

LESSON 8 – WALKING ORDERLY IN OBEDIENCE

II Thessalonians 3:1-18

Summary

Paul's preceding prayer for the Thessalonians is followed by a request for prayers in behalf of the gospel's swift and free course, that it may be glorified in others, as it had been glorified in them. Although he is confident in the Thessalonians' character, Paul's ultimate confidence and trust lies with the Lord, Who grants success to their effort and draws all men to Himself. The Thessalonians' steadfastness is further tested by the command to securely hold the apostolic traditions by withdrawing from those who will not obey it. Specifically, the failure to work and produce income for their own food is addressed. Such people are not only to be marked and disfellowshipped, but they are also not to be enabled. Nevertheless, such admonition is to be delivered as to a brother, not an enemy. Final exhortation to remain steadfast and strong in doing good, while praying for the Thessalonians' peace in the Lord's grace closes this last epistle from Paul to the Thessalonians.

Bible Reading With Questions

Confident Prayers – II Thessalonians 3:1-5

1. Why did Paul ask the Thessalonians to pray for them (Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy)?
2. To what lofty standard of love and patience (endurance or steadfastness) were the Thessalonians to aspire? How might they (and us) accomplish such a goal?

Withdrawing From The Disorderly – II Thessalonians 3:6-15

3. Are not "*traditions*" of human origin and therefore optional? What are our options, if someone refuses to "*walk according to*" apostolic "*tradition*"?
4. Do Paul's instructions for withdrawal apply only to the apostolic tradition regarding labor? Explain.
5. Describe Paul's "*work ethic*"?
6. Is it not cruel to deny food to our fellow man? How do we reconcile this command to withhold food with other requirements for love, compassion, and benevolence?
7. What did "*idle hands*" produce in this case? What other verses warn against a similar danger?

8. How can people become “*weary in doing good*”? How can we avoid it? Related passages?
9. If we refuse to “*keep company*” with a disobedient brother, are we not treating him like an enemy? How do you reconcile verses 14 and 15?

Closing Admonition and Benediction – I Thessalonians 3:16-18

10. Name at least one counterfeit prevention measure that Paul employed? How does this help us?
11. Paul’s life would eventually fade, but what did he give the Thessalonians and leave with them that would never fade?