

Church Dynamics

4-16-23

1 Thessalonians 5:14–15 (ESV)

¹⁴ And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. ¹⁵ See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.

- **And we urge you, brothers**

Comes after Respect Due Elders, but the entire body must cope with practical situations of the errant believer.

- **Admonish the idle**

Admonish – to put in one’s mind

Idle – military term meaning insubordinate – NIV gives an appropriate rendering “idle and disruptive” – This is characteristic of someone who sets themselves outside the necessary and given order.

2 Thessalonians 3:11 (ESV)

For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies.

Need to Admonish – put in mind – get with the program

1 Thessalonians 4:11 (ESV)

To aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you.

No one gets a name tag “Admonisher”! Jesus said:

Matthew 7:4 (ESV) How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye?

We want everyone to walk in freedom and not under judgement of self-appointed admonishers! With that in mind, there are two rules I use to identify people who need to be admonished. #1 Are they rearranging our furniture? Furniture is metaphorical. #2 Are they influencing others by their errant behavior. Key word is influence. Otherwise, I give people a lot of Grace.

- **Encourage the fainthearted**

Encourage – console and stimulate into action

Fainthearted – means small souled – soul has to do with mind, will, and emotions therefore fainthearted are those whose mind that waivers, whose will lack perseverance, and whose emotions overwhelm and paralyze. These are people who continually complain of being overwhelmed and think they can't handle life.

For the fainthearted we console and stimulate them into action in mind, will, and emotions by giving everything to Jesus and walking in the Holy Spirit.

- **Help the weak**

Help – hold firmly onto a person – cleave

Weak – spiritually weak – Protect a young person who comes to the LORD and immediately wants to go to North Korea as a missionary. This word is most often used in the NT for those who misuse Christian freedom or those who get caught up in legalism. We need to hold them firmly and explain the Little Red Wagon to them.

- **Be patient with them all**
patient – long tempered – longsuffering – don't lose your temper – Dealing with all the idle, timid, and weak requires patience because they often refuse to respond to constructive counsel.

1 Corinthians 13:4 (ESV)

Love is patient and kind.

- **See that no one repays anyone evil for evil**
NIV uses wrong for wrong which seems more appropriate because the word covers a whole range of bad character. **Romans 12:17-19** gives an expanded instruction for dealing with evil.

Romans 12:17–19 (ESV)

¹⁷ Repay no one evil for evil but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. ¹⁸ If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. ¹⁹ Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

- **Repay no one evil for evil but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all; do not hit back.**
- **If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Key: so far as it depends on you!**
- **Beloved, never avenge yourselves. However:**
- **But leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."**

No one gets away with anything, just give it to God.

K.T. Kendall said, “Never forget, vindication is what the LORD does best, HE doesn’t want our help.”

- But always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.

Our mind set is always to seek good laying everything before the Lord. The Holy Spirit seems to add a seemingly duplicate phrase “and to everyone” meaning to every kind and variety. This expands our responsibility to all Christians because at one time or another we all will “provoke each other” by thoughtlessness or even intentional hurtful acts. Even here with all Christian brothers and sisters we need to be patient, longsuffering, slow to anger, and kind always seeking to do good.

Remember:

Romans 5:8 (ESV)

God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Therefore, Christian Dynamics are based on:

Ephesians 4:32 (ESV)

Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.