

II Thessalonians Lesson 03

II Thessalonians Chapter 3

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Memory verses for this week: *Heb 13:5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*

Introduction: Last week in Chapter 2, we studied about the day of the Lord, and how the prophecy shows that this day is very near. We also studied how that God will send strong delusions after the church is taken out in the rapture and that the people will believe a lie rather than the truth. We conclude our study of Thessalonians this week as we get into chapter 3. Chapter 3 deals primarily with church discipline.

I. Church Conduct

2 Th 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:

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

Paul encourages the church to pray for the leaders and for the pastor. Unless a church prays for their pastor, they can not expect God to bless the church and see it prosper. When a man of God is given the freedom to preach the whole counsel of God and has a group of people behind him in one mind and purpose, that being the mind of Christ, there is no limit how far that church can go in reaching the lost. Verse 2 warns us that there are many unreasonable and wicked men because many do not know Christ and have the faith that justifies before God. And many of these lost men are pastors of churches today, and these are the men that Satan empowers.

2 Cor 11:14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

2 Cor 11:15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

If you remember in our study of Corinthians a few months ago, we were told as a church to judge the outward acts of members who go astray from the Lord's commandments.

1 Cor 5:4 In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered

*together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,
1 Cor 5:5 To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the
flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.
1 Cor 5:6 Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven
leaveneth the whole lump?
1 Cor 5:7 Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump,
as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:
1 Cor 5:8 Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with
the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of
sincerity and truth.
1 Cor 5:9 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:
1 Cor 5:10 Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the
covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of
the world.
1 Cor 5:11 But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any
man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a
railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat.
1 Cor 5:12 For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do
not ye judge them that are within?
1 Cor 5:13 But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away
from among yourselves that wicked person.*

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

We find that the Lord is the one who will establish you and keep you from evil. No matter what happens in this life, when your feet are on that solid rock which is Jesus Christ, nothing will move you much in this life. The more we draw nigh to God, the closer He draws to us. When the Holy Spirit is directing your paths, nothing that Satan can throw at you matters a lot. You look at all the examples we have in the bible of men and women of faith, we see that God never deserted a single one. That's not to say there were many days when great trials and testing may have come, but in the end, God delivered.

Joseph is a good example... sold into slavery by his own brothers, wound up falsely accused and in prison for months and months, but we have no record of him grumbling nor complaining. And because of his steadfast faithfulness in God, he ultimately was put in charge of the King's dealings. He was second in command in Egypt... only Pharaoh was above him. A Hebrew in charge in a gentile world. God knows all about our situations, and he uses circumstances to mold us and make us into what God can really use.

One of the commentaries said we need to be established by the Lord.

The Lord is faithful, and He will establish you. Christians need to be established. Right now many homes are in disarray, many churches are in disarray, and the lives of some believers are in disarray. We need to be *established*. How can you as a believer be

established? By coming to the Word of God and letting it have its influence in your life. The Lord operates through His Word. The Word of God will keep you from evil. Someone has said, "The Bible will keep you from sin, and sin will keep you from the Bible."

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

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

Like Paul, I have confidence that God will ALWAYS do what He has promised. Men and women will fail you, but God and Christ will NEVER fail you. He will give us strength for today, and also strength for tomorrow. I love how that we are not only saved by Jesus Christ, but we are kept secure in that salvation. If it was up to me, I'd mess it all up in one day. But Jesus is never unfaithful to his followers and believers.

1 Cor 3:10 According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon.

1 Cor 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1 Cor 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

1 Cor 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

1 Cor 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

1 Cor 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

II. Church Discipline

2 Th 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.

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

Church discipline is not a popular topic, but it is needful to keep the church pure and effective in the world. God does not put rules in place for no reason, and His desire is that Christ's bride be a chaste and perfect virgin without spot nor wrinkle. If we let open sin go on without discipline, God will hold us accountable for that one day. God's desire is for all of us to walk according to His commandments. Verse 6 says we are to withdraw ourselves from every brother that walks disorderly. The rules that we are to follow are clearly defined in God's Word.

John 15:9 As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you: continue ye in my love.

John 15:10 If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love.

John 15:11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

John 15:12 This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you.

John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.

1 John 5:2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

1 John 5:3 For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

1 John 5:4 For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.

1 John 5:5 Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?

Prov 4:4 He taught me also, and said unto me, Let thine heart retain my words: keep my commandments, and live.

Prov 4:5 Get wisdom, get understanding: forget it not; neither decline from the words of my mouth.

Prov 4:6 Forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee: love her, and she shall keep thee.

Prov 4:7 Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.

