

INTRO

1. Review 1 Thessalonians

2. The main object of this letter is to correct erroneous misconceptions
 - a. on the minds of the Thessalonians regarding
 - i. the second coming of Jesus,
 1. either by **his own** former letter,
 2. or by **one forged** in his name.
 - b. They had the impression that that event was eminent.
 - c. This belief had produced an unhealthy concern; ver. 2.
 - d. It became necessary to clarify the subject,
 - i. in order to free their minds from alarm;

3. Intro to: 2 Thessalonians chapter 2

- a. the events which would take place
 - i. between the date of his First Letter
 - ii. and the Lord's coming,
- b. the apostle gives 3 things that will **take place**:
 - i. A great **apostasy**.
 - ii. The **removal of that power** which hindered the coming of the lawless one.
 - iii. The appearance of the lawless one, and his reign

2 Thessalonians 3:1–18

Request for Prayer

Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith. But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.

Warning Against Idleness

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "If a man will not work, he shall not eat."

We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right.

If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

Final Greetings

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

I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand, which is the distinguishing mark in all my letters. This is how I write.

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

4. vs.1-2

“Finally, brothers, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was with you. And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith.”

- a. 5 times in both 1 Thessalonians and 2 Thessalonians Paul asks the young church to **pray for him**.
- b. He wanted to **impress upon them** the importance of prayer
 - i. and that everything **he was doing** was dependent upon God.
- c. **Note:** that the message was spreading rapidly
 - i. **People were eager to learn** about this Jesus that they had heard about
 - ii. **Widely circulated** around the Roman Empire during Paul's day
 - iii. The message was accompanied by miraculous powers demonstrated by the Apostles

John 10:37–38

“Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.”

Mark 16:15–18

“He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

- iv. Miracles and signs produced faith
- v. Without the Scriptures (NT in process of being written)
 1. these signs will accompany Jesus' messengers

2. **to validate** the message, they are bringing.
- d. The prayer also included being delivered from evil men
 - i. Remember they were **run out of town** in both Phillippi and Thessaloniki
 - ii. Prior to that the Jews stoned Paul (in Lystra) thinking he was dead.
 - iii. People to oppose the preaching of the gospel
 1. **Disrupts their lives**
 2. **Challenges their beliefs**
 3. **Makes them uncomfortable**
5. **vs. 3** *“But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.”*
 - a. As Paul had just told them back in Chapter 2
 - i. that Satan is the one working behind the scenes –
 - ii. working through men
 - b. They would **need God** to strengthen them and protect them
 - i. **Satan** is much too powerful to take on by themselves
 - ii. They would need God’s supernatural power
 - iii. to bind Satan’s demonic powers (counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders) to overcome his lies.
 1. These are the lies that evil men bought into and believe
 2. Thus, bringing on them persecution.
6. **vs. 4-5** *“We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts into God’s love and Christ’s perseverance.”*
 - a. Paul’s confidence was based on
 - i. the report that Timothy brought back to them
 1. about the health of the church
 2. back in 1 Thessalonians Chapter 3
 - ii. Paul trusted that **God would continue** to strengthen their faith
 1. Because of their devotion to God
 2. and their perseverance
 3. in the midst of persecutions
7. **vs. 6** *“In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.”*
 - a. Paul asserts his authority by issuing a command
 - i. This is directed towards **Christians**
 1. **Not** directed to those who are lost
 - ii. A **command** is a strong word
 1. **Not** a suggestion

- 2. They had better follow up on what he is telling them
 - iii. And a brother (Christian)
 - 1. who is not following what Paul had taught them
 - 2. Both in person,
 - a. through Timothy
 - b. and in his previous letter
 - b. “Keep away” Alienate a brother who is idle
 - i. Withhold fellowship
 - ii. Don’t spend time with them
 - iii. Seems harsh
 - c. He goes on to explain what he means by “idle”
8. **vs. 7-9.** *“For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone’s food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow.”*
- a. Paul is calling the church to follow his example
 - i. They witnessed first-hand how he lived
 - ii. He didn’t mooch food from other people
 - iii. He either paid for it or worked for it.
 - iv. In fact, he toiled day and night so that he didn’t burden anyone
 - b. He uses his personal example to draw attention to those in the fellowship
 - i. Who felt entitled to benevolence from the church

1 John 3:16–18

“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.”

