



Women's R&R Bible Study 2024-2025

"YOUR WORDS WERE FOUND, AND I ATE THEM, AND YOUR WORD WAS TO ME THE JOY AND REJOICING OF MY HEART."

JEREMIAH 15:16

LIVING IN HOPE LESSON 8

In our lesson last week, Paul attempted to clear up some misconceptions about the timing of the Day of the Lord. He ended with prayer, asking the Lord to comfort their hearts and strengthen them as they follow Him. Chapter 2 caused us to look in the future. Now, in chapter 3, Paul brings the Thessalonians back to the present. Most of Paul's letters can be divided into two sections: doctrinal and practical. 2 Thessalonians is no different. Here in chapter 3, Paul moves from the doctrinal issue of the coming of Christ, to commands concerning practical living while we wait for His return.

To summarize 2 Thessalonians, we can break it down as such:

Chapter 1: **Commendation and Assurance**

Chapter 2: **Correction and Instruction**

Chapter 3: **Appeal and Inspiration**

Memory Verse of the Week: "But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary in doing good." 2 Thessalonians 3:13

1. Read 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18. Note any key or repeated words or phrases.
2. Paul gives the Lord a special title in this chapter. What does he call Him?
3. Which verse particularly ministers to your heart today?

4. What does the word “finally” indicate?

5. Paul begins this chapter asking for prayer. What are his requests?

As any missionary, pastor, or teacher, Paul recognized his need of prayer. He depended on God, and knew he needed the constant prayer of his family and friends.

6. Do you ask others to pray for you? Why is it so hard at times to share your needs, burdens, or requests, with others?

In verse one, the phrase “have free course” is best translated “may run.” This word is also used in Psalm 147:15. Paul asks them to pray that the Word of the Lord would run swiftly and have free and rapid progress. He prayed for a swift advance of the Word, and that it would be “glorified,” which is seen by the evident effect of the Word of God in turning men to righteousness.

7. Describe how Paul views the Word by his use of this phrase.

8. Does the Word of the Lord have free course to “run swiftly” in your life? What obstacles do you need to clear off your track so the Word can run unhindered? (Hebrews 12:1)

9. What obstacles are you facing as you share the Gospel?

Paul asks for deliverance from “unreasonable and wicked men.” The word “wicked” means “out of place” or “absurd.” The tense used implies that Paul is not speaking about a general deliverance, but specifically about

particular enemies that were opposing the Gospel. Remember that Paul wrote this letter from Corinth where he was facing much opposition from the Jews. These Jews were probably the “unreasonable and wicked men” he was referring to. Corinth didn’t receive the Word like the Thessalonians did, as Paul says in verse 1; “as it is with you,” although sometime later the Word of the Lord did run in Corinth. (Did the Thessalonians respond to Paul’s plea for prayer, and God answered?) Paul also reminds the Thessalonians again that not all people have faith in Christ, so expect opposition.

In verse 3, Paul changes directions. He now moves from looking at his own trials and opposition to them and reminds them of a very important truth.

10. What does Paul say about God’s faithfulness?

11. Who is Paul’s confidence in?

Because God is faithful, Paul is confident that God not only will establish them, but He will protect them as well. He is also confident in them, not because of their own character or strength, but because of their relationship with the Lord.

12. What do these Scriptures say about God’s faithfulness?

- A.** Psalm 119:90
- B.** Psalm 37:3-5
- C.** Psalm 89:8

13. What specific aspect of God’s faithfulness particularly ministers to your heart today?

14. What does Paul pray for them in 2 Thessalonians 3:5?

The word **“direct”** means to “make straight,” like removing obstacles from a path (1 Thessalonians 3:11). Paul prays that the Lord would open up the way for them to know the love of God. He also reminded them of the endurance of Christ, and prayed they would follow His example. **Charles Swindoll** explains verse 5 in this way: “In the midst of instability, Paul prays that their lives will be characterized by an inner awareness of the **“love of God”** -- which provides security -- and an outer expression of the **“steadfastness of Christ”** -- which produces stability.”

- 15.** How is Christ an example of patience, endurance, and steadfastness? Read Hebrews 12:1-3 again. Use other Scriptures for your answer.

The word **“command”** is a military term that was used of a general giving orders to his troops. Although this was an authoritative term, it was given with affection, by using the word brethren. The term “disorderly” refers to the failure of a soldier to keep in rank.

