

Verse by Verse: 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13

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Good morning, my radio friends and friends of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. This is Louis T. Talbot, welcoming you to another broadcast of Bible study in 2 Thessalonians chapter 3. And I welcome you once again in the wonderful name of our wonderful Lord.

Now my friends we come to the closing verses in 2 Thessalonians Chapter 3. And we're going to begin at verse 6. There was everything in that assembly that pleased, uh, the apostle Paul. And the, and if it pleased the apostle Paul, then we are sure that it pleased the Lord. He found nothing in this chance to criticize. There is nothing in these two books against them. But in the last part of this chapter, there is a warning. There were something that the apostle Paul noticed, something that he had heard about. And it was not against the assembly, but he wrote it more as a warning, a warning about something that if they were not watchful and they did not recognize it as an evil, it might work a great deal of harm against their testimony among the pagans in the midst of which they live.

You know, my friend, that the assembly of the saints, God's church, is a very precious company of people. And if the church of Christ doesn't tell the story of Christ, then who will? And what other society on the face of the earth and what other organization has the knowledge of Christ? If the church fails, then what? And if we do not tell the story, who will? And so the apostle Paul was very quick to notice anything that might in any wise interfere with a glorious work that the assembly was doing. And perhaps we can get our lesson, uh, for each of ourselves this morning.

We're going to go through each verse, beginning at verse 6 of this chapter, and just gather up the truth that the apostle Paul states as he goes along.

Now, I want you to read with me verse 6, will you? Verse 6 of this 3rd chapter. And Paul says, "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, uh, the tradition which he received of us." My friends, I wonder what does orderly walk in the assembly is. Now, it may not be out nor seen. It may not be seen in the assembly of any Christian in that gathering. You know that the word "disorderly" here, in the original, means out of order or out of step. And I think of that something to do with doctrine. You remember how that Paul said if they do not receive the traditions, all the teaching that they receive from us. You know it ought to be a great, uh, mantra, great concern with every Christian that we are walking just according to the Word of God.

You remember how that in the second epistle, uh, general of John and verse 4 that John writes this? He said, "I rejoice greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father." And then just across the page, in the third epistle general of John and verse 4, that John says this, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth." My dear friends, I wonder what it is to walk in truth. Do you remember that in the third chapter of John and verse 21, the Lord Jesus said this, "But he that doeth truth, uh, cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, and that they are wrought in God." Now, man note those words "he that doeth truth."

Now what is that to walk in truth? And what is that to do the truth? I think, my friends, said is just this. It is walking according to the truth that we know. For instance, if you know that the Lord Jesus Christ is coming back again, and if you know that He is likely to come today, then you must walk today expecting him, not leaving anything for tomorrow that you want to do today. If there is something to be made right and you expect the Lord Jesus Christ today, then you cannot leave it until tomorrow. And if there is a soul that you have prayed much for and that soul is still lost and you expect the Lord Jesus Christ today, then it won't do to try and win that soul tomorrow, because tomorrow may be too late. If we know the truth of the second coming of Christ, that He may come at any time, then we are not doing the truth unless we are living according to it.

And if we know that souls are lost, and if we know that the heathen are lost, and if we know that they are dying without Christ and lost forever, it doesn't do to wait until next week or next month to do what is in our power, to do right now, because the Lord Jesus Christ may come today. It may be, my dear friend, that that gift, uh, that you give today will win a soul today. And that one soul, one may complete the body of Christ. All while there are souls lost, and we believe, according to God's Word, that they're eternally lost and in danger of the lake of fire and the lake that burns with, uh, with fire and destruction forever. And we expect the Lord Jesus Christ today. And we are dy-, and they are dying without Christ. Then we must do today what is in our power to do today.

