

Human Relations

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[0:00] And my message here tonight is about human relations if you like. Like a mini course in how to deal with other people, how to get along with people, how to communicate really.

And different kinds of people on how we ought to respond to them. And this verse captures so much in just this short one verse. 1 Thessalonians 5 verse 14.

It says, Paul says, Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.

So we here see four instructions on living with others, talks of three different kinds of people and how to deal with them. And we come across these people all through our lives, don't we?

The ones who are unruly, the ones who are feeble-minded, the ones who are weak. And firstly, Paul says of the unruly. He talks about those who are unruly, that we should warn them.

[1:01] Now this word unruly, the same word is translated disorderly. It's about a person who's disorderly, out of order. Someone who's unruly.

And we see that in life, don't we? People just don't like the rules. They just won't take correction. And Paul says, warn them. In fact, it's got the sense of warn and keep on warning.

Some people need to be warned and warned again. The first group of people here are the unruly. They're disobedient ones. They aren't living right. There's a problem there.

There's a problem with their life, their spiritual life. And it's like, and really here, this kind of sense of it, of like an undisciplined army. Rebellious soldiers stepping out of line, not keeping rank, not marching according to the direction, not at their post.

They're out of order, out of line, out of step. And they're easy prey for the enemy. We ought to be an army marching lockstep. Marching like an army. You see those armies in displays of armies, how they're all marching with such precision.

[2:10] That's how God wants his church to be. They were all marching to the same marching orders, as it were. And Paul says that some are not like that.

They are unruly. They're out of accord. Virtually the same word, as I say, translated as disorderly. For example, in this verse here, where Paul says, there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy bodies.

These folk, Paul says, they're shirkers. They're not working. They're undisciplined, uncommitted, unteachable. They're disorderly. Some people are like that. They're just in this, and I think it's more so in this lawless world, that the sons that are unruly, they're rebels.

You know, no one's going to tell me what to do. Their lies are out of God's order. And they're, also there's challenges in the word of God about murmurers and complainers.

People are just causing that kind of trouble. Now, we've all got need of learning, of being under authority, and it starts with humility. I need to be under authority.

[3:16] Every one of us needs to be under God's authority and come in that rightful order. And when the church is in order, that's a blessing. God is not the author of confusion.

He likes order and decency and such. And so God is not the author of confusion. That's the devil's work. Disorder is the devil's work. We're called to godly order.

And God brings order and harmony. He wants that in the home. He wants that in the church. He wants that in our own lives. Not a discord or a disunity, but a right order like a soldier on a parade ground.

And there's a rightful discipline in that. And the word discipline, of course, is related to discipleship. We're called to be his disciples. He wants us to be disciples, us to make disciples.

And there's times where, and as we've had occasion in recent weeks, to exercise church discipline. That can be a hard thing. But the object of the discipline is restoration.

[4:13] That's the motive. That's the object. That's the intent. And thank God we've had that restoration where there was a problem. That's been restored. Fellowship has been restored.

And this sense of restoration, it talks about it in Galatians, how the elders should bring correction. It's got a sense of restore. To restore such one.

And it's got the sense of setting a leg straight. If you've got a broken leg. I know some people could probably identify with that lately. Having a broken leg. And there's a sense of getting it straight. And getting it so it knits back together again.

And it's right again. It can work and function again. That's what God wants. He wants his church to function. So there's a need for vital correction. That brings things, sets things right. And it's good for the church.

When everything is on track, that's what we want. We want it to be a church where everything is done decently and in order. And that doesn't mean we've all got to be cookie cutters of each other.

[5:07] Or you've all got to be some particular shape and size and way of living. But the sense that we've got the same mind. We've got the same doctrine. We've got the same faith.

We've got the same direction. And there's that order, that harmony. That's a good thing for the church to have. So who are the disorderly? Paul talks about some.

Romans 16, 17. They're divisive. 1 Timothy 6, 3 to 5 talks about division. Again, about disruptive. Destructive. People can have that mind that they won't support a godly church.

They won't come under godly leadership. That's not a submission. They're rebels who want to bring in their own different teachings or to live in ungodliness or go their own way, do their own thing.

