

Thank you!
Ethan Longhenry
Today's speaker

New Christians...and Others Interested
“Foundation Lessons” Class
Wednesdays 3:30 p.m. at the church building

Demonstrated Faith

“What use is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone says he has faith, but he has no works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is without clothing and in need of daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and be filled,” yet you do not give them what is necessary for their body, what use is that? In the same way, faith also, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself.” James 2:14-17

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

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Support the Weak

By Mike Johnson

Paul closes the book of 1 Thessalonians with some very important and practical exhortations. In chapter 5:14, he "exhorts" (NASB - "urge") the brethren to, among other things, "uphold the weak."

Christians have a responsibility to "uphold the weak." The weak are those who are spiritually weak. Most churches have those who are immature, and they need to be "upheld." The fact they are to be "upheld" does not mean we are to uphold these individuals when they are wrong, nor does it mean we are to make excuses for them. Instead, we are to "help" (NASB) them spiritually. We are to do things for them that will help them to increase their spiritual strength.

Churches having immature members is not necessarily a bad sign, any more than it would be to say that some families have physically weak members. Children, for example, are physically weak family members, yet having children in a family is not maligning. Churches also might have immature members for various legitimate and acceptable reasons. One converted to Christ, for example, usually will lack strength at first. It is a good sign when a congregation has many new converts because it shows the church has been bringing people to Christ—they have been working. The Bible refers to immature Christians as "babes" in Christ who are on the milk of the word. 1 Peter 2:2 says, "... as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby." It takes time for the new Christian, the babe in Christ, to grow into a mature Christian.

Those who are new Christians are weak and need help. An infant is not left by his parents to feed, clothe, and care for himself;

neither should the new Christian be left to himself spiritually. Matthew 28:18-20 records the Great Commission given by Jesus. The commandments are to "teach," "baptize," and then "continue to teach." However, often, we do not continue to work with the new Christian. We need to encourage them, continue to teach them, listen to their problems, and advise them. Frequently this does not happen as the new Christian is by himself to face the temptations of the world without teaching and encouragement. Soon, he may miss some services, and he eventually falters. At this point, many excuse themselves by saying, "Well, I figured he wouldn't last; he probably never was truly converted to begin with."

While some are spiritually weak because they are new Christians, others may be weak because they have not made an effort to grow. These have had plenty of time to grow, but they have not. In Hebrews 5:12, we read of certain ones who should have become teachers, but instead it says, ". . . *For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food.*" These people need teaching; they need the first principles again; they need to be encouraged to have zeal and to grow—they have gone backward.

All Christians need to "uphold" (help) the weak. We should have concern for others. In conclusion, Philippians 2:4 states this important principle "*Do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*" (NASB)

Helpful Bible Verses about Caring for Others

"I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all people will know that you are My disciples: if you have love for one another." John 13:34-35

"Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it for one of the least of these brothers or sisters of Mine, you did it for Me."
Matthew 25:40

"But whoever has worldly goods and sees his brother or sister in need, and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God remain in him? Little children let's not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth." 1 John 3:17-18

"Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor." Romans 12:10

"Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ." Galatians 6:2

"So then, while we have opportunity, let's do good to all people, and especially to those who are of the household of the faith."
Galatians 6:10

"But if anyone does not provide for his own, and especially for those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever." 1 Timothy 5:8

"One who shuts his ear to the outcry of the poor will also call out himself, and not be answered." Proverbs 21:13

"Pure and undefiled religion in the sight of our God and Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world." James 1:27

"Be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you."
Ephesians 4:32

"Since you have purified your souls in obedience to the truth for a sincere love of the brothers and sisters, fervently love one another from the heart." 1 Peter 1:22

"Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility consider one another as more important than yourselves." Philippians 2:3