- ii. Reading this scripture,
 - 1. **some feel** it’s the churches responsibility
 - 2. to provide for them
 - 3. Part of the church’s benevolence
- iii. This scripture is **not in conflict** with what Paul is saying
 - 1. People who are not willing to work should not receive help from the church
 - 2. There have always been freeloaders in society

- iv. Take advantage of other Christian's generosity
- v. Christian Panhandlers
- c. Now, the scripture in **1 John** applies to people who justifiably **can't** work:
 - i. Elderly
 - ii. Disabled
 - iii. Mentally Retarded
 - iv. Short-term situations
 - 1. Recently losing a job
 - 2. Health conditions-Hospitalized
 - 3. Bereaved-grieving
 - 4. Pregnancy
- d. Some who work directly with the church
 - i. Are entitled to support (if they chose)
 - 1. Evangelist
 - 2. Elders
 - 3. Janitors/Maintenance

e. Widows

1 Timothy 5:16

"If any woman who is a believer has widows in her family, she should help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need."

9. **vs. 11-13** *"We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right."*
- a. This is not hypothetical
 - i. There were people in their church that were idle
 - ii. Paul is stating a fact
 - b. Paul calls attention to busybodies
 - i. People who constantly doing odd jobs
 - 1. But not earning enough to cover their financial needs
 - 2. Always coming up short

1 Timothy 5:11-14

"As for younger widows, do not put them on such a list. For when their sensual desires overcome their dedication to Christ, they want to marry. Thus, they bring judgment on themselves, because they have broken their first pledge. Besides, they get into the habit of being idle and going about from house to house. And not only do they become idlers, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things they ought

not to. So, I counsel younger widows to marry, to have children, to manage their homes and to give the enemy no opportunity for slander.”

- c. They not only are a burden to the church
 - i. They are also disruptive
 - ii. And typically cause people to get attitudes and sin
 - iii. And **don't** set a good example to the community
 - 1. For which we are evangelizing

10. **vs. 12** *“Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat.”*

- a. **Once again**, Paul exercises his authority
 - i. He commands and urges
 - ii. Those who are **idle**
- b. Start **taking responsibility** for themselves
 - i. Requires Repentance
 - ii. When someone wants to change,
 - 1. **Then** Christians can step in and help
 - a. Come up with **a plan**
 - b. Looking for work
 - 2. **Counselling** on personal discipline
 - 3. **Motivating** them to stick with it

11. **vs. 13** *“And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right.”*

- a. **Always choosing** to do what is right
 - i. Is exhausting
 - ii. Always being tempted to compromise
 - iii. Perseverance is the **key to character**

Romans 5:3–4

“Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.”

Romans 2:7

*“To those who by persistence [**perseverance**] in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life”*

- b. That is part of our ticket to heaven

12. **vs. 14-15** *“If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him. Do not associate with him, in order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.”*

- a. Paul **re-emphasizes** how we should respond to
 - i. those who are idle
 - ii. those who do not obey his instruction
- b. That **not only** includes the brother/sister who is idle
 - i. But those who continue to fellowship the idle person
 - ii. Because they are **not** following his instruction
 - 1. On how to deal with someone who is in sin
- c. The **goal of this command** is
 - i. To cause the person to be ashamed of his life situation
 - ii. It's for their benefit
- d. Purpose is **not** to cause them permanent harm
 - i. But temporary shame
 - ii. That would lead them to **repentance**
- e. We are **not** to regard them as an enemy
 - i. Or someone who is sinfully lost
 - 1. He hasn't fallen away
 - a. lost his salvation
 - 2. Or lost the Holy Spirit
- f. BUT A BROTHER WHO HAS GONE ASTRAY

13. *Final Greetings*

Vs.16-17 *"Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you. I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand, which is the distinguishing mark in all my letters. This is how I write"*

- a. **These last words** were written directly with Paul's handwriting.
 - i. His handwriting had a very distinguishing recognition to it
 - ii. Probably like many doctors had a very distinguishing signature
 - iii. It's **possible** that his hand got damaged when he was stoned in Lystra
 - iv. The balance of the letter was **probably written by Luke**
 - 1. Paul's travelling companion
 - 2. Dictated by Paul
 - 3. Who was also an accomplished writer
 - a. Gospel of Luke
 - b. Acts of the Apostles

14. **Vs. 18** *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all."*

- a. The same conclusion Paul uses in all his letters