Now, of course, we've had occasion of that where some have tried to bring in a teaching that's been out of accord, really false doctrine. And I've had to stand up to that in time past and say, look, we won't accommodate that.

[6:07] It's not what we would condone. We cannot support that. There's a need for that. It has to happen. And so when someone rebels against that and goes into some false doctrine, that causes a problem.

We don't want that, do we? And the Bible talks about those who are murmurers. It says there's a strong rebuke for them. There's an occasion in Exodus 16, verse 2, and this example here in the Old Testament, people murmuring, they murmured against Moses and Aaron, and effectively it says they spoke against the Lord because they were murmuring against Moses and Aaron, and effectively they were murmuring against the Lord.

And so the Lord challenged that. And it's interesting that it's not long after, really just one chapter after, they've been brought out of Egypt by God's mighty power.

And here they are murmuring. They were murmuring about the water, the bitter water, and then murmuring about a lack of food. And then the Lord sent manna.

And it's just interesting, that kind of principle of people murmuring. It's an ungodly thing. It's an unhelpful thing. And then in the New Testament, we see examples of it where the Lord warns those gathered around him.

[7:18] John 6, 43, the Lord Jesus himself says, murmur not among yourselves. And then Paul says, do all things without murmurings and disputings.

So murmurings, disputings, it's not a good thing for a church to have a discord like that. In fact, the Bible talks about the sowing of discord as being a very serious matter. So the point we're making here is that some are unruly.

And that's the way people are still today. They want their way rather than God's way. And the Bible repeats those who are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. It talks about those who are lovers of godlessness rather than godliness.

It talks about lovers of fleshly ways rather than spiritual ways. We've all got to guard against that.

The word of God urges us about rebellion, that it is as the sin of witchcraft.

Saul was trying to excuse his disobedience to God. God gave him clear instruction and he compromised that. He tried to argue to keep some of the livestock for sacrifice when God said not

to.

[8:26] And he tried to kind of excuse his wrongdoing. And Samuel rebuked him and said that rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft and stubbornness.

You know, having this, being stubborn like a mule, bullheaded, it's like iniquity. It's sinful. It's idolatry. And so Samuel rebuked Saul and said, because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he has rejected thee from being king.

So, it's interesting here. You've got the Old Testament examples. You've got the New Testament examples. People out of order, needing to be corrected, to be brought back into line, back into order.

And there's a rightful thing. Now, of course, we know some might go to the extreme and be a bit cult-like or be a bit kind of unnecessarily strict on side issues and trivial things.

We're not talking about that. We're talking about sound doctrine. We're talking about godliness and right living, about being a constructive part of the body of Christ. And Paul says, for some, when they're unruly, they're rejecting that, that they should be warned.

[9:34] It's necessary warning to caution people, to instruct them, to spiritually counsel and confront them with the word of God. So, there's very many examples we could cite of correction, of giving warning, needful warning.

For example, Ezekiel, the watchman, he was given this responsibility, he was urged, and he said, it's the responsibility of the watchman to warn the wicked.

And to fail to do that is a grievous error. So, if we see something that's wicked, we should warn. We should stand up and call it out. It's like the saying of tough love, isn't it?

That people use when it might be hard to say something, but it's really the loving thing to do, to challenge and provoke in a good way. Of course, the Bible talks about speaking the truth in love. So, they come together. Speaking the truth in love. That's, one goes hand in hand with the other. In Titus 1, Paul talks about many that are unruly, there's that word again, and vain talkers and deceivers, especially they of the circumcision.

[10:38] So, these Judaizers who wanted to bring the church back under that Old Testament operation. And it says, their mouths must be stopped. Wherefore, rebuke them sharply that they may be sound in the faith.

It's time to say that's a rebuke and say it sharply. A sharp rebuke, a strong rebuke. And we see occasion of that, for example, and we've had, you know, situations in the past where there's a clear sin.

It has to be, it has to be confronted and it has to be challenged. Because like a little leaven, leavens the whole lump. And so, when it's a carnal thing, it's a lifestyle of sin, when it's something that's clear cut, that needs to be called out strongly.

