

# Attitude To Work

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] 190, 1,190, 2 Thessalonians chapter 3, and we're going to read the whole chapter.

2 Thessalonians 3, starting at verse 1, on page 1190. So, let's hear God's word to us.

Finally, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honoured, just as it was with you.

And pray that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men, for not everyone has faith. But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.

We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command. May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.

[ 1 : 1 7 ] In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers and sisters, to keep away from every brother or sister who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.

For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it.

On the contrary, we worked night and day, labouring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow.

For when we were with you, we gave you this rule, if a man will not work, he shall not eat. We hear that some among you are idle.

They are not busy. They are busy bodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat.

[ 2 : 3 0 ] And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is right. If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of them.

Do not associate with them. In order that they may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard them as an enemy, but warn them as a brother or sister.

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you. I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand, which is the distinguishing mark in all my letters.

This is how I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Tom. Good morning.

It's great to be here in Caragline with you all. So, just before we start, I'm very conscious that this is God's word. It's what he says. And we need his help to understand this.

[ 3 : 5 9 ] Who are we just to look at it flippantly and think we can understand all that it says. So we're going to pray and ask for his help in understanding what it says today. Father, we thank you for giving us your word, the Bible, that you have shown us who you are through the words of these pages.

And ultimately through your son Jesus. And now as we look at this very specific passage, written in a very specific point in time, help us to understand it.

Lord, I need your help as I explain it. I pray that we would understand what it means and how that applies to us today.

Amen. It has to be done. It pays the bills. I love what I do.

I wish I had a better job. I'm always so bored. What's our attitude towards work? Is it something that we despise having to do?

[ 5 : 10 ] Are we obsessed with it? Are we earnestly trying to find it? Are we physically not able for it? Have we finished with work?

Are we retired? Should we even bother working? Well, Paul has a lot to say about work in this passage. And we'll be looking how he finishes off the letter to the Thessalonians.

We looked back in July at the first chapter. And now we're going to look how he finishes this letter. But as we think about work today, please don't just think employment.

As Google put it nicely, work is an activity involving mental or physical efforts done in order to achieve a result. Not necessarily you need to be paid for it.

It's not employment. We're thinking about work in general. So we need to remember who he's writing to. So Paul's writing a letter. It's not just a book that he wrote.

[ 6 : 10 ] He's actually writing to a group of people, a church like this, in a place called Thessalonica. So these people have been facing a lot of trouble, as you might remember, both externally and internally.

But at the very start of the letter, he reminds them that they are being kept in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul is writing to encourage them and instruct them as God's people.

So they face fierce persecution from outside themselves, as we heard in chapter 1. And they face conflict and trouble from within, as there were some who had very bad attitudes towards work and working.

So a quick overview. Paul in chapter 1 speaks of God's justice and Christ's revelation. In chapter 2, we see him reassure the church about what must happen before Jesus comes back.

We see a man called the man of lawlessness. And he encourages the church to stand firm. And now in chapter 3, Paul gets practical and provides very helpful teaching for the church.

[ 7 : 19 ] And it's not just for Thessalonica, not for just that place in the ancient world. But with God's help, we can understand what it means for us in Cargilline, in County Cork, in Ireland today.

Okay, so the first thing that Paul talks about, we're stuck, is one, prayer for work. So in the first five verses, we see the first thing in this last chapter is Paul's request for them to pray.

But to pray for what? Prayer that God would work through Paul and his team of workers. And there are three main things that he mentions in these first few verses.

So in verse 1, what does it say? As for other matters, brothers and sisters, pray for us that the message of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honoured, just as it was with you.

So Paul's main concern is that the message of the Lord, that is the gospel, would spread and be honoured. So the image that Paul uses here is literally that the message of the Lord would run.

[ 8 : 30 ] It's an image that the hearers at the time would be very familiar with. And it's one he used in a similar letter to the Corinthian church, which when he was talking about an athlete. But not just that this message would spread and would go far, but that it would be honoured.

Not just in how the people explained it, but that it would be believed and accepted. Paul is wanting people to hear and believe the message of the Lord.

But what is the message? It's the message that God has provided a way to be forgiven for rebellion against God.

If you know the story of the Bible, it starts back at the beginning of time, and mankind rebelled against God. And ever since, man has been living, men and women, humankind, has been living in a way that goes against the way that God wants us to live.

And that causes separation. But this message is that there's a way to be forgiven for this rebellion. And to be in the presence of God forever.

[ 9 : 45 ] And because we don't live in this way that he wants us to live, we're separated. And without his help, we'd be destined for much worse. So with him, we can be forgiven.

