

SERVICES WE PROVIDE **(1 Thessalonians 5:14-15)**

I. Warning those out of step.

- A. As Christians we are to provide warning to our brethren who are out of step with Jesus.
- B. The word unruly means disorderly or out of ranks.
 - 1. It may even go so far as to mean those who have quit the ranks.
 - 2. Many secular writers used it to describe those who were idle and not working as they should.
- C. When we see our brethren walking in a way that is out of step with the brotherhood, whether it be moral or doctrinal, we are to warn them of the consequences of their actions.
- D. Christianity is not a self-centered lifestyle.
 - 1. It is a lifestyle that is dedicated to one's spiritual family.
 - 2. It is one that is focused on others and trying to help them get to heaven.
- E. We don't love family when we let them break ranks.
 - 1. We don't love them when we allow them to head towards sin and not give them any warning.
 - 2. We are to admonish them as a brother or sister in order to keep them from falling out of the ranks completely.
- F. We are to look out for one another and help one another.

II. Comforting those out of heart.

- A. Comfort is a service that we are to provide to others.
 - 1. We know that God is the God of all comfort.
 - 2. He gives us comfort through His word and then we are to give that same comfort to others.
- B. A particular group in need of comfort is that group that is faint-hearted.
 - 1. This is what the word feeble-minded means.
 - 2. They are brethren who are out of strength.
 - 3. This is the only time in the New Testament that this particular word is used.
- C. This group of people is on the verge of giving up because of the pressures of life.
 - 1. So much goes on that beats on the Christian that wears us down.
 - 2. This individual is one who has been beaten on and is about to give up.
- D. Paul encouraged the Corinthians not to faint.
 - 1. In fact, the American Standard Version translates this word as "fainthearted."
 - 2. We need to be on the look out for those who are giving up out of despondency.
- E. This is a person who is not giving in to sin, but giving up because of spiritual fatigue.
 - 1. Soldiers were sometimes sent to the rear because of combat

- fatigue.
 - 2. They had been on the front lines fighting for a long period of time and they were physically exhausted.
 - 3. We can get that way spiritually if we are not careful.
- F. We know that Jesus would go away and be by Himself from time to time.
 - 1. This life can take a toll on us.
 - 2. Constant harassment, temptation or illness causes spiritual fatigue.
 - 3. We need to be on the lookout for our brethren who are showing signs of this.
- G. It may be we know this person is going through tough times physically and they miss services a couple of times.
 - 1. This person needs a visit.
 - 2. They need comfort.
- H. Maybe a difficult family situation has arisen and the person is not as involved as he once was.
 - 1. He may be fatiguing and in need of encouragement.
 - 2. This is a service Christians are to provide one another.

III. Supporting those out of strength.

- A. Support is an interesting word.
 - 1. In Matthew 6:24 it is translated hold to.
 - 2. In Titus 1:9 it is translated holding fast.
- B. The picture we should get from it is holding one up who is weak in the faith.
- C. We have all seen someone who is limping and others come and put their arms around him and help him to a seat.
 - 1. This is the idea.
 - 2. We are holding to someone who is hurting and weak.
- D. Spiritually speaking, this weak person has a lack of faith.
 - 1. They are questioning what is lawful and what is not lawful.
 - 2. They are in the midst of a spiritual crisis, attempting to find their way through the trial.
- E. Sometimes, we can be hard on our own brethren.
 - 1. We may say things like, "Well he should know better than that."
 - 2. We chastise them for their weakness instead of holding them up until they strengthen.
- F. Too many times we don't give our brethren the benefit of the doubt.
 - 1. We turn our backs on them and are upset with them for their weakness.
 - 2. We should rather go to them and try to help them hold their heads above water until their faith is increased.

IV. Evangelizing those out of Christ.

- A. Doors of opportunity must be opened to us in order for us to bring the gospel in to someone.
- B. Paul tells us that evangelism begins long before a Bible study is gained with someone.
- C. We are first patient with all.

1. We are long-suffering with all men.
 2. We bear the insults or offenses aimed at us.
- D. We do not give back evil when it is given to us.
1. We are not to have a quick temper.
 2. Vengeance is not ours and it ruins efforts to evangelize others.
- E. Paul makes sure that he writes we are to treat one another this way as well.
1. A lot of times we will put up with slights from those in the world much better than we do those from brethren.
 2. We need to treat each other with respect and concern as well as the world.
 3. We don't fire back at a brother any more than we would one who is outside of Christ.
- F. We are to follow, or live for, that which is good.
- G. Paganism allowed for revenge, but Christ does not.
- H. Our world today allows for revenge but Christ does not.
- I. The only way to overcome evil is by doing good.
- J. When we provide this service to others it opens the door for Bible studies and hopefully, conversions.