

Final Words of Instruction Concerning False Doctrine and Personal Behavior



2 Thessalonians 3:1-18 TEXT, EXPOSITION AND PRACTICAL HELPS

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FINAL WORDS, [2 Thessalonians 3:1-18](#)

A. Prayer and The Lord's Faithfulness, [2 Thessalonians 3:1-5](#)

[\(2 Thessalonians 3:1-5\)](#) **Introduction:** the main section of the letter of 2 Thessalonians has been completed. This passage begins the final words ever written to the church by Paul so far as we know. In the final words, two subjects jump to the forefront immediately: prayer and the Lord's faithfulness.

1. [The request for prayer \(v.1-2\).](#)
2. [The Lord's faithfulness to the believer \(v.3-5\).](#)

1. [\(2 Thessalonians 3:1-2\)](#) **Prayer:** there was the request for prayer.

The believers at Thessalonica were suffering severe persecution and all kinds of trouble. This was one of the reasons Paul was writing to the church: to comfort and encourage them to continue on for Christ. But remember: Paul was in Corinth and he too was suffering all kinds of trouble, including persecution. He needed the presence and power of the Lord as much as anyone. As John Walvoord says:

"Paul, too, was having his difficulties. The task committed to Paul was a very lonely one: to go from place to place, frequently coming into a strange city where not one person would welcome him. He was not entertained in the best hotel, nor was there any honorarium for him in recognition of his services. He had to find his own way, arrange for his public meetings, and somehow try to bear a testimony for Christ. Apart from fellowship with the Lord, it was a very difficult and solitary task and one in which there were many discouragements" (The Thessalonian Epistles, p.146).

The specific trouble at Corinth was persecution. The Jewish religionists attacked Paul and dragged him before the civil authorities. However, the case was dismissed because it was a religious matter. Paul was allowed to continue his preaching mission, but apparently the Jewish religionists continued their opposition, stirring up whatever trouble they could (**cp. [Acts 18:1-18](#) for the full story**).

The point is this: Paul needed prayer; he needed believers everywhere praying for him. But note what it was he requested. **He did not ask prayer.....**

1. for comfort
2. for personal needs
3. for God to take him away from Corinth and to open up a new ministry elsewhere

Paul's focus was not selfish, not upon himself—not at all. His whole focus was upon the spread and success of the gospel. **He wanted prayer for two things.**

1. There was the need for the Word to have *free course and to be glorified*. The Word of God is often hindered, hampered, and stymied. Too often, it has no power or influence among a people. **Why?**

- a. opposition
- b. unprepared hearts
- c. sleepy eyed listeners
- d. daydreaming minds
- e. unprepared and carnal preachers and teachers

The list could go on an on, but the great need of the hour is for the Word of God to have free course and be glorified in the pulpits and pews, classrooms and homes, streets and places of this nation and world.

"Free course" means "to run". It is a picture of an Olympian athlete running in a race, the picture of the **Word of God spreading all over because it is.....**

- a. focused
- b. active
- c. strong
- d. unflinching
- e. vigorous
- f. powerful
- d. urgent

If the Word of God had free course, it would be glorified; that is, souls would be saved and lives changed. **People would be freed.....**

- a. from sin and its enslavement
- b. from guilty consciences
- c. from immoral and evil behavior
- d. from unjust treatment
- e. from ignorance
- f. from worldliness

People would no longer experience emptiness, loneliness, purposelessness, or lostness. They would be set free to know the Lord and to commit their lives to reaching and meeting the needs of a world full of desperate people. Note: this is exactly what had happened to the Thessalonian believers. The Word of God had *freely run* among the Thessalonians; therefore, many had been converted to the Lord (**cp. [1 Thes. 1:5](#); [1 Thes. 2:1, 13](#)**).

"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" ([Acts 13:48](#)).

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake" ([1 Thes. 1:5](#)).

"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe" ([1 Thes. 2:13](#)).

"The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward" ([Psalm 19:7-11](#)).

"He sendeth forth his commandment upon earth: his word runneth very swiftly" ([Psalm 147:15](#)).

Thought 1. Believers should always be praying for the ministers and teachers of the gospel—that the Word of God might have a free course as it is preached and taught. And they should pray every day for every preacher and teacher they know. Think for a moment: What would happen if the believers of a single church prayed often every day for their minister and teachers? One thing is known: God could not sit still, for He would know that those believers were as sincere and genuine as they could be. He would know that they desperately wanted to reach their community for Christ.

