

# Jesus Christ, One-Size-Does-Not-Fit-All

## Part 4

- I. There are several examples in scripture where God encourages us to fit or adapt our ministry to a person according to his or her's particular need, but none as clear as the scripture found in 1 Thessalonians 5:14 which states:

***“And we exhort you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, support the weak, be longsuffering toward all.” ASV***

*“Our counsel is that you warn the freeloaders to get a move on. Gently encourage the stragglers, and reach out for the exhausted, pulling them to their feet. Be patient with each person, attentive to individual needs.” THE MESSAGE*

### A. “Support the Weak.”

1. Lets look at the word “support.”

- a. **The Greek word is antechomai (an-tekh'-om-ahee); which means to hold fast, hold to, support. It means to stick oneself to, 'to glue oneself to,' or 'to become one with.' It means to cleave to someone while they are in trouble to help them endure what they are going through.**
- b. Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines the English word “support” this way, to bear with, sustain, prop up, to help someone endure so that they won't be defeated.

### 2. Lets look at the word “weak”

- a. The Greek word is asthenes (as-then-ace') which is a state of helplessness in view of circumstances.
- b. **Noah Webster's 1828 Dictionary defines the English word “weak” this way, not able to bear a great weight, not able to resist a violent attack, not well supported by argument, and not having full conviction and confidence**
  - The unruly need correction
  - **The fainthearted need inspiration**
  - The weak need perspiration
  - **This person needs our presence, our protection and our power.**

- II. Hebrews 12:15 gives us some instruction on how to deal with those people that are in our midst that are weak,

***“Look out for each other so that none of you will miss out on the special favor of God's grace. Watch out that no bitter root of unbelief rises up among you, for whenever it springs up, many are corrupted by its poison.” (NLT)***

There are two phrases that I want to look at more closely, “look out” and “watch out.”

A. The first is “look out.”

**1. The Greek word that is translated in the English “look out” is “episkopoo” which means to look upon others in such a way is that you are inspecting their lives for the purpose of caring for them.**

a. The inspection here is to keep them from falling short or lacking in some area of their life.

**b. It’s not for the purpose of judging how they are, but for the purpose of encouraging them to become what they should.**

c. In other words we are told to “look out” for the ones that are “missing out.”

**2. The Greek word that is translated in the English “miss out” is “husteroo,” which means to “be inferior, to fail, be lacking, and to be in want.”**

a. It’s telling us to “look out” for the ones in our midst that have failed and as a result are now in want in some area of their life.

**b. It is the same word translated “hurt” in the story of the Prodigal son, which states, “There, undisciplined and dissipated, he wasted everything he had. After he had gone through all his money he began to hurt.” Luke 15:13-14**

- It is hurt that is a result of the son’s own sinful actions and in one sense he is getting what he deserves.

- **But that wasn’t the posture of the Prodigal’s father, it’s not the posture of our Father, and it can’t be our posture.**

3. The implication is, that it is the ones who are messing up that are also missing out.

**a. In other words we need to look out for those in our midst who are in trouble because of some sin in their lives.**

b. Once we discovered who these people (the messengers) are, we then need to bestow the grace of God upon their lives.

**c. That is, we are not to treat them the way their sins deserve but treat them the way the Son deserves.**

d. Our actions shouldn’t be to condemn people for how they are, but seek to conform them to how they should be.

**e. It’s not our job to bring punishment to their sin but to bring production to their soul.**

- f. This will be difficult for us, because our human propensity is to want to judge their sin instead of loving their soul.
- g. We do this because we don't want to put the time and effort into helping them:
  - **We find it easier to point out a weakness, instead of pouring in His Strength.**
  - We find it easier to denounce their flaws, instead of developing their faith.
  - **We find it easier to criticize their failings, instead of caring for their future.**
  - We find it easier to condemn their habits, instead of comforting their hurts.
  - **We find it easier to be fruit inspectors, instead of fruit cultivators.**
- h. Greed causes messes but Grace will cause mending.

