Women’s Bible Study

I & II Thessalonians

**Fourteenth Study** - II Thessalonians 3

**“Enduring Hope and Peace”**

Studies in I&II Thessalonians Pages 68 - 74 (using Lesson 15)

Once again, the questions from Rev. Hanko’s Study Guides are in parenthesis after the questions.

All quotes by Wm. Hendrikson are from his New Testament Commentary on I & II Thessalonians

# Day One\_

**Intercessory Prayer**

Today we will look at intercessory prayer – what it is, and its benefits.

**II Thessalonians 3:1 - Study Guide pages 68-69**

**Read:** II Thess. Chapter Three Matt. 9:38 Luke 10:2 Rom. 15:30-32

II Cor. 1:11 Phil. 1:19 Col. 4:2&3 Philemon 22 I Tim. 2:1-3

**Do:** 1. Read the introduction to Lesson Fifteen on page 68 in the study guide.

1. Paul asks for the intercessory prayers of the congregation. (#.2. pg.69)

For what does the apostle desire intercession of the congregation? (Q.2.a.pg.69)

**Food for thought:** “Jesus teaches us to pray in the plural. Not *my* Father in heaven, but *our* Father in heaven. This means that we are part of a family, and we should be thinking about other members of God’s family as we go to Him in prayer.

This will affect how we pray. God’s people are gathered from all the nations of the earth. And God’s people have a great variety of needs. Some of God’s people are very sick and deal with this day after day. Others of God’s people are persecuted severely for their faith. Some of God’s people deal with grief and loneliness in their lives. Others are very poor. And then there are also many of God’s elect people who are still living in darkness, under the power of Satan. We must pray for all of these in their needs.

Sometimes we do not know what to do for others. An elderly person in the nursing home says, “I really cannot do much for the church and for fellow believers anymore.” But that is not correct. The best thing that we can do for others is to pray for them in their needs. Jesus teaches us that we should not be selfish in our prayers. So often we cry out from our own need, failing to remember that there are many of God’s people with much greater needs than our own.

Do you remember this as you pray? Do you have in your mind all of god’s people and all their many different needs as you pray? If you do not, your prayers will fall to the ground and will not be heard by God. This is what James means in chapter 4 when he says, “Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.” Selfish prayers are not answered by God.

But when we pray with and for others, then our prayers are caught up in the great stream of acceptable prayer that ascends to God – what the Scriptures call “the prayers of the saints.” And these intercessory prayers serve the great purpose of bringing us together as brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ.”

Rev. R. Kleyn in the RWH sermon Praying to Our Heavenly Father

# To take with you today: II Thessalonians 3:1

**“Prayer is one of the means God is pleased to use to bless His people. We too should use this means,**

**praying specifically for one another and urging our fellow saints to pray for us in specific times of need.”**

# \_Day Two\_

**That the Word of the Lord May Have Free Course**

Today we look at what Paul is asking the Church of Thessalonica to pray for.

# II Thessalonians 3:1-3 - Study Guide page 69

**Read:** II Thess. 3:1-3 Acts 6:7 Acts 13:40-48 Acts 19:13-20

**Do:**

1.  What does it mean for the word to have “free course,” as it did in Thessalonica (vs. 1)? (Q.2.b.pg.69)

1. How is verse 2 related to verse 1? (Q.2.c.pg.69)
2. Do Paul and his coworkers also make intercession for the Thessalonians (vs. 5)?

Find other examples in the two epistles. (Q.2.d.pg.69)

**Food for thought:** “… preaching is, namely, God’s speech to His people. When God speaks, He reveals Himself. He gives the knowledge of Himself to His covenant people. At the same time, preaching is a means of grace. Through preaching God furnishes His people with the necessary spiritual gifts to be godly husbands and fathers leading their families, to be covenant wives and mothers in the home, to be children who go off to school, and also the gifts to be preachers of the gospel. This is God’s means, His powerful means, to teach about Himself and to equip men to serve Him in their life and especially in the church…

Pray for them [preachers] that they have the strength to stand adamantly for the truth in the face of opposition. This opposition may arise right within their own congregations—when they preach against specific sins and that offends some in the congregation who love that sin; and when they preach antithetically and expose and condemn the lie and it offends friends and relatives of the one who holds to that lie. Opposi­tion comes also from the outside. The world hates Christ, the world hates the truth, and the world hates the faithful messengers of the truth. And, closer to home, there is op­position even within the Reformed camp. There are those who would speak malicious words against us because we hold up the truth of sov­ereign, particular grace and reject every compromise thereto. Pray for these men, considering what they must be prepared to endure.

