

As the Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians comes to completion, he finishes with an example of "Kingdom work" by way of contrast to the idleness of some brothers in Thessalonica. He gives instructions to separate from those who refuse to repent with the hope of restoring them.

2 Thessalonians

3:6-18

Warnings

Against

Idleness

I. COMPARING OUR STORIES

MY EXPERIENCE...

YOUR EXPERIENCE...

Working hard doesn't come easy. No matter the context, it's admirable when we see the example of hard work in our lives. Whether it be a student studying diligently, a laborer in the heat, or a mother in her own home, hard work is a strong witness and something good we should emulate.

II. CONSIDERING OUR STRUGGLES

WHO comes to mind when you consider those who work hard?

WHY can diligence in any work be a good witness when it comes to the Christian life?

In Contrast, **HOW** is laziness a poor witness as a Christian?

IS there a time when idleness might be considered ok, even wise?

HOW can diligence, or a refusal to be idle, become a problem?

2 Thessalonians

3:6-18

Warnings Against Idleness

2 Thessalonians 3:6:18

OBSERVATION

What does Paul command the brothers in vs. 6?

In vs. 7, who and what does Paul call those in the church to imitate, specifically?

According to vs. 8-10, how did Paul and those with him receive their bread, and why did they choose to get it this way?

How are some in the church “walking”, according to Paul in vs. 11?

In vs. 13-15, what do you observe about the directions Paul gives in handling those in idleness?

What can you observe in Paul’s final verses of this chapter?

INTERPRETATION

What does it mean to “walk in idleness”? How is walking in idleness different from *being idle* for a moment?

Why would Paul call the brothers to keep away from others who are idle? Consider 1 Corinthians 15:33.

Do you think there is a difference in treating brothers this way (vs. 6), and those outside the church?

In vs. 7 Paul calls those in Thessalonica to imitate he and others in their diligence (as opposed to idleness). Where has Paul previously given himself and those with him as an example in this letter? See 1 Thess. 1:5, 7, 2:14; 2 Thess. 1:3, 3:4.

Paul gives a strong command in vs. 10. How does the “compromise” he chooses in vs. 8-9 reinforce this?

What is a “busybody” (vs. 11) and why is this concerning to Paul?

In vs. 14-15, Paul suggestions can seem unloving. How do the specific directives mentioned cause shame, and why would Paul give such an order?

In vs. 15, explain the difference between treating someone as an enemy and as a brother.

APPLICATION

What is the work God has given you? What would it look like to not be idle in that work, but to live as a good example others can imitate?