



## “Work & The Will Of God” (II Thessalonians 3:6-15)

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Intro: So here’s the rule Paul laid down in the Thessalonian church (v.10).

### I. POINTS TO HELP US UNDERSTAND

#### A. Paul’s Personal Reasons To Be A Tent Maker

1. What it means to be a “tent maker.”
2. To keep from being a burden to the Thessalonian church.
  - Some churches are not financially able to support a full time pastor, not to mention a full time missionary and church planter like Paul. In the early days of CCSP I was a tent maker...
3. To be an example to the church.
  - There were bad examples in the church, and there still are today. In I Cor.11:20 Paul mentions leaders who “take advantage of you.” Jude refers to shepherds in the church that “feed only themselves.” Paul wrote to Timothy about some people believing godliness was actually a means to financial gain. See I Peter 5:1-4. Elisha refused payment from Naaman the Syrian. Abraham refused to take the spoils when tempted by the king of Sodom.
4. Paul did at times receive financial support.
  - See Phil.4:16, 18; Acts 18:1-5
5. The right of a minister to receive financial support (Luke 10:7; Gal.6:6; I Cor.9:11; I Tim.5:17-18).

#### B. The Biblical Principle Of Work

1. God ordained that man should work.

- Gen.2: 15 The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. 16 And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden..."

- Work is meant to be a part of my "fulfillment" in life, and it includes work that God has preordained for me to do that will make a difference for His kingdom. (Eph.2:10; 4:16; Rom.12:6-8)

2. Man's work has been affected by sin (Gen.3:17-19).

3. God never intended for man to be consumed with work.

- Ex.35: 2 For six days, work is to be done, but the seventh day shall be your holy day, a Sabbath of rest to the LORD. Whoever does any work on it must be put to death.

- Ex.20: 9 Six days you shall labor and do all your work, 10 but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. 11 For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day.

- John 5: 16 So, because Jesus was doing these things on the Sabbath, the Jews persecuted him. 17 Jesus said to them, "My Father is always at his work to this very day, and I, too, am working."

- The Sabbath is meant to provide rest, not restrict us from doing good (on any day). Keeping the Sabbath will not make you more holy, but it should make you more healthy.

4. God commands that He be honored with the fruit of man's work.

- Because God gives man the ability to work/produce wealth. (Deut.8:10-14, 17-18)

- Prov.3: 9 Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops... Jericho, etc.

5. God desires all of man's work be done as unto Him.

- Col.3: 23 Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, 24 since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.

- Eph.6: 5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. 6 Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. 7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving

the Lord, not men, 8 because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

### C. Practical Ways Our Work May Benefit The Kingdom Of God

1. As a witness (I Thess.4:12a; Col.3:22-24; Joseph; Daniel)

2. \$ Support for the local church

\* Abraham and Melchizedek (Gen.14:20); Jacob (Gen.28:22); Matthew 23: 23 "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices--mint, dill and cummin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law--justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former; Hebrews 7 (Melchizedek).

\* Verses on how monies in the NT went to and through the local church...

3. Help for the needy

\* Acts 20: 35 In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

\* Eph.4: 28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

4. Missions

## II. COMMANDS, INSTRUCTIONS, & ENCOURAGEMENT

### A. People We Need To Stay Away From

\* This is not meant to be an option for the believer. Paul commands "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

\* See I Thess.4:11-12; 5:14a. Evidently some people were not obeying these instructions, or responding to the church's encouragement to change.

\* KJV = 14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly; "Idle" = 813. ataktos, at'-ak-tos; from G1 (as a neg. particle) and a der. of G5021; **unarranged**, i.e. (by impl.) **insubordinate** (religiously):--unruly. The word was applied to a soldier who would not keep rank but insisted on marching his own way.

\* What Paul was dealing with here were people that were unproductive, both in life and for the kingdom of God. Ironically there was a lot of activity in their lives, yet that activity was producing nothing positive.

\* Note: We are not to have an attitude toward these people, we are simply to not hang out with them (v.15).

## B. People Who Need To Repent

\* Some people are just plain lazy; Some people are independent; Some people are misdirected.

