

2 Thessalonians Ch.3

MAJOR THEME: REDEMPTIVE SEPARATION

Hymn: #185 Lo, He Comes With Clouds Descending

1) EHORTATION TO PRAYER V.1-5

a) For the Message V.1

- i) That the Gospel might **spread rapidly**
 - (1) Urgency; a godless eternity is perilously close to many; the Gospel is the “power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes”. (Rom.1:16)
 - (2) Peter speaks of looking forward to the day of God and “speeding its coming” (2 Pet 2:12) by living a godly life that demonstrates and speaks the Gospel.
 - (a) I do not want you to be ignorant of this mystery, brothers, so that you may not be conceited: Israel has experienced a hardening in part until the full number of the Gentiles has come in. (Rom. 11:25)
- ii) That the Gospel might be **honoured**
 - (1) As it was with you
 - (a) 1 Thes. 1:5 “...with power, The Holy Spirit, and deep Conviction
 - (i) Power of God as in Rom.1:16
 - (ii) Presence of The Holy Spirit- not resisted
 - (iii) Personal Conviction- faith and repentance
- iii) The spreading of the Gospel and the preparation of hearts for its reception is God’s work and we participate in that miracle primarily by prayer, then by action.

b) For the Messengers v.2

- i) To be **delivered** from wicked and evil men
- ii) Not everyone has faith
 - (1) The preaching of the Gospel elicits two very distinct responses
 - (a) Honour and faith
 - (b) Disdain and unbelief
- iii) Matt. 10:34 Jesus said “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.”
- c) V.3 Jesus is faithful to protect from the evil one.
 - i) 1 John 5:18 “the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.”

2) SEPERATION FROM THE IDLE V.6-15

a) Separation

- i) V.6 “keep away from” Lit. hold aloof; avoid; withdraw
- ii) V. 14 “do not associate” Lit. do not mix together; keep company with

b) Command

- i) V.6 This is not a suggestion. It is an authoritative word from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself

c) From who?

- i) Every **brother** who is idle
 - (1) Note this is about brothers within the assembly of believers, not the unbelieving world (1 Cor. 5:9-11)
- ii) Categories of idleness

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(1) **Idle- ἀτάκτως** Lit. “walks disorderly”; was a military term meaning to ‘break ranks’; to be out of line; out of God’s order; unruly; insubordinate; refusing to observe God’s word and discipline.

(2) Individual Idleness

(a) Context here is unproductive sloth and laziness; used three times v. 6, 7, 11

(i) In contrast to Paul’s example when he had been among the Thessalonians

1. Paid for the food he ate v.8
2. Worked, laboured and toiled night and day
3. Gave them the rule: “If a man is not willing to work, he shall not eat”

(b) Many other forms of individual idleness; of “walks disorderly”; ‘break ranks’; to be out of line; out of God’s order; unruly; insubordinate; refusing to observe God’s word and discipline.

(3) Corporate Idleness

(a) In 1 Cor.14:32-33 the context is instruction about orderly worship corporately

(b) “The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets. For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.”

(i) Disorder- Lit. ἀκαταστασίας -not-down-stand; “unsettled”; “commotion generating confusion”; out of control and “up for grabs”.

(ii) Peace- Lit. εἰρήνης,- to join together as a whole (note: *the opposite of breaking ranks*); order; tranquillity

(c) Many professing churches today manifest idleness through disorder and lack of peace as here defined

d) Paul’s instructions to the idle minority

i) V. 12 Command and exhorts to

(1) “settle down and earn the bread they eat”; Lit- with ἡσυχίας- tranquillity/quietness

e) Pauls instructions to the obedient majority

i) Never tire of doing what is right

(1) We may grow tired **IN** doing what is right, but let us never grow tired **OF** doing what is right.

ii) Take special note- Lit. “mark” those who disobey this instruction

(1) Do not associate with them

(a) In order that he may feel ashamed

(i) The sense of shame is redemptive not punitive; to bring about correction, not sentence with judgement

(ii) Is the responsibility of every individual at a personal level; not a public identifying and corporate discipline; unlike 1 Tim. 5:20 where elders who sin ARE to be rebuked publicly

(b) Not break off all contact with him

iii) Warn him as a brother

(1) Warn- Lit. νοθετεῖτε (mind+place); to appeal to the mind, supplying doctrinal and spiritual substance and content. (Previously used in 1 Thes.5:14)

(a) Different than denouncing

(2) Brother, not an enemy

(a) As one who is immature, undisciplined not as an unbeliever

(i) Jude 22-23 “Be merciful to those who doubt; snatch others from the fire and save them; to others show mercy, mixed with fear--hating even the clothing stained by corrupted flesh”

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3) BENEDICTION V.16-18

a) Prayer for Peace to the Lord of Peace

b) Assurance and Insurance

i) Paul usually dictated his epistles to an amanuenses (*Def. "a literary or artistic assistant, in particular one who takes dictation or copies manuscripts"*), however in this letter he wrote to the Thessalonians in his own hand. Paul notes that his own handwriting is quite distinguishable. This may have been due to his eye problems (Gal.4:15). Whatever it was, it was unique and Paul said "...in all my letters. This is HOW I WRITE.

(1) Paul did this to **Assure** the Thessalonians that this letter, unlike the letter they received in 2:2 which unsettled them, was genuine and from him.

(2) Paul also did this to **Insure** that any future "supposed letters from him" could be held up against this one to compare the clearly unique hand writing and safeguard them from deception.