That our faith will be strong and pure and right. There's some that are hooked onto false teaching. And even amongst our number, I've had some where you see some of the things they might be reading or the content they're talking about, they're watching.

And it's false teaching. We've got to stand against that. It can infect. The Bible talks about sin and doctrinal error as being like leaven, like a cancer. It talks about words that eat like a canker, like cancer, like leprosy, spreading like this all-pervasive leaven.

[11:54] And so, we've all got to guard ourselves against that. I have to guard myself against that. We've all got to be aware of those destructive, deceptive, deadly things. The Bible tells us, don't have any fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them, stand against them.

Don't toy with them. Don't have any fellowship with those unfruitful things of darkness. We know the Bible talks about the dog going back to his vomit. That's the kind of picture of it.

It's a vile thing. It's like the drunk going back to the booze. Paul says, Acts 20, 31, that he talks about how he says, watch and remember that by the space of three years I cease not to warn everyone, night and day, with tears.

Paul says this was a warning that he was doing night and day with tears. He was warning while he was weeping. And we must take God seriously. This is something that should cause us to be convicted and concerned for our brothers and sisters when we want to see them encouraged and

grow to be mindful, to warn the unruly.

The Bible talks in 1 Thessalonians 1, verse 8, about those who obey not the gospel of our Lord, that they will face flaming fire, God's vengeance. So we must heed God's voice of warning.

[13:10] This Bible is full of warning. We're to reprove, rebuke, exhort. It talks about that it's profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction.

So there's need for correction here and it's from God's word of truth. And so we should heed sound Bible teaching and boldly speak against error and that's for all of us.

You know, if you see error in me, talk to me about it and correct me. We can talk through where there might be a difference that we can come to the same mind according to the scriptures. And for some, they don't have that submission to the word of God, to a godly church.

They will not bow their will and knee to the Lord. And so the problem of disorder is that it's really a community-wide, it's a worldwide, Australia-wide problem that there's a lack of that godly discipline of what is the truth and standing for it and submitting to it.

In the Bible, it talks about how in the family there's needful order. It tells the father, he that spareth his rod hateth his son, but he that loveth him, chasteneth him, or disciplines him, betimes or promptly.

[14:20] So the discipline should be prompt, it should be given with the object of love. When we discipline a child, a son, who needs correction, it's not because we want to be hard or hurt them, it's because we love them.

And we're talking about true biblical discipline. We're not talking about some might be heavy-handed, but we're talking about those that would want their son, their daughter, to be godly, to be corrected, that there's a time for needful discipline exercised with love for the object of correction.

And that's how we can see the one who loves their son will discipline them, and promptly so. There was a time where there was a man preaching, and one of the preacher's girls was unruly, and the mother immediately picked her up and took her out of the hall.

And while the mother was carrying the little girl out, she cried out, help me, help me, somebody help me. And the congregation was laughing, but really, the mother was actually the one who was helping her child, because the child needed discipline.

Now, there's time for that. The child has to be disciplined. And really, children are crying out for help. They're crying out for order. They're crying out for rules. Where there's no rules, we get unruly.

[15:38] And we see the undisciplined youth of our day. We see neighbourhood gangs, domestic violence. We see children having children or having abortions. They're crying out.

They're begging for love. For really, in the form of discipline. Some grow out without a godly discipline in the home. And really, that's what they're crying out for.

That's what they need. For correcting the disorderly. To warn the unruly. It's good for us to get that sense of correction. What's right doctrine?

What's sound doctrine? And get a hold of that. And get it for yourself and share it with others. Paul talks about warn the unruly. Secondly, he talks about comfort the feeble-minded.

The feeble-minded, you could think of it as those who are discouraged. Those who are faint-hearted. They're disheartened. They're downcast. And discouraged ones. So here's another category.

[16:35] We talked about the unruly. Now we're looking at the discouraged. We're talking about those that are feeble-minded. They need comfort. They need comfort. And they're discouraged. Paul tells the Thessalonians that we exhorted and comforted and charged you every one of you as a father doth his children that you would walk worthy of God who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory.

