

TAKE CARE OF ONE ANOTHER

1 Thessalonians 5:14

Part 2

“How to Hug a Pygmy”

“...encourage the fainthearted...”

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Chuck Swindoll writes, “Let’s get specific. It is doubtful that there is anything more basic, more Christlike, and therefore more Christian than compassion.

For some strange reason we’ve missed this, especially we who are evangelicals. In place of compassion we have deliberately substituted information. Somehow we have determined that knowledge will heal wounds. We have convinced ourselves that facts are what the hurting soul really needs. Good truth, to be sure, but little more.

When did we buy into such heresy? Where, pray tell, do we find Christ modeling such a thing? Don’t misunderstand, biblical truth is important, doctrinal knowledge is valuable, but it comes later ... after mercy has won a

hearing, after compassion has prepared the soil into which truth can take root.

OTHERS WILL NOT CARE HOW MUCH WE KNOW UNTIL THEY KNOW HOW MUCH WE CARE.” ~ *Compassion*, Chuck Swindoll, pp. 39-40

As we come to the thoughts at the gates of 1 Thessalonians 5:14, we are confronted with a deep, spiritual need. In order to make our faith practical, it is interesting that the Scriptures do not call us to increase our theological I.Q., but rather to encourage and build up other believers.

HOW TO HUG A PYGMY

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HUG WHO?

- Paul was calling the Thessalonian church to seek out a certain group.
- Fainthearted: lit. the “**little souled**”

- The small souled person is one who is:
 1. Easily **discouraged**
 2. Prone to focus on **past failure**
 3. **Fearful/timid**
 4. Self-**depreciating**
 5. A **quitter** – spiritually unmotivated

HUG HOW?

- Paul calls this group of believers to comfort = to draw **near** and speak in a **friendly way**, to encourage with **stories**.
- This word has four implications:
 1. We are to be **close**.
 - Don't shout from a distance.
 2. We are to “encourage,” “**refresh**,” “urge,” “**persuade**” – not **teach** or **fix**.
 - Don't steer ... cheer!

3. In emotional situations **stories** are **good**.

➤ Stories are windows to the soul.

4. This role makes you like **Christ**.

FINAL THOUGHTS