

No Work, No Eat... It's Natural

2 Thessalonians 3:6-18

Sunday April 28th, 2024

So far, in 2nd Thessalonians, Paul has addressed two issues. First, the **problem of persecution** and the questions concerning it. Second, he **refuted the false teaching** that happened concerning the timing of the *Rapture* and the *Day of the Lord*.

Now, at the conclusion of his letter, Paul addressed a third issue. There were some believers (Christians) in the Thessalonian church who were not working to support themselves. They were 'walking in idleness'. Instead of working, they were relying on the church or those in the church to provide for their daily needs. This caused discouragement, and unnecessary strain on the rest of the believers.

Paul commanded the hard-working portion of the Thessalonian church to deal with this situation. They were to warn the idle. They were to stop feeding them, and if they didn't listen they were to have nothing to do with them in hopes of restoration.

Keep Away From the Idle

Paul commanded the hard-working to keep away from the idle brothers. They were not in line with Paul's teaching and the teachings of scripture.

⁶ Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us.

Work As Paul Worked

Paul referenced his life as an example for the church to follow. Paul encouraged them to imitate his work ethic.

⁷ For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, ⁸ nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. ⁹ It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.

No Work, No Eat...It's Natural

Even while Paul was in Thessalonica, he drew some hard lines. If someone doesn't work they should not expect to eat. Hunger is the natural consequence of not working and it is designed by God to motivate mankind to be productive.

10 For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat. 11 For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies. 12 Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.

The Idle Were Draining the Church Family

The love the hard-working had for their brothers was being taken advantage of. They were in danger of becoming disillusioned and bitter. Paul urged them not to grow weary of the good things that they were doing. Instead, draw the line. Set a boundary.

13 As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good. 14 If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed. 15 Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

Paul closed his letter in his own handwriting. Up until this point he has dictated to a scribe, but the last words he wrote himself.

16 Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all.

17 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way I write. 18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

GRACE NEWS AND NEEDS

New Women's Bible Study on Colossians: Beginning May 16th, Sign up with Ann Weatherstone or Sharon Plunkett.

Baptism Class: Begins May 5th during 2nd Service in the Modular Classroom.

Tie a Knot in the Prayer Quilt for Lisa Ann Hyde.

Business Meeting: Sunday, April 28th, 4:00 PM, Childcare provided. Everyone Welcome!

VOM Needs for April: Financial donations to purchase needed items.