

Commentary on 2 Thessalonians Chapter 3 by Chuck Smith 6.23.24

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May memory verse Romans 6:8 (NKJV)

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

June memory verse Romans 6:9 (NKJV)

knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

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Finally, brethren, pray for us (2Th 3:1),

Now again Paul is calling for prayer for him. I think that maybe sometimes we are guilty of not praying for those in spiritual leadership feeling they've got it made. Far from the truth. Those in the position of spiritual leadership really have probably greater trials, greater temptations than the average person. Satan, I think, works harder against spiritual leadership. How many pastors have fallen in the snare of the devil? Because you see, if Satan can snare a pastor then the repercussions go through the whole congregation. Many people are hurt. So the pastor needs prayer.

Pray for us, Paul says. I would say the same to you, pray for me. I need your prayers. For what?

that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you (2Th 3:1):

That God's word might just come forth freely from us. That we would remain faithful to the Word of God and to the truth of God. People often ask me what can I pray for you? And I answer, pray that God will keep me usable.

Paul the apostle said, "I'd beat my body to keep in subjection lest having preached to others I'd be put on the shelf" (1 Corinthians 9:27). If we don't keep our body in subjection, we can be put on the shelf very easily. So many ministers have been destroyed by pride or by greed or by lust. And they let the body get the best of them and they become destroyed, no longer usable. My prayer that I will remain usable. I only have one purpose for living, and one main purpose for living and that is to do the work of the Lord, that which God has called me to do. Pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and he be glorified, through his word, even as you have experienced the power of God's word in your life:

and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith (2Th 3:1-2).

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And that is one of the problems of the ministry, some of the unreasonable people that you have to deal with. And what happens is that they can waste your time. Totally unreasonable. They really don't want to reason, they just want to throw their trip on you and they become so demanding and so pushy. Paul said pray that God will just deliver me from unreasonable men. For not everybody has the faith.

But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you, and keep you from evil (2Th 3:3).

The Lord is faithful and God will establish your walk and your life, and God will keep you from evil. He is faithful.

And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you [Paul said, what is it?] that you both do and will do the things which we command you (2Th 3:4).

I have this confidence that you are going to obey the instructions and the exhortations in this epistle. I just have this confidence, I know.

And that the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ (2Th 3:5).

Other commentators and translators translate this "and to the patience of Christ", but "that the Lord will direct your hearts in the love of God". How we need God's love to be working in our hearts and lives more and more. For all of our efforts, all our works, all of our sacrifices, all of our gifts, all of our anointings are of no value if the love of God isn't there working through it.

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and angels and have not love, it is just a meaningless empty sound. Though I can prophesy, I understand all mystery, if I have not love it is worthless. Though I give my body to be burned or I sell everything that I have and bestow on the poor, if I have not love it really profits mean nothing". Oh, may the Lord cause his love to abound in our hearts, direct our hearts into love and into the patience of Christ.

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ (2Th 3:6),

Now this becomes very serious when you start commanding people in the name of Jesus. That is the way you deal with demons.

That you withdraw yourselves from every brother that walks disorderly, and not after the truths which you have received from us (2Th 3:6).

Now Paul is commanding them that you really separate yourselves from the disorderly brothers.

When Paul wrote to the church in Corinth, he said we are not to have fellowship with those who are drunkards, who are committing fornication, who are living after the flesh,

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who claim to be brothers in Christ. He said you can't just exclude yourself from mixing with everyone who does these things. In other words, you live in the world, you can't get out of that. But with those that say they are brothers, don't eat with them. Don't fellowship with them if they are walking disorderly. He is saying now the same thing, only commanding them in the name of Jesus that you withdraw from these disorderly people.

For yourselves know how that you ought to follow us: for we behaved not ourselves disorderly among you (2Th 3:7);

And so there were those that were coming in after Paul who were creating divisions and all, and Paul said withdraw from them. These guys are teaching you junky stuff, withdraw from them. They are not following the teachings that we gave to you. Now follow after those things that we taught you, for we taught you the truth through the Holy Spirit. And,

Neither did we eat any man's bread for nothing (2Th 3:8);

We set an example for you, and the leadership should be setting an example for the flock, but a good example to be sure.

Now Paul says, "Be followers of me", but that's to a point. Paul said, "I didn't eat any man's bread for naught;" In other words, I didn't sponge off of any of you. I didn't come in and eat you bread. I didn't come in and inflict myself upon you and say "all right, now take care of me and feed me". I didn't come in and tell you that God was broke and going out of business if you don't send your tithes and offerings in this week. "We didn't eat any man's bread for naught",

but worked with labor and travail night and day, that we would not be chargeable to any of you [that we wouldn't be dependent upon any of you.] Not because we do not have the power to make ourselves an example unto you to follow us (2Th 3:8-9)

Paul wrote to the Galatians to communicate to those who taught them in the Word in every good thing. But Paul said I wasn't chargeable to you, not that I didn't have the power, but I just wanted to set an example for you. I wanted to set this kind of an example of working to provide for my own needs that it might be an example to you that you might follow us.

For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by the Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness you go to work, and you eat your own bread. But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing (2Th 3:10-13).

Again, in another place, Paul said, "Be not weary in well doing for in due season you will reap if you faint not" (Galatians 6:9).

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It is easy sometimes to become weary in doing good, especially if you don't see any effect or any results and fruit from it.

And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man [mark that man], and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed. Yet don't count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother. Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all. The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token of every epistle: so I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen (2Th 3:14-18).

So Paul signifies that this, his signature attested to the veracity, the truth of this letter being from him. Follow it, obey it, and the teaching that he had given. A great epistle. We'll get next into first Timothy. So you can go ahead and read first Timothy the first couple chapters. You might as well read the whole book, but we'll take probably the first three chapters in our next lesson.

Now may the Lord be with you and cause you to abound in all things in Christ. That the love of God might increase in your heart and in your life as God establishes you in your faith and in your walk with Him. God be with you and God bless and keep you during the time that we are absent from one another. May God enrich you through His Spirit in all things in Christ Jesus.