\* There have been lots of doomsday prophets. One of the most famous was William Miller, a farmer and amateur Bible scholar. Miller convinced many people that Jesus would return in 1844. And when he didn't, people were crushed. People who have believed false prophecies have made foolish decisions. Gary Vollmer was absolutely certain that on May 21, 2011, God would send devastating earthquakes, raise believers to heaven in the "rapture" and then destroy the world five months later. "Judgment Day has come and passed, but it was a spiritual judgment on the world," he explains. "There is no more salvation. Salvation is over with. The fact is we have 153 days, and on the 21st of October, the world will end." Before May 21, many believers quit their jobs, left their families and gave their savings to Family Radio (Harold Camping), which then sent out caravans and put up billboards announcing the end. One guy spent \$140,000 of his personal money on an ad campaign. Experts say most people will find a way to rationalize their beliefs. "It's very hard for us to say, 'Boy, was I stupid!' " says Elliot Aronson, a prominent psychologist and co-author of the book *Mistakes Were Made (But Not By Me): Why We Justify Foolish Beliefs, Bad Decisions, And Hurtful Acts*.

\* The **Year 2000 problem** (also known as the **Y2K problem**, the **Millennium bug**, the **Y2K bug**, or simply **Y2K**) was a problem for both digital (computer-related) and non-digital documentation and data storage situations which resulted from the practice of abbreviating a four-digit year to two digits. In computer programs, the practice of representing the year with two digits becomes problematic with logical error(s) arising upon "rollover" from x99 to x00. A local businessman that was once part of CCSP invested thousands of dollars in a sail boat that he was going to ride out the Y2K storm in. That boat sat downtown in the St Pete Marina for years, and I have often thought of how much of the Lord's money was wasted on such an effort.

\* I met some people years ago that were storing provisions in caves in the mountains of N.C. in preparation for the end of the world...

## C. People Who Need To Persevere In Their Work (v.13)

\* See Gal.6:9

### III. EXAMPLES TO FOLLOW

- \* What an example Paul and his team were. Not only were they not lazy, they were willing to forfeit a biblical right to financial support from the church.
- \* The example of Joseph
  - God given dream, tremendous disappointment, faithfulness in prison
- \* The example of Daniel
  - Daniel's great work ethic is what got him into trouble

### CONCLUSION

\* John 9: 4 As long as it is day, we must do the work of him who sent me. Night is coming, when no one can work.

\* Ever heard the phrase, "Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last?" It was coined by a Studd – Charles Thomas Studd. Born in England in 1860, his father was a wealthy man. C.T. Studd became a famous cricket player for Cambridge University. His father became a Christian through a Moody-Sankey evangelistic campaign in England. Not long after another visiting preacher led C.T. and his three brothers to Christ while visiting their home. But it was not until six years later when his brother Charles became seriously ill that he got serious about his faith. He was confronted with the question, "What is all the fame and flattery worth when a man comes to face eternity. As a result of that experience, he realized cricket nor anything in this world would last, that the only thing really worthwhile was living for the world to come. So he gave away his inheritance and became one of "The Cambridge Seven," seven Cambridge students who volunteered themselves to Hudson Taylor as missionaries to China with The China Inland Mission. Of his decision, C.T. Studd said, "Some want to live within the sound of church or chapel bell; I want to run a rescue shop within a yard of hell." After some time in China, he pastored in India, then became concerned about the large parts of Africa that had never been reached with the gospel. In 1910 he went to the Sudan and eventually founded The Heart of Africa Mission. In 1913, against medical advice, he visited The Belgian Congo, establishing four mission stations that reached out to eight different tribes. Studd's wife Priscilla visited his work in The Congo in 1928, then died the following year. C.T. Studd continued to minister in Africa until 1931, when he died of untreated gallstones.

\* "Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last." For years I thought that was the only line. But it's not. Here's the full story:

"Two little lines I heard one day, Traveling along life's busy way; Bringing conviction to my heart, And from my mind would not depart; Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last. Only one life, yes only one, soon will its fleeting hours be done; Then, in 'that day' my

Lord to meet, and stand before His judgment seat; Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last; Only one life, the still small voice, gently pleads for a better choice, bidding me selfish aims to leave, and to God's holy will to cleave; Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last; Only one life, a few brief years, each with its burdens, hopes, and fears; Each with its clays I must fulfill, living for self or in His will; Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last. When this bright world would tempt me sore, when Satan would a victory score; When self would seek to have its way, then help me Lord with joy to say; Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last. Give me Father, a purpose deep, in joy or sorrow Thy word to keep; Faithful and true what e'er the strife, pleasing Thee in my daily life; Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last. Oh let my love with fervor burn, and from the world now let me turn; Living for Thee, and Thee alone, bringing Thee pleasure on Thy throne; Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last. Only one life, yes only one, now let me say, 'Thy will be done;' And when at last I'll hear the call, I know I'll say 'twas worth it all; Only one life, 'twill soon be past, Only what's done for Christ will last. Only one life, 'twill soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last. And when I am dying, how happy I'll be, if the lamp of my life has been burned out for Thee." –*C. T. Studd*