

Spiritual Mentor: Adviser

1 Thessalonians 5:12–15

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The past three weeks we've talked about being a Spiritual Mentor. It is the most influential way to Glorify God. I would like to share some dramatic stories from my Spiritual Mentoring. But, I don't think I can. They are confidential experiences between two people. They aren't dramatic.

I will share this story. When I was a wee boy my daddy was painting the house. Back in those days there was only oil based lead paint. My daddy was painting the house yellow, because it was already yellow, and he wasn't going to change the color. With oil based paint my daddy would clean up using a little gasoline on a rag.

Painting looked like fun, whipping the brush back and forth, putting the paint on the house. My daddy told me he had to get it done. I needed to stop bothering him. When ma said supper was ready, daddy went in the house. I got the flyswatter and started to help daddy get it done. The paint went on a lot of places including on me. I wasn't very far into helping daddy when he appeared, swearing. He got the rag with a little gasoline and wiped my hands and arms, stripped me naked, I was about five, and then I was sprayed off with the garden hose. The beating followed - not spiritual mentoring.

Brothers and sisters, we urge you to warn those who are lazy. Encourage those who are timid. Take tender care of those who are weak. Be patient with everyone. See that no one pays back evil for evil, but always try to do good to each other and to all people. 1 Thessalonians 5:14–15 (NLT)

To glorify God we need to hold one another accountable. You will glorify God by helping your brothers and sisters live for Jesus. That's just simple faith. God is glorified when we are all living for Jesus.

Take a quick poll in your head of the people you know. How many call themselves Christians? Now of those who call themselves Christians, how many have a unique Christian lifestyle? Let me define a unique Christian lifestyle. I'd say they are attending a church at least once each month. We add to that they are financially supporting a church. Then let's add to their lifestyle they live above reproach, and their language is pure and clean.

That is unique, isn't it? For a person to have all four of those qualities they are different than about 80% of our nation. You are a living a unique Christian Lifestyle.

Now, of the eighty percent who aren't unique how many would call themselves Christians? That's somewhere around two thirds of the US population. About one quarter of people in the US claim they have no religious affiliation. That doesn't include all the other people who practice another faith or call themselves atheists or agnostics.

What I'm saying is there are lots of people who need a Spiritual Mentor. People who need to be held accountable for their faith in Jesus. I know church attendance has been declining in our nation. There

has been a steady drop off of people attending church my entire life. That could be personal. I think Jesus takes it personal.

In the first century there were a whole bunch of heathens, sinners, and idol worshippers. During that same time there were only a handful of believers in various scattered communities. They were a very small percentage. Gallup wasn't around then to do polls.

Alrighty, God knew that every Christian needed to be held accountable then, and every Christian needs to be held accountable now.

You and I need to be held accountable because we easily slip back into our old ways of life, our old sins. How easy is it to be selfish, thinking of yourself first? How easy is it to be greedy, thinking about what you want? We're more likely to fall back into doubt or fear or anxiety or lethargy or being in control, or being a work-a-holic. We're more likely to start using negative language and inappropriate words. We're more likely to pick up our prejudices, bias, and favoritism.

We need one another to recognize our failures, speak the truth to us, comfort, and point us back to living for Jesus. But, very few of us have the desire or capacity to hold their brothers and sisters in Christ accountable. Therefore, God is inspiring us with His Word to be Spiritual Mentors.

Encourage those who are timid. Take tender care of those who are weak. Be patient with everyone. 1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NLT)

How do you really feel about the timid and the weak? We might be a little impatient with the timid and the weak.

If you like me, your patience capacity has to be refilled. There are people who are endlessly patient. Pre-school and Kindergarten teachers are endlessly patient. The person who works the line at the factory watching items roll by could be endlessly patient.

The Spiritual Mentor who relies on the work of the Holy Spirit becomes endlessly patient. It is the Holy Spirit that fills up our patience capacity. Without God's Holy Spirit dwelling within us, we're merely people. Through and by and for the Holy Spirit we can do all things. In the name of Jesus we can do all things. We are inspired and motivated to do what may seem impossible.

Be honest, some people test our patience. They might be slow to change or they might be jack-rabbits. Either way they stomp on our nerves. They might be afraid or they might be daredevils. They push us to the limits. The timid don't want to talk. They may not be able to take action. They may be unable to see the change they need to make. Be patient, call upon the Holy Spirit, trust the Holy Spirit.

The weak might be worn out. The weak could be spiritually immature. The weak might be on the verge of falling back into sin. Do this sound familiar to you? Have you every been there? Weren't you at one time timid or weak?

As Spiritual Mentors we need to meet the timid where they are. We lift them up with encouragement. The encouragement must come in gentle doses. Nothing too big, nothing too fast. They need to be reminded of their place in the Kingdom of God. They are brothers and sisters of Jesus. They have all

the promises in the Bible. They are filled with the Holy Spirit. They have nothing to fear. If Jesus is their Savior and their Lord, then He is who He says He is. That means His promises are true.