Pray for us as you remember the fact that we live in the last times. Evil abounds. The unmistakable clouds of persecution gather. Min­isters stand in the front line of the conflict. These young men may well be some of the first who give up their lives for the sake of the gospel in the final, great persecution under the Antichrist. Thus it is incumbent on you that you pray for us that we may have the courage to stand for the cause of Christ; to preach sovereign, particu­lar grace and the glorious uncon­ditional covenant of grace; and to preach the antithetical life. Courage will be necessary as we approach the end, to be faithful preachers, even if the whole world rises up to snuff out the witness.

# To take with you today: I Thessalonians 1:5

**“From those that know Thee may Thy love and mercy ne’er depart,**

**And may Thy justice still protect and bless the upright heart.”** Psalter #94 st. 5

# \_\_Day Three\_ Our Intercessory Prayers

Today we look at intercessory prayers throughout scripture.

# II Thessalonians 3:1&2 - Study Guide page 69

**Read:** II Thessalonians 3:1-2 Eph. 1:15-19  [Ephesians 6:18](about:blank)

**Do:** 1. The scriptures often admonish us to make intercessory prayers for others (I Timothy 2:1-3)

(#3 pg. 69)

What are intercessory prayers? (Q. 3.a.pg.69)

2. Find other places in scripture that admonish us to make intercessory prayers. (Q.3.b.pg.69)

3.Why must we make intercessory prayers? (Q.3.c.pg.69)

**Food for thought:** “Our Heidelberg Catechism teaches us that prayer is the chief part of thankfulness to God and that God gives His grace and Holy Spirit to those only who with sincere desire continually ask them of Him and are thankful. These are tremendous statements. They are the clear teaching of the Word of God. Indeed, we ought always to be asking ourselves, are we being faithful in prayer? Are we continuing in prayer with all perseverance? When we pray do we pray earnestly and sincerely and not just generally, formally, and coldly? Do we pray constantly for the needs of the church of Jesus Christ and for the ministry of the gospel? Do we pray earnestly and with fervent love for our fellow saints? How often would we avoid strife and bitterness and anger in the church if we spent more time praying for one another? Do we know the great needs and concerns of our fellow saints or do we care only about ourselves? When we pray do we pray only for our own needs or also for the needs of one another?” Rev. den Hartog in S.B.: The Church Prayer Mtg

“In the wisdom and providence of God, the church of Jesus Christ depends on preaching, and therefore on qualified, Reformed preachers. Preaching is the power of God unto salvation. Preaching is the means God uses to work and confirm faith. The sheep hear the voice of the good Shepherd through faithful preach­ing, spoken by faithful ministers, and they follow Him. As believers, our spiritual life depends on preaching, and thus on Spirit-equipped, Christ-ordained preachers!Prof. R. Dykstra in S.B. Pray for Us

**To take with you today: Ephesians 1:15&16**

**Pray for us because of the importance of the semi­nary’s work, that is, equip­ping men to be faithful, Reformed ministers of the gospel. The work of the minister is indispensible for the church.”**

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# \_Day Four Benefits of Intercessory Prayer

Today we look into the benefits of our intercessory prayers.

# II Thessalonians 3:1&2 - Study Guide page 70

**Read:** II Thessalonians 3:1-2 Exodus 17: 8-13 Phil 1:3-5 [Colossians 1:9](about:blank)

Acts 18:5-9 Rom. 15:30-31

**Do:** 1. Scripture also points out the benefits of intercessory prayers. (James 5:16-17). (#4.pg.70)

Find other scriptural passages that give the benefits of intercessory prayers. (Q.4.a.pg.70)

2. What are the benefits of intercessory prayers? (Q.4.b.pg. 70)

Questions continued

\_Day 4 cont\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3.Give examples from Paul’s epistles that he made intercessory prayers for the churches. (Q.5.pg.70)

1. Along with the request that the gospel have free course, what additional need did Paul request the Thessalonians to pray for in verse 2?

**Food for thought:** “Pray for us because God gathers His church in all the world out of all the nations, through preaching. According to Revelation 6, Christ sends the white horse and thus directs the course of the gospel. The Heidelberg Catechism rightly confesses that “the Son of God…gathers, defends, and preserves to Himself by His Spirit and Word, a church chosen to everlasting life” (Lord’s Day 21). As that elect church is gathered out of the na­tions, through preaching, Christ comes ever closer, and more swiftly.

For the work of missions, for the gathering of the church out of the nations, for the swift coming of the Lord, pray for us, that we may have faithful missionaries.

