

Notes on the Greek New Testament
Day 288 – October 15th – 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18

Works frequently referenced in these notes on Thessalonians

John Eadie *A Commentary on the Greek Text of the Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians*, MacMillan, London, 1877

Leon Morris *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, 1991

Verse 1

Τὸ λοιπὸν προσεύχεσθε, ἀδελφοί, περὶ ἡμῶν, ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου τρέχη καὶ δοξάζεται καθὼς καὶ πρὸς ὑμᾶς,

λοιπος, η, ον rest, remaining, other: (το)
λοιπον adv. finally

προσευχομαι pray

The verb is in an emphatic position. Cf. 1 Thess 5:25.

τρέχω run, exert oneself

For the imagery, cf. Ps 147:15.

δοξάζω praise, honour, glorify, exalt

Paul is writing from Corinth where there was opposition and difficulty.

Verse 2

καὶ ἵνα ῥυσθῶμεν ἀπὸ τῶν ἀτόπων καὶ πονηρῶν ἀνθρώπων, οὐ γὰρ πάντων ἡ πίστις.

ῥυσθῶμεν Verb, aor pass subj, 1 pl ῥυομαι
save, rescue

ἀτοπος, ον improper, evil, harmful
πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad, wicked

"Both the use of the aorist tense in the verb 'delivered' and the article with 'wicked and evil men' point to a definite situation. Paul is not asking for prayer that he might be kept safe in his constant journeys and preaching. He writes in the light of his particular situation. He writes knowing that his friends are aware of his difficulty. He looks to them to join him in prayer that he may be delivered out of it. It seems most natural to understand his enemies as those Jews who opposed his preaching... We know that they dogged his steps at Corinth as they did in other places (Acts 18:5; 12ff.). His request reminds us of similar words elsewhere (Rom 15:31)." Morris

οὐ γὰρ πάντων ἡ πίστις either 'not all people believe' or 'not all have embraced the faith.'
The former leads perhaps more naturally to the contrast of the following verse.

Verse 3

πιστὸς δὲ ἐστὶν ὁ κύριος, ὃς στηρίζει ὑμᾶς καὶ φυλάξει ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ.

πιστος, η, ον faithful, reliable

The inclusion of ἐστὶν is emphatic.

στηρίζω see v.17

Cf. 1 Thess 3:2.

φυλασσω keep, guard, defend

πονηρος, α, ον evil, bad, wicked

Could be either 'from the evil one' or 'from evil.'

Verse 4

πεποιθᾶμεν δὲ ἐν κυρίῳ ἐφ' ὑμᾶς, ὅτι ἂ παραγγέλλομεν καὶ ποιεῖτε καὶ ποιήσετε.

πεποιθᾶμεν Verb, perf act indic, 1 pl πειθω
persuade, convince perf act & pass

have confidence, be confident

παραγγέλλω command, instruct

"Paul is putting his trust basically in the Lord. But he is expecting the Lord so to work in the lives of his friends that they will respond to the commands laid on them." Morris

Verse 5

ὁ δὲ κύριος κατευθῦναι ὑμῶν τὰς καρδίας εἰς τὴν ἀγάπην τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ εἰς τὴν ὑπομονὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

κατευθῦναι Verb, aor act opt, 3 s κατευθυνω
direct, guide

"Paul is about to deal with certain people who are idle and insubordinate. He never shirks an issue, and his directions when he comes to them are blunt enough. But it is not part of his plan to give needless offense, and the reference to the love of God is timely. It reminds them that Paul speaks of one who himself owed everything to the love of God and who loved God himself, and also that they are in the same position. There should be no resentment among people whose thoughts are fixed on God's love. Similarly the reference to 'Christ's perseverance' is in point when people's idleness is about to be rebuked." Morris

ὕπομονη, ης f patience, endurance

"There is some difficulty in knowing exactly what the following expressions signify. An expression like 'the love of God' might mean in Greek either God's love for us (which NIV chooses) or our love for God... [It is probable that] the primary idea will be that of God's love to us, but there will also be the secondary idea of our love for him. Paul's prayer, then, will be that the inner life of his friends be so concentrated on God's love for them that that this will evoke an answering love for him. Conformably to this, 'the perseverance of Christ'... will denote first the attitude of Christ, and then the answering attitude on the part of the Thessalonians." Morris

Verses 6-13

"In the First Epistle Paul had mentioned that some people would not work but were disorderly (4:11-12; 5:14), but it is evident that his brief exhortations had not produced the desired effect. He felt strongly on the matter, as we see from the fact that in this letter he devotes so much space to this problem." Morris

Verse 6

Παραγγέλλομεν δὲ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, ἐν ὀνόματι τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ στέλλεσθαι ὑμᾶς ἀπὸ παντὸς ἀδελφοῦ ἀτάκτως περιπατοῦντος καὶ μὴ κατὰ τὴν παράδοσιν ἣν παρελάβοσαν παρ' ἡμῶν.