2. There was the need for believers to be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men. Again, remember the situation of Paul, how he was being attacked in Corinth. He knew what it was like to be opposed by wicked people who would not listen to reason.

Ministers, teachers, and believers alike are sometimes opposed and attacked by unreasonable and wicked people. Think how unreasonable the attacks are.

Why would people want to oppose and attack a person who preaches and teaches.....

- | | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| a. love | e. discipline |
| b. joy | f. brotherhood |
| c. peace | g. salvation |
| d. morality | h. eternal life |

Why would people want to attack a person who preaches and teaches that God loves the world—that He has provided the way for man to escape death and to live forever and that the *fountain of youth* has been revealed? A reasonable and honest person would never oppose or attack a person who was preaching and teaching this message.

But note: not all people are reasonable and good. As Scripture says, all persons do not have faith ([2 Thes. 3:2](#)). In fact, the world is full of unreasonable and wicked persons, persons who want to live like they want without any interference from God. They deny and ignore God—deny and ignore the evidence within the world and within their hearts and thoughts that God exists and that His love and judgments are real. Therefore, they oppose anything that reminds them of eternity, of a coming day of judgment.

They want nothing to do with a message that puts restrictions upon their behavior, especially a message that demands so much love—a love that demands that we give all we are and have to meet the needs of the dying and poor masses of the world.

Believers, ministers and laymen alike, need to be delivered from such unreasonable and wicked persons. When people lack reason and morality, goodness and honesty, conscience and decency, they are dangerous. They can hinder both the messenger and the message of the gospel. Therefore, believers need to be constantly praying for God to deliver His people from unreasonable and wicked persons.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints" ([Romans 15:30-31](#)).

"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; and for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak" ([Ephes. 6:18-20](#)).

"Brethren, pray for us" ([1 Thes. 5:25](#)).

"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished" ([2 Peter 2:9](#)).

[2. \(2 Thessalonians 3:3-5\) Jesus Christ, Faithfulness of: there is the faithfulness of the Lord to the believer.](#)

The Lord Jesus Christ is faithful. Believers may fail us: when we stand in the greatest need, when people oppose and persecute us, when the most terrible trials confront us—**believers may fail.....**

- a. to pray
- b. to encourage
- c. to support
- d. to speak kindly
- e. to help

But not the Lord. The Lord God is faithful. He will do things for the believer.

1. The Lord will establish the believer and keep him from evil.
 - a. The word "**establish**" (*stērizo*) means to strengthen, secure, make stable or firm, and set fast.
 - b. The word "**keep**" (*phulasso*) means to guard.
 - c. The word "**evil**" (*ponēros*) can refer both to evil behavior and to the evil one, that is, Satan.

The point is this: the Lord is faithful, even if we fail to help one another. God will strengthen and guard us against Satan and his evil followers. In fact, the Lord will strengthen and guard us against all evil no matter what it is. Even if the evil seems to be conquering us, it will not—not in the final analysis.

- a. God will deliver us by working all things out for good.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" ([Romans 8:28](#)).

- b. God will deliver us by overcoming our failures and completing His work of salvation in us.

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ" ([Phil. 1:6](#)).

"For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" ([2 Tim. 1:12](#)).

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, by glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever" ([Jude 24-25](#)).

- c. God will deliver us by delivering us from death.

"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever" ([2 Tim. 4:18](#)).

2. The Lord will motivate the believer to keep His commandments. The Lord actually works within and energizes the believer to will and do God's pleasure, that is, to keep His commandments. When we *sense a stirring*, some energy being aroused within our hearts to do good, that is the Spirit of God working within us. The Lord will never leave the believer, not completely; so long as the believer is on earth, the Lord will continue to work within him, to stir and energize him to keep God's commandments. This is the reason Paul had confidence in the Thessalonian believers, that they would keep the commandments of the Word that had been taught them.

Thought 1. This is a critical fact: a person can tell if he is a true believer or not by the working of the Lord within his heart. If a person keeps the commandments of God, then it is evidence that the Lord is working within his heart; however, if a person is not keeping the commandments of God, then it is evidence that the Lord does not live within his heart and is not working within him.

"And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" ([1 John 2:3](#)).

"My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him" ([1 John 3:18-19](#)).

"Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit" ([1 John 4:13](#)).

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son" ([1 John 5:10](#)).

