

## BRETHREN PRAY FOR US

### **TEXT: II THESS. 3:1-18**

#### **Introduction:**

1. I mentioned last week, the apostle Paul's emphasis on prayer (2:13). Prayer is asking, but prayer is more than asking and prayer includes giving thanks to God (2:13).
2. Paul often mentions in his epistles that he prayed regularly for them, and he also asked them to pray for him.
3. Paul wrote in I Thessalonians 5:25, "Brethren, pray for us," and II Thessalonians 3 begins with the same request.
4. First & Second Thessalonians both deal extensively with eschatology, and both epistles conclude with practical exhortations.
5. In fact, most of the apostle Paul's epistles end with practical exhortations. The pattern is usually – first doctrine, then duty. Or, first creed, then conduct.
6. The great Bible preacher, H.A. Ironside, preached a message from this chapter, and he entitled his message, "Christianity in Practice."
7. Another preacher called his message, "Serving and Waiting" (3:5).

#### **I. PRAYERFULNESS (II Thess. 3:1; cf. 1:11).**

- "that the word of the Lord may have free course" (3:1), i.e., that the Word of God may run swiftly.
- "And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men..." (3:2).
- Wicked men are often very "unreasonable" (3:2). But Christians are to be reasonable.
- "But the Lord is faithful..." (3:3). He delivers us from temptations. Our Lord taught us to pray, "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matthew 6:13).
- "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it" (I Cor. 10:13).
- Here we see both God's part and man's part (3:3-5). The Lord establishes us, and keeps us from evil (3:3). The Lord directs our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ (3:5).
- Our part: obedience. "Trust and Obey."

- The Lord directs those who want to be directed (3:5). “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths” (Proverbs 3:5, 6).
- “He leadeth me beside the still waters” (Psalm 23:2).
- “The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way” (Psalm 37:23).
- “Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth” (John 16:13).

## II. SEPARATION (3:6-15).

- Apparently some Christians had quit their jobs and were idly waiting for the Lord to return. They were then “mooching” off of others (cf. I Thess. 4:11, 12).
- “Doctrinal misconception always results in practical misconduct” (Charles C. Ryrie).
- The fact is that the doctrine of the second coming of Christ ought to motivate us to work harder to get the Gospel out and win souls.
- The biggest missions-minded and missions-supporting churches have always been fundamental, soulwinning, premillennial churches.
- “I have felt like working three times as hard ever since I came to understand that my Lord was coming back again. I look on this world as a wrecked vessel. God has given me a life-boat, and said to me, 'Moody, save all you can.' This world is getting darker and darker: its ruin is drawing nearer and nearer: if you have any friends on this wreck unsaved, you had better lose no time in getting them off” – D.L. Moody.
- Regarding II Thessalonians 3:6, 14, 15 – it is sometimes necessary to separate from a disobedient brother in Christ.
- The apostle Paul had the “power” (i.e., the right) to be supported financially by those who sat under his ministry (3:7-9; cf. I Cor. 9:6-14; I Timothy 5:17, 18).
- But Paul waived that right in order to be an example to them of unselfishness and hard work.
- The Bible teaches that if a man will not work he should not eat (3:10). Laziness is a sin, and it is not unkind to tell someone to go out and get a job (3:10-12).

- We are not to be weary in well doing (3:13). We must press on. Moody said, “I get weary in the work, but never weary of the work.”
- The purpose for separation: that the errant brother might get right with God (3:14, 15). The goal must be restoration (cf. Gal. 6:1).
- Spurgeon said, “The truest love to those who err is not to fraternize with them in their error but to be faithful to Jesus in all things.”

### **III. BENEDICTION (3:16-18).**

- Typical Pauline benediction.
- The “token” is his customary signature (3:17).
- Paul always ends with, “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen” (3:18).
- It is also the last verse in the book of Revelation. “The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

### **CONCLUSION:**

1. Charles Haddon Spurgeon contrasted verses 11 and 12 and 13.
2. "working not at all, but are busybodies" -- vs. 11.
3. "that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread" -- vs. 12.
4. "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing" -- vs. 13.
5. Spurgeon:
6. A church should be like a hive of working bees. There should be order, and there will be order where all are at work. The apostle condemns disorder in verse 11. There should be quietness, and work promotes it (verse 12). There should be honesty, and work fosters it...While any strength remains, we may not cease from personal work for Jesus. Moreover, some will come in who are not busy bees but busybodies. They do not work for their own bread, but are surprisingly eager to eat that of others. These soon cause disturbance and desolation, but they know nothing of "well doing."