

# Patiently Waiting for Christ

II Thessalonians 3:1-18

Introduction:

- We now come to a close in our series in Thessalonians
- We remember the previous admonition Paul gave in 2:17- every good word and **work!**
  - Eph 4:11- Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called!
- The theme of these letters has been the Lord's Return, and now we close with some specific principles while we await that great day!

## I. **PRAY-** v. 1-3

- a. Prayer is not a spiritual gift that only some believers have- every believer can engage in this! (Though there are some who know how to get ahold of God!)
- b. Prayer is the lifeblood of the church!
- c. Every work must have prayer behind if it is to succeed\*
- d. Behind every great and successful ministry or minister are people who are praying!
- e. You cannot pray for Paul today, but you can pray for Carl Lubin
- f. This may surprise some of you, but sometimes pastors deal with unreasonable and wicked men (v. 2). So, they need much prayer in dealing with all types of people.
- g. Free course for the Word- run free unhindered
  - i. Sometimes the spreading of the gospel is hindered more by people inside of the church than outside! Quote-while saints are bickering, questioning the pastor's methods, deciding whether it will work- souls are being lost to Satan!
  - ii. Satan is so much more in earnest than we are--he buys up the opportunity while we are wondering how much it will cost." — Amy Carmichael
  - iii. Free course- the word will produce the same marvelous results that it did in Thessalonica (I Thess 1:5)
  - iv. God has promised this: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. (Isaiah 55:11). But as with many of

God's promises, we are expected to take this promise in faith, and in prayer, to ask God to perform the promise for His glory.

II. Obey-v. 4-5, 14

- a. Trust (pray) and obey
- b. We may let Him down, but He never lets us down! V. 3
- c. Our Christianity is based on God's faithfulness, not our own!
- d. Established- many are unstable and on shaky ground. God's word establishes us!
- e. V. 4- continual obedience- through all stages of life
- f. Disobedience brought a curse upon Israel,
- g. V. 5 into the love of God-
  - i. Last week we examined the fact that we are beloved by God- that is our position. This is talking about our present experience
  - ii. Doesn't God love us unconditionally, why do we have to be directed into it? This deals with our personal experience of that love (the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts)- God's love is like the sunshine- we can bring clouds of sin/an umbrella which shields us from experiencing that love! Obedience vs. disobedience
- h. Obey while patiently waiting

III. Separate- v. 6, 14-15

- a. Sometimes in a church there is addition by subtraction
- b. V. 6- Withdraw- separate from the disorderly- sloppy Christians
  - i. Tradition- body of doctrine passed down from the Apostles (Bible doctrine)
  - ii. "The present tense of the verb walks denotes that it is a deliberate course of action. Their disorderly conduct is not an occasional lapse but a persistent practice." (Hiebert)
- c. You will be like the crowd you run around with- be careful of the company you keep! (parents ought to know the company their kids keep- social media)
- d. We separate from the world, but also from worldly Christians!
- e. V. 14-15- The role of separation, and the goal of separation- to restore the wayward member
  - i. Refraining from social fellowship, while he may still be looked on as a brother
  - ii. This will hopefully compel him to mend his ways

iii. Never be afraid to honor God rather than honoring a friendship

IV. **WORK**- v. 8-13

- a. We'll work till Jesus Comes- The believer waiting for the Lord is not a dreamer, but a worker- occupy till I come!
- b. We need to get to work in preaching the gospel and making disciples!
- c. I believe we must serve with excellence!
- d. Paul's view of full time ministry- Paul is specifically talking about his first missionary journey here. He did not let anyone pay for his work among them. When he arrived in town there was no reservation for him at the local Holiday Inn, there was no stipend or love offering taken for him the first time he was there. He mentions to the Thessalonians and the Corinthians that he supported himself through tentmaking. However, after the churches were established and Paul made his second and third missionary journeys to visit he did receive an offering from them.
  - i. I Cor 9:14- Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.
  - ii. I Tim 5:17-18- worthy of his reward (wages)
  - iii. **He had a right to be supported** but he decided to forego that right to be an example unto them, and prove false any accusation that he preached the Gospel for personal gain.
- e. According to Scripture the method of provision for God's people is a little four-letter word: WORK
- f. Isaac was a well digger, Jacob toiled for 14 years for his bride, the disciples were fisherman, Paul made tents- work existed before the curse! It just became more difficult after the Fall!
- g. V. 9-11- The importance of work- some were being idle perhaps because they were "waiting" for the Lord
  - i. Waiting- waiter waits on you at a restaurant by serving you
  - ii. Gardner for a wealthy owner of multiple homes (always stay ready)
  - iii. Athlete on the bench
- h. Some are unable to work- and that is one thing- but others are unwilling!
- i. As I look across the room this morning I know most folks in here are hard workers- but I am concerned about the next generation!

- i. According to God, there is no room for laziness, or handouts- we have a culture today that increasingly rewards laziness
  - ii. Sometimes well-meaning parents who want to provide the best life for their child, the life that they never had, can unknowingly reward laziness. Remember parent- how did you become hard-working and industrious?
  - iii. Idleness is fertile ground for the devil to sow his seeds
- j. V. 12- Some that are not busy in their own business but are busy in everyone else's!
  - k. Instead of working they are busybodies- gossipers
  - l. We remember the previous admonition Paul gave in 2:17- every good word and work!
  - m. V. 13- The work of the Lord: DL Moody- I get weary in the work, but not weary of the work

Conclusion:

- Paul gives his usual benediction as he concludes this wonderful epistle that deals with important Bible prophecy
- The emphasis is clear- waiting for Jesus includes fulfilling our duties and privileges until He comes!
- Number (count) our days, to make each day count for eternity
- "Work, for the night is coming,  
When man's work is done."