



QUESTION 1

What are some of the wise boundaries you have placed in your life? Are there people in your life with whom you should draw some new boundaries?

QUESTION 2

Read v11-13. What do you think about Paul's strong language towards those who are busybodies and who aren't willing to work? How does that apply to how we should view how we spend our time?

QUESTION 3

How would Paul's example of hard work combat some who have the attitude of a freeloader (v10-11)? Does this passage deal with real and practical issues that apply to what's going on in your life?

QUESTION 4

How easy is it to grow tired of doing the right thing? It's easy to see others cutting corners and maybe even getting ahead for a time - but what God calls us to is a higher calling. What are some ways you keep yourself from cutting corners?

GOING DEEPER

As in 1 Thessalonians 5:14, the problem is with those members of the church who “walk” or conduct themselves in a disorderly manner (*ataktōs*) and not in accordance with the apostolic teaching on work. The term translated *idle* does not mean “lazy” but rather tags these people as those who conduct themselves in a way that is “out of order” or “disorderly” because they do not follow the rules of the community (vv. 7, 11). In this case the rule has to do with labor (v. 10). The end result of their disorderly conduct was that they did not work. The standard to which they refused to conform is *the teaching you received from us*. This *teaching* is the authoritative apostolic “tradition” (*paradosin*) that the founders had handed down to the church and to which the church was to adhere (2:15).

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

The apostle commands the church to *keep away* from any believer who does not obey this tradition. As we will see further on, the community should not consider this person to be an “enemy” or somehow outside the fold but should “warn him as a brother” (v. 15). These persons continue to be members of the family of faith, although they are subject to the correction and discipline of the community. They had already received the apostolic tradition on more than one occasion, and now in light of their continued disobedience more drastic measures need to be taken.