

Patience unto Peace

Living out 1 Thessalonians 5:14 within the Covenant Family of God
(Part 2)



Sermon Goal

That we would learn to love one another wisely, as Christ has loved us.



Sermon Text

1 Thessalonians 5:14

→ “And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.”



Big Idea

Wise love is flexible and tailor-made. We must know a person truly if we are to love the person wisely.

(1) Admonish the Idle

(1) Admonishment Requires Clear Lines—We don’t admonish for every little thing that we think might possibly be sin. Admonishment comes into play when the transgression is clear.

(2) Admonishment Rises in Severity—These brothers were taking lightly the things of God, living for the here and now, exploiting Christian charity, deceiving the family, and deceiving themselves. Love pushes into that and says we can’t let you go on this way.

(3) Admonishment Is Family Business—This isn’t purge the church of people that annoy you. This is covenant family work. It is not an “us” vs. “them” thing. It is a “we” thing. Even if we have to exclude someone for their unrepentant sin, our ultimate hope is to include them in the end!

(2) Encourage the Fainthearted

I don’t know how you try to encourage others, but here’s what Paul does: he walks with these hurting people to the cross and shows them afresh what Jesus did for them. And there in the light of the cross, he tells them how their story is going to end: “We will always be with the Lord!” (1 Th 4:17). He has not left you. He has not forsaken you. He’s holding onto you even now!

(3) Help the Weak

With this call to “help the weak” we are reminded that the church is not just the mouthpiece of Jesus but His hands and feet as well. We don’t merely proclaim to others of the world to come, we bring something of that world back into this one. We don’t merely tell others to be warmed and filled (Jam 2:15-16), we invite them out of the cold and into our home, and we sit them down at our dining room table and feed them like family. We don’t just pray or preach the miracle, we act the miracle.

Be Patient with Them All

There is one particular expression of wise love that Paul says ought to characterize them all: patience.

When wise love gets hard, please remember: He is not asking us to do anything for others that He is not already doing for us!



Critical Action

Learn from Him, lean on Him, and let the momentum of His love move through you to others.

Reflection Questions

- When you are feeling fainthearted, what encourages you? Explain.
- Which expression of love feels most comfortable to you? Which feels most uncomfortable? Why? How can you grow in your ability to wisely love others in all of these ways?
- Who are you most prone to lose your patience with: the unruly, the fainthearted, or the weak? Why do you think this is? How does God’s love for you in these teach you to love others in the same way?