Without him, look at chapter 1, verses 8 and 9. We're going to do some flicking. We're all used to flicking a lot. Flicking around the TV, flicking through magazines, flicking around the internet.

So it's no exception, we'll flick a lot today as well. Verses 8 and 9 in chapter 1. Listen to this. He will punish those who do not know God, and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

They will be punished with everlasting destruction, and shut out from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his might. That's a serious, serious message.

But the message of the Lord, is that the Lord Jesus Christ died on a cross, taking the punishment for sin, for this rebellion that we deserve, which is separation from God.

[ 10 : 55 ] And we know that the good news, Jesus was raised to life in victory over sin and death, and simply through faith in him, that he did that to save me, we can be forgiven, and enjoy being in the presence of God for all eternity.

Think about that, that our lives now, have consequences. What we see isn't all that there is to life. What we do with life now, has consequences in the life to come.

And what does come next? Eternity. And the Bible tells us, this isn't just a spiritual experience. If we're people who believe in Jesus, we're not just going to go and live in the clouds, we're not just going to be ethereal beings, with no form or matter, we're going to be very tactile, earthy people, living in a new world, this earth remade, and perfect.

And that's wonderful, that we can live there forever. So we will either be with the Lord, or we'll be separated. And it's only through Jesus, that we can be with him forever.

So Paul, he asks for prayer, for the spread of this wonderful message. Prayer for this work. That's the first thing. And then verse 2, prayer for deliverance, from wicked and evil people.

[ 12 : 24 ] For not everyone has faith. So he's asking for prayer, for the Lord to work in delivering Paul and his team, because he's working with a group of people, from those opposed to God and his message.

And he uses the same word here that Jesus uses, when he says in the Lord's Prayer, deliver us from evil. So if Paul firstly is asking, that the Lord would work in spreading the gospel, this message, here he's asking for prayer, that the Lord would help those, who are doing the spreading.

So Paul is dependent, and his team, on God's help, in opening doors, providing opportunities, bringing people to them, even though they were being persecuted by people, opposed to God and his message.

Flick back to Acts. So this is a letter to the Thessalonians. Acts is like a history book, which gives us a story, and explains what happened in different places.

So in chapter 17, it talks about Thessalonica. And we're just going to read from verse 5 to 9. So Acts chapter 17, verse 5 to 9.

[ 13 : 42 ] So Paul visited this city. He preached this message of the Lord, the gospel. Some people accepted it and believed. But verse 5.

But other Jews were jealous. So they rounded up some bad characters from the marketplace, formed a mob, and started a riot in the city. They rushed to Jason's house in search of Paul and Silas, in order to bring them out to the crowd.

But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some other believers before the city officials, shouting, These men, who have caused trouble all over the world, have now come here, and Jason has welcomed them into his house.

They are all defying Caesar's decrees, saying that there is another king, one called Jesus. When they heard this, the crowd and the city officials were thrown into turmoil.

Then they made Jason and the others postpone and let them go. So there was this fierce persecution, and Paul is praying for work, that God would work in helping those spreading the gospel.

[ 14 : 55 ] So it's worth mentioning here at this point, about who these gospel spreaders are, or who they should be. Is there an elite, super spiritual team of gospel spreaders in this church, who we need to pray for?

Or in any church? No, not at all. We're going to look at Paul's instructions for work in the verses that follow, but this work of spreading the gospel, of telling other people about Jesus, is not just for a few, it's for everyone.

I'm paraphrasing our principal in our college in Dublin, in IBI, but he has suggested that the Great Commission, the last words of Jesus to his disciples, may have been better named the Everyday Commission, for everyday Christians.

It's for everybody. Jesus' command to go and make disciples of all nations, is for all of us. Whether we're people who work in Christian jobs, secular jobs, whether we're job seekers, stay-at-home parents, volunteers, students going back to school, college, if we're retired, whatever we're working at, it's our responsibility to be gospel spreaders.

And we need the Lord's help with this. We need to be praying for each other and encouraging each other to this end. So, just before Paul goes on to encourage the believers, or sorry, to pray for the believers, he takes a moment to encourage them in verses 3 and 4.

[ 16 : 36 ] What does he say? But the Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. We have confidence in the Lord that you are doing and will continue to do the things we command.

So, verse 4 then goes on to show how Paul has confidence in those he's writing to, that they are and will continue to do what Paul and his team commanded. He's encouraging these believers.

And then the final prayer for work is that the Lord would direct the believers' hearts. Look at verse 5. May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.

