



**Stay on Target**  
Studies in 2 Thessalonians

Warning Against Idleness  
2 Thessalonians 3  
**Lesson 8**

### **Introduction**

False teachers and false doctrines had infiltrated the church at Thessalonica, bringing with it disorderly or unruly conduct. Unruly conduct has the clear meaning of being not *according to tradition*, or living in an irresponsible manner, no longer willing to work. Certainly, this was not the example that Paul and his friends had left for them. "Idlers" were often those who held an *aristocratic* disdain for manual labor, or a mistaken belief that the day of the Lord had already come and canceled the need for labor. Another more likely possibility was that they may have pursued a *philosophic* mindset. "Idlers" were known to pass their days in the marketplaces of Greek cities debating the newest ideas. Though some of them may have been genuinely converted, they had not given up their previous lifestyle.

Paul exhorts the church that they had not been given an example of idleness from he and his friends, but instead they labored so as to not be a burden to anyone. He charged them that anyone who refused to work should not be allowed to eat free of charge. He admonishes the brethren to not grow weary in doing good, but to set a good example for others to follow

### ***Treasures of the Heart***

*But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good.*

*2 Thessalonians 3:13*

## **What does it say?**

The first step is getting the lay of the land. **Carefully observe the text** looking to see where you might dig to find hidden treasure. **Mark your text** looking for repeated words, contrasts or similarities. Look for answers to, Who? What? When? Where? Why or How?

### **2 Thessalonians 3:1-5**

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. 3 But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one. 4 And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you. 5 Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ.

### **Digging Deeper**

Dig deeper using other resources such as a dictionary, concordance, maps & cross-references. Notate where you found it to share with the group. Look for commands to obey or questions to be answered. What does God want you to know about Himself?



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## 2 Thessalonians 3:6-18

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. 7 For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; 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. 10 For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. 11 For we hear that there are some who walk among you in a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. 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. 13 But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good. 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. 15 Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

16 Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with you all. 17 The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so I write. 18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.



## **L**ook - What do you see?

Write a summary sentence that states the **main point of the chapter** from the observations you made. What is the author trying to say?

Aim: \_\_\_\_\_

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## **L**earn – What does it mean?

What **lesson** can I draw from my observations? **Ask yourself, "What was the intended meaning of the original author?"** Is there a command to obey or a warning to heed? An example to follow or avoid? **State each lesson in a simple sentence that you could share with someone else.** (aim for 10 words or less).

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5 \_\_\_\_\_

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2 Thessalonians 3:6-18 \_\_\_\_\_

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## **L**ive - How can I apply it?

**Ask yourself, "What course of action do I need to take to apply each lesson?"** How should it change me? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? (aim for 10 words or less).

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5 \_\_\_\_\_

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2 Thessalonians 3:6-18 \_\_\_\_\_

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**Challenge:** Use cross-references to find correlating scripture that backs up a main point of the chapter. **Summarize your findings in your own words.**

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## **Looking for Jesus. . .**

Hope for Christ's return is an anchor in the midst of persecution and the motivation for holy living in the midst of a perverse world. The expectation of the **Day of the Lord** is the theme of 2 Thessalonians. Paul writes to correct false doctrine that has crept into the church. See if you can state Paul's correction about the **Day of the Lord**, and how they are to live daily. **State these truths in your own words.**

**S**tate a reference to the Day of the Lord?

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**H**ow is it applied to daily living?

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**W**hat words or phrases are repeated? Repeated words help us discover the main point, and what is most important to the author.

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## **Getting The Point**

See if you can boil down the meaning of **each section** into one or two words. This helps you fully understand what the author is trying to convey. (It's fun to alliterate if you want to try) Did you catch the vision?

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5 \_\_\_\_\_

2 Thessalonians 3:6-18 \_\_\_\_\_

**Title** State the main **point** of the passage in the form of a title.

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**Flex Your Muscles** Can you discover an O.T. example of this N.T. truth?

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### **Radiating His Truth . . .**

Work is not primarily a thing one does to live, but the thing one lives to do. It is, or should be, the full expression of the worker's faculties, the thing in which he finds spiritual, mental and bodily satisfaction, and the medium in which he offers himself to God.

Dorothy L. Sayers