Finally, know that, through faithful preaching, God’s truth is defended and maintained in the world. Good and faithful preaching develops doctrines ever more clearly and sharply. It condemns the lie. It defends the truth, which truth en­ters into the hearts and minds of the believing hearers. The faithful min­isters wield the sword of the Spirit. The light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines forth from clay vessels—the preachers.  Prof. R. Dykstra in S.B. Pray for Us

**To take with you today: Romans 15:30&31**

**“Understanding that importance, that indispensability, of faithful preaching,**

**people of God, pray for us.”** Prof. R. Dykstra

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# \_Day Five\_

### **“The way God manifests His faithfulness”**

### Today we look at Paul’s words concerning the Lord’s faithfulness to the Thessalonians

# II Thessalonians 3:3-5 – Study Guide page 70

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**Read:** II Thessalonians 3:1-5 Psalm 89:1-8 Ephesians 3:14-20

**Do:** 1. How can the apostle be confident that the members of the church do and will endure opposition

both from within and from without (vs. 3-4)? (Q.6.pg.70)

2. Sum up briefly, what the Canons of Dordt say about the certainty of perseverance and enduring opposition. Canon Fifth Head articles 11&12 (Q.6.a.pg.70)

\_Day 5 cont\_\_

3.What is the difference between enduring and “patient waiting” (vs. 5) (Q.6.b.pg.70)

4.Explain then, what the Lord’s faithfulness has to do with what we have studied today?

**Food for thought:** “…He [Christ] is in heaven today as our advocate and intercessor, appearing in the presence of God as our representative, so that He can bring to us here on earth the blessings and the grace of God…The book of Hebrews compares in contrast the Levite priesthood of the Old Testament and the priesthood of Christ to show us that Christ is a superior high priest, that He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament priesthood.  That comparison is in the words “he ever liveth to make intercession.”

        To make intercession for another is to offer prayers to God in their behalf.  One of the important duties of the priest in the Old Testament was to make intercession for the people.  On the great Day of Atonement, the high priest would make a sacrifice for the people.  And then, with the coals of the sacrifice, he would go into the inner sanctuary of the tabernacle or temple, where the ark of the presence of God was, and there he would make intercession for the people of God by burning incense on the coals.  The coals, which represented the sacrifice, were the foundation for the prayers that were represented in the incense.  The incense was accepted by God because of the sacrifice. This was a beautiful picture of our praying in Jesus’ name.  Today, God receives our prayers because of the death of Jesus Christ on the cross….

Think about that.  When He ascended into heaven about 2,000 years ago, Christ began to make prayers for the early church.  And He has continued to pray for His people from that time, all through history, and into the present.  He prayed for the church in her early growth.  He prayed for her through the dark Middle Ages.  He prayed for her at the time of the Reformation.  And still today, He is praying for her.  He will continue to pray for her till the end of time, when the church is gathered with Him in glory.

        Because we have Christ as our heavenly intercessor, we need not and we should not pray to saints or angels.  Hebrews 4 tells us that we can come boldly to Christ Himself because He knows our situation.  We should not think of Him as one beyond our reach but as one who is like us and who knows and understands us and so prays for us.” Rev. R. Kleyn in RWH sermon: Our Ever-living Intercessor

# To take with you today: Psalm 121:7&8

#### “Christ arose as our Savior to a victorious and everlasting life.  And in that life He ascended into the presence of God where, we are told, He is still alive today and makes intercession for us.” Rev Kleyn

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**\_Day 6\_ Confidence in the Lord**

### Today we will see Paul’s confidence in God concerning the Thessalonians

# II Thessalonians 3:4 - Study Guide page 70-71

**Read:** II Thessalonians 3:1-5 Gal. 5:1-10 Philippians 1:1-6

**Do:**

1. Why does the apostle admonish the believers to faithfulness when he is sure that God will work it in them? (vs. 5) (Q.6.c.pg.70)

1. How does Romans 1:16 apply to the above? (Q.6.c.1)pg.71)
2. Find other scriptural passages that apply to the relationship between faithfulness and admonitions.

(Q.6c.2)pg.71)

\_Day 6 cont

1. What does Canons 3-4.17 teach regarding the means of admonitions?

Canons Third & Fourth Head article 17 (Q. 6.c.3)pg.71)

**Food for thought:** “  For whom does Christ make His heavenly intercession?  The answer of the text is:  “those who come unto God by him.”  First, these words tell us that the intercession of Christ is not general but particular.  His prayers are not for all men, but for those who come to God by Him, for believers only.  In [John 17:9](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/John%2017.9) Jesus says, “I pray for them:  I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me.”  John 17 identifies those for whom Christ prays as the elect, those whom the Father has chosen and given to the Son.  Here in Hebrews 7 this group is identified as those who come unto God by Christ.  To come unto God by Him is to believe on Jesus Christ.  No one can do this except those who are drawn of the Father through faith.

        Second, these words describe Christ as the only way of salvation, the only way to come to God.  The only Mediator between God and man is the Man Christ Jesus.  In [Acts 4:12](https://biblia.com/bible/kjv1900/Acts%204.12) Peter preached:  “Neither is there salvation in any other:  for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”  Jesus is the way, the only way.

