

## **HELP THE WEAK**

1 Thess.5:13-15 contains a list of seven characteristics of a healthy church. They are listed by seven Greek (present imperative) commands. We will study each of the following seven characteristics of a healthy church.

- Live in peace (5:13b)
- Admonish the unruly (5:14a)
- Encourage the fainthearted (5:14b)
- **Help the weak** (5:14c)
- Be patient with all men (5:14d)
- See that no one retaliates (5:15a)
- Seek after good for all men (5:15b)

**This lesson will study SEVEN aspects of the fourth characteristic of a healthy church - HELP THE WEAK.**

**1. We will begin by studying the Greek words for help and weak in order to get a clear understanding of what Christians are command by Help the Weak.**

The Greek word help is (antechomai - p.m.impv). It is a compound verb (anti - against) and (echo - to have or hold). It refers to holding something against one's interest. It means to concern yourself with the interests of other's over your own (Luke 16:13).

The Greek word for weak is (astheneo - p.a.ptc nsm). It consists of the alpha privative (a - without) and the verb stheneo (strength). It refers to lacking strength to perform a necessary task. This could be the result of divine discipline (1 Cor.11:30) or physical sickness (John 11:4; James 5:14) or spiritual immaturity (Rom.14:1).

“Now accept (proslambano - take a special interest - welcome) the one who is weak in faith, but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions.” (Rom.14:1)

“Now we who are strong ought (opheilo - obligate) to bear (bastazo - to bear as a burden) the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.” (Rom.15:1)

**2. Unregenerate humanity is helpless to save itself because of Adam's original sin (AOS). Therefore the sinless humanity of Jesus Christ died to rescue or save the ungodly.**

“For while we were still helpless (weak), at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.” (Rom.5:6)

“For indeed He was crucified because of weakness, yet He lives because of the power of God. For we also are weak in Him because of the power of God directed toward you.” (2 Cor.13:4)

“For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh.” (Rom.8:3)

“For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.” (Heb.4:15)

**3. Regenerated humanity operating under the old sin-nature (OSN) is helpless to become spiritual. Therefore God provided the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to overcome the weakness of the flesh (OSN) (1 Cor.6:19-20).**

“And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groaning too deep for words.” (Rom.8:26)

“But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.” (Gal.5:16-17; James 1:13-14; Matt.26:41)

**4. Spiritual mature believers can be weak in faith in some areas of doctrine because of old man cosmos diabolicus thinking (Rom.14:1-6; Eph.4:22-24; Rom.12:2).**

We are told to accept the one who is weak in faith but not for the purpose of passing judgment on his opinions (Rom.14:1, 17-20 - grace liberties).

We are told to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves (Rom.15:1,7).

We are told to help the weak in order to have a healthy church (1 Thess.5:14).

“Who is weak without my being weak? Who is led into sin without my intense concern? (2 Cor.11:29)

**5. The way to overcome weakness of faith is to not allow the faith cycle to breakdown (Heb.11:1).**

**Hearing**  
(Rom.10:17)

**Completion**  
(James 2:22)

**Believing**  
(Heb.4:2)

**Applying**  
(2 Cor.5:7)

“And without becoming weak in faith he contemplated his own body, now as good as dead since he was about 100 years old, and the deadness of Sarah’s womb; yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform.” (Rom.4:19-21) (2 Cor.12:9-10)

**6. The spiritual advancing believer is encouraged to remember that the weaknesses of God are greater than the strengths of men.**

“Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” (1 Cor.1:25) Let’s example six biblical examples of this principle:

- God used a great fish to teach a disobedient prophet.
- God used a lad with a slingshot to teach a fearful army.
- God used a donkey to teach a hardheaded prophet.
- God used a boy’s lunch to teach 12 unbelieving disciples.
- God used an aged couple to teach faith-rest.
- God used the cross to teach a lost world about the love of God.

**7. Spiritual advancing believer should be aware of the danger of legalism.**

It is a weak and worthless modus operandi that leads to spiritual bondage in the Christian Way of Life (CWL) (Gal.2:21; 4:9; 5:1,13; Heb.7:18-19).