B. Romans 2:1-2 - You who judge practice the same things.

- 1.. **You may not look at porn with lust in your heart, but you look at position, prestige, power and profit with lust in your heart. And it can be just as destructive.**
2. You may not smoke and drink and thereby defile and destroy your temple, but your eating and exercise habits are defiling and destroying the temple.
3. **Somehow drunkenness is wrong but gluttony isn't.**
4. I want to look at Romans 2:4 more closely. Lets look at 5 words that will help us understand the power of God's grace

***“Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?” (NASB)***

- a. The Greek word translated “*think lightly*” is “*katafronoo*,” which means to despise, disesteem, discount, disdain, or think little of.”
  - **The literal meaning is to think that something has no value.**
  - You think lightly, because you don't know.
- b. **The Greek word translated “*kindness*” is “*chrestotes (khray-stot'-ace)*” which means an event or action that is useful and benevolent.**
  - Benevolence is defined as “a desire to promote prosperity and happiness at no cost.”

- \* **You can't extend kindness with an agenda**
  - \* The moment you attach a condition or requirement to your kindness you strip it of its power.
  - \* **Kindness pays most when its done for no pay**
  - \* Kindness is most powerful when it is done without thought of profit.
  - **It signifies "not merely goodness as a quality, rather it is goodness in action, goodness expressing itself in deeds."**
  - \* Kindness is love in work clothes
  - \* **Kind words are short to speak, but their echos are endless**
  - \* You need to train your heart to feel kindness and your hand to give help.
  - **Kindness had converted more sinners that either zeal, eloquence, or learning.**
- c. The Greek word translated "*forbearance*" is "*anochē (an-okh-ay')*" which means "a delay or suspension of punishment in order for repentance to be worked out.
- **It is a putting up with what you don't like until what you do like comes forth.**
  - You have to suspend the punishment of the person he or she is in order to support the person God wants them to be.
  - **Jeremiah 15:19 - "*If you extract the precious from the worthless.*"**
  - \* Example of the Samaritan woman  
Others saw trash, Jesus saw a treasure  
Others saw problems, Jesus saw potential  
Others saw promiscuity, Jesus saw promise
  - \* **Jesus extracted the treasure from the trash through kindness.**
- d. The Greek word translated "*Longsuffering*" is "*makrothumia (mak-roth-oo-mee'-ah)*" which means "a state of emotional calm in the face of provocation."
- **It also means a slowness in avenging a wrong done to you.**
  - It self-restraint in the face of injury, which does not hastily retaliate or promptly punish. (*Helping the squirrel hit by car*)
  - The implication is that as you seek to help those who are hurting, they in all likelihood will inflict hurt on you. (*Pete or the people who lived with us*)

- **This is where most people bail in the process of befriending a sinner.**

\* But it is continual kindness in the face of injury that releases the most power.

\* **Kindness is most effective with cruelty as its backdrop.**

e. The Greek word translated “*leadeth*” is “*ago (ag'-o)*” which means to carry or accompany. Our kindness will carry people until they can repent.

**5. It takes the whole package in order to bring someone to repentance.**

a. First we have esteem, count on, and think highly of God’s kindness.

**b. Then we will have to delay and suspend our judgement about their past actions.**

d. And we will have restrain ourselves from retaliating when their continued actions provoke and injure us.

**e. We will do this knowing that each act of kindness, forbearance and longsuffering is releasing power and is moving the one who has fallen short of the grace God one step closer to the day, he or she repents.**

B. Watch Out - *“Watch out that no bitter root of unbelief rises up among you, for whenever it springs up, many are corrupted by its poison.”*

**1. Where the word “*look out*” implied action that needs to be taken. The word “*watch out*” implies actions that needed to be avoided.**

a. In other words after you look out for the individual who is in need of God’s grace, you need to watch out for the ones who don’t believe the individual should have gotten it.

**b. Because God blessed someone who you believe doesn’t deserve it, then you become bitter.**

2. You can see this dynamic in the following stories. The Story of the Prodigal Son & The story of the laborers in Matthew 20

**3. Who are the ones that we need to “*watch out*” for?**

a. They are the ones who refused to “*look out*” for the ones who are missing out.

**b. A heart that doesn’t easily allow grace to spring forth from it, is a heart that easily allows a bitter root to grow out of it.**

4. We need to watch out for the ones who aren’t looking out for those who are missing out.