

## **2 Thessalonians 3**

**2 Thessalonians 3.1-5** – As is characteristic of just about all of Paul's letters, this part is doctrinal, and the second part is of a very practical nature

-Ch. 3 begins the very practical part of *2 Thessalonians*

**V1** – **What did Paul request of the Thessalonian Christians?** That they pray for Paul

-**Why pray for Paul?** That the gospel would spread rapidly

**V2** – **What else were they to pray for?** That Paul would be delivered from perverse and evil men

-Paul is very realistic here – not all people are “nice”

-There are some very evil people in the world, and we need God's help to escape from such people

-**Why didn't Paul ask that God would kill such evil people?** Because they might someday repent and be saved

**V3** – **What would the Lord do for the Thessalonian Christians?** Strengthen them, and protect them from the evil one (Satan)

-**What did Paul say that God would do for us when we are tempted to sin?** *1 Cor. 10:13*

– Furnish a way of escape

**V4** – **How did Paul build up the confidence of the Thessalonians?** He believed that they would always do what was right and be steadfast in the faith

-It always helps to expect the best of people

**V5** – A prayer that God would help them remain steadfast

## **2 Thessalonians 3.6-12**

**V6** – **What did Paul comment that they do with an unruly brother?** Stay away from him

-William Barclay said that the word "unruly" means “to play truant”

-This would certainly cover a lack of attendance and an absence from the work of the church

-In other words, a loafer in the church

-Such a person was to be disfellowshipped, and members were not to be close to these people

**V7** – **In what way did Paul set the example for the Thessalonians?** He did not live an unruly life among them

**V8** – **How had Paul managed to survive while preaching at Thessalonica?** By working at another job, in addition to preaching

-**Why had he done this?** So that no one could accuse him of taking advantage of the church

**V9** – **Did Paul have the right to be supported by the congregation?** Yes (see *1 Cor. 9* – the exact same subject)

-So Paul chose not to accept support from Thessalonica, even though he had the right to

accept that support

-Paul must have suspected that the Thessalonians had a problem with working for their living, so he had to set the right example for them by working hard to survive there

**V 10 – What did Paul preach on this subject while he was at Thessalonica?** If anyone will not work, then he should not eat

**-How would this affect our benevolent program today?** Directly in many cases

-Maybe we should make a great effort to put people to work if they want money from the church

-Notice that in *1 Timothy 5:5-16*, Paul seems to say that even widows that the church might be helping should do some work for the church in return for the help they are receiving

**V 11 – What subject had developed at the church in Thessalonica?** Some had stopped working and were leading undisciplined lives

**-What had they become?** Busybodies, etc.

**V 12 – What was the command of Paul in this matter?** Each person was to work with his own hands and earn his own bread

-Again, what a great lesson for our benevolent work today (and also for our government)

## **2 Thessalonians 3.13-15**

**V 13 – What did Paul tell them not to do?** Not to grow weary in doing good

**-Is that possible in the church today?** Yes, when we see people say that they are going to do something, and it doesn't get done, and when so many are doing nothing at all, not even coming regularly to the services

-When you see people miss the services of the church for no good reason, it makes a person weary of doing good

-So the First Century church must have had the same kind of problems that we have today

**V 14 – What was to be done to the person who did not obey the commands of Paul?** He was to be disfellowshipped

-The members were not to associate with that person

**V 15 – Does this mean that when a person is disfellowshipped, we can never speak to him again?** No, we are not to “shun” him, but we are to admonish him as a brother

-Notice *1 Corinthians 5:11* – we are told not to eat a meal with such a person

-So our contact is limited to urging him to repent

**2 Thessalonians 3.16-18** – In some way, this has been a really stormy letter, but it now has a calm and beautiful ending and a warm “benediction”

**V 16 – What did Paul pray for concerning the Thessalonians?** That God would grant them peace

-Notice that he said “*all*” in this verse – he had no hard feelings against any of the Christians

there – he loved them all

**V 17** – Very interesting

-**How did Paul close all his letters?** With some kind of special signature

-Even today, when we type a letter, we put our own handwritten signature at the end of it

-**What are some implications of this verse?** That he might have had eye trouble and that the book of *Hebrews* was not written by Paul

-His signature kept forgeries from arising in the First Century

**V 18** – Again Paul made reference to “*all*” the Christians at Thessalonica – they were all precious to his heart

Revised 2013-01-26