3. The Lord directs the believer's heart into the love of God. This means both God's love for us and our love for God. The word **"direct"** (*kateuthuno*) means **"to make straight or to be straight"**. It means **"to remove obstacles out of the way or to open up"**. The Lord Jesus Christ takes the genuine believer and opens up his heart; He straightens, directs, and focuses the believer's heart upon the love of God. The result is that the believer learns to love God more and more. His attention and focus becomes more and more set upon God's love. Therefore, when trials, trouble, temptation, and evil attack the believer, he is able to stand in the love of God and overcome the attack.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" ([John 3:16](#)).

"Keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life" ([Jude 21](#)).

"And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" ([Deut. 6:5](#)).

"And now, Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" ([Deut. 10:12](#)).

"O love ye the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer" ([Psalm 31:23](#)).

4. The Lord directs the believer to patiently wait for Christ's return. The Lord Jesus Christ stirs the genuine believer to keep his eyes upon His return. Therefore, when evil strikes, the believer endures and perseveres—stands in strength and patience—keeping his eyes and heart focused upon the glorious hope of Christ, the hope of conquering death and of living forever and ever in perfection with God, the hope of ruling and reigning throughout the whole universe for Christ.

"For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel" ([Col. 1:5](#)).

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" ([1 Thes. 5:23](#)).

"That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ" ([1 Tim. 6:14](#)).

"Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" ([Titus 2:12-13](#)).

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" ([1 Peter 1:3](#)).

"And now, little children, abide in him; that, when he shall appear, we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before him at his coming" ([1 John 2:28](#)).

B. Work and Employment, [2 Thessalonians 3:6-18](#)

[\(2 Thessalonians 3:6-18\)](#) **Introduction:** this passage concludes the letter of 2 Thessalonians. It deals with a very significant subject for our day and time: work and employment. The workplace is full of disorderly workers, workers who slack off and do as little as possible; workers who are eyewitnesses, who work only when they see the boss coming. In addition to these, there are many in our society who could be working, but they choose not to work because of laziness and slothfulness; and they have found a way to sponge off the government, social services, churches, and neighbors. The result is that a tragic dullness and a spirit of *give me* has pervaded the workplace and nation. As stated, this is the subject of this passage, a much needed subject.

1. **Withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly—who does not work (v.6-11).**
2. **Work—every one of you (v.12-13).**
3. **Discipline the idler, the disorderly: disassociate from him (v.14-15).**
4. **The conclusion: the believer receives three possessions in Christ (v.16-18).**

[1. \(2 Thessalonians 3:6-11\)](#) Employee— Employment— Labor— Work: withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly, that is, who does not work.

Note: this is a very strong command. It has the force of a military command: it is given "**in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,**" the supreme commander. There is to be no discussion about the matter. What is being said is to be obeyed.

"Withdraw...from every brother that walks disorderly" ([2 Thes. 3:6](#)). Who are the disorderly? Those who do not work. A strange thing had happened in the Thessalonian church. Some of the believers had become excited over the return of the Lord and the promise of being with Him forever in the new heavens and earth. They became so excited that they began to sacrifice all they could to meet the needs of people. But some went too far. They ignored the Lord's words that only God knew when He would be returning, and they began to project dates and declare that His return was about to take place.

Therefore, some quit their jobs in order to have more time to minister, and in an act of sacrificial commitment they gave away *all they had*. The result was catastrophic. They were now having to sponge off the other believers in order to survive. Their action had been most unwise—unwise because believers are to *live life* as it should be lived so long as they are upon earth. Believers are to set the example as to how life is to be lived, and work is certainly one of the duties of men. Therefore, of all people believers are to set an example in work. They are to be the very best workmen possible. Quitting work and not working is disorderly behavior; it is totally unacceptable for a true believer.

It is so unacceptable that believers are commanded to withdraw from non-workers.

- a. **What does the Lord mean by "withdraw" (*stello*)?**
The word means to stay away from the idle worker; to have no fellowship with him. His behavior is not to be indulged or condoned. We are not to put our stamp of approval upon him, nor are we to run the risk of becoming identified with him.
- b. Who are the disorderly? They are the idle, the slothful, the lazy. They are the persons who refuse to work or who shirk their work or are slack in their work.

There are four reasons why we are to withdraw from the disorderly or idle worker.

