

Sermon Notes 1/2/22

“Working with Jesus”

How can we honor Jesus in our work?

1. Keep away from disobedient _____.
2 Thessalonians 3:6
1 Corinthians 5:9-11

2. Be good _____ for one another.
2 Thessalonians 3:7-9
Acts 20:34-35

3. Work hard to do what’s _____.
2 Thessalonians 3:13
1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

4. _____ Christians to obey God’s word.
2 Thessalonians 3:14-15
1 Thessalonians 5:14



Paul worked as a tentmaker along with Priscilla and Aquila (Acts 18:1-3).

Life Group Discussion Questions

Week 11: January 2-9

2 Thessalonians 3:6-18

In this final section of Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians he confronts those Christians who were refusing to work. He also gives difficult instructions to the church concerning the discipline of those who were disobeying God's word. This passage teaches us about two important principles that are especially relevant for the modern church. First, a good work ethic is an essential part of our Christian witness. Second, a healthy church is a community of Christians who hold each other accountable in their obedience to God's word.

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-18

1. What command did Paul give to his Christian readers in verse 6?

Jon Weatherly observes,

“Is idle” here represents the verb περιπατέω (*peripateo*-, literally “walk”) and indicating a general manner of life, modified by the adverb ἄτακτως (*ataktōs*), a cognate of the word found in 1 Thess 5:14. As in that case, the broadest sense of this adverb is “disorderly,” though it is often used, as this context indicates, to refer to willful and rebellious irresponsibility.¹

2. How did Paul emphasize the authority of this command?

Leon Morris notes,

The command is given *in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ* (cf. 1 Cor. 5:4), which makes it as authoritative as it possibly can be. But despite the authoritative tone, Paul uses the affectionate address *brothers* and applies it to the offenders as well as to other church members. They are to be dealt with, but they remain brothers. This is the warm affection of a friend, not the cold rule of an autocrat.²

¹ Jon A. Weatherly, *The College Press NIV Commentary: 1 & 2 Thessalonians* (Joplin, MO: College Press, 1996).

² Leon Morris, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2007), 141.

3. What teaching in Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians could he be referring to in verse 6?

Weatherly writes,

This problem was addressed more briefly in 1 Thess 4:11-12 and 5:14, while Paul had laid the foundation for those exhortations by emphasizing his own self-support in 2:9. Apparently, though, Paul's first reminder on this subject did not correct the problem, so here he addresses it at length, using some of the harshest language in the Thessalonian letters.³

4. What example had Paul set when he was with the church at Thessalonica? (3:7-8)

5. Why did Paul work so hard and pay for his own food? (3:8)

6. Why did Paul not use his authority as an Apostle to earn his living from his ministry? (3:9)

7. What rule had Paul given about working and eating? (3:10)
Charles Swindoll comments,

Paul matches his lifestyle example with a quotable motto: "If anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either" (2 Thes. 3:10). Paul isn't betraying his own compassion for the poor (Rom. 15:26; Gal. 2:10). His principle doesn't apply to those who can't work, but to those who refuse to work.⁴

8. What reports had Paul heard about some of the believers in Thessalonica? (3:11)

9. What had some people in Thessalonica become? (3:11)

10. What was Paul's command to the busybodies in Thessalonica? (3:12)

³ Weatherly, *The College Press NIV Commentary: 1 & 2 Thessalonians*.

⁴ Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on 1 & 2 Thessalonians* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2016), 157.

11. How did Paul emphasize the authority of this command?
12. What command did Paul give to those who were doing good? (3:13)
13. How should we respond to Christians who refuse to obey God's word? (3:14)
14. How should we warn Christians who ignore New Testament commands? (3:15)

Morris notes,

Paul is insisting that the erring one be regarded as a brother and treated in such a way as to bring him back. The action is not excommunication (as Calvin held), but in order that he may feel ashamed (and so brought to a change of mind and conduct) ... He makes it clear that the offender is to be regarded as one of themselves. He has erred, indeed, and his sin must come home to him. But this is to be done entirely in a spirit of love, with a tender concern for the welfare of the one being disciplined.⁵

15. How did Paul pray for the Thessalonian believers in verse 16?
16. What did Paul say about the final words of this letter? (3:17)
17. How can spending time with lazy people influence our work habits?
18. Why should we stay away from Christians who refuse to obey New Testament commands?
19. What example should a Christian set for others in the workplace?
20. What improvements in your work habits can you make this week?
21. What can you do this week to be a good influence on your fellow workers or students?
22. How can you pray for your brothers and sisters in Christ this week?

⁵ Morris, *1 and 2 Thessalonians*, 146.