

DRIVEN TO EXTREMES

1 Thes 4:11-12 ¹¹ and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, ¹² so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.

Intro: Balance, equilibrium, a place of stability and peace, this is where we should find ourselves as Christians. One of Satan's most sinister and subtle tools against this is extremes. Think about it for a minute. Among conservative Christians, what causes most infighting, extremes. One side posed against the other. There is Calvinism and Arminianism, Pentecostalism and Cessationalism, Progressivism and Traditionalism. The same is in government, Satan wants to polarize people that live in the same nation so they will be divided against each other. I am not saying to fall into another one of Satan's traps, tolerance, when there are clearly things we should oppose. If Satan can't get you to believe the wrong thing, he will get you to have the wrong attitude about the right thing. He will have you hold on to your position so strongly you forget to be balanced with the other truths of scripture. This is what Paul is dealing with in Thessalonica. A strong church that would not waver under persecution, so he pushed some of them to being extremist.

Context: 2 points to consider

Point 1: Due to severe persecution Paul was careful to ground the young church in the return of the Lord.

Look at the end of the first four chapters.

1 Thessalonians 1:9–10 For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, ¹⁰ and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.

1 Thessalonians 2:19 For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?

1 Thessalonians 3:13 so that he may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.

1 Thessalonians 4:16–18 ¹⁶ For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive,

who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Therefore **encourage one another with these words.**

Point 2: Due to some false teaching on the resurrection and some misunderstanding on what believers should be doing some people had taken an extreme position of not following what the Bible says about working diligently as we wait for our Lord's return.

2 Thessalonians 3:6–12 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. 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. 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.

1 Thessalonians 2:9–12 For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. ¹⁰ You are witnesses, and God also, how holy and righteous and blameless was our conduct toward you believers. ¹¹ For you know how, like a father with his children, ¹² we exhorted each one of you and encouraged you and charged you to walk in a manner worthy of God, who calls you into his own kingdom and glory.

- There are still people upsetting the church over and causing confusion over teachings of the coming of the Lord. This letter will help us resolve most of that confusion.

Conduct: In light of what some church members were doing Paul gives four admonitions.

Aspire to live quietly - Greek, “make it your ambition to be quiet, and to do your own business.” In direct contrast to the world’s ambition, which is, “to make a great stir,” and “to be busybodies” (2 Th 3:11, 12).¹

Matthew Henry-“It is the most desirable thing to have a calm and quiet temper, and to be of a peaceable and quiet behavior. This tends much to our own and others’ happiness; and Christians should study how to be quiet. We should be ambitious and industrious how to be calm and quiet in our minds, in patience to possess our own souls, and to be quiet towards others; or of a meek and mild, a gentle and peaceable disposition, not given to strife, contention, or division. Satan is very busy to disquiet us; and we have that in our own hearts that disposes us to be disquiet; therefore, let us study to be quiet.”²

Mind your own affairs - busybodies, danger of social media, people are idle and spend their time meddling in other people’s business. This is scripturally wrong! to bustle about uselessly, to busy one’s self about trifling, needless, useless matters. 1A used apparently of a person officiously inquisitive about other’s affairs.³

Is it not ironic that what the busybody makes a priority to talk about is what the Bible says is not a priority and should be left unstudied and uncommented on?

Work with your own hands – working hard even manual labor is honorable and commendable and expected.

Be dependent on no one – the government, the church, friends, or family are not to be preyed upon to support your needs unless you cannot work. Later Paul will go so far to say if you will not work then you will not eat, 2 Thes. 3:10. And fellow believers should, “keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us, 2 Thes. 3:11.”

¹ Jamieson, R., Fausset, A. R., & Brown, D. (1997). [Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible](#) (Vol. 2, p. 389). Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

² Henry, M. (1994). [Matthew Henry’s commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume](#) (p. 2342). Peabody: Hendrickson.

³ Strong, J. (1995). [Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon](#). Woodside Bible Fellowship.

THE REASON: SO YOU MAY WALK PROPERLY BEFORE OUTSIDERS

Everything Paul is teaching is counterculture to what people are doing in our land today. The Christian should be setting an example in these areas. Persecution from outsiders and the return of Christ are not a reason not to continue to conduct ourselves with character. In fact, it is all the more reason why we should.

Christians are to be the salt and light in the world. Some people get so wound up making their point over spiritual truths that they forget how they are to conduct themselves. The practical and the spiritual always come into balance in the bible.

You can be lazy because He is coming, or you can work harder because He is coming.

You can have peace because He is coming, or you can be in an uproar because He is coming.

Paul says be at peace and work hard.

How we conduct ourselves in our daily lives is the foundation of our evangelistic efforts!