I think, my dear friends, that that is what the apostle Paul has in mind when he talks about walking in the truth. And I think that that is doing the truth. And I think that in this Thessalonian

church while they may not have been anything utterly wrong, there are some but were not keeping step. You know, if most of the church is living for today and expecting the Lord Jesus Christ today, and there is one person urging us to do things some other time that ought to be done today, then that person is out of step, or as the apostle puts it here, is walking disorderly. He is out of step with the rest. And my friends, do not be out of step. Let us all be waiting for Christ at all times and doing now what is to be done. Because the Lord Jesus Christ may come today. Now I think that that is the meaning of the word disorderly here, a meaning out of step. And those are in step are those who are walking in the truth and doing the truth.

Now let us go back to our lesson here. And you will notice, my dear friends, that in verse 7 of that 3rd chapter to the, uh, to the Thessalonians, the apostle Paul uses the same word. Then we come to, uh, verse 8. And the apostle Paul says there this, "Neither did we eat any man's bread for naught; but wrought with labor and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you." You know, my friend, the apostle Paul did not take a salary for his preaching. Sometimes he didn't even take an offering. And in this case, at Thessalonica, when he went there, rather than be chargeable to them, he worked night and day. And we learn from another scripture that the apostle Paul was an experienced tent maker. And he wrought at that trade, making tents. And he earned his living by physical labor while he preach the gospel.

And he says in verse 9 and 10 the reason why he worked as a day laborer when he was in Thessalonica. Look at that, those verses 9 and 10. "Not because we have not power, but to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us. For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any man would not walk, neither should he eat." Now, further along in

the lesson we get the point that the apostle Paul was trying, uh, to making this argument. You know, we find that he found some people going around not doing anything, but posing as prophets of the Lord and posing as preachers, and working not at all, doing nothing, but living off the church and not accomplishing anything. And the apostle Paul says "they are not going to say that about me." And so when the apostle Paul went to Thessalonica, that he got some work to do and he toiled with his hands. And he didn't even take an offering. Now my dear friends, that was his cause in Thessalonica, just simply because of the conditions that he found there and in several other places.

You know that there are some folks who claim that that is the way that ministers ought to live today. That ministers and workers and Bible teachers and so forth should not be chargeable to the church. And there are some parts of the church that carry that out. You know that in the northern part of California, I came in contact with some pastors and their congregation requires them to work in the fields and earn their own living and pay for their own needs and then preach at night. But my dear friends, the apostle Paul, uh, took this attitude that is described in verses 9 and 10, because of the conditions that prevailed in that church of Thessalonica. As I told you a moment ago that there were some people that were posing as prophets and, and teachers that they were living on this church and they were doing nothing.

And lest the apostle Paul should be considered as just another one of that company. He said they are not going to say this on me. And so he made tents and he paid his own way. But my dear friends, that is not the general order that God has laid down. That God's order is this. That those that receive a man's ministry, that is if a man is preaching the Word of God and teaching the

Word of God, then those who ministered by him, those rather, who receive his ministry, ought to make it possible for him to live and to pay his bills, so that he might spend all of his time working among people, preaching the gospel, and teaching people from house to house.

You know that that is what the apostle Paul writes in 1 Corinthians chapter 9 verse 7. I want you to look please at, or put on your piece of paper. 1 Corinthians chapter 9 verse 7. And I want you to see what is God's general order. And he says there this, "Who goeth a warfare at any time and his own charges?" You know that the government doesn't pay a soldier very much, but the government doesn't expect a soldier to go and pay his own expenses. At least they don't do that. The government is responsible and takes upon himself the full responsibility of all the expense of the soldier, even though over and above his expenses he doesn't get very much. Then the apostle Paul says in verses 10, 7 to 10 this. He says, "Who goeth a warfare at any time and his own expenses? Who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not the milk of the flock? Say I these as a man? Or saith not the law the same thing?" He says, "For it is written in the law of Moses, thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. Does God care for oxen? Or saith He it altogether for our sakes?" Yay, "For our sakes, no doubt, uh, this is written: for he that ploweth should plow in hope; and he that thresheth in th-, he thresheth in the hope and should be a partaker of his hope."