1. The idle worker disobeys the instructions of God ([2 Thes. 3:6](#)). Note the word "tradition" (*paradosis*). It means all the Word of God, whether taught or written ([2 Thes. 2:15](#)). Paul says that he had taught the believers the commandments of God that deal with work; therefore, they are without excuse. They know better than to sit around idle. If they continue to be idle, slothful, and lazy, the other believers are to withdraw from them. They are deliberately disobeying the instructions of God.

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing" ([Matthew 24:45-46](#)).

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" ([Romans 12:11](#)).

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" ([Ephes. 4:28](#)).

"Servants [employees], be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ" ([Ephes. 6:5](#)).

"Servants [employees], obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God" ([Col. 3:22](#)).

"And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you" (1 Thes. 4:11).

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

"Exhort servants [employees] to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again" (Titus 2:9).

"That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" (Hebrews 6:12).

"Servants [employees], be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward" (1 Peter 2:18).

"And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it" (Genesis 2:15).

"In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return" (Genesis 3:19).

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest" (Eccles. 9:10).

2. The idle worker has the example of committed workers. The believers of Thessalonica had the example of Paul; we have the example of committed workers in our day. Paul worked *day and night* so that he would not owe any man anything (2 Thes. 3:7-8). As a minister of the gospel, he had the right to be supported by believers so that he could be free to minister more. But he refused to exercise that right. Why? So that he could set a dynamic example of a diligent worker for the believers (2 Thes. 3:9). Note: Paul says "**follow us**"—follow our example in being a diligent worker:

- a. You "**know how ye ought to follow us**" (2 Thes. 3:7).
- b. We have set an "**example unto you to follow us**" (2 Thes. 3:9).

Thought 1. There is absolutely no excuse for a Christian to be disorderly at his work: idle, slothful, or lazy. Paul set a dynamic example for us, and there are examples of other dynamic Christian workers who surround us. And if by chance there are no examples around us, then we should be following the example of Christ (the carpenter) and Paul (the tentmaker). We should be setting an example for other believers in diligent work.

"After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; and found a certain Jew named Aquila, born in Pontus, lately come from Italy, with his wife Priscilla; (because that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome:) and came unto them. And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers" (Acts 18:1-3).

"Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive" ([Acts 20:34-35](#)).

"And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself" ([2 Cor. 11:9](#)).

"For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God" ([1 Thes. 2:9](#)).

"Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you" ([2 Thes. 3:8](#)).

3. The idle worker must work or lose his right to eat ([2 Thes. 3:10](#)). This fact is stated as clearly as it can be: **"if any [will] not work, neither should he eat."** Note that this is a command, a command that Paul had preached when he was with the church. Note this fact as well: the commandment deals with those who choose to be idle and refuse to work. It is not dealing with those who are honestly unable to work due to disability or being unable to find employment. If a person is able to work, he is to work. If he refuses, he is not to be fed; he is not to be allowed to sponge off the church, community, or society. There is no excuse for a person not working if he is able to work—not in the sight of God. Too many in the world—millions—are desperate and destitute, dying within and without from loneliness, emptiness, starvation, disease, and sin. Almost every church or social service can put us to work in reaching a world of desperate and dying people who need our help and attention. In God's words: **"This we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat."**

"And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: that ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises" ([Hebrews 6:11-12](#)).

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" ([Romans 12:11](#); cp. [Matthew 25:24-27](#)).

"Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law" ([Romans 13:8](#)).

"Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame" ([1 Cor. 15:34](#)).

"Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light" ([Ephes. 5:14](#)).

"Give not sleep to thine eyes, nor slumber to thine eyelids" ([Proverbs 6:4](#)).

"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest. How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? When wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: so shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man" ([Proverbs 6:6-11](#)).

"He that gathereth in summer is a wise son: but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame" ([Proverbs 10:5](#)).

"He that tilleth his land shall be satisfied with bread: but he that followeth vain persons is void of understanding" ([Proverbs 12:11](#)).

"He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster" ([Proverbs 18:9](#)).

"Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep; and an idle soul shall suffer hunger" ([Proverbs 19:15](#)).

"The desire of the slothful killeth him; for his hands refuse to labor. He coveteth greedily all the day long: but the righteous giveth and spareth not" ([Proverbs 21:25-26](#)).

"For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty: and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags" ([Proverbs 23:21](#)).