        And, third, these words tell us what God commands sinners to do.  God’s command to all is to repent and to come to Him through faith in Jesus Christ.  Do you, today, recognize Christ as the only way to God?  Do you come unto God by Him?  This means renouncing yourself, recognizing your own sinful weakness, and trusting only in Christ for salvation.  It means looking and praying to God through Jesus Christ for daily strength in the spiritual battles of life.  Christ is the supreme, the only, the all-sufficient Savior.  He is the only way to the Father.  As He Himself declared:  “I am the way, the truth and the life.  No man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

        For all who come to God by Christ, there is in the text a beautiful truth, a wonderful promise. This:

“That he is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by him.”

Rev. R. Kleyn in RWH sermon: Our Ever-living Intercessor

**To take with you today: Philippians 1:6**

**He ever lives to make intercession for us.  And so we shall be saved to the uttermost.  Every obstacle to our salvation He is able to overcome.** Rev. R. Kleyn

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# \_Day Seven\_

**Those Who Walk Disorderly**

Today we look at Paul’s instructions for the Thessalonians toward those in the church who walk disorderly.

# II Thessalonians 3:6 & 11-15 - Study Guide page 71

**Read:** I Thessalonians 3:1-15 Matt. 18: 15-17 I Corinthians 5:11&12

**Do:**

1. Dealing with those who walk disorderly in the church. (#7.pg.71)

Of what did those who walked disorderly in the church of Thessalonica make themselves guilty?

(vs.10-11) (Q.7.a.pg.71)

Questions continued

\_Day 7 cont\_

1. How should the Thessalonians deal with them? (Q.7.b. pg.71)

verses 6,14-15

I Corinthians 5:11&12

I Thessalonians 5:14

**Food for thought:** “The command which follows (vs. 6&7) is given ‘in the name of’ – that is, on the basis of the authority of and in accordance with the teaching of the Lord Jesus Christ. He alone is the anointed Lord and Savior of the Church and in that capacity has the right to issue commands. The command has to do with individual cases of ‘disorderly conduct.’ The expression ‘every brother’ would seem to indicate that the instances were rather isolated: here one and there one. The congregation as a whole was sound in faith and practice… The fact that a rather lengthy paragraph (verses 6-15) is devoted to this sin would seem to indicate that the evil here signalized had grown worse since the first epistle was written. Such conduct was certainly far removed from ‘the tradition’ which the Thessalonians had received from the missionaries. This ‘tradition’ was the teaching which Paul, Silas, and Timothy, on the basis of the authority vested in them, had passed along to the congregation…In the case of some individuals all this instruction had been in vain. Hence, somewhat stronger methods must now be used. When admonition does not succeed, segregation must be resorted to, at least to a limited extent. The ‘brothers’ are told to stay away from such a ‘brother’ (note that the disorderly persons are still referred to by this name!) Even this staying away however, is qualified. It does not imply complete ostracism, for verse 15 states expressly that such a one must be admonished as a brother. It does mean, however, that the rest of the congregation should not ‘get mixed up with him’ (verse 14), that is, should not associate with such a person on intimate terms, agreeing with him and following his example.” William Hendrikson

# To take with you today: II Thessalonians 3:6

“Discipline... involves watchfulness and rebuke on the part of all the members.

Matthew 18 teaches that the church as a whole is not even brought into the matter

unless the sinner, when confronted with his sin, refuses to repent.

**We are convinced that there would be little need for formal discipline**

**and exclusion from the church if the members faithfully fulfilled these responsibilities.”**

Rev. Ron Hanko in Doctrine According to Godliness

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**\_Day Eight\_**

**Dealing with the disorderly**

Today we look further into the calling of the members of the church toward the disorderly in the church.

**II Thessalonians 3:6,14-15 – Study Guide page 71-72**

**Read:** II Thessalonians 3:6-15 Romans 16:16-18 I Cor. 5:11-13 Galatians 6:1 Titus 3:10

**Do:**

1. What is the meaning of “withdraw yourselves from every brother that worketh disorderly” (vs. 6) and “note that man, and have no company with him” (vs. 14)? (Q. 7.c.pg.71)
2. Does Paul contradict the above instruction when he writes, “Yet count him not as an enemy, nor admonish him as a brother” (vs. 15)? (Q. 7.d.pg. 71)

\_Day Eight cont

1. What is the relationship between “withdraw yourselves… note that man, and keep no company” and what Paul says in verse 15? (Q.7.e.pg. 72)
2. What did Jesus teach concerning those who walk disorderly (Matt. 18:15-17)? (Q. 7.f.pg.72)
3. Find other passages of scripture that instruct us regarding how to deal with those who walk disorderly in the church. (Q.7.g.pg.72)