So Paul says that he was like a father with his children. He was talking to these ones. He was comforting them. The sons are discouraged.

Think of this world. There's so much discouragement. You see, some people, it's like their lives are full of discouraging things and they're very negative. I know some people that I know, it's almost like

there's a new trial, a new test, a new trauma, a new tragedy.

They're constantly down, down, down, down. And some people are like that. They need lifting up. They need encouragement. And we that are here, it's up to you and me to think about these ones that we can comfort like a father would comfort his children.

They need comfort. They need cheering up and giving hope. Some people are easily discouraged. And then we have people with, you know, we have mental health problems and such. People struggling.

[17:55] They're losing some battles. Some people on the edge of even taking their lives. And there's tragic things that are happening in many places and all around us, in the streets all around us.

There's people despairing like that. And we that are saved, we should encourage those who are discouraged. In other words, put courage into them. And even for our fellow believers, spur them on in the gospel race.

The younger ones in the faith, we that are older, we should be the ones spurring them on, strengthening them, encouraging them, exhorting them in love. In this gospel race that we have, as a loving father would give a helpful word to his child.

The discouraged of our day, they're all around us. Fellow believers, that might be lacking in victory. They're labouring under the circumstances of life. Practical needs that they're struggling with.

I know there's someone Monday night, I'm going to give a hand to someone practically. Have a mind to help people practically. To put yourself out, to go the extra mile. People that are low in spirit, they're going through trials and tests and setbacks.

[19:02] Do we see them all around us? Sometimes we can live in our own little world and we don't see those that are downtrodden. The battle weary. Those who've had battles to fight.

They've tried some difficult pathways. Let's have that mind to the others. The people in our lives, the people we meet, those who've got scars of discouragement and defeat.

Instead of pointing a finger, hold out a helping hand. How often are we to encourage others? How often should we do it? The Bible says, exhort one another or you could say comfort, encourage one another while it is called today.

Do it today. Lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. So it's saying there really, think of having that mindset, encourage one another daily, day by day, every day.

How do we do that? How can we encourage people? Maybe it's a word of praise. It's just taking time to reach out. Take time to care for those who are bruised and fragile.

[20:05] To reach out, to uplift those that are troubled. Take time for the hurting. So listen to them, to pray for them, to seek to bring them healing. Do we reach out to people when tragedy strikes?

You know, the situations where people get something tough happen and that's when we should reach out to them, do what we can. Paul says we're to encourage those who are discouraged. Could be sharing a scripture. Offering an uplifting word. Giving them comfort. Friends, discouragement is powerful. There's a story about the devil sorting through some tools that he uses to attack believers and where he narrowed it right down so the one that he really wouldn't let go of that he wanted to keep and that was discouragement.

Because discouragement is powerful. And on the other side of it, encouragement is also powerful. Think of the encouragement you could give and it might be just a word or a reaching out of just a brief nature.

That encouragement can make all the difference. The Bible says, be not overcome of evil but overcome evil with good. Think of the discouragement people live in and the encouragement you can bring in to their lives.

[21:21] To encourage them. Encourage them into fellowship. Encourage them into godliness. Encourage them in their spiritual lives. Paul says this in 1 Thessalonians 5.11 he says, wherefore comfort yourselves together and edify or build up one another even as also you do.

Think of it for yourself. How can I build up other people in my life? How can I be an encourager? How can I help lift the load? To share the burden? To shoulder the weight?

Be an encourager. Determine that. Determine that. Now the man Barnabas in the Bible in Acts his very name means the son of encouragement. And we see when Barnabas was on the scene he had that encouraging nature with the people that he was with.

He encouraged Paul as a new believer. Here was Paul nearly saved. He'd just been a Christian persecutor. Barnabas stood with Paul. He encouraged Paul. Barnabas was a generous man when the church had needs.

He reached into his pocket. He met those needs. Barnabas encouraged in his giving. Barnabas encouraged the people of Antioch to stay true to the Lord. To cleave unto the Lord.

[22:31] Acts 11. 23. And Barnabas also was one who wanted to give John Mark a second chance. John Mark was one who had kind of failed and he had a bit of a bad reputation being a bit of a quitter.

