

*Edgemont Bible Church*  
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*1 Thessalonians 5:14-15*

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Intro: Like everything in this sin racked world, the closest the Church ever was to perfection was shortly after the event at Pentecost. They understood their need for community, fellowship, prayer, sharing, taking care of those with less, joy and worship (Acts 2:42-47). They even seemed to understand how to handle difficult situations such as persecution (Acts 4:24-30), they prayed and that resulted in even more sharing, of things and the Gospel (Acts 4:31-35). But the church still had to grow through some difficult lessons. In Acts 5:1-6, there is the need to deal with sinning believers based on Mt 18:15-18. Paul had to deal with this issue in the Corinthian Church (1 Cor 5; 2 Cor 2; 12:20-13:2). Paul had already shown thanks for the spiritual health of the Thessalonian believers - 1:2-3,9-10;2:19-20; 3:9-10. He wrote of his desire for their continued growth - 3:8,12;4:1,10. And now he writes about the need for the Church to deal with believers in various states that could wear on the health of the Church itself. Most of what he writes will not be appreciated by many today, which only means that we need to step back and consider our need to align with scripture and not the culture.

XV. Growing a Healthy Flock – Part 2: Dealing with the Spiritually Needy

A. Dealing with Wayward Sheep – vs 14a

1. exhort - shows urgency - **parakaleo** - to come alongside, providing help to someone
2. you, brethren
  - a. though the Pastor has some responsibility, notice the call is to the church
  - b. the healthy have to help the unhealthy
3. warn those
  - a. **noutheteo** - to put in mind, to caution or reprove gently, admonish, warn.
  - b. connotes to put sense in someone's mind, to alert him to the serious consequences of his choices, to warn him against the danger
  - c. not judgmental or critical in a superior manner
  - d. caring, kind of rebuke or warning against danger - Acts 20:31
4. who are unruly
  - a. **ataktos** - unarranged, insubordinate (religiously):--unruly.
    - i. in classical greek, often referred in a military context
    - ii. indicates they are behaving in a disorderly, insubordinate way
  - b. Those that were out of step with the direction that everyone else was headed
    - i. failing to serve the body using their spiritual gifts - 1 Co 12:7; 14:12-13
    - ii. failing to give a portion of their wealth - 1 Co 16:2; 2 Co 8:7; 9:6-12
    - iii. failing to support the church leadership - 2:12-13; 1 Tim 5:17; Heb 13:7,17

- c. their reasoning for not doing these things is not the issue
  - i. they don't care, they're angry, rebellious, or contentious
  - ii. become critical benchwarmers, undermining leadership, divisive.

## B. Dealing with Worried Sheep – vs 14b

### 1. comfort

- a. **Paramutheomai** - to speak alongside, to relate near, encourage, console:-  
-comfort.
- b. those that are confident need to become instructors and examples to the worried
- c. Dealing with areas of insecurity such as
  - i. biblical certainty of answered prayer - 1 Jo 5:14-15
  - ii. Security of their salvation - Jo 1:-27-29
  - iii. Them being included in the final resurrection - Jo 11:24-27
  - iv. God's eternal love for them - Ro 8:38-39
  - v. God sovereignly fulfilling His will for their lives - Pro 19:21; Ro 8:28-29
- d. These kinds of reminders encourage, bring joy and confidence to them

### 2. the fainthearted

- a. **oligopsuchos** - little-spirited, small souled, faint-hearted:--feebleminded.
- b. unlike the unruly that were pushing the boundaries, these were the worried, huddled in the middle, not wanting to get near the edge
- c. these lack the boldness to accept the challenge of ministry, they fear the unknown or change

## C. Dealing with Weak Sheep – vs 14c

### 1. uphold - Gal 6:1-2

- a. **antechomai** - to hold oneself opposite to, adhere to; to care for:--hold fast, hold to, support.
- b. come alongside, establish relationships, provide doctrinal instruction and encouragement toward righteousness and away from sin

### 2. the weak

- a. **asthenes** - strength-less, more feeble, impotent, sick, without strength, weak(-er, -ness, thing).
- b. those that are weak in faith, beset by doubts - Ro 14:1-15; 1 co 8:1-13; 9:19-23; 10:23-33
- c. Not strong enough to enjoy their freedom in Christ - Gal 5:1; Col 2:16-23
- d. focuses on the susceptibility to sin and applies to those who struggle with abandoning sin and obeying God's will
- e. more susceptible
  - i. To error - Eph 4:14
  - ii. To temptation and sin - 1 co 8:9-13
  - iii. To extra sensitivity to things as sin that are not sin - 1 Co 8:7
- f. the weak can be stumbling blocks to the growth of the Church

#### D. Dealing with Wearisome Sheep – vs 14d

##### 1. be patient

a. **makrothumeo** - to be long-spirited, forbearing or patient:--bear (suffer) long, be longsuffering, have (long) patience, be patient, patiently endure.

b. easy for the strong and healthy to become frustrated, angry, or discouraged with the weak

i. investing time, teaching, training, strength, encouragement

ii. Then the unruly, fainthearted, and weak continue on the path of little commitment, or spiritual immaturity

2. with all - all those that the strong would have a tendency to become impatient.

3. Mt 18:21-22 Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

#### E. Dealing with Wicked Sheep – vs 15

##### 1. See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone,

a. disobedient sheep do things that cause hurt to the obedient ones

b. Revenge is never allowed for believers - Le 19:18; Pr 20:22; 24:29; Mt 5:39,44; Ro 12:17; 1Co 6:7; 1Pe 3:9

##### 2. but always pursue what is good

a. the proper response

i. Ps 34:14; 1 Co 13:2-7; 2 Co 8:21; Eph 4:25; Phil 4:8; Jas 3:17

ii. Overcoming evil with Good - Ro 12:20-21; 2 Kgs 6:22; Pro 25:21-22; Mt 5:43-44; Lk 6:27-38; 1 Co 4:12; 6:6-8; 1 Pe 2:19-23; 3:8-12

b. both

i. for yourselves - there are benefits for doing what is right

ii. and for all - there are benefits to a community for doing what is right