they need to be doing Doing what you can to pull some of the way.

Like today when we were helping the Washburns unload their truck and you get a couple young men on the edges of something, really too big for the two of them together and they are straining hard and you know grown man who may or may not have sneaky old men's strength.

That is twice with those young men have might come along and just add 150 pounds of lift to the center and suddenly you know, that's not just that they can carry the thing. Their shoulders, you know, straightened back and their chest puffs out and they feel very strong as they carry this mess of thing.

They have found strength whenever anyone's in a season of life, where the burden that they have is heavy or their strength, for whatever reason is that They don't need, anybody telling them how much better they could be doing, or that the burden isn't as heavy. As they think it is, just come alongside them and help lift the thing.

We live in an age of great weakness in the church, and a lot of things weakness in leading your family. Well basically, sacrificing my life to do a lot of things to lift the burden for men because if we were in another season in the life of the church, I wouldn't have to do what I'm doing now.

But the burdens heavy, we should carry it with them. One of you got very upset this past. Lord's Day at something that we're not doing super well in or, you know, we as a family are having difficulty with and we're finding that the church even those who are trying or having difficulty and there are others aren't even trying.

Don't criticize, You may warn the unruly It takes some skill there. But one thing you can do for sure is uphold the week, get your shoulders in under the yolk with those who are trying especially and just finding themselves unable and then we do know what to do in every situation.

It's difficult to take wisdom to know which kind of person you're dealing with in the rest of verse 14. But one thing you can do it doesn't matter which kind of person you're dealing with because every one of them, you are to be patient with be patient with all.

And then there's a another kind of person altogether and verse 15. The guy who just straight up sins against you, the guy who renders you evil, does you harm? And you might be thinking, ah, what are we going to do with that guy, with that guy? We're going to watch out against our own heart that we not respond to them in a way of vengeance.

That doesn't mean they never get correction, right? We already talked about warning, the unruly and there are people who are over the church and who provide accountability, but it does mean that the great danger when someone is sending against you or causing you harm is that you would have a bitter vengeful spirit and that you would start thinking or speaking or acting in a way that repays back the evil with evil instead of exercising, this patients with all this wisdom to understand and analyze what kind of person you're dealing with and what's going on with them this wisdom.

Then to, once you have figured that out to apply the right remedy from the different customized responses, we have here. And of course, these aren't the only ones they set an example, they set an example for us to follow. See that? No one renders evil for evil. Be careful as far as it depends on you to live at peace with.

Everyone will hear when we get to Romans chapter 12 and then immediately he launches into it that point not repaying evil for evil vengeance belonging to the Lord leaving it to him. If your enemy is hungry, feeding him, if he's thirsty, giving him something to drink and so forth.

So we have in kind of a short scope here. Something similar to what we have. And the Ephesians chapter 4 and the first section of Ephesians chapter 5 in in most of Ephesians 4, he's talking about submitting. Well, to those whom the Lord has given as pastor teachers, who teach us the Bible, who help us have stable doctrine, and one of the reasons is because we need to speak the truth in love.

And then he goes on, especially from Ephesians, 4:25 about to effusions, five or seven and to describe this speaking, the truth in love and what that looks like in a kind and patient and tender-hearted and forgiving and admonishing and encouraging and comforting etc. One, another learning to speak. Well, to one another.

So the Lord help us. First of all, he make our minister such a man as would be a steamed like this and give our elders to be as well and help us all to esteem the minister and the elders. And then to follow them in the exercise of this wisdom that we have described in verses 14 and 15.

Let's pray. Thank you Lord for this portion of your word. Oh Lord! We are weak and we thank you that Christ has invited us into his York that he is infinitely. Strong that your Almighty. Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, you and the son have sent that.

He might not just be upon us and with us, but even dwell in us so that we may live by faith in Christ for the power of the Holy Spirit. And the power of the Risen Savior that we that it would no longer be we who live but Christ who lives in us.

And that the life that we live, we might live by faith in Him who loved us and gave himself for us. Oh, Lord. Grant that it would be. So especially in the way that we respond to those who you have given to labor among us and oversee us. And admonish us grant that we would live by the power of Christ and have the wisdom of Christ and how we interact with all the different types of sinners.

There are in the church making us to remember that. We are one of those types of sinners as well and make us to have patience with all. And take vengeance upon none. For we ask these things in Jesus name. Amen.