As Spiritual Mentors we need to meet the weak with tenderness and care. Whatever is weak is often times frail. This is especially true of people. Christians who are weak may not appear that way on the surface. They need to be received with the tenderness that only Jesus can supply. Their strength must be built up slowly with concern about the present. Seeing them as they truly are, people who need reassurance. The weak need small but every increasing challenges.

A Spiritual Mentor with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the inspiration of Jesus will have the patience to empower the timid and strengthen the weak.

See that no one pays back evil for evil, but always try to do good to each other and to all people. 1 Thessalonians 5:15 (NLT)

Being held accountable makes us stronger and more compassionate believers. Our society needs more people who are compassionate. In this time in which we live people intolerant, and they demand their rights. There are too many angry people walking around in our world. What we need is compassion.

Anyone of us can become, a do what you want person. All of us have the potential to be violent. So, we need to hold one another accountable. Instead of falling into one temptation after another we need to hold one another accountable.

While we may look good on the outside, there are cracks and weaknesses. We need to advise one another to restore our faith. We need to come alongside each other with the truth, urging one another to do what is right.

No follower of Jesus needs to fear being held accountable. It is the Holy Spirit that speaks to us, calling us back into the righteousness of Jesus. We do our own thing, even as Christians. We still seek out our own desires. When the Holy Spirit puts the words in your heart to speak to another believer, speak the truth. You are keeping a brother or sister in Christ from walking further away from God's plans and purposes.

As a result of speaking you will strengthen your faith. You will become more compassionate. You will help make the faith of another believer stronger. You will guide them to becoming more compassion.

After several weeks of talking about Glorifying God by being a Spiritual Mentor you might have two thoughts. Who can I mentor in their faith? How do I start this relationship? First, you mentor the people Jesus has put into your life. Narrow that down from a neighbor. Look over the people at your place of work. Keep a watchful eye on a friend. Listen to your family.

Pray by name for these individuals. Ask Jesus to crack open a door for you to offer encouragement, bring comfort, and hold them accountable. Jesus will answer.

You start the relationship by being encouraging. Don't look at mistakes, but speak words of encouraging truth. Lift them up when there are failures. Ask them how they are doing, but go beyond the simple answers.

Jesus has given you specific relationships. Maybe it's not a neighbor, but a close friend. Maybe it's not a co-worker, but it's family member. We are placed in relationships with believers for a purpose. We can influence their lives, making their faith stronger, their heart more compassionate by mentoring them.

Brothers and sisters we urge you. 1 Thessalonians 5:14 (NLT)

As a Spiritual Mentor actively challenge your brothers and sisters. Without us challenging one another, holding one another accountable, Christians will fade away. That isn't a scare tactic. I believe it's a reality. There will be Christians who are strong in their faith. As they die, without mentoring another, there will be fewer Christians. The number of strong Christians will become smaller and smaller. Hopefully, Jesus returns soon.

You are here today, and most Sundays. You are living the unique Christian lifestyle. You are in the twenty percent of American Christians. The other eighty percent of American Christians might not be here for a variety of reasons. The reasons are secondary to our discussion. They believe Jesus lived, died, and rose again. They need a Spiritual Mentor. Where they are spiritually right now is not where Jesus wants them to be for the rest of their lives.

He has promises for them to claim. He has power to be released in their lives. He has plans and purposes for them. They need a Spiritual Mentor. They need encouragement, comfort, and accountability.

You are here to begin that process in their lives. They actually want someone to encourage them. They are looking for comfort. They may not admit it or like it at first, but they want to be held accountable. You are their Spiritual Mentor.

The message sinners need to hear is that Jesus takes away our sins. Every person who doesn't trust Jesus, isn't living for Jesus, isn't glorifying God. We have one job, glorify God. Too many people aren't glorifying God. They need to turn from their sin or they will receive the penalty. That penalty is eternal separation from God in hell. Anyone who doesn't call upon Jesus will live forever in pain and suffering in hell.

There is no comparison in this life to hell. People talk about certain diseases as a living hell, it's not the same. People will mention emotional torment as a living hell, it's not the same. People will mention war zones as a living hell, it's not the same. Diseases, emotional torment, war zones are terrible, horrible experiences that no one should face. They are just a small sample of the reality of hell.

Everyone person who calls upon the name of Jesus is saved from hell. They are saved to eternal life in heaven. They are delivered to live a new life of hope and peace right now. They are redeemed into an eternity where there is no suffering, no pain, and no war. They will live with Jesus forever.

Today, call upon Jesus. Give Him your sins. Claim His promise of salvation. Live your life for Jesus.