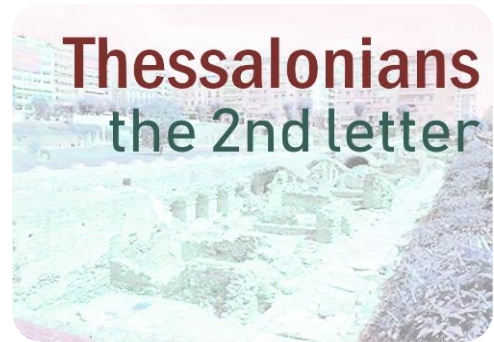


2 THESSALONIANS 3 vs 1

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This is the last chapter of Good News...Paul wrote to the church Jesus said He is building... which is another perfect example why Paul is rarely read or even mentioned in the church; and much like the last words Jesus said to his students... the night He was betrayed -- John 13-17... here we find verses so uncharacteristic of the mindset in those who claim to be followers of the Lord in our generation. So, let us see how well, we... in the choosy pick & choose generation are doing with what Paul wrote:



¹ **Finally, brothers and sisters pray for us** / you know, Paul has been maligned by scholars in some communions as some sort of domineering, arrogant woman hater; how they arrive at such inventiveness is beyond me. Notice, Paul did not say: congregants or friendship-, associate- or full- members. Paul said what Jesus taught him: nothing complicated, Paul knew the sisters in the Lord didn't need the reminder; the mothers and daughters would be praying for him as they, stood with him. And what should they pray for?

that the word of the Lord may have free course / that all the Lord Jesus taught us... after all He is the good Pastor, the great Teacher who, starting with Moses and all the prophets declared; may spread rapidly, and flow freely... unobstructed. Now days, the word of the Lord is rarely spoken in most church gatherings. Matthew 23 is fair warning to those who love the religious titles, who love the dramatic, artificial traditions to be seen of men, who deceitfully shut off the kingdom of heaven from those trying to enter in,

Finally brothers and sisters, pray for us that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified / **doxa** = a glorious, praise worthy outcome; something they will boast about in heaven and even in the church here on earth; **the word of the Lord** is powerful,

even as it is with you:

² **And that we may be delivered from unreasonable** / the word is: *atopos*, nothing even the slightest out of place; nothing twisted. The thief on the cross uses this word when silencing the other guy; saying we are guilty, but *this man has done nothing amiss*. We have the expression: **a miss is as good as a mile**; to miss... small or great, it doesn't matter: we missed! Jesus did nothing amiss.

and 'wicked men' / or women ...the word is *poneros anthropos*; C.S. Lewis commented, those who think their wrong, their oops and sorry; their little deviant behavior might be inconsequential and humorous; but what will it grow to after a million years? Notice, Paul includes himself in the need to be delivered... not merely from others; but also from our own genius selves:

that we may be delivered from the wicked wrongs... and from endlessly missing...

for not all have faith / what moves the core of our engine... and drives us to do what pleases God.

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³ But **the Lord** is faithful, **who will establish you** / Paul reminds the Thessalonians a 3rd time of this blessed truth: it is the risen Lord... who will be intervening in our lives here on earth; working with us through our minds and hearts attuned to Him, giving us strength... through His Spirit,

and guard you from evil / which is why Jesus said the night He was betrayed: *You are clean through the word which I have spoken to you; If you live in Me and My words live in you, you will ask what you will, and it will be done to you; without Me, you can do nothing.*

⁴ And we have confidence in the Lord touching you,

that you both do and will continue to do what we command / actually, *parangello*...closely related to *euangelion* = Good News, and Paul's **announcement** is not to write more rules for Mount Sinai, but simple to keep things orderly... like the Colossian gathering;

that you both do and will continue to do what we announced to you.

Starting with: **Get God our Father in focus**...

⁵ And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God / the selfless, tireless effort of God our Father to secure the well-being of the life He planted in His creation, faithful to His word... enduring to His own hurt; which is evidence that Paul was taught by the Lord Jesus. The night He was betrayed, this is exactly what Jesus told his disciples: those doing the math, putting it all together 1 by 1... *as I have loved you, you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples.* Jesus said: **Keep my commands**; and He only had two: **1st**. Love God our Father above all else; and **2nd**. Love one another... that's it! Jesus knew if His people did that... everything else would find its proper place; nothing would be amiss.

the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God,

and into the patient endurance of Christ / remembering all the words of what Christ endured in this great contradiction... as He emptied himself and graciously walked among us... all the way to the cross, when He gave His life for us; because Messiah will come one day, sooner than we can imagine; but first there must come a falling away of a faithless, loveless generation, which is why they are a lawless generation; the great rebellion, the great abandonment of faith... must come first.