Do you see, my dear friends, what the apostles Paul's argument there is that they that preach the gospel should live off the gospel, and that a man who would goeth into a warfare for God should live by it. My dear friends, if people bring you spiritual things, you can never pay them for that. There is no man who was preach God's word faithfully that is being reimbursed for it by the

Lord's people. He was never reimbursed for what he did. If somebody led you to Christ, why you never can pay that one for it? If a minister led you deeply or more deeper into the study of the Word of God and shows you the truth, you never can pay him for what he did. If we bring you to, if you, we have given you spiritual things, is that a great thing that we should reap carnal things, says the apostle Paul?

You know that Mr. Moody, as a young man, worked in a store in Boston. And his Sunday school teacher came into the store one day, and spoke to him and led him to Christ. And Moody in turn later hold upon America in one hand and England in the other, and move thousands of people to Christ. My dear friends, can you play that man for what he did when he led D.L. Moody to Christ? Suppose that you offered him a million dollars for leading Moody to Christ, there it is laid to his account over there, my dear friends. Nobody can pay a man for that.

You know that Mr. Charles Spurgeon, the Prince of Preachers, on a stormy morning walked into a little chapel on the, the Sa-, a side street because the storm was so bad. And he went into the chapel just to get away from the storm. And the preacher led him to Christ. Can you pay that preacher for what he did by offering him a million dollars? You know that Mr. Spurgeon at the age of twenty was preaching to thousands and all of England and Scotland were moved by him. You cannot pay that man for that sermon that morning. He would spond anything that you would give him. He will get his reward up there in glory.

You know that Billy Sunday went into the Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago one day. And Harry Monroe took him by the hand and led him to Christ. Do you think that Harry Monroe

wanted any money for that? You know that he is in the heaven now and so is Billy Sunday. You cannot pay for spiritual things, my dear friends. And it is a small thing that men who preach the Word of God should live by the word. If anybody led you into the, into the Word of God in the simplest way, all the money in the universe cannot pay for that man. But if a man is eloquent, and if he's a great preacher but he doesn't preach the Word of God, my dear friends, he isn't worth ten cents. And if a man is a preacher, but preaches modernism, I want to tell you he is a liability and he isn't worth one cent. But if a man is faithful to the Word of God in the preaching of it, all the money in the universe can never repay him.

But the apostle Paul found a condition among the Thessalonians that made him decide that he was not going to take anything from them. And so he, he worked as a day laborer. He worked making tents. And he paid his own way. And he paid for his own bills. And if he put up at any place to sleep, and there was a charge made. He made it as a result of his day, uh, labor, just simply because of the people that were in Thessalonica: false teachers posing to be prophets and teachers. And they were living on these Thessalonians. And the apostle Paul wanted to be an example among them. But my dear friends, God's general order is that a congregation, if it has a faithful preacher and a faithful teacher, that they should meet his needs, in order that he might give himself wholly, uh, to the ministry in spiritual things.

Now look at verse 11. The apostle Paul goes a little more deeply into this. In verse 11, he says, "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies." Now that is what he was dealing with. And you know, my dear friends, that this church of Thessalonica had had a wonderful experience, an-, and people have heard about it.

And there were, undoubtedly, in that day false teachers and false prophets and men who didn't care, uh, just simply so long as they got a living. And you know that they flocked to the Christians of Thessalonica, because you get a bunch of folks, like the church of Thessalonica, who loved the Lord. You know that they would be an easy mark for a fella-, for a bunch of folks, a bunch of false teachers, who just wanted to live on them. And because there were men there, preaching in power and hundreds were being saved, they wanted to get in and cashing in on their generosity. And Paul had seen the beginning of it and he told them about it. And he just gave a warning here. And he says in verse 11, "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies."