παραγγέλλω see v.4

ὄνομα, τος n name, person, authority
στελλομαι try to guard against, avoid; σ.
ἀπο keep away from, shun

"In view of verse 15 this does not mean 'abstain from all interaction,' but it stands for the withholding of intimate fellowship." Morris

ἀτακτως in idleness, in lazyness

Compare 1 Thess 5:14

περιπατεω walk, walk about, live

παραδοσις, εως see 2:15

παραλάβοσαν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

παραλαμβάνω take, receive, accept

The weight of textual evidence is fairly evenly divided between παρελαβοσαν and παρελαβετε. UBS prefers the former as the 'harder' reading and the one more likely to explain the origin of the other. Morris prefers the latter saying that it is possible that the former "arose by what Westcott and Hort call 'an ocular confusion' with the ending παραδοσιν in the corresponding place in the line above." He adds, "Moulton thinks it 'more than doubtful' that παρελαβοσαν can be accepted, since the termination is so very rare at this period."

Verse 7

αὐτοὶ γὰρ οἶδατε πῶς δεῖ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς, ὅτι οὐκ ἠτακτήσαμεν ἐν ὑμῖν

πως how(?), in what way(?)

δει impersonal verb it is necessary, must, should, ought

μιμεομαι imitate, follow another's example

Cf. 1 Thess 1:5-6.

ἀτακτεω be lazy, idle

Verse 8

οὐδὲ δωρεὰν ἄρτον ἐφάγομεν παρά τινος, ἀλλ' ἐν κόπῳ καὶ μόχθῳ νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας ἐργαζόμενοι πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπιβαρῆσαι τίνα ὑμῶν·

οὐδε neither, nor

δωρεαν without cost, freely, for nothing

ἄρτος, ου m bread, a loaf, food

ἐφάγομεν Verb, aor act indic, 1 pl ἐσθιω and ἐσθω eat, consume

"To eat bread' is evidently a Semitism for 'get a living,' not simply 'get a meal,' or even 'meals' (cf. Gen 3:19; Amos 7:12, etc.). Paul does not mean that he had never accepted a hospitable invitation, but that he had not depended on other people for his means of livelihood." Morris

κοπος, ου m work, labour trouble

μοχθος, ου m labour, hardship

νυξ, νυκτος f night

ἐπιβαρῆσαι Verb, aor act infin ἐπιβαρεω be a financial burden

Cf. 1 Thess 2:9

Verse 9

οὐχ ὅτι οὐκ ἔχομεν ἐξουσίαν, ἀλλ' ἵνα ἑαυτοὺς τύπον δῶμεν ὑμῖν εἰς τὸ μιμεῖσθαι ἡμᾶς.

ἐξουσια, ας f authority, right

Compare 1 Corinthians 9:3-14 for a fuller statement concerning the rights of an apostle and Paul's attitude toward such rights.

ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον him/her/itself

τυπος, ου m pattern, example, type

Cf. 1 Thess 1:7; 2:8.

δῶμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1 pl δίδωμι give
μμεομαι see v.7

Verse 10

καὶ γὰρ ὅτε ἤμεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, τοῦτο
παρηγγέλλομεν ὑμῖν, ὅτι εἴ τις οὐ θέλει
ἐργάζεσθαι μηδὲ ἐσθιέτω.

ὅτε conj when, at which time
παραγγελλω see v.4
θελω wish, will

The injunction applies to those who *will not* (do not want to) work, not to those who cannot. "Paul is giving the clearest expression to the thought that the Christian cannot be a drone. It is obligatory for him to be a worker." Morris

μηδε negative particle nor, neither
ἐσθιέτω Verb, pres act imperat, 3 pl ἐσθω
and ἐσθω eat, consume

Verse 11

ἀκούομεν γὰρ τινὰς περιπατοῦντας ἐν ὑμῖν
ἀτάκτως, μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους ἀλλὰ
περιεργαζομένους·

ἀκούομεν It is not clear how Paul heard this news – it may even have been by letter. The present tense could suggest 'we keep hearing' or may simply mean 'we have heard.'

