

Warning Against Idleness—2 Thessalonians 3:6–18

Topics: Character, Consequences, Discipline, Employment, Example, Jobs, Laziness, Work

Open It

1. How does a person learn good work habits?
2. What kind of help do you think should be given to people who do not work?

2 Thessalonians 3:6–18 (ESV)

⁶Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us.

⁷For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you,

⁸nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.

⁹It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.

¹⁰For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.

¹¹For we hear that some among you walk in idleness, not busy at work, but busybodies.

¹²Now such persons we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living.

¹³As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good.

¹⁴If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed.

¹⁵Do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

¹⁶Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all.

¹⁷I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. This is the sign of genuineness in every letter of mine; it is the way I write.

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

Explore It

3. Why do you think Apostle Paul wrote for believers to avoid those who are idle? (3:6)
4. What example had Paul set when he was with the church at Thessalonica? (3:7–8)
5. What work habits did Paul display while he was in Thessalonica? (3:8)
6. What rule had Paul given about working and eating? (3:10)
7. What reports had Paul heard about some of the believers in Thessalonica? (3:11)
8. What was Paul's command to the busybodies in Thessalonica? (3:12)
9. What encouragement did Paul give to those he called "brothers"? (3:13)

10. How were the Thessalonians to regard anyone who ignored Paul's instructions? (3:14–15)
11. What should we do with people who do not obey these instructions? (3:14–15)
12. What blessing did Paul invoke on the Thessalonian believers? (3:16)
13. What did Paul do to make his final greeting special? (3:17)

Get It

14. What disciplinary action should be taken toward a Christian who ignores the teachings of the Word of God?
15. How should Christians respond to someone who doesn't work or support his or her family?

Apply It

16. From what bad influences do you need to distance yourself? How?