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II Thessalonians 3:1-15

1. “Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just as *it did* also with you;
2. and that we will be rescued from perverse and evil men; for not all have faith.
3. But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil *one*.
4. We have confidence in the Lord concerning you, that you are doing and will *continue to* do what we command.
5. May the Lord direct your hearts your hearts into the love of God and into the steadfastness of Christ.
6. Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us.
7. For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you,
8. nor did we eat anyone’s bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we *kept* working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you;
9. not because we do not have the right *to this*, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you

would follow our example.

10. For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.

11. For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies.

12. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread.

13. But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary of doing good.

14. If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person and do not associate with him, so that he will be put to shame.

15. *Yet* do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”

The church which Jesus Christ established is pictured in many different ways in both the Old and New Testaments. In this New Testament passage the church is likened to a work corporation or labor force.

Paul and his companions are described as a model and an example for the brethren in the congregation at Thessalonica. Paul writes, “With labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we might not be a burden to any of you.”

When Paul and his companions evangelized this area

in the first century, they worked night and day to first provide for their own physical needs and then to share the gospel to the lost. They did not do this for personal gain, but to establish the Lord's church in this area.

They taught by example, so Paul could later write, "For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone will not work, neither let him eat." And so this is the pattern for the Lord's church even today. Note: this statement is specifically for those who "will not work," not for those who are not able to work. (But most people can do something.)

Paul then goes on in verse 14 to clearly state, "And of anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that man and do not associate with him, so that he may be put to shame." Church discipline is required for those who will not work. Slackers are not to be coddled in the Lord's church.

Now Paul goes on to state in verse 15, "And yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother." Here we understand the church discipline of denying fellowship with one who "will not work" is to move that brother or sister to repentance.

Christian, you need to get to work. Day and night, if necessary, to get the job done. The Lord Jesus is waiting on us. Our work contract is for six days a week, and an eternal rest when our task is finished.

If you have been standing around in the market place, so to speak, waiting for work--consider this your call. Get

a hold of us if you need training and placement.