

---

# Shepherding Like 1 Thessalonians 5:14

---

Subject: What does it look like to shepherd like 1 Thessalonians 5:14?

Complement: When it comes to helping and caring for people, a "one size fits all" approach does not work. People are complex and the factors influencing their heart motivations (the world, the flesh, and the devil) are deeply intertwined. Also, we can be poor diagnosticians. For example, a depressed person may look idle, when actually they are weak or fainthearted. We need wisdom! When we are tempted to try and fix their problem(s), recognize that what they need most is a friend to point them to Jesus.

Idea: Personal ministry must always be personal. In the rub of life in the body of Christ, shepherd according to a person's need - and people always need Jesus.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. Background (Excerpted from *The MacArthur Bible Handbook*)

Paul undoubtedly had multiple reasons for writing, all coming out of his supreme concern for the flock from which he had been separated. Some of Paul's purposes clearly included: (1) encouraging the church (1:2–10); (2) answering false allegations (2:1–12); (3) comforting the persecuted flock (2:13–16); (4) expressing his joy in their faith (2:17–3:13); (5) reminding them of the importance of moral purity (4:1–8); (6) condemning the sluggard lifestyle (4:9–12); (7) correcting a wrong understanding of prophetic events (4:13–5:11); **(8) defusing tensions within the flock (5:12–15); and (9) exhorting the flock in the basics of Christian living (5:16–22).**

### B. Scripture

1 Thessalonians 5:12–22 (ESV) - <sup>12</sup>We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, <sup>13</sup>and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. <sup>14</sup>**And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.** <sup>15</sup>See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. <sup>16</sup>Rejoice always, <sup>17</sup>pray without ceasing, <sup>18</sup>give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. <sup>19</sup>Do not quench the Spirit. <sup>20</sup>Do not despise prophecies, <sup>21</sup>but test everything; hold fast what is good. <sup>22</sup>Abstain from every form of evil.

## II. WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE TO SHEPHERD LIKE 1 THESSALONIANS 5:14?

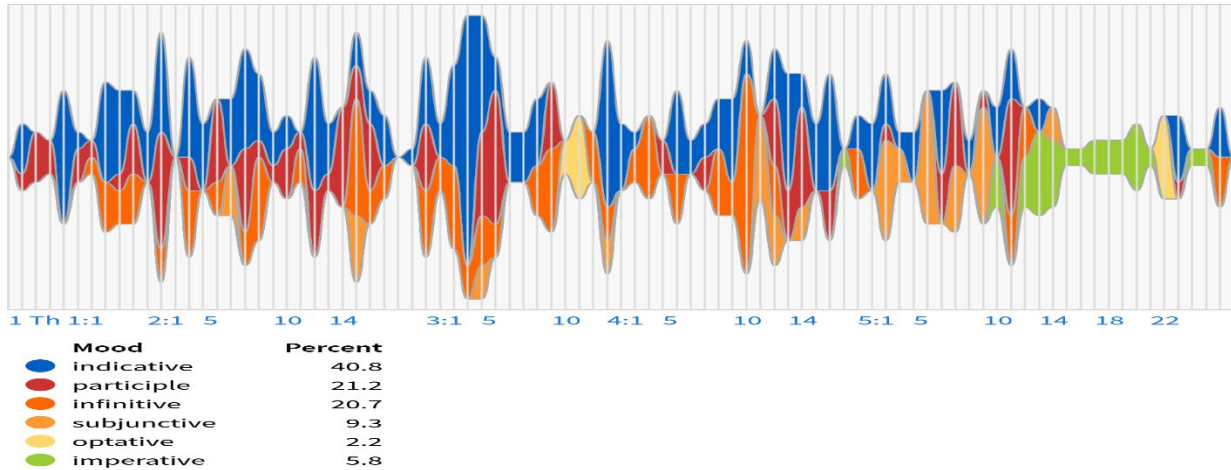
### A. Some general observations about 1 Thessalonians 5:14 and the paragraph surrounding it.

1. Chapter 5 is very direct and full of imperatives (respect, esteem, be at peace, admonish, encourage, help, be patient, seek to do good, rejoice always, pray, give thanks, don't quench the Spirit, don't despise prophecies, test everything, abstain from evil).

# Shepherding Like 1 Thessalonians 5:14

2. BUT, the following "verb river" chart of 1 Thessalonians shows that the imperative mood is only used in Chapter 5. This demonstrates the overall tone of the letter to be gracious (encouragement with some correction) and not legalistic.

## Passage Analysis



3. These instructions are for everyone in the church ("brethren"), but would certainly include the leaders/ shepherds as well.
4. The whole paragraph represents common human struggles, even in the church. We have chosen to focus on the four from verse 14:
  - Idleness (ESV) / unruly (NASB) - "admonish the idle"
  - Faintheartedness - "encourage the fainthearted"
  - Weakness - "help the weak"
  - Slow to change - "be patient with them all"

### B. Case Study: The story of "Angry Mom." (Wendy)

1. The story of "Angry Mom." *As Wendy tells the story, note where you see the four struggles identified in 1 Thessalonians 5:14.*
2. Your turn. *Consider Wendy's story of "Angry Mom." How was she idle/ unruly? Fainthearted? Weak? Slow to change/ needing patience?*
3. *What might this tell us about dealing with people?*

## Shepherding Like 1 Thessalonians 5:14

---

C. Why "admonish... encourage... help... be patient?" Why these actions for these types of individuals?

1. **ADMONISH** -
2. **ENCOURAGE** -
3. **HELP** -
4. **BE PATIENT** -

D **Put it all together:**

1. **Back to complement:** When it comes to helping and caring for people, a "one size fits all" approach does not work. Personal ministry must be personal. You have to know the person you are ministering to! People are complex and the factors influencing their heart motivations (the world, the flesh, and the devil) are deeply intertwined. When we are tempted to try and fix their problem(s), recognize that what they need most is a friend to point them to Jesus as their personal savior.
2. **Main idea:** Personal ministry must be personal! In the rub of life in the body of Christ, shepherd according to a person's need - and people always need Jesus.

### III. DISCUSSION/ QUESTIONS/ ANSWERS (All)

A. **Your questions.**

B. **Bob's questions:**

1. What are common personal barriers to actually doing this, and how do I as a shepherd overcome them?
2. When people are properly cared for, how does it affect the impact of ministry of the Word?
3. How is Immanuel doing in this kind of shepherding?

### IV. CONCLUSION & CLOSE (Bob)