Barnabas said let's give John Mark a second chance. He showed forgiveness and grace. He saw the best in people and he encouraged John Mark. And wouldn't it be nice if like the song goes seldom is heard a discouraging word.

Wouldn't that be good? Not have a discouraging word but have an encouraging word. How often do we stop to give an encouraging word? It's very easy to see the negative to see the things that need improving but rather see that which you can praise and encourage and lift up.

To think of others instead of ourselves. Take time to encourage people. Look about you. Look for those opportunities in your life in your circle of influence.

Who can you give an encouragement to? A word of cheer. To be like a coach for the team. That's what we should be. That we should have the same heart like a coach for a team.

[23:40] Really we're the best team aren't we? The church the team of God really aren't we? We should care for one another like a coach a captain would care for the team. To care for those that are hurting.

To lift up one another. To help people get back on track who might be flagging. To inspire one another. To strengthen one another in the faith. So there's a sense of encouragement.

It's a very beautiful thing. Encouragement. Find some kind words to say. Bring hope to people. Pray for them. Share an uplifting scripture. Show appreciation.

Let's encourage one another. Let's have that mindset. Determine to be an encourager. Determine to be a Barnabas yourself. A son of encouragement. A daughter of encouragement. Amen.

Hebrews 10.25 is a familiar one talking about not forsaking the assembling. And he says but rather exhorting one another. exhorting one another. When you come to church it's about exhorting one another.

[24:39] Take time to have a conversation. To exhort one and for them to exhort you. Encourage one another is the sense of it. And so much the more as you see the day approaching we should be doing all the more in the light of Christ returning.

Time is short. Nehemiah was another encourager. Nehemiah that old prophet on the Old Testament where he saw the need of the day of the broken walls of God's city and he assembled the people to rebuild.

To take courage. He urged the people he says let us arise and build. Let us arise and build. There's a story told about an old man and he was known for never saying an unkind word to anyone and everything that came out of his mouth was encouraging and positive and people couldn't stand it because they liked to talk about people in a negative way and one day there was a vicious dog that terrorised the townspeople for years and this vicious dog died and the townspeople got together and they said all kinds of bad things about this vicious dog and then they went to this kind man's house to see what he would say about the dog they knew you can't say anything good about this dog and when the people asked him what he thought about the dog this nice man said that dog sure had pretty teeth he found something positive to say what about us when we have situations the gainsayers the naysayers the negative people the negative nellys and whatever the male version is of a negative nelly there's people like that they're always negative always downhearted always finding the negative always finding that to criticise don't underestimate the power of encouragement counteract the negative with the positive

I'm not saying be a what's the word the positive gospel not meaning that but that sense we should be positive in the sense we should have that heart that is looking to see the good looking to see God do good things and seeing the good in people and encouraging that fostering that building that

bringing words of encouragement words of kindness comforting the discouraged an encouraging word can make all the difference think of it and you see some people they're on the edge as I say we don't know when someone might be even on the edge of suicide think of it how can you encourage them think of it have that mind to think put yourself in other people's shoes is there someone who needs your encouragement and you never even thought of it wow yeah that's something maybe they do need a bit of encouragement maybe I can give it amen can you think like that it's a good thing to think isn't it Paul talks about the disorderly the unruly he talks about the discouraged and thirdly he talks about the weak and he says care for the weak he says support the weak friends there's weak people all around us they're not as strong as you they're not as strong as me those that have got little strength there's people who are without strength they're sick sick ones and what does it say we're meant to do we're meant to support them we're meant to support the weak again it's easy to be self-censored think oh I've got it all together you know I've got my life how I want it and I'll just live my own selfish way and just think about my own selfish life and not to care about others but the Bible says support the weak those that need strengthening strengthen them be supportive sustain them stand by them you know avoid the careless words and I've been guilty of saying silly things that might not have had that that supportive nature and I'm sorry for that we've got to have that thinking think about the other person how they feel do we uphold them do we help them