How are we doing so far?

⁶ Now we **announce** to keep things orderly, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

withdraw yourselves from every brother who walks disorderly / in the middle voice... meaning something done for the individual's benefit; Dr. Vine wrote, the word is used of furling sails, of folding up the sails to stop sailing, to avoid journeying; it is a military term identifying insubordinate, unruly, idle soldiers not keeping rank, who think they are on leave.

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and not according to the tradition you received of us / this word for tradition = some habit, or instruction, or teaching handed over. We know Paul taught what he directly received from the risen Lord; Paul was not scribbling new rules and regulations; but he noticed how Gentile communities received the Good News of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

⁷ For you know how you ought to follow us: for we did not behave disorderly among you / like idle, unruly soldiers;

⁸ nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it / as if food was a free gift;

but working with labor and struggle / interesting, this same phrase was in the first letter written to the Thessalonians, which we know is the first letter Paul wrote to any community gathering: **ergazomai... kopos... mochthos...** indicate Paul and those with him were not busybodies... they were producing, striking, pounding away in weariness and in painful effort, opening up the new and living way, and this they did...

night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you / because Paul knew Jesus was the **Good Pastor**, and the hireling... you know the one doing it for \$\$\$ who Jesus said, **is not a shepherd, but takes the money and runs**:

⁹ Not because we do not have the right,

but to make ourselves an example for you to follow / Paul came to church with NO empty wheelbarrow; and he knew every worker is worthy of their pay; so from beginning to end we discover Paul could have done lots of things, but this is his life story, what he was willing to put his life on the line for... by 21st century standards: not very gratifying is it? but knew the Lord would provide; and he owed no man anything except the love of Christ. Thank you, Paul.

How are we doing so far?

¹⁰ For even when we were with you, we would announce to keep things orderly / finally, we have arrived at what the super-spiritual, legalistic tradition lovers have been salivating to hear. Paul's list of NEW rules and regulations, but remember the word just means announce; okay, okay! But what are we going to keep orderly?

that if anyone will not work, neither should he eat.

WHAT?

that if any / man or woman... will not work, neither should he eat.

Paul said that... and it is interesting: the amount of lunch food given out daily **in the public schools and colleges of America**... at tax payer's expense; that gets thrown in the trash... could solve the problem of

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hunger in the world. Now, in our genius 21st century generation...those who love to throw their verbal invectives at people of historic Christian faith in Jesus Christ... those who intolerantly demean and belittle; over this ONE ISSUE... UNTIL THEY SOLVE IT... they can shut the bleep up!

Any fanatic, self-righteous, 2-faced pharisaical hypocrites, concealing what is, while revealing what is not, they can all... shut up!

But back to Paul who was speaking to the church Jesus said He is building.

if any / man or woman... will **not work, neither should he eat** / not complicated, is it? I grew up among relatives, but not friends—because we can choose them... who celebrate obesity; some who think government should deliver them... and take care of them. Government? What government? Ours?! Yet they can't even keep the pot holes filled... and you want them to take care of your life? Not me! Wrong deliverer! I'm with Paul **working night and day**, that I owe nobody anything... but the love of Christ.

How are we doing so far?

¹¹ For we hear there are some who walk among you disorderly, not working at all, but are busybodies / who really don't believe the Lord is coming again; or that He kindly gave to everyone a talent; and to many people more than one, and if something still is lacking, they can ask Him.

¹² Now those are who we **announce to keep things orderly and urge by our Lord Jesus Christ, that they work quietly, and eat their own bread.**

¹³ But brothers and sisters, do **not be weary in well doing.**

¹⁴ And if any / man or woman... does **not obey our instruction in this letter, take note of that one and do not associate with him, that he be ashamed.**

¹⁵ Yet do **not count him as an enemy / he's just a lazy ass, but scold him as a brother.**

¹⁶ Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means.

The Lord be with you all / but He probably won't hang around to play BINGO or drink SHOTS.

¹⁷ I Paul send greetings with my own hand, this is my mark in every epistle: so I write.

¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

This is My Father's World