

2 Thessalonians 3

Outline

I. General Encouragement (Verses 1-5)

II. Command to live a quiet and disciplined life (6-5)

III. Closing Greeting (16-18)

Cross references

(Philippians 1:6) - "Being confident of this, that He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus."

I. General Encouragement (1-5)

Teaching Points

(v.1) Finally. Brothers "pray for us, " that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored as happened among you, that we may be delivered from them wicked and evil men. For not all have faith.

Pray for Us:

[Q] Do you regularly pray for you spiritual leaders?

[Q] How can you make this a habit?

[Q] What will you pray for them?

- Prayer is a two-way street.
- Here Paul makes it clear that prayer should not only be flowing from the leader for his students/disciples, but also the other way around. Every believer has certain responsibilities. One of those is to regularly pray for our leaders.

(v.1b) "that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly" — here - the word speed -n the KJV - "Rapid" [Greek] is "tre-kho." - this mean haste or running a race.

When this word occurs in the Greek writing it denotes incurring extreme peril, which requires the exertion of all one's efforts to overcome.

The spread of the gospel is urgently needed and must be treated as so.

(Acts 9:15) - "But the Lord said to Ananias, "Go! This man is My chosen instrument to proclaim My name to the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel."

He was called to the Gentiles. And there are a lot of Gentiles! It is such a mammoth task that it is impossible to finish it unless the spread is rapid a rapid spread.

(v.2) "As happened among you," - Just as it did with you - the Thessalonians were a living proof that it can happen as their lives and their community were rapidly transformed in just a short amount time.

From them the gospel went out to the rest of the world.

(v.2b-3) and may be delivered from the wicked and evil men. For not all have faith.

- That we will be rescued — Paul's first prayer request focused on the spiritual side of their mission. His second prayer request was for God's help from evil people who were obstacles to this mission.
- We learned that Paul was forced to leave Thessalonica because of evil people seeking themselves up against his mission and trying to thwart the spread of the gospel.

(3) But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one

(4-5) And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will do the things that we command.

It is likely that this opposition ended up aiding the spread of the gospel by forcing Paul to go place to place as well as quickly train up leadership who could lead in his absence.

(v.5) May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ.

- Paul's Encouragement - Throughout these two letters we have seen Paul's continued encouragement to the Thessalonians. In this final passage, he continues with even stronger encouragement. He himself is absent, but God would strengthen them and protect them. He would also enable them to continue growing as well as obeying what they had learned.

(Philip.1:6) - "Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

Paul could not be there to see this work completed in their lives, but God was there. Everything we need for life and for godliness is found if God was there

Everything we need for life and for godliness is found in God not in ourselves or in any leader no Matter how good.

While this does not negate our responsibility to encourage and teach others, it is a reminder that God is in control and cares for the people we minister to even more than we do. That means we don't have to stress out if everything doesn't go according to plan. Maybe it is going according to plan, just not our plan.

II. Command to live a quiet and disciplined life (6-15)

(v.6) - Now we command you, brothers, in the name of the 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."

- We command you - throughout these two letters we have seen that Paul primarily encourages the Thessalonians through positive feedback and reminders. But here Paul issues them a couple of commands point blank.

Teaching Points:

From this we can learn several important principals:

A. Paul did have the authority to give commands.

B. In most cases it is clearly more effective for leaders to use encouragement, reminders, testimonies, sharing, and even pleading rather than giving commands right and left.

C. Sparing use of giving commands will make the times when commands are given have that much more stock.

D. Just because you are in position of authority does not mean you have to use it.

It is a leader's job to shepherd people's hearts.

(6b.) In the name of our Lord Christ Jesus - this is where Paul's authority came from. He wasn't self-anointed. He was appointed.

(6b) Keep away from unruly brothers {Who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received.} He's talking about A Lazy person.

In the Greek the word for unruly used here is "a-ta-k-tos" = "disorderly"
One who deviates from prescribed order or rule.

Paul said these people were not following the tradition which they had received from him.

*Paul's Command is that they stay away from these people.

This was written to the whole church so these brothers who were doing this had a chance to repent.

(Proverbs 13:20) - "Walk with the wise and become wise, for a companion of fools suffer harm."

(1 Cor. 15:33) - "Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."

If you hang with lazy people, it is easy to become lazy like them.

At the same time, avoiding these people is a type of discipline.

[Q] Before taking the step of avoiding believers - what steps should you take.

(Heb.12:11) - "No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it."

A. (Matt. 18) - They should be confronted with their sin. If people avoid them and they don't know why, it is useless.

B. It is most effective if it is the church as a whole. It must be by an agreed upon decision. If only one or two individuals avoid this person it will not be effective.

C. It should only be done when the person is in clear violation of the commands of Scripture and has been given an opportunity to repent.

(v.7-9) - For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us:

- Paul's model of ministry - is good for other believers as long as we have the right motivation. As noted in (1Thessalonians)

A. - Paul and his co-workers had a right to receive support. Jesus told His disciples to receive help from the person of peace when He sent them out in pairs (Luke 10).

B.- Paul and his co-workers were hard workers. Those who are called to do ministry should follow their example by working hard.

But not all are. Unfortunately some go into "ministry" because it is easier. Living far away from their supporter they take advantage of others generosity by either living a life of luxury or simply not working hard for Christ.

(v.10) - "If anyone is not willing to work, let him/her not eat." There is great value in hard work. - work is a good thing and we should do it to the best of our ability for the Lord. (The movie the "Ultimate Gift." [a rich spoiled kid]

He learns first how to do grunt work. Then all his bank and credit card[s] are taken away and he has to actually work for his paycheck. These experiences slowly change him into a brand new person.

(v.11) “For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies.”

Busybodies - becoming a busybody is often a natural result of being lazy.

An idle person has little to do except to get involved in other people business.

An idle mind - is the devil’s playground.

One way to avoid temptation is to keep ourselves busy serving the Lord.

(v.12) “Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.

- Eat their own bread - it does not negate the need for hospitality or generosity. Instead it is a reminder that we should not be a leech.
- We should not take advantage of others.

(v.13) “As for you brothers, do not grow weary in doing good.

- Doing good is not something you did enough of yesterday. There is no limit to how much you should do.

(v.14-15) - “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.

“Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother. Refer to the comments on (v.6-7)

III. Closing Greeting (16 - 18)

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

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.

“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

Discussion Questions