

# Do Not Grow Weary in Doing Good

## 2 Thessalonians 3

Paul concluded Chapter 2 with an admonishment to remain steadfast and to be established in the Word, both in word and deed. As he closed his letter, he continued to encourage believers in their walk as they await Christ's return.

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5.

1. Pray for us. This was Paul's great desire for himself. He wanted his fellow believers to pray for him and those working and traveling with him. What did he ask them to pray for?

v. 1 \_\_\_\_\_

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v. 2 \_\_\_\_\_

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2. **THINK:** What do you think it means for the Word of the Lord to run swiftly?

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**Run Swiftly** - metaphorically: of doctrine rapidly propagated

**Glorified** – to make renowned, render illustrious, i.e., to cause the dignity and worth of some person or thing to become manifest and acknowledged

3. Are you praying for those who are serving in ministry? Are you praying that the Word of the Lord will spread and be glorified through the efforts of that ministry? Are you praying for their safety and protection from evil men? If not, what steps can you take to remind yourself to pray in this way?

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4. **THINK:** What do you think it means for the Word of the Lord to be glorified, and why is this so important?

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If the work Paul was doing were to flourish, it would be because the Word of the Lord accomplished it. Work done by human hands can only accomplish so much. Powerful, life-changing work is accomplished through prayer and the Word of the Lord.

It is frustrating when Satan uses evil men to come against the work of God, but it is even more frustrating when Satan uses Christians to hinder God’s work.

5. Read the following verses and record how these believers opposed the work of God, knowingly or unknowingly.

Matthew 16:21-23	
Acts 4:33-35 Acts 5:1-4	

6. How can a believer be guarded against hindering the work of God?  
(2 Thessalonians 3:3)

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7. **THINK:** What do you think Peter, Ananias, and Sapphira could have done for things to have played out differently in each of their situations?

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<p><b>Faithful</b> – trusty, faithful; of persons who show themselves faithful in the transaction of business, the execution of commands, or the discharge of official duties</p>
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Thankfully, the Lord is always faithful. Through prayer and the study of His Word, it is He who establishes and guards us, making us ready for every good work and word.

8. As Paul considered the believers in Thessalonica and the work to be done, where did he put his confidence? (v. 4a)

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9. In the Lord, Paul was confident of what? (4b)

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**Command** – a military order passed down from a superior officer

10. **THINK:** In a military setting, why is it essential for soldiers to follow their superior's orders?

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11. **THINK HARDER:** As a soldier of Jesus Christ, why do you think it is essential for missionaries, pastors, Sunday school teachers, and church members to follow their Superior's orders?

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12. What motivates you to obey God's commands and answer His call on your life?

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Christ is coming. Pray that the Word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified! Pray for protection from evil men and do what you have been commanded to do!

13. Record Paul's prayer found in verse 5.

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**Direct** – to make straight, guide, direct: of the removal of the hindrances to coming to one

**Heart** – denotes the center of all physical and spiritual life

**Love** – affection, good will, love, benevolence

**God** – spoken of the only and true God, His counsels, interests, things due to Him

**Waiting Patiently** – a patient, steadfast waiting for the return of Christ from Heaven

14. **THINK:** Using the definitions provided and considering the context of these two letters, what do you think Paul was trying to convey through this prayer?

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We have great hope in the fact that Jesus is coming back, and that one day we will meet Him in the air. But, we do Him a great disservice if we are so focused on His return that we neglect His marching orders for the here and now. Pray that the love of God poured out for us on the cross and the hope of Jesus' return would spur us on to do as He commands.

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15.

15. Go back to Paul's first letter. What three things did Paul encourage the people to do in 1 Thessalonians 4:11? What did he want them to do with the unruly in 1 Thessalonians 5:14?

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The issues of idleness and unruliness continue in Thessalonica. Some looked at Christ's return as an excuse to quit their jobs and wait. Relying on the generosity of others to take care of them and their responsibilities, they became busybodies and spread false ideas about Christ's return. Their misinterpretations were causing hardship for everyone, just as our misinterpretations of God's Word cause hardship for those around us. We have a responsibility to believe the truth, apply it, guard it, and share it.

16. Having been warned, what instruction does Paul now give to the believers regarding how to deal with those who are disorderly and not living according to tradition? (2 Thessalonians 3:6)

**Withdraw** – to remove oneself, to abstain from familiar contact with one

**Disorderly/Unruly** (*ataktos*) – out of ranks (often so of soldiers)

**Tradition** – what is delivered, the substance of the teaching

17. Detail the example left by Paul and those who traveled with him. (v. 7-8b)

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18. Why did Paul choose to labor and toil day and night? (v. 8c, 9b)

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19. Read the following verses and record what you learn about the dangers of idleness.