I have mentioned it before I don't want to sort of name names but there's a person who comes to our church in a wheelchair in the mornings sometimes and he was a computer programmer who had a stroke and he's still got a functioning mind but he's very weakly and sickly in that wheelchair and it's up to you and me to go to him that man in a wheelchair can't come it's hard for him to come up to everyone and shake your hand and say hello to you it's up to you and me that are able-bodied to go to that man amen to take the time catch him before the carer wheels him out the door because that's what happens you know they're on a time schedule they've got to get back for lunch in the mornings after church and sometimes they just wheel him in and wheel him straight out take the time to go to that man support the weak he's a weak man in the sense he's still fully functioning he can he's got his mind is fine and functioning his speech is impeded and his mobility is impeded and because he's with a carer they've got to wheel him out straight after the service it's up to you and me to make the effort take the initiative go to him he can't come to you he can't come to you and shake your hand he's right at the back and basically it's a bit of a bottleneck there too and basically he's he's wheeled out pretty quickly I try to catch him when I can but I can't always catch him myself but it's up to you and me brothers and sisters have that mindset support the weak God commands you to support the weak those that are in wheelchairs or who less able they're weakly sickly medically physically disabled and such they're struggling some are struggling in their

[30:19] Christian walk do we think about the new Christians new believers they're going through hardships you know the devil's throwing everything at them a new believer we should not neglect them we should support them we should be willing to rescue the fallen those that are backsliding too people are honest with me sometimes saying I've been through some backsliding some people are not honest enough to say I'm backsliding do we think about hey they haven't been to church for a while maybe I should think about them maybe I should reach out to them maybe I should support the weak or do we neglect them just think oh they're not at church I guess they've gone to some other church we don't care about them it's easy to be like that isn't it to be uncaring inconsiderate just to discount to not nurture the weaker ones support the weak we should do that show the love and care for the frail the sick show your love and care you that are stronger you that are more mature in your faith you are the ones who should rise up and support the weak and the stumbling those who are weak in the faith do we have that consideration friends there's new believers they're not babies baby Christians they need our consideration our care think of what our Lord our shepherd does with the weak and the weekly the the lambs it says that he'll gather the lambs in his arms he'll carry them in his bosom now you see pictures of some picture of the shepherd carrying the lamb over his shoulder that's the sense of it as that what the Lord would do isn't it he feeds the flock

cares about the sheep he gathers the lambs in his bosom how often do we think do we act like Christ the savior the shepherd to be one who would support the weak to extend a hand to show our care to help the afflicted the downtrodden the Bible talks about you and me as being a body wow we've got the arm over here and the eye and the leg and the big toe and we're all like parts of the body some of us are weaker all right some of us are injured and it says when the one part hurts the whole body hurts you know I had a little splinter in my thumb lately and it felt like my whole body was hurting just this that's how weak I am it's just a little piddly splinter in my thumb and I thought yeah and then some people they play a sport they dislocate an ankle and the whole body is is writhing with pain or the doctor puts it in a cast to support that weak spot to prevent further injury friends it's a picture of the body and it's saying there's actually weaker parts in the body think of it you know for yourself physically some of my parts are not as strong and it's like that in the body of Christ that there's weaker parts in the body think about those weaker spots in the body now when you're in a church gathering wherever it be there's

Christians all around you there might be some people they're not even saved some are weak and wounded and hurting I know I've had it heard it said of some criticism of families taking communion and little ones taking it where that family's probably not even saved now of course it's incumbent on us to guide people how they should rightfully take communion but we should show grace where they're unlearned they need to be taught they need to be supported we don't go glaring at them and or shouting at them when the child makes a noise and because the littlest thing can put people off fellowship can't they just the littlest thing can offend cause someone to oh I'm not going to that church again they you know whatever it be some weak weedy little thing that they should be mature enough to overlook but some Christians are weak and they're easily wounded they're hurting let's try to show grace let's try to extend grace let's try to love these families especially when we might get unbelievers come and they're just learning they're just here to hopefully they hear the gospel hopefully we can reach them for Christ of course we know the assembly really is for the believers but sometimes unbelievers come we want to reach them while they're here it's an it's an opportunity for us to show the love of

