

**2 Thessalonians 2:16-17 (16)** Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given *us* everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, **(17)** comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

**(2 Thessalonians 3:1)** Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the **word of the Lord** may run *swiftly* and be glorified, just as *it is* with you, **(2)** and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.

Paul and his band of travelers were under constant persecution; scoffers resisted him and tried to put up as many road-blocks as they could!

These are Jews and gentiles who did not want to hear the truth; they believed in their man-made religions that took no faith to believe; as long as they could continue in their immoral and wicked ways, they were content in their faithlessness because no demands were put on them to behave!

**(2 Thessalonians 3:3)** But **the Lord is faithful**, who will establish you and guard *you* from the evil one.

Their faithlessness is contrasted with the faithfulness of Our LORD; He is the only perfectly faithful One; We stand on the Rock of our Salvation, confident that he will guard us from the evil one, the Son of Perdition!

**(2 Thessalonians 3:4)** And we have **confidence in the Lord** concerning you, **both that you do and will do the things we command you.**

Notice that Paul didn't say "we have confidence in you"! His confidence was always in Jesus through whom he could do all things because Jesus strengthened him for every good work.

The principle is the same with us: we do good but only by the grace of God so that we cannot boast! Pride is at the root of all sin that will cause our fellowship with Jesus to suffer.

**(2 Thessalonians 3:5)** Now may **the Lord direct your hearts** into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.

Paul's prayer is that the LORD will continue to direct our hearts so that we can be immersed in the Love of God and the endurance and fortitude provided by Jesus!

**(2 Thessalonians 3:6)** But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you **withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.**

The word "disorderly" has both a moral connection (that is, acting in an immoral manner) or being unruly or insubordinate, acting in a rebellious manner;

**2 Thessalonians 2:15** Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

This struck me strange at first because elsewhere where the word “traditions” is used, it is referred to in a negative manner because of the “traditions of the fathers” or “traditions of the elders”. Their system of laws, ordinances and statutes kept people FROM having a relationship with their God; It was all external appearances done to persuade others of how “good and righteous” they were. White-washed tombs is the name given to them by Jesus!

The traditions to which Paul refers are the “Gospel” traditions – mainly because all of them were delivered first from the Father to the Son; then the Son to the apostles and from the apostles and disciples to the newly formed “Body of Christ”, that is, the church. Not only the Gospel, but ordinances such as the Lord’s Supper and baptism; Also, as we have seen throughout the NT scriptures, basic rules for right conduct in the church and in the world (See GILL on this verse and 2 Thess 2:15);

(2 Thessalonians 3:7) For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not **disorderly** among you;

Paul encouraged the new believers to follow his example of how to live the acceptable life of a follower of Christ.

Disciplined, diligent, hard-working and self-sufficient in that he did not depend on others to feed him or otherwise support him; But knowing Paul, this “self-sufficiency” was based on the Grace of Jesus and not really on himself!

(2 Thessalonians 3:8) nor did we eat anyone's bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, (9) not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us.

Paul could have exercised his apostolic authority and asked for provisions (room and board); but he was not afraid of work! And by so doing, presented a good example to the church!

(2 Thessalonians 3:10) For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: **If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat.**

This seems to be the cry of conservative America. Even Jesus recognized that the poor will be with us always (Matt 26:11).

There are also going to be disabled, handicapped, and otherwise unable to work because of some mental or physical reason; We need to support these folks the best we can; And, in cases where skills can be learned, we train them and support them in their jobs;

But those who are able but refused to work, these should not be fed; Hunger is a great motivator for attitude adjustments.

Not to give an excuse, but some have offered the following reason for this behavior: their fear that Christ was coming back soon and their misunderstanding of the church’s position as the Bride of Christ. This is part of the anti-pre-tribulation stance: You “pre-tribblers” are just biding your time until Jesus takes you out before the tribulation begins; You’re not about the Father’s business and you are just scared of the judgments of God.

(2 Thessalonians 3:11) For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a **disorderly** manner, not working at all, but are busybodies.

Busybodies are those who are, meddling in the affairs of others while they could be productive members of the community.

(2 Thessalonians 3:12) Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread.

The first prescription for the non-worker is simple: work without fuss and earn enough to feed yourself!

(2 Thessalonians 3:13) But *as for* you, brethren, do not grow weary *in* doing good.

Giving the following verse, I don't think Paul is telling the church to not weary doing good things for those who will not work. But, in a general sense, there's a lot of legitimate needs that need to be handled. Doing it with Joy and humility will guard us from becoming weary and even resentful!

(2 Thessalonians 3:14) And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed.

The second prescription for the church is: do not fellowship with persons who are disobedient in this manner; perhaps a bit of gentle reproof in the form of "shunning" will provide the needed shame to awake this person from their chosen state of laziness.

The world teaches that we should never shame someone; but the Greek word here means to "turn your attention inward" so that you can properly see the sin you are committing;

(2 Thessalonians 3:15) Yet do not count *him* as an enemy, but admonish *him* as a brother.

The shunning needs to be in Love with an eye towards repentance and restoration to the Body of Christ!

(2 Thessalonians 3:16) Now may **the Lord of peace** Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord *be* with you all.

Right after Jesus told His disciples that he was going away and that the Holy Spirit would come, He said to them:

**John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**

And, right before His arrest and crucifixion He once again reminded them:

**John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace.**

In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Only the LORD of Peace can give us perfect peace! Left to ourselves, our peace is always dependent on good outcomes to bad circumstances!

(2 Thessalonians 3:17) The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so I write.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-2 Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, (2) not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.

So, Paul is ensuring that they see his hand-writing so that what he has written would be considered legitimate!

(2 Thessalonians 3:18) The **grace of our Lord Jesus Christ** *be* with you all. Amen.

This really is Paul's favorite prayer! We must always be acutely aware of God's Grace in our lives and what a precious gift it is!