

Astute Admonitions

Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians 5:14, "*Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men.*" These brief commands are written to all the Christians. "*We exhort*" is more authoritative than Paul's previous "*we beseech*" (5:12).

"*Warn*" is an injunction for the local body as it copes with situations by warning errant Christians. "*Comfort the feebleminded*" means that words of comfort to the fainthearted are also needed. "*Support the weak*" almost certainly relates to moral and spiritual debility, whether it be weakness in shrinking from persecution (3:3-5), yielding to temptations to immorality (4:3-8) or some other difficulty. Summing up the previous three commands is a fourth general one: "*Be patient toward all men.*" This is an even-tempered response of one who is slow to anger. May brethren use these admonitions wisely!

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