Who then should be disciplined? Three types of offenders:

a. Personal offenders

Matthew 18: 15 Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. 16 But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. 17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. 18 Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

b. Public offenders

2 Thessalonians 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. 7 For yourselves

know how ye ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you;

c. Heretical offenders

Titus 3:9 But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain. 10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject; 11 Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself.

2 Th 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:

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

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

Paul used his own life as an example of how we ought to conduct ourselves before others. We should never take advantage of people and their love for the cause of the Lord. Paul certainly was not saying we should not support missionaries, but he was saying in his initial visits that he and his companions worked to provide for their own well-being. We should be known as people who are not afraid to work, and should work to provide for our own families. We are commanded to help the poor, and we take that responsibility seriously. But sometimes providing work for a person may be more important than filling their stomachs.

When we do our very best, we provide both. But as a church, we need to be sure we do provide food when that is what a family asks. Too many churches and organizations give out money directly, and if the parents are not responsible people, the money may not go to feed those children. We always go out and take the people and buy the food, or provide food directly from the church pantry. While these verses were about how pastors and missionaries should set an example, we need to recognize the need to properly help those in need.

1 Peter 5:1 The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: 2 Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; 3 Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. 4 And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.

5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. 6 Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: 7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: 9 Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world.

10 But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.

J. Vernon McGee had these comments about Paul and his companions working to take care of themselves.

“Neither did we eat any man’s bread for nought”—that is, for nothing; he paid for what he ate.

“But wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you.” His practice was that he would not let anyone pay him for his missionary work among them. I think this applied especially to his first missionary journey. When he arrived in town as a missionary, there was no reservation for him at the local motel. There was no stipend given to him, no love offering taken for him the first time he was there. He was very careful about paying his own way. He mentions that to the Thessalonians and also to the Corinthians. When he was establishing churches he supported himself by tent making. However, after the churches were established and Paul had come back to visit them a second and a third time, he did receive an offering from them. He makes it clear to the Galatians that they should give. He thanks the Philippians for their gift. He himself took an offering on his third missionary journey to be given to the poor saints in Jerusalem. Obviously, the great truth of the coming of Christ had not caused Paul to become some sort of a fanatic or to take some unreasonable position in relation to money matters.

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

2 Th 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.

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

We discussed a few weeks ago how that God desires that we learn to be quiet and take care of our own business. Verse 12 commands us to do our work in quietness and to eat our own bread. The church’s main responsibility is to reach the lost with the gospel, not to come together to eat and have social gatherings. Eating together and fellowshiping is needful, but that does not have to be done all the time in the church. We have houses of our own, and can get together to eat and fellowship there rather than doing it in church capacity. We are not to grow weary in well-doing. This is sometimes difficult, but God wants us to keep on doing good.

2 Th 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.

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

There are reasons why God wants us to live by these principles and commands. By doing so, we cause the disciplined person to be ashamed. And we do this to admonish him to turn back to God. Note it says to do this 'as a brother', not a person outcast or some one despised and rejected. It should pain us greatly to have to discipline anyone. A father or mother does not find joy in spanking their child when they do wrong, and we should find no joy in bringing discipline to Christian offenders. Our hearts prayer and desire should be to see that person forsake that sin, and turn back to God.

2 Corinthians 2:5 But if any have caused grief, he hath not grieved me, but in part: that I may not overcharge you all. 6 Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. 7 So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. 8 Wherefore I beseech you that ye would confirm your love toward him.

These verses stress that we should seek to see an offending brother and sister reconciled and brought back into fellowship. When you pray for someone, you find it very difficult to criticize and find fault. We should pray one for another ALL the time, even when there is no discipline involved. How much more so when there is a need for correction?

III. Church Consolation

*2 Th 3:16 Now the Lord of peace himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.
2 Th 3:17 The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.*

How true verse 16 is concerning the church... the only true peace that can come to us is from the Lord. Jesus is the Lord of Peace, and he brings peace when no peace can be found. The world seeks peace through alcohol and drugs, but there is no peace there. Only God can give true and lasting peace. What consolation the churches received from the epistles written by Paul. What a great warrior for the cause of Christ was Paul.

Phil 4:9 Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.

1 Th 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Th 5:24 Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.

Heb 13:20 Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant,

Heb 13:21 Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

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

The topic of grace is perhaps the greatest in all the bible. Through Grace we have so many things.

- a. Salvation
- b. Clean living
- c. A blessed Hope
- d. A determined purpose
- e. Divine Authority

All of these things can be proved by a few verses over in Titus Chapter 2.

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

Titus 2:12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

Titus 2:13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;

Titus 2:14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

Titus 2:15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more

unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.