

“The Bread Of Idleness”

2 Thessalonians 3: 1 - 18

May 25, 2014

III We must pay much closer attention to living with self discipline under God’s word, (2 Ths. 1: 1-3: 18)

God Has Called His People To Work & Refrain From Idleness Which Is Worldly, (vs. 6 – 8)

**Message Emphasis:** The believer is called, by the work of the Gospel, to labor for the kingdom of Christ. Many today do not see the necessity to engage in such labors; many see faith only in terms of blessing. However, we must understand that to be a believer in Jesus Christ requires that we not only be good citizens but that we also truly labor for the Gospel work.

*I have often pitied some of the descendents of honourable and wealthy families of both sexes, the unhappiness of whose education has given them nothing to do, nor taught them to employ their hands or their minds: Therefore they spend their hours in sauntering, not knowing whither to go, and are at a loss what to do with themselves to wear their life away. Upon this account they give themselves up sometimes to the mean and scandalous pleasures of the lowest of the people, and spend their hours in chattering and vulgar merriment. They make the business of their dress the study and labour of half the day, and spend another part of it in trifling discourse and laughter, and in scattering jests and scandal upon their neighbours or acquaintance. All these pieces of folly and immorality would be rectified, if they would but find out for themselves some daily and proper business to be employed in. ~~ Isaac Watts*

1) Our Willingness To Demonstrate Our Love Of The Gospel Is Not Hard To See, (vs. 6) *Obedience is not difficult; just “hard labor”*

- Our testimony of salvation is truly at stake *Why did Paul say this? What is at stake? Who is really harmed?*  
**Now we command** (Pres.Act.Ind) **you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,** “And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.” (Colossians 3:15-17, ESV)
- Failure to live by the Gospel is worldliness *How do I intermingle with the world in unsuspecting ways?*  
**that you keep** (Pres.Mid.Inf) **away from any brother who is walking** (Pres.Act.Part) **in idleness**
- We cannot & should not claim ignorance on this matter *What is my obligation now that I have been shown the error?*  
**and not in accord with the tradition that you received** (Aor.Act.Ind) **from us.** “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like.” (James 1:22-24)

2) Our Testimony Of Salvation By God’s Grace Alone Is Not Hard To Express, (vs. 7 – 8a) *There is no entitlement in Christ*

- Our testimony of salvation is our obligation to pass on *How do we know? What should we imitate?*  
**For you yourselves know** (Perf.Act.Ind) **how you ought** (Pres.Act.Ind) **to imitate** (Pres.Act.Inf) **us,** “Therefore be alert, remembering that for three years I did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. I coveted no one’s silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities and to those who were with me. In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ” (Acts 20:31-35)
- Our testimony of salvation is by grace & NOT merit *In what areas do I believe I am entitled to blessing?*  
**because we were not idle** (Aor.Act.Ind) **when we were with you, nor did we eat** (Aor.Act.Ind) **anyone’s bread without paying for it,** “Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God,” (2 Corinthians 3:4-5, ESV)

3) Our Commitment To Live According To Our Professions Is Not Hard To Prove, (vs. 8b)

- Salvation requires constant “hard labor” *Why am I unwilling to “work” for the Gospel?*  
**but with toil and labor we worked** (Pres.Act.Part) **night and day,**
- That none of us hinder the Gospel in any way *How is my response a hindrance to the Gospel?*  
**that we might not be a burden** (Aor.Act.Inf) **to any of you.**

\*\*\*What Must I Do To Be Assured Of Faith? \*\*\*

**Message Directive:** Look to Christ for the salvation of your soul; ONLY in Christ will you find any strength to undergo the “hard labor” of the Christian walk.

4. God Has Called His People To Serve As An Example Of True Godliness In Very Simple Ways, (vs. 9 - 12)
5. God Has Called His People To Preserve The Holiness Of Their Testimony, (vs. 13 - 15)
6. God Has Called His People To Trust In The Teachings Handed Down By His Messengers, (vs. 16 - 18)