In other words, Paul says that there are some that are living off of you and claiming to be teachers of the Word and doing nothing. They were idle. And you know that God hates idleness. If there is any man, my dear friends, who is displeasing to God, it's an idle preacher. And my friends, the trouble with idleness is that it leads to sin and make some men or a woman a busybody. You know it's a terrible thing to be a busybody. It's not a good record. My friends, for anyone to have somebody say "well, if you want to get the low-down, and if you want to find out things, and if you want to get the gossip, you go and see Mrs. So-and-so or Mr. So-and-so. Because he or she knows everything." I want to tell you, my dear friends, that that is not a good reputation for the person to have. And yet oftentimes you hear that said. That is the one thing that is doing all the mischief and God hates it.

You know that busybodies do not, uh, tell things to your face. They say things behind your back and God forbid that we should say anything about anybody that we're not willing to say in their

presence. And the most terrible thing that we possess, my dear friends, is the tongue. I know that my tongue has gotten me into more trouble than any other member of my body. You may not believe that but you know my dear friends what the, uh, James says about the tongue. You just put this down, James chapter 3 and verse 6. Just make a note of it. And he is talking about the human tongue. And this is what he says "the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. So is the tongue among our members, that it defile the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell." My friends, that is the tongue that you have in your mouth. And that's the tongue that I have. And the tongue is a deadly thing. And it can say a single word that will make a man stumble and be lost and go straight to hell. The tongue can make a statement about a godly preacher, but that will cause all of these life's work to be undone. It can criticize a Christian and make him stumble and fall and become the, uh, discouraged and go away from the Lord and just ruin his business, that if m-, his ministry rather.

My friends, let me read verses 8 and 9 again, will you? Of the 3rd chapter of, of James. That James, James says this, "But the tongue, but the tongue, no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therefore blessed we God, even the Father; and therefore curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God." You say will surely no man would bless God and then curse. The curse here, my dear friend, is the thing you say about another person that haven't seen. That is a curse. It doesn't mean blasphemy. We say sometimes about a man but brings a, a curse into their lives and makes them stumble and fall. My dear friend, the tongue no man can tame. And we had better give our tongues to the Lord. Not only, uh, our eyes and our hands and our minds, but we need to give our tongue and say "Lord, I dedicate my tongue to thee, to speak only for thee, and never to speak anything about anybody else."

You know that Paul said that some of these folks in the Thessalonian church, that is those that are coming in among them to get an easy living, they just spent their time gathering up the gossip. And the apostle Paul says they were busybodies. And here we have the curse, the curse for idleness of being a busybody. My friend, you just think of the good that the tongue can do. Your tongue is capable of blessing. Your tongue is capable of, of saying words that will bring men into a right relationship with God forever. And your tongue, on the other hand, is capable of saying things that will drive men away from God.

My friends, don't let us be alike this company of people that gabbed among these Thessalonians, busybodies, given to idleness, doing nothing. The Lord has given to you the same ministry that He has given to me. The Lord Jesus has says "follow me, and I will make you to become fishers of men." And those words were spoken to you. as well as to me. And if you have anything to say, uh, to any man about wrongdoing, my dear friends, never tell it to your neighbor. Never, never tell it to a third party. Go to that person in love. And when you point out his error, my friends, you consider him as self, lest you also be tempted.

But we're gonna close with this verse 13. And it seems as though we're gonna complete our studies in Thessalonians tomorrow. But look at verse 13. He says, "But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing." And I want to tell you that I trust that we'll take these exhortations and our warnings. And the Lord has given to us the ministry of making Christ known. And you know that sometimes you get weary in well doing, some of you folks, mothers, have been trying to lead your, your husbands or lead your, your boys and girls to the Lord. And the more you pray, it

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seems as though to you that the faster over the devil they go. Well, my dear friends, don't you become weary and left. For God one day will hear your prayer.

Will continue this where we have left off today. Will conclude the studies in, in Thessalonians. And then we shall begin the studies in the book of Revelation. Thank you for listening. Goodbye and God bless you all.

[Music until the end]