Ecclesiastes 10:18	
Proverbs 21:25	
Proverbs 24:30-34	

20. What had the idleness in Thessalonica led to? (v. 11)

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21. **THINK:** Why do you think idleness leads to gossip and other sins?

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22. What did Paul command and exhort these idle busybodies to do instead? (v. 12)

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Paul was calling idle believers to do something constructive with their time. Being idle sends the message that the work is done, there is nothing left to do, or indeed nothing worth getting up for.

23. What would Jesus say about this assessment? (Luke 10:2)

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24. Read the following verses and record what you learn about the importance of work.

John 9:4	
1 Corinthians 15:58	
Ephesians 2:10	
2 Timothy 2:15	

One who is not willing to work for the necessities of life will certainly not be willing to work for the glory of Christ.

25. Are there any areas in your life where you have grown idle? If you find you have time to gossip and poke around in others' business, you can be sure the seed of idleness has taken root in your heart. What practical steps can you take to resist idleness and to work in quietness (not officiously meddling in the affairs of others) instead?

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26. **THINK:** Be honest. How do you feel when you look around and see that you're the only one working?

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Those who were working to provide for their families and serving in the church in Thessalonica could likely relate. It can be easy to grow weary when those around you are enjoying the comfort of an overstuffed chair.

27. How did Paul encourage these hard-working believers? (v. 13)

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28. How can you be encouraged when weariness from doing good creeps in? Look for verses to inspire you in each of these scenarios.

“No one appreciates what I am doing.”

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“Why am I always the one who has to do everything?”

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“I deserve some time to just focus on me and what I would like to do.”

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29. In verse 14, Paul returned to the unruly and disobedient and how they should be dealt with. How did Paul further describe what it looks like to withdraw from the disorderly brother? (v. 14-15)

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_

**Ashamed** – to turn about, to turn one upon himself  
**Admonish** – warn, exhort

30. **THINK:** What do you think is the heart behind withdrawing from the disorderly brother?

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Read 2 Thessalonians 3:16-18.

**Lord of Peace** – the author and promoter of peace  
**Peace** – the tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and content with its early lot, of whatsoever sort that is

31. Consider the depth of what Paul prayed on their behalf; “Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way.” Are you experiencing this kind of peace in your life? How is this kind of peace acquired?

Romans 15:13	
2 Corinthians 13:11	
2 Peter 1:2	

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.

- Isaiah 26:3

## A Closer Look at the Faithfulness of the Lord

### 2 Thessalonians 3:3

32. Read Thessalonians 3:3. What is the Lord faithful to do for us?

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33. Without looking up the word, what does *faithful* mean to you?

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34. In your walk with God, do you believe Him to be faithful? Give details of His faithfulness in your life.

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Scripture assures us that God **is** faithful. This means He keeps His promises. Because He is steadfast and sure, you can trust His Word to be true and therefore trust **Him**.

There are times when life seems difficult or unfair. During moments of loss and disappointment, it might seem that God is not faithful. But this is never the case. We can overcome these negative thoughts by knowing and understanding His Word.

35. What does Isaiah 55:8-9 teach us?

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36. How does this verse help you understand God when He doesn't answer your prayers the way you had hoped?

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37. Read Malachi 3:6 and Hebrews 13:8 and record more reasons we can be assured that He will remain faithful.

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38. Read the following verses. What do they teach you about God's faithfulness?

Lamentations 3:22-23

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Psalm 119:89-90

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1 Corinthians 10:13

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Philippians 4:19

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1 John 1:9

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To understand God's faithfulness, we must know Him and His character. Therefore, we should spend time in His Word. Additionally, it might be helpful to keep a notebook by your Bible to jot down all the ways God shows faithfulness.

Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me.

- Isaiah 46:9

39. Because God is faithful, we also must be faithful. Someone who is not faithful is wishy-washy, untrustworthy, and unreliable. Read 1 Corinthians 4:2. Would you be found faithful by God and by other believers? If not, what steps can you take?

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40. Meditate on Hebrews 11:6 and write down your response to this verse, thanking God for His faithfulness.

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Therefore know that the LORD your God, He is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and mercy for a thousand generations with those who love Him and keep His commandments.

- Deuteronomy 7:9