**Food for thought:** “Paul and his associates provide for the possibility that there will be those who refuse to obey ‘our word expressed in this letter.’ The writers are probably thinking especially of those members who were making themselves guilty of disorderly conduct: laying down their tools, rushing away to spread Parousia-gossip, and sponging on (as well as meddling in the affairs of) other people. These members had been repeatedly warned with respect to these matters: first, during the personal presence of the missionaries when the gospel was brought to Thessalonica…then, by means of the first letter…One might expect that Paul would long ago have lost his patience with them and would now advise their excommunication. However, we find nothing of the kind. The apostle still regards them as ‘brothers’, though erring brothers. To be sure, Paul and his fellow-workers are conscious of their authority, and they believe in discipline, personal, mutual, and church discipline, but they do not believe in harsh intolerance, rash action, precipitate decision which cannot tolerate the light. They believe in honesty and integrity, and in the exercise of genuine love and patience! Hence, what they desire – and they are speaking by inspiration! – is this, that if all previous admonitions fail to effect their purpose, sterner measures must be resorted to. But even these measures are reformatory in character. They aim to reclaim, to lead to repentance, to save; not to destroy.

The person who persists in his disobedience must now be marked or noted. ‘Note that man for yourselves,’ he says. This is addressed to *all* the faithful brothers at Thessalonica, not only to the consistory of the church…What is actually meant is probably this: The congregation, having listened carefully to the public reading of I Thessalonians, a letter in which the character and conduct of the disorderly members are clearly indicated, must take definite notice of the persons described. In the future these individuals must not be treated as if nothing had happened. On the contrary, to a certain extent the obedient members must ‘withdraw themselves’ from such disobedient ones… Here in verse 14 the command is, ‘Let there be no intimate association with him,’ or ‘do not get mixed up with him.’ The disobedient members must not associate with such an individual on intimate terms. They should not welcome him in to the company of close friends, agreeing with him, approving of his conduct, etc. The purpose of this limited segregation or ostracism is ‘in order that he may become ashamed’. Clearly this purpose is reformatory. It springs from love, from the desire to heal, not from the desire to get rid of an individual whom one does not happen to favor. The shame will probably result when the individual in question begins to reflect on the patient and loving manner in which, in spite of his own grievous error which is pointed out to him, this ‘discipline’ is being exercised.” Wm. Hendrikson

# To take with you today: II Thessalonians 3:14

“Scripture speaks of admonitions, not a single admonition.

Love demands that every opportunity must be given for repentance.

In admonishing, as much as possible, the sinner must be spared, especially if he repents.

Thus Scripture says love covers sin, not to hide it so that it is not dealt with,

but to spare the sinner unnecessary shame and reproach, if possible.”

Rev. Ron Hanko

**\_Day Nine**

**Christian Discipline**

Today we take a closer look at Christian discipline.

# II Thessalonians 3:14&15 - Study Guide page 72

**Read:** II Thess. 3:1-15 Matthew 18:15-20 Luke 15:18 II Cor. 2:5-8 James 5:19&20

**Do:** 1. What is the teaching of the Heidelberg Catechism in Lord’s Day 31, Q&A 84 concerning the

relationship between the preaching of the gospel and Christian discipline? (Q.7.h pg. 72)

1. What is the meaning in Lord’s Day 31, Q&A 85 of “excluded from the Christian church, and by God himself from the kingdom of Christ”? (Q.7.i.pg.72)
2. What is the purpose of Christian discipline (vs 14)? (Q.7.j.pg.72)
3. Find other scriptural passages regarding the purpose of discipline. (Q.7.k.pg.73)
4. What are the benefits of discipline for the one being disciplined? (Q.7.l.pg.73)
5. What are the benefits of discipline for the church? (Q.7.m.pg.73)

**Food for thought:** “The purpose of the exercise of discipline is threefold. In the first place, the chief purpose is always the glory of God in Christ. For the church in the world is a manifestation of God in Christ. It must show forth His glorious virtues. And therefore, it has the calling to be holy, even as He is holy. The church, therefore, may not be mixed with the elements of darkness. This does not imply, of course, that there is no sin and that there are no sinners in the church visible in the world. But it certainly means that all that are members of the church are characterized by a manifest sorrow after God, repent of their sin, crucify the flesh, and strive to walk after sanctification of life. And it is for the glory of God that all those who are not disposed to lead such a life of repentance and sanctification are excluded from the kingdom of heaven.

Secondly, it is to the well-being of the church that Christian discipline is diligently exercised. If not, the covenant of God is profaned, the wrath of God is kindled against the church; and soon, if the workers of iniquity and the power of evil is left in the church visible in the world, it will become subject to those powers and soon be corrupted.

And finally, the purpose of the exercise of Christian discipline is also the salvation of its members. When they walk in sin, of which they do not repent, it is certainly not to their salvation that they are left undisturbed, without rebuke and admonition. And the positive purpose of the exercise of Christian discipline, as far as the members of the church are concerned, is certainly their salvation.”

