

March 26

1 Thessalonians 5:12-14 (NASB) ¹²But we ask you, brothers *and* sisters, to recognize those who diligently labor among you and are in leadership over you in the Lord, and give you instruction, ¹³and that you regard them very highly in love because of their work. Live in peace with one another. ¹⁴We urge you, brothers *and* sisters, admonish the unruly [undisciplined], encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

I had not slept well for several nights. I woke to a beautiful morning, but the sleepless nights and concerns that swirled around me weighed me down. I began to do my Bible study, to write in my journal, and to write my devotion, but my heart was not in them. I understood that the Lord was with me, that His word was true, and that He heard my cries, but the weight remained heavy. Carol joined me on the back porch, and I told her I was ready to take action; I was not sure what that step was, but I felt it was time. She calmly said, “No, don’t do that. You are not to take that next step. We will work on the situation because I feel the Lord is going to heal you soon. Now is not the time to give up.” Immediately, the weight lifted.

Paul tells us to be patient with everyone. That is so important because being impatient robs us of the ability to see clearly the needs of others. Paul mentions the unruly, the fainthearted, and the weak. We are to respond to each differently, so we need to be patient so the Holy Spirit can guide us in helping each. When Carol spoke those words to me, words that were not flattery but from the Lord, she encouraged me because I was fainthearted. I want to make two points. No matter how long we have been with the Lord, we may find ourselves in situations where we need encouragement. We should not hesitate to reach out to Godly friends and/or family. Second, we may be the one Jesus uses to bring that encouraging word to someone in need. We do not flatter or tickle the ears or demean or admonish; instead, we speak God’s truth to them and lift them up. That requires faith and humility. Needing encouragement is not an embarrassment. Giving encouragement is part of our ministry. Being patient allows us to see the needs of others and to see God’s plans for us.