

## Brother One Another, Pt 2 Encourage the Fainthearted / Help the Weak

*Today's section involves not the distracted, but the distressed; it is not the unwilling, it is the unable.*

### 1) Consider the Object

Faint-Hearted & Weak

The able, but unwilling – we admonish

The faint-hearted and weak – we encourage & help

**So – how do you tell the difference?** They look much the same, sitting in the middle of the track...  
You move in closer and you talk... (you will hear it).

**“Faint-hearted”** – “small-souled, little-hearted”

What are the symptoms (in yourself or others)?

- Involved less in the work of ministry
- Lack of joy in serving others
- Not creatively identifying new ventures
- Prayers that aren't expectant, hopeful
- General despondency about life
- Little or rote involvement in Spiritual Disciplines

What are circumstances that have a tendency to make people lose heart?

- Facing death (of self or loved one)
- Major setback in life (job, relationships, health)
- Crisis of one's own sin (guilt, shame, consequences)
- Facing persecution or suffering for Christ
- A matter of difficult obedience
- Significant temptation to sin
- Physical / Mental malaise or depression
- Struggling through a theological conundrum

**“Weak”** – lacking strength (of any kind)

- Physical strength – sick, blind, lame, dying, etc.
- Financial strength – some can't meet own needs (widows, orphans, poor)
- Knowledge strength – the new in the faith, the young, or simply those who have a lack of a thorough bible knowledge
- Positional strength – those who are under someone else's authority (like children or wives)
- Spiritual strength – such as all of our condition prior to salvation – “helpless” (Rom 5:6)

### 2) Consider the Response

A response is required! – Galatians 6:5,3

**“Encourage”** – to comfort, even console – but more than that – refresh, cheer, put courage into the heart, re-enliven...

John 11:21-27

**“Help”** – to hold close, to be connected to

Think about that – exactly what it means to let another person “Lean on you.”

Romans 15:1 – *We who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength, and not just please ourselves.*

### 3) Why should we?

There are lots of good reasons...

Proverbs 19:17 – *One who is gracious to the poor man lends to the Lord, and the Lord will repay him for his good deed.*

2 Cor 8:13-14 – that there may be equality among us

But there is an even greater reason we do this...

2 Cor 8:9

Do you want to be like Jesus?

Mark 10:43-45 - *Whoever wishes to be great among you will be your servant; and whoever wishes to be first among you will be slave of all.*

*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served (to store up for Himself strength, power, riches, wisdom, knowledge)... but to serve (pour out His strengths, power, riches, wisdom, strength), AND ultimately to give His life a ransom for many.*

### Praxis

1. Consider a time where you helped someone in need... Compare the joy with the joy of a weekend adventure. Consider from all angles.
2. What leads people to “lose heart?” How might you recognize that they have?
3. Evaluate this statement: “What the weak/discouraged need is merely to be reminded of the truth.” Back your answer with Scripture.
4. Consider a specific person who you think may be presently discouraged. Make a concrete plan about how you might re-courage them this week.
5. Consider a specific person who may be weak in an area you are presently strong. How will you go and let them lean on your strength?
6. Ponder: “I cannot gain any more position with God than I have in Christ; but I can be more pleasing to God than I am today.” How?