Rev. Herman Hoeksema in the S.B. article:Part Two—Of Man's Redemption, Lord's Day 31,

The Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven (1)

# To take with you today: II Thessalonians 3:15

**Is it not a fact that the purpose of Christian discipline**

**is the glory of the Name of our covenant God,**

**the purification of His Church,**

**and the salvation of the elect sinner?** Rev. Herman Veldman

**\_Day Ten**

**The Christian’s Work**

### Today we look into scripture’s teaching on the work of a Christian.

# II Thessalonians 3:7-12 - Study Guide page 73

**Read:** II Thess. 3:1-12 I Thess. 2: 9&10 I Timothy 5:4&8-11 Eph. 4:27 Gal. 6:10

**Do:**

1. How had Paul and his co-workers been examples, even to those who walked disorderly? (Q. 7.n. pg.73)

Verses 8-10

I Thessalonians 2:9&10

1. Why must Christians work?
2. II Thessalonians 3:10&12
3. I Timothy 5:4&8
4. Eph. 4:27&28 and Gal. 6:10
5. II Thess. 3:11 and I Tim. 5:11-15
6. I Thess. 4:11&12 and Phil. 2:14&15
7. What could happen to the witness of a child of God if he does not work?

**Food for thought:** “That God calls us to work is plain already from the account of man’s creation. Making man in His own image, God made man to work. In [Genesis 2:15](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=Genesis+2:15) we read, “And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it.” God gave man work to do in Paradise. He did not permit the man whom He had created to live in the Garden of Eden doing nothing. But He required of Adam that he keep and dress and care for the Garden.

The first mention of the institution of labor after the fall of man is in the curse pronounced upon Adam. “And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return” ([Gen. 3:17-19](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=Gen.+3:17-19)).

The understanding of this text is important. The important thing to notice in this Word of God is that the curse pronounced upon Adam is NOT the curse of labor, as some suppose. The curse is the pain and hardship, the frustration and disappointment that will now be connected to man’s labor.

We find this echoed in the words of Lamech, the father of Noah, at the time of Noah’s birth, when he said concerning the son whom God had given him, “This same shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed” ([Gen. 5:29](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=Gen.+5:29)).

The fourth commandment of God’s law stands as the great call of God to the thankful, redeemed Christian to labor. It is often forgotten that the fourth commandment is a command to labor as well as to rest. In fact, the command to rest is grounded in and arises out of the command first to labor. “Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work” ([Ex. 20:9](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=Ex.+20:9)). The day of rest has no meaning except as rest from labor. We may be quite certain that the man who disobeys the first aspect of this commandment, who is unfaithful in his work, will never enjoy the benefits and blessedness of the day of rest.

The New Testament is equally clear on the gospel’s call to work. In the parables of the pounds ([Luke 19:11-27](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=Luke+19:11-27)) and of the talents ([Matt. 25:14-30](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=Matt.+25:14-30)), the Lord calls us to faithful labor in the kingdom. We must not bury our talents or squander our gifts. The Lord’s judgment on the unprofitable servant is severe: “Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed hot, and gather where I have not strawed . . . cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth” ([Matt. 25:26, 30](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=Matt.+25:26,+30)).  Food for Thought cont…

The teaching of the Apostle Paul parallels the teaching of Christ. In [Ephesians 4:28](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=Ephesians+4:28) he says, “Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.” In [I Thessalonians 4:11, 12](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=I+Thessalonians+4:11,+12) he admonishes the Thessalonian Christians: “And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.”

One of the clearest passages on the Christian’s calling to work is found in [II Thessalonians 3](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=II+Thessalonians+3). In [II Thessalonians 3:6](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=II+Thessalonians+3:6) the Apostle admonishes the believers to “. . . withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.” We might at first suppose that the Apostle is talking here about false doctrine, and that he has in mind our calling to separate from heretics. Or we might think that Paul has in view some gross, unrepented of sin like adultery, or idolatry, or theft, or drunkenness. But the disorderliness that the Apostle has in mind here is idleness, laziness. That comes out in verse 11: “For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.” The Apostle’s judgment on this disorderliness is severe: “For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat” (verse 10). The churches today, of course, have no use for this judgment of the Apostle. They consider it to be uncharitable and unchristian. And so they launch their massive programs to feed the derelicts and vagrants, and consider that they do a good work. Instead they ought to listen to God’s Apostle, “if any would not work, neither should he eat.” The sluggard must bear the judgment of God. Our government is guilty of the same thing when it provides welfare for those who are simply too lazy to get and to keep a job.

The positive implications of the Apostle’s instruction here are plain. It is a mark of faith in Jesus Christ, an evidence of the sincerity of faith itself, that we labor to earn our living and to provide for the needs of our family. The ethic advanced by the New Testament Scriptures is that Christians ought to work with quietness, and eat their own bread, [II Thessalonians 3:12](http://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?version=9&search=II+Thessalonians+3:12). Idleness is sin. And when that idleness is cloaked in the garb of piety which considers labor somehow incompatible with the requirements of communion with God and devotion to spiritual things, that idleness is only made a more serious sin still.”

