

1 Thessalonians 2:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,

Analysis

As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children—the metaphor shifts from nursing mother (v. 7) to instructing father, revealing ministry's comprehensive nature. Parakaloumen kai paramythoumenoi kai martyromenoi (παρακαλοῦμεν καὶ παραμυθούμενοι καὶ μαρτυρόμενοι) describes threefold ministry: parakaloun (exhort/encourage) combines urgency with compassion; paramytheomai (comfort/console) offers tender sympathy; martyromai (charge/testify solemnly) indicates serious admonition. True pastoral care requires all three: encouragement without challenge produces weakness; challenge without comfort produces discouragement; both without solemn charge lack gravity.

Every one of you (hena hekaston hymōn, ἔνα ἔκαστον ὑμῶν)—Paul's ministry was individually personalized, not merely corporate preaching. Like a father with each unique child, he adapted approach to person. Hōs patēr tekna heautou (ώς πατὴρ τέκνα ἔαυτοῦ, 'as a father his own children') indicates the proprietary love and responsibility fathers feel. Spiritual fatherhood combines maternal tenderness (v. 7) with paternal instruction—nurture plus discipline, comfort plus challenge, affection plus authority.

Historical Context

In Greco-Roman culture, fathers bore primary responsibility for children's moral and civic education, training them in virtue, citizenship, and practical skills. Paul

adopts this imagery but transforms it through gospel: spiritual fathers reproduce faith (1 Cor 4:15), not merely behavior; they train children to walk worthy of God (v. 12), not merely succeed socially. The combination of motherly tenderness (v. 7) and fatherly instruction (v. 11) presents holistic spiritual parenting that nurtures the whole person—emotionally, intellectually, and volitionally.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

Study Questions

1. How do you balance the threefold ministry pattern of exhortation, comfort, and solemn charge without overemphasizing one at the expense of others?
2. What evidence demonstrates that your spiritual influence is individualized ('every one of you') rather than merely generic or corporate?
3. How does combining maternal tenderness with paternal instruction provide a complete model for spiritual mentorship?

Interlinear Text

καθάπερ	οἴδατε	ώς	ένα	έκαστον	ύμῶν	ώς	πατὴρ
As	ye know	as	one	every	G5216	as	a father
G2509	G1492	G5613	G1520	G1538		G5613	G3962
τέκνα	έαυτοῦ	παρακαλοῦντες	ύμᾶς	καί	παραμυθούμενοι		
children	doth his	we exhorted	of you	and		comforted	
G5043	G1438	G3870	G5209	G2532		G3888	
καί	μαρτυρούμενοι						
and	and charged						
G2532	G3140						

Additional Cross-References

Hebrews 13:22 (Parallel theme): And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation: for I have written a letter unto you in few words.

1 Timothy 5:21 (Parallel theme): I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.

2 Thessalonians 3:12 (Parallel theme): Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

1 Chronicles 28:20 (Parallel theme): And David said to Solomon his son, Be strong and of good courage, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 (Parallel theme): Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do.

1 Thessalonians 4:1 (Parallel theme): Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more.

1 Thessalonians 2:7 (Parallel theme): But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children:

Deuteronomy 3:28 (Parallel theme): But charge Joshua, and encourage him, and strengthen him: for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which thou shalt see.

Acts 20:2 (Parallel theme): And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece,

Psalms 34:11 (Parallel theme): Come, ye children, hearken unto me: I will teach you the fear of the LORD.