Christ to them to share the gospel to them with tenderness and care because they're weak they're unsaved we should help them support the weak and tells how we that are strong should bear the infirmities of the weak and not to please ourselves Romans 15 1 the Bible talks about God's chosen the weak the weak things so we can sometimes look on people and say oh he is a weak one she's a weak one but actually God doesn't look at it like that he's chosen the weak he wants them to be saved he's chosen the less able he's chosen the children people with less abilities people that can be overlooked or discounted or put in some category that are they're kind of less important no support the weak rather than being caught up in our own needs and feelings and wants being selfish self-centered let's face it I can be self-centered I can be selfish you know come to church and I want to get what I want out of it rather than thinking what about the others around us am I exhorting one another am I taking the time to think to support the weak to be supportive of them they are supportive of the weak the weak ones make that extra effort think of it yourself are we quick to criticize and condemn oh they're not dressed how we should dress or they're not talking how we should talk or you know they're playing with their phone while the this is happening or whatever it be they're weak they're weak ones we should love them reach them guide them strengthen them you know of course we want church to be a godly place a blessed place a holy place where we take it seriously and care about being honoring him in how we act and what we do but we don't have that kind of holier than thou kind of looking down on on the weaker ones we're not to look down on them we're to support them amen so take that extra effort the weaker ones are all around us all the time there's some that are weaker than you in the sense that they've not been saved as long as you they don't have the bible knowledge that you do they don't know sound doctrine like you do so show grace to them we may not always notice the weaker ones it's easy to miss them because sometimes they're very quiet they sit in the shadows they sit on their own they sit in the corner or at the back and and kind of kind of hide we've got to go to them and show love to

them step out of the comfort zone yourself and go to these ones especially when it's newcomers when it's folk that you think well that they look like they might not know much about about the lord maybe you can be that brother and sister you can be that one to support the weaker ones to make that extra effort to not miss them those who are unwittingly lack strength of faith or they've got not got spiritual maturity how are they going to grow unless we care how are they going to get any knowledge of spiritual things unless we lovingly reach out and stop being selfish about our own hurts and needs god helping you be that mature believer support the weak you that are strong nurture the younger ones in the faith now it's not all about the pastor doing it all as in training we can all be a part of that you that are older in your faith you that know the word of god you can take time to share things take them under your wing older women teach the younger women that's what it says doesn't it you that are older men teach the younger men nurture the younger ones in the faith it's interesting that our lord says be mindful of the least of these that's interesting isn't it the ones we would discount the least of these he says what you do to the least of these you do to me of course there's a context for all of that but there's a principle there the least of these are important to him it's actually very significant it talks about looking after the needs of the weaker brother the weaker brother we should care for the weaker brother look how david honored mephibosheth that's that's a prime example isn't it this man the mephibosheth he was a lame man and david honored him he gave him a seat at the king's table he put mephibosheth there in a place of honor and he showed hospitality and care for him he reached out to mephibosheth and he gave mephibosheth a place of honor and regard he supported the weak that's what he did mephibosheth was weak he was physically weak he might have been one you know probably on the outer an outcast of the society but david honored mephibosheth he supported the weak you see the example of the good samaritan the good samaritan put himself out he used his his donkey to to provide care and transport to put the man in an inn this injured man to put him in accommodation at his own expense he supported the weak this injured man the good samaritan he was one that people would have thought who's this good samaritan who's the samaritans you know they would they would say the word samaritan with contempt with their lips curled and with this oh samaritan that's a dirty word but he was the one who did the right thing because he supported the weak this injured man so let's think of it think of it for yourself wow these are things i can do this is a practical message paul says to recap correct the disorderly the disobedient the unruly warn those warn them those who aren't living right he says comfort the discouraged those who are disheartened comfort them show them comfort bring them encouragement he says care care for the weak support the weak be supported help and sustain them lastly paul wraps it all up with this fourth category really all men all men we get to here that we should keep patient we should be patient towards all men now this is perhaps the hardest one of all of all the categories and this is for everyone really isn't it wow have i got to be patient with everybody it says we're to be patient with absolutely everybody everyone without exception now everybody will spend eternity somewhere that's how i like to think of it even the ones that get under our skin the people that annoy us the people at work the the lousy shop assistant down at the shop those that you know just a rude obnoxious horrible people and we should be patient with them too amen some need patience more than others they try our patience some can be hateful and hurt us they can be selfish and irritate us i've had people like that in my life you know there's the situations i can identify with that the lord jesus says love your enemies bless them that curse you do good to them that hate you and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you there's a lot there in that verse right isn't there love your enemies paul says continue being patient towards all there's a sense there of that continuing patience persevere keep on persevering keep patiently enduring long suffering putting up with much be patient with everyone the bible says 1 corinthians 13 love charity is patient love is patient it's a loving thing to do to be patient and when you're having to wait in that queue or you get those times on the on the phone too you know i used to be a telemarketer and they get enough abuse without you abusing them too it's a tough job you know be patient with everyone even with the telemarketer who's trying to sell you something be patient be patient with that that uh salesman who knocks on your door be patient be patient when you're waiting there in the queue at the shops or wherever or when you're in the traffic when it's thick traffic think about the other people rather than just thinking selfishly now that really there's no one you should be impatient with and that's a hard thing to get really isn't it and even to love your enemies even your enemies now it's a good thing really not to have any like like try not to make any enemies there's people that probably count me their enemy but i still i don't see