In Paul’s first letter to the Thessalonians, he addressed the issue of believers who were unwilling to work. It seems that because of some of the misunderstandings related to Christ’s Second Coming, some believed they didn’t have to work while they waited for His return. Paul’s exhortation to them obviously had not brought the problem to an end. He gives a great deal of attention to it here, as well as some stiff commands on how to deal with the offenders.

Paul had a great work ethic. Paul was not lazy and didn’t believe there was a place for laziness in the life of any Christian.

- 16.** How was Paul an example of the issue at hand? (Also read 1 Thessalonians 1:5-6, 2:2-9)

- 17.** Why do you think Paul says to “withdraw” from a brother who is disorderly?

18. Was Paul saying that it was wrong to ever eat a free meal? What point was he making?

19. Even though Paul had the right to be paid (vs. 9), he chose not to. Why?

Not only had Paul been an example to them, he also gave them a rule: “If you don’t work, you don’t eat.” He saw work as ordained by God (Genesis 3:19) and believed that Christians were called to give their best.

20. Do you think there are any exceptions to this “rule”? Explain.

When we are told to **“withdraw”** from the disorderly, it should never be with an air of superiority, but in the spirit of brotherly love. It is for their good as well as for the testimony of Christ. As a fellow brother or sister in the Lord, we withdraw as not to condone the deeds of one who claims to be a believer, but their actions show otherwise.

21. How does withdrawing from one help them?

22. Have you ever had to do this? Why is this so difficult to do?

Notice that verse 10 does not say “cannot work” but “will not” work. It is a voluntary choice to impose on others to take care of their needs.

23. How would you describe your work ethic? Do you believe in working hard? What’s the balance between working hard and depending on the Lord? In what ways are you teaching your children to have a Biblical work ethic? (Read Romans 12:11)

24. Read Proverbs 31:10-31. How would you describe her work ethic? (Be specific.) Compare her to Ecclesiastes 10:18.
25. According to verse 11, what was the result of their laziness?
26. Why does laziness cause this?
27. Whose business should we be about? Read 1 Thessalonians 4:11 and Luke 2:49.

“When men are not employed properly, there is always the danger that they will busy themselves in matters in which they ought not to interfere. They can become nuisances and be used of satan to disturb the peace of the church or the peace of those to whom they look for their support. The tongue does not offend so seriously when the hands are kept busy.” (H. A. Ironside)

28. In verse 13, Paul turns his attention to those who are diligent. What does he say? Also read Galatians 6:9-10.

“Be not weary” means **“do not lose heart,”** (Luke 18:1, 2 Cor. 4:1, 16) and **“well-doing”** means doing the noble, or right, thing. How others are acting doesn’t matter; we are to continue doing what is honorable (Hebrews 13:18).

29. As Christian women, what kinds of things make us weary?
30. Have you been “growing weary” of doing good? How do we get “built back up”?

31. In verse 15, what's the difference between treating him as an enemy and warning him as a brother?
32. What do you think would happen within the church today if Christians followed Paul's instructions on this subject more often?
33. In verses 16-18, what does Paul ask the Lord to give them?
34. Why would peace be so important to the Thessalonians?

Paul knew he had been saved by grace, sustained by grace, and wanted to remind others about God's grace. Paul fully understood what it meant to receive something he didn't deserve. He knew he deserved death but received life instead. That is grace. **God's Riches At Christ's Expense.**

Paul usually dictated his letters but would add a greeting or signature at the end. Because of the possibility of the forged letter we discussed earlier, he most likely wanted to make sure the Thessalonians knew that this letter was definitely from him.

35. Jesus reminds His disciples about peace the night before He went to the cross. Read John 14:27. How is the peace of Christ different from the world's peace?
36. The Thessalonians were in the middle of persecution, yet Paul told them they could have peace in the midst of it. If you are in the middle of a "situation" right now, what do you need to do to find His peace?

John White, in his book, Greater than Riches, says that the heart that has this kind of peace is like a lighthouse in a storm. He continues, "Winds shriek, waves crash, lightening flickers around it. But inside, the children play while their parents go about their work. They may look out the window to marvel at the powers that rage around them, but they have peace -- the peace of knowing that the strength which protects them is stronger than the strength of the storm."

37. What impacted you the most from this chapter? This book?

38. What hope does 2 Thessalonians give you?