τινας Pronoun, m & f acc pl τις
ἀτακτως see v.6

Cf. 1 Thess 5:14.

μηδεις, μηδεμια, μηδεν no one, nothing
περιεργαζομαι be a busybody

Perhaps busying themselves in encouraging others also to be idle.

Verse 12

τοῖς δὲ τοιοῦτοις παραγγέλλομεν καὶ
παρακαλοῦμεν ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ Χριστῷ ἵνα
μετὰ ἡσυχίας ἐργαζόμενοι τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἄρτον
ἐσθίωσιν.

τοιουτος, αυτη, ουτον correlative pronoun and
adjective such, of such kind
παραγγελλω see v.4
παρακαλεω exhort, encourage, urge

Adds a softer note to the command.

ἡσυχια, ας f silence, quietness
ἑαυτος, ἑαυτη, ἑαυτον see v.9
ἄρτος, ου see v.8

Verse 13

ὑμεῖς δέ, ἀδελφοί, μὴ ἐγκακήσητε
καλοποιοῦντες.

Ἵμεῖς δέ i.e. the majority of the church.

ἐγκακήσητε Verb, aor act subj, 2 pl ἐγκακεω
become discouraged, tire of
καλοποιεω do what is good

Part of this doing good is for them to seek to win over the idle.

Verse 14

Εἰ δέ τις οὐχ ὑπακούει τῷ λόγῳ ἡμῶν διὰ τῆς
ἐπιστολῆς, τοῦτον σημειοῦσθε, μὴ
συναναμίγνυσθαι αὐτῷ, ἵνα ἐντραπῇ·

ὑπακουω obey, be subject to
ἐπιστολη, ης f letter
σημειοομαι take note of
συναναμιγνυμι associate with

The injunction is to withdraw from close fellowship but (v.15) not to exclude the brother completely. The same verb is used in 1 Cor 5:9-13.

ἐντραπῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3 s ἐντρεπω
make ashamed

Verse 15

καὶ μὴ ὡς ἐχθρὸν ἠγεῖσθε, ἀλλὰ νοουθετεῖτε ὡς
ἀδελφόν.

ἐχθρος, α, ον enemy, one hated
ἠγεομαι think, regard, consider

"Throughout this whole section he aims at having the dissident reclaimed in a spirit of love. The actions enjoined in verse 14 are just as kindly intentioned as those in this verse." Morris

νουθετεω instruct, teach, warn

Cf. 1 Thess 5:12,14.

Verse 16

Αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ κύριος τῆς εἰρήνης δόξῃ ὑμῖν τὴν
εἰρήνην διὰ παντὸς ἐν παντὶ τρόπῳ. ὁ κύριος
μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

εἰρηνη, ης f peace
δόξη Verb, aor act opt, 3 s δίδωμι give

διὰ παντὸς 'continually'

τροπος, ου m way, manner

"Has within it the idea of the manner in which conditions alter. No change in that which is outward can interfere with the Christian's deep-seated peace... The Christian's peace is never independent of the Lord. It is the gift of the Lord, and it is impossible apart from him; indeed, it is the very presence of the Lord. It is only as the Lord is in the heart of the believer day by day that he knows this peace." Morris

Verse 17

Ὁ ἀσπασμὸς τῆ ἐμῆ χειρὶ Παύλου, ὃ ἐστὶν
σημεῖον ἐν πάσῃ ἐπιστολῇ· οὕτως γράφω.

ἀσπασμος, ου m greeting

ἐμός, ἡ, οὐ 1st pers possessive adj my, mine
χειρ, χειρὸς f hand, power

Paul's practice would seem to have been to dictate his letters to an amanuensis who wrote them down (see particularly Rom 16:22). Paul would add the closing words of greeting in his own hand. This practice seems to have been not uncommon at that time.

σημεῖον, οὐ n sign
ἐπιστολή, ἡς see v.14

Paul's words may have been prompted by the uncertainty alluded to in 2:2.

Verse 18

ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

Note the inclusion of 'all.'

χαρις, ἰτος f grace