them as my enemy people that attack me on social media or have attacked my family we've had to get a restraining order against a particular person but i don't bear any grudge or hatred or malevolence towards them they're they're not someone who who's living it who's taking up space in my head you've got to have that sense where actually i don't have any enemies i still love even the ones who hate me even the ones who are against me even the ones who are hurting or trying to hurt me that we're not going to take that we're not going to we're going to be patient with them and we can even have the sense that we'll go the extra distance with them to go the extra mile that we'll have that patient spirit we won't have this attitude of of having resentment or bitterness against anybody in our life even those that have really hurt us that we're actually going to let it go we're going to be having the heart of jesus to love even those that deserve our hatred as the world would reckon we're going to bless them we're going to do good we're going to actually pray for them pray for them so learn to put up with those who would frustrate you and annoy you would get under your skin have a calm and enduring spirit learn to be gracious and kind have that heart of christ don't hold any grudges don't hold them let them go get that chip off your shoulder and throw it away be forgiving be forgiving please life's too short to hold any grudges isn't it to hold hurts against anyone or make any enemies go beyond what is your natural strength and be like this verse here love your enemies bless them do good to them pray for them wow wouldn't that be it's a it's it's hard to even think of what that really looks like isn't it that we would draw such strength from our lord that we can have that graciousness and show god's grace to others that doesn't mean you've got to be a doormat for jesus but the sensor there's a sense where we shouldn't hold those things in our heart that are holding us down holding us back so again to recap now we exhort you brethren warn them that are unruly some people are unruly they're causing discord they're causing crisis there's time to warn people to lovingly warn there's time to comfort the feeble-minded those that are feeble in their minds they're discouraged they're weighed down they're hurting comfort them be a comforter do the work of the holy spirit he is the comforter and guess what the holy spirit is inside of you the comforter lives inside of you so comfort the feeble-minded support the weak those that are the weaker support them lift them up and be patient toward all men to all men wow that's something isn't it to think how can i be patient towards everybody in my life to be persevering and to just show the grace of god show his grace exercise grace let's pray lord we thank you that you've shown such grace to us that

[46:51] while we were your enemies christ died for sinners such as we lord that we can know such a turnaround that we can now be called your friends that we that were once your enemies can now be your friends lord we thank you for that wonderful grace pray that each one might know that that christ died for sins for our sins he rose he's risen and he lives in the hearts of those who believe and trust in him we pray that each one might know what it is to be born again to have that new life to be saved to have salvation to be safe and saved in your keeping lord that each one might have that trust in you and lord as we profess that faith put it into our shoe leather lord that will walk it out and live it out lord that will be real and true that this will be practical this faith that we profess we'll practice it we'll we'll not just profess it but we'll practice it lord it'll be real in how we treat other people in our lives we pray in jesus name amen