Prof. R. Cammenga in the S.B.article: The Christian and Work

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**\_Day Eleven\_**

**Weary in Well Doing**

Today we look at Paul’s encouragement to the Thessalonians not to become weary in their well doing.

# II Thessalonians 3:13 - No Study Guide

**Read:** II Thess. 3:1-13 I Cor. 15: 57&58 II Cor. 4:1 &16-17 Gal. 6:1-10 Eph. 6:17&18

**Do:** 1. What contrast does Paul give us in verse 13

1. Who was Paul speaking about in verses 11&12?
2. Who is he speaking to in verse 13?
3. What danger is there for the child of God to become weary in well doing?

Galatians 6:9

##### II Cor. 4:1& 16-17

**Food for thought:** “I am simply of the opinion, that Paul had it in view to provide against an occasion of offense, which might arise from the indolence of a few. For it usually happens, that those that are otherwise particularly ready and on the alert for beneficence, become cool on seeing that they have thrown away their favors by misdirecting them. Hence Paul admonishes us, that, although there are many that are undeserving, while others abuse our liberality, we must not on this account leave off helping those that need our aid. Here we have a statement worthy of being observed--that however ingratitude, moroseness, pride, arrogance, and other unseemly dispositions on the part of the poor, may have a tendency to annoy us, or to dispirit us, from a feeling of weariness, we must strive, nevertheless, never to leave off aiming at doing good.”

John Calvin in his commentary on II Thessalonians

# \_Day 11 cont\_ To take with you today: II Thessalonians 3:13

“Do not be misled.

Do not let a few people who neglect their duty keep you from doing yours.

Never grow tired of doing what is right, honorable, excellent.” Wm. Hendrikson

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# \_Day Twelve

**The Lord Give You Peace**

### Today we look at the closing of Paul’s second letter to the Thessalonians

# II Thessalonians 3:16-18 - Study Guide page 73-74

**Read:** II Thess. Three Ps. 37:34-37 Isaiah 40:1&2 John 14:24-27 John 21:15-17 Rom.15:13

mine own hand I Cor. 16:21 Col. 4:18

**Do:**

1. Paul’s final benediction and signature. (#8 pg.73)

What is a benediction? (Q.8.a.pg.73)

2.The peace of which Paul speaks is often confused with peace among individuals or nations. (vs.16)

Refute this idea (Q.8.b.pg.73)

3.What is the peace of which the apostle speaks? (Q.8.c.pg.73)

See Isaiah 40:1&2

John 14:26-27

John 16:33

3. Why did Paul place his signature (“with mine own hand”) at the end of the letter? (vs.17) (Q.8.d.pg.73)

1. Is there a connection between Paul’s signature on this letter and what he says in 2:2: “by letter as from

us”? (Q.8.e.pg.73)

1. What is the importance of the benediction in Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians? (Q.8.f.pg.74)
2. What is the importance of the benediction in public worship? (Q.8.g.pg.74)

verse 18

**Food for thought:** “Thoroughly convinced that in their own strength the reader cannot fulfil the precepts contained in the preceding verses, the writers add: ‘Now may he, the Lord of peace, give you this peace at all times in all ways.’ The Lord of peace is the Lord Jesus Christ. It is he who established peace through his cross. It is he who not only pronounces it but actually imparts it. Hence Paul writes, ‘Now may he…*give.*’ This *peace* or spiritual *prosperity* will prevail when the disorderly persons begin to live calmly, attending to their duties both earthly and heavenly (that is the immediate context here), when the fainthearted go to the depth of God’s promise, no longer worrying about their departed friends and about their own spiritual condition, and when the weak gain strength through sanctification. Food for thought continued

\_Day 12 cont\_\_

“It is needed ‘at all time, in all ways,’ that is, in every circumstance of life. The peace here indicated is of a very special character. Note the article in the original (literally, ‘Now may he, the Lord of *the* peace’). Objectively, it is the condition of being reconciled, God’s wrath having been removed. But here the subjective must not be dissociated from the objective. It is the reflection of God’s smile in the heart of the believer who, by sovereign grace, has received the blessed assurance of this state of reconciliation. This, truly, is prosperity!” Wm. Hendrikson

# To take with you today: II Thessalonians 3:16

**“Like Zion’s steadfast mount are they who in the Lord confide;**

**Secure, immovable they stand, forever to abide.**

**O Thou Who art Thy people’s shield, their helper and their guide,**

**Upon them let Thy grace and peace for evermore abide.”** Psal. #354 st. 1&6

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# \_Day 13\_

Notes for this review were taken from the above listed Reformed Witness Hour sermons,

Standard Bearers, and the commentaries by Jamieson, Fausset, Brown, and Hendrikson.

