

II Thessalonians 3: 6-9

The Command Given and an Apostolic Example

HHBC





II Thessalonians chapter 3: 6-9

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.



II Thessalonians 3: 6

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The Command Given: (from McCalley's outline)

- *Brief Review of Last week's lesson of Verses 1-5: Paul asks for prayer (imperative; middle vox; you yourselves) for himself, Silas and Timothy*
 1. *For the gospel to 'run'; freely and effectively where it may and not be hindered; have 'free course'*
 2. *That Paul & his team be rescued/delivered from **atopos** men (out of place; unrighteous; harmful)*
- Now, he makes a command: Verse 6 above: to keep away from every brother who qualifies as one leading an unruly life
 1. 'COMMAND' = **parangellō** = (a charge; an order; a military term)
 2. 'KEEP AWAY' = **stellō** = (diminish; check; cause to cease). 'To shorten the sails' of as it was used in the ancient nautical sense. So take the wind out of the sails of your association with the unruly ones.
 3. 'UNRULY' = **ataktōs** = (out of ranks; inordinate; irregular)



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4. '(LEADING) *an unruly* (LIFE)' = ***peripateō*** = (walk). Leading one's day to day life. Peter would use the term 'our conversation'... How this unruly one conducts himself.

Keathley, III: *'The lesson here is simple: the church is engaged in spiritual warfare (Eph. 6:10ff 'put on the full armor of God...) with each believer a soldier whom God has enlisted into His army. When we fail to follow the directives of the Savior, it leads to disorderly conduct which hurts our effectiveness (see 2 Tim. 2:3-4; 1 Tim. 1:18).'*

Eph 6: 10-17 summarized: ***"put on the full armor of God... That you may be able to withstand the schemes of the devil... Our struggle is not against flesh & blood.."*** 2 TIM 2:3-4: ***'...as a good soldier of Christ Jesus... No soldier in active duty entangles himself with the affairs of everyday life....*** 1 TIM 1:18 ***'... That you fight the good fight..'***

5. Note: the command is given under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ: the One Who is Commander-in-Chief of the church body/ army



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‘The Tradition received from us’:

1. Previously, in II Thes. 2:15, we discussed ‘traditions’ things handed down. The Greek ***paradosis*** is a body of precepts, oral or written teachings, instructions or narratives given from one to another and meant to be passed on through time.
 - a) What would the ‘tradition’ Paul has in mind here... ?
 - b) ‘Tradition’ here: how he lived among the Thessalonians upon first arriving in their midst...
 - c) From Paul’s First letter: I Thes. 2:6-12:

even though as apostles of Christ we might have asserted our authority. ***But*** we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us. For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as a father would his own children, so that you would ***walk*** in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.



II Thessalonians 3: 7-8

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'The Support of the Command': (from McCalley's outline)

1. Again, the recall of 1st Thes. 2:6-12, stated previously, perfectly supports Paul's continuing defense of how he lived among them
2. Paul set the *example* = ***mimeomai***: (*mimos* (n.)) a word that clearly says 'mimic' my behavior and ways, the lifestyle I clearly set before you when I was with you . . .
 - Therefore I exhort you, be ***imitators*** of me; I Cor 4:16
 - Be ***imitators*** of me, just as I also am of Christ; I Cor 11:1
 - Therefore be ***imitators*** of God, as beloved children; Eph 5:1
 - You also became ***imitators*** of us and of the Lord; I Thes 1:6
 - For you, brethren, became ***imitators*** of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea; I Thes 2:14
3. Discussion point: how much tentmaking did Paul do? 6 am to 3 pm, then preached? Worked all day very hard at tentmaking, then preached 6 p.m. to midnight?
4. WHY: did Paul work and not make his income from missionary work?
 - a) 8b.'s "so that" purpose clause gives us one primary reason: he did not want to be an ***epibareō*** (*weighing on them*) is the thrust of *epibareō*



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5. Discussion point: something I've been wondering about but not able to answer in studying this is: did Saul the Persecutor of the church earn a living as a tentmaker? Or did he derive income from the Jewish synagogues he was fighting for?
6. Another purpose of Paul's command to withdraw from undisciplined believers who do not work:
 - a) There was obviously some who had this propensity not to work in Paul's 1st epistle:
 I Thes. 4:11-12: ***and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.***
 1 Thes. 5:14: ***We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.***
 - b) Paul is now being forceful, with a command from the Lord Jesus Christ, and being specific in addressing these 'shirkers' of Christian duty to work, mind their own business and be self-sufficient



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Paul's Right to remuneration for Spiritual Work vs. His Liberty to Forego Taking It

1. The applicable key to illuminating Verse 9 is First Corinthians, the 9th chapter: Paul's defense of his Rights to accept food, drink, shelter, monetary compensation as an Apostle
2. In the chapter he says: ***'do we not have a right to eat or drink?... Who as a soldier serves at any time at his own expense?... And argues his right to take just compensation from the O.T. '...not muzzling an oz while he is threshing..'***
3. BUT: after arguing and contending the point, he says in Vs. 12: ***'If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ.***
 - a) He argues just a strongly for his right to give up his right in liberty (M. Doyle; I Cor. Study. HHBC 1/17/21; #41)
 - b) "My rights are subservient to the interest of Christ and His people; My rights are not for the self-glorification or the indulgence of the body; All Christian ministry is of Christ the Lord, not earthly man, and if the spirit of the world is allowed to intrude, it will ruin Christian ministry" (M. Doyle op. cit.)
 - c) 'HINDERANCE' = ***egkopē*** – a cutting in a road made to impede an enemy's pursuit



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Purpose Clause of Not Taking any compensation from the Thessalonians:

1. To serve as a living example of Christ and His life (Phil 2:5-8): ***Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.***
 - a) Paul was modeling Christ; and expecting the Thessalonians afterward to model him: specifically in the matter of Christian work-ethic; not being unruly and out of order
 - b) 'MODEL' = ***typos*** = the mark of a blow or strike; an imprint; the figure formed by the blow or impression



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Finally: one last thought on Paul's example to the Thessalonian Believers:

- Reasons given by Paul for working for the Gospel free of charge have been: (a) So not to hinder the gospel (1 Cor 9:12) (b) *Not to be a burden on Paul's hearers of the gospel (2 Th 3:8)*; (c) To shut up criticism of Paul 'peddling' the gospel for financial gain (2 Cor 2:17); (d) *To serve as example of diligence (2 Th 3:9)*
- One final reason is worth looking at from 1 Cor. 9:18: ***What then is my reward? That, when I preach the gospel, I may offer the gospel without charge, so as not to make full use of my right in the gospel.***
- One commentator named 'Les' on biblebridge.org had an observation about 9:18: that Paul was spiritually rewarded, not future in heaven as a crown for service, but on the earth; his reward was preaching for free; it was actually pleasurable for him, and he enjoyed the pleasure
- While this may seem odd or simplistic, the definition of 'grace' / ***charis*** comes to mind from Aristotle
charis: 'something conferred freely, with no expectation of return, and finding in its source in the bounty and the freeheartedness of the giver' (McCalley's 'Grace' series quoting Wuest)
- McCalley also says: charis is the quality of something that makes it pleasurable
- So, Paul was giving the gospel in true, pure and unhindered grace to his recipients. Truly communicating: grace.