4. The idle worker tends to be a busybody. The mind of man is an active thing. What we tend to overlook is this: the mind is *always active*; it is never still. It is either thinking positive thoughts or negative and evil thoughts. The point is this: an idle person has an idle mind. His mind is not set upon positive thoughts, but negative and evil thoughts. An idle mind is the devil's playground. This is the reason why so many idle persons—regardless of their age—get into trouble. The trouble can range all the way from becoming a busybody to murder.

The present passage is dealing with Christians and the trouble caused by being a busybody. Too many believers are busybodies, that is, poking themselves into other people's affairs, tattling, gossiping, and spreading all kinds of talk and rumors. They just go about speaking all kinds of things that they should not. Why? Because they do not stay busy for the Lord by helping and ministering to the needs of those within the community who are hurting, lonely, desperate, dying, and lost.

"For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies" ([2 Thes. 3:11](#)).

"And withal they learn to be idle, wandering about from house to house; and not only idle, but tattlers also and busybodies, speaking things which they ought not" ([1 Tim. 5:13](#)).

"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evildoer, or as a busybody in other men's matters" ([1 Peter 4:15](#)).

"Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbor: I am the LORD" ([Leviticus 19:16](#)).

2. [\(2 Thessalonians 3:12-13\)](#) **Employee: work—every one of you.**

Again, this is a forceful command, a command that comes from the Lord Jesus Christ. **But note:** it is also an exhortation, a stirring challenge that comes from the Lord. The Lord is not cold or hard about the matter. If a believer has been mistaken about how he should work—if he has been slothful and slack in his work—the Lord will forgive. But the believer must confess his wrong and repent. He must repent by beginning to work and earn his own living. And note how we are to go about earning our living: *in quietness*. This is in contrast to being a busybody. We are to work with a quiet spirit and mind our own business; we are not to poke ourselves in other people's business. We are to be quiet and efficient workers, not inefficient busybodies who are always walking about gabbing about other people and their affairs.

Note one other point: do not be weary in well-doing. Do not let the idlers discourage you, but stick to your job: be diligent and persevere. Do not slack off no matter what others do. Be a dynamic example for the Lord.

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing" ([Matthew 24:45-46](#)).

"Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord" ([Romans 12:11](#)).

"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth" ([Ephes. 4:28](#)).

"Servants [employees], be obedient to them that are your masters [employers] according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ" ([Ephes. 6:5](#)).

"And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you" ([1 Thes. 4:11](#)).

"Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread" ([2 Thes. 3:12](#)).

3. [\(2 Thessalonians 3:14-15\)](#) **Employee— Idler: discipline the idler, the disorderly—have no company with him.**

Withdraw from him and have no fellowship with him. Note why: that he may be ashamed. The hope is that his shame will motivate him to get up and get to work.

However, the idle person is not to be disciplined as an enemy, but as a brother. The discipline is not to be done in a spirit of some superior, but in the spirit of a fellow believer, admonishing and warning him of what the Lord has to say about the matter.

The importance of the discipline is seen in the exactness of the words of Paul. Paul says, "**Note that man**"; that is, mark him out and disapprove of his behavior. Let him know that his refusal to work is not acceptable. Do not condone and indulge his idleness. Withdraw and have no fellowship with him. Also warn him: warning is essential. He must be admonished. Warning and letting him experience shame are his only hope of changing. Being warned and feeling shame might stir him to repent, to get up and get to work.

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men" (1 Thes. 5:14).

"And he [Adam] said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself" (Genesis 3:10).

"And said, O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face to thee, my God: for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens" (Ezra 9:6).

"My confusion is continually before me, and the shame of my face hath covered me" (Psalm 44:15).

4. (2 Thessalonians 3:16-18) Conclusion: the believer has three great possessions in Christ.

Note: this is a prayer of Paul for all the believers of the church.

1. The believer receives peace from "**the Lord of peace Himself.**" Note the phrase "**always by all means.**" The believer receives peace "**at all times and in all ways—under all circumstances and conditions, whatever comes**" (Amplified New Testament).

2. The believer receives fellowship, a very special and personal fellowship. The church was dear to Paul. He sensed ever so deeply a close tie, a spiritual fellowship that bound his heart to the believers. Thus, he became concerned and was aroused to write and deal with the problems that had infiltrated the church. He wrote because of the special bond of fellowship between him and the church.

Note: it was Paul's practice to dictate his letters to a secretary and then to sign them. This is what he means by the statement, "**the salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I wrote**" (2 Thes. 3:17).

3. The believer receives grace—the undeserved favor and strength of Jesus Christ.