**3:1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you:**

**3:1 Finally,** (as to what remains) **brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord** (in the writing, and especially the preaching) **may have free course,** (may run – spread rapidly without being held back) **and be glorified, even as it is with you:** (when it is seen that the Word of the Lord has effected a change in the lives of the believers. Holiness in the lives of Christians is the glory of the gospel.)

**3:2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith.**

**3:2 And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men:** (more than ordinarily bad) **for all men have not faith.** (do not believe- are not given faith)

**3:3 But the Lord is faithful, who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.**

**3:3 But the Lord is faithful,**  (His promise never fails. He always completes that which He begins) **who shall stablish you, and keep you from evil.** (Paul assures them that when God establishes us, then He is strengthening us, enabling us to go on, to proceed. And when He keeps us, then He guards us and prevents us from falling into the traps of the evil one.)

**3:4 And we have confidence in the Lord touching you, that ye both do and will do the things which we command you.**

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

**3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.**

**3:5 And the Lord direct your hearts** (Paul prays that God will remove all obstacles out of the way, as only God can, so that the Thessalonians will want to obey Him) **into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ.** (persevering endurance connected with the hope of Christ’s coming. The grace to bear up when all things seem to be against us.) Continued

\_Day 13 cont\_

**3:6 Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us.**

**3:6 Now we command you, brethren,** (now Paul writes of general commands to obey) **in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves** (stay clear of) **from every brother** (fellow believer)  **that walketh disorderly,** (evil, perhaps such as loafing, gossiping, not working, meddling in the office bearers business) **and not after the tradition which he received of us.** (and not according to the spoken and written word which he has received from the missionaries)

**3:7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;**

**3:7 For yourselves know how ye ought to follow us:** (how ye ought to live) **for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;**

**3:8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought;** **but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:**

**3:8 Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought;** (live at anyone else’s expense) **but wrought** (worked) **with labour and travail** (toil and hardship) **night and day,** (scarcely allowing time for rest) **that we might not be chargeable** (be a burden) **to any of you:**

**3:9 Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us.**

**3:9 Not because we have not power,** (not that we don’t have the godly right to be supported) **but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us.**

**3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat.**

**3:10 For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work,** (is not willing to work) **neither should he eat.** (he will have no food)

**3:11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.**

**3:11 For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies.** (and as a result of not working, are busy about everyone’s business except their own)

**3:12 Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.**

**3:12 Now them that are such** (the idle busybody) **we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work,** (laying aside restlessness and meddling, they are to work) **and eat their own bread.** (and therefore be able to eat the bread earned by themselves and not another’s bread)

Continued

\_\_Day 13 cont\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**3:13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.**

**3:13 But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing.** (Be not cowardly in doing well. Do not be wanting in strenuousness in doing well. With patient industry do your duty in your own calling.)

**3:14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.**

**3:14 And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note** (mark) **that man, and have no company with him,** (avoid companionship with him) **that he may be ashamed.** (so that he may be made to look into himself and so be ashamed of his actions.)

**3:15 Yet count him not as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.**

**3:15 Yet count him not as an enemy,** (yet consider him not as an unbeliever) **but admonish him as a brother.** (Do not shun him in contemptuous silence, but tell him in love why he is so avoided)

**3:16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always** **by all means. The Lord be with you all.**

**3:16 Now the Lord of peace himself** (Jesus Christ, an appropriate title in the prayer here, where the harmony of the Christian community was liable to be interrupted by the disorderly.) **give you peace** (give you the peace which is His to give) **always** (not changing with outward circumstances) **by all means.** (in every way) **The Lord be with you** (not only with His peace but also with His presence) **all.** (including the disorderly brethren)

**3:17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.**

**3:17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand,** (the letter itself being written down by a ‘secretary’, Paul now writes the closing with his own hand.) **which is the token in every epistle:** (which is the autographed proof of his authorship of the entire letter) **so I write.**

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

**3:18 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.** (Paul closes by praying for grace to those whom he addresses) **Amen.**

**Food for thought:** “Peace and rest belong not to the unregenerate, they are the peculiar possession of the Lord’s people, and of them only. The God of Peace gives perfect peace to those whose hearts are stayed upon Him… At this hour we rest in the promises of our faithful God, knowing that His words are full of truth and power; we rest in the doctrines of His word, which are consolation itself; we rest in the covenant of His grace, which is a haven of delight…The person of Jesus is the quiet resting-place of His people, and when we draw near to Him in the breaking of the bread, in the hearing of the word, the searching of the Scriptures, prayer, or praise, we find any form of approach to Him to be the return of peace to our spirits.”

C. H. Spurgeon in Morning and Evening

# To take with you today: Psalm 37:39&40

**The steps of those whom He approves are ordered by the Lord;**

**And though they fall, held by His hand, they yet shall be restored.**

**Mark well the perfect, upright man, as still his years increase;**

Behold his life, and thou shalt see his journey end in peace. Psalter #101sts. 1&5