So, God's love and Christ's perseverance. We now, today, just as they did then, need the Lord to be directing our hearts to his love and looking to our Saviour Jesus for our example of perseverance.

Our personal relationship with the Lord is of utmost importance when serving him and doing his work and spreading his gospel.

[ 17 : 49 ] We need to be people who always rely on God's love and care in all we do, big or small, and we need to be looking to Jesus and following him in all our actions and thoughts.

Our personal relationship with the Lord Jesus is the foundation for everything else we do. Without that, we're lost.

As some of you might know, I work for Amazon and they have an amazing policy for some of their workers in the United States. They have massive warehouses.

I don't know if you've seen some of the newspaper articles. They have massive warehouses. You click on Amazon and say, I want to buy this book. It goes to a system and this big warehouse finds it, puts it in a box and sends it to you.

And there are naturally people in this warehouse who need to work and fulfill the orders. And Amazon has this amazing policy that they say, if you want to leave Amazon, we'll give you \$5,000 and you can be on your way.

[ 18 : 54 ] Thank you very much. You can get up and leave and you can have \$5,000 find a new job. So Amazon is trying to create this culture of keeping people who love working for Amazon.

They're not going to take the \$5,000 if they want to keep their jobs with them. And it's the same with the Lord. If we're going to be workers for him, we need to love Jesus.

If we're to be effective, we need to be people who love the Lord and as a result, we will love working for him. We need to first and foremost love the Lord with all our heart, soul, strength and mind and then loving others and serving them will follow.

So we need to be looking to God's love and Christ's perseverance, his example as we go about our lives. So that's one, prayer for work. The second thing, instructions for work.

We move on to some very practical down-to-earth instructions that Paul is giving to the Thessalonian church. But first, why on earth would they listen to Paul? What authority does he have?

[ 20 : 11 ] Who's this Paul anyway? Why does he write so many letters? So listen to the start of verse 6. I'm sorry, back in chapter 1.

So in verse 2, in chapter 1, grace and peace to you from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. He's writing on behalf of someone.

Look at verse 6, back in chapter 3. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you. Paul was an apostle of Jesus Christ.

That is, one who was sent by Jesus and God the Father with unique authority and power. Now, we don't have people like this today. I can't write you all a letter and say, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ with such power and authority that Paul did.

but we have Paul's words. We have the same words he wrote and he tells us where this authority comes from. It's not his own. It's from Jesus. The Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 21 : 27 ] So before we look at these practical instructions, we need to understand the context and we need to understand what Paul and his team had previously commanded. So in case anyone in the church had forgotten and very helpfully for us, Paul reminds us of the teaching that he gave.

Look in verse 10. Skip on a little bit. Chapter 3, verse 10. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule.

The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat. The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat. Seems a bit drastic, Paul.

Unwilling workers don't get to eat. Well, this is very similar to some of the sayings in Proverbs. So we're going to do some more flicking. Turn in your Bibles back to Proverbs.

So we're halfway through your book, Proverbs. It's after Psalms. And the first one we're going to is Proverbs chapter 10.

- [ 22 : 37 ] They're all very short. Now Proverbs is amazing because there are these nuggets of wisdom. Now, it's worth mentioning they're not promises.
- They're principles. Okay? So I think that's worth remembering. Look at Proverbs chapter 10, verse 4. Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth.
- Move forward to chapter 12, verse 11. Those who work their land will have abundant food, but those who chase fantasies have no sense.
- And the last one, chapter 14, verse 23. All hard work brings a profit, but mere talk leads only to poverty.
- So in a similar way, Paul had given them this instruction that those who are unwilling to work shall not eat. these Proverbs would have been known by God's people at the time.
- [ 23 : 56 ] And I think what Paul is saying here, these people didn't have social welfare. They didn't have a government who would give them benefits if they didn't have a job.
- So without work, it was very practical, they wouldn't eat. They wouldn't have money, they couldn't buy food, they couldn't grow food, unless someone shared with them.
- So Paul is saying those who don't work don't eat, it's those who are unwilling to work who don't eat. So, it was a common practice in the early church for believers who were more wealthy to look after those in need and could not make a living for themselves a sort of social welfare within the church.
- So it should not be the case that those who were able to work but not willing to do so should benefit from the hard work and fruit of others' labour. But this is the exact problem.
- There were people in Thessalonica who were doing exactly this. So Paul's teaching in this matter is that God's people need to be a working people.
- [ 25 : 07 ] So, we mentioned the very beginning of the story at the start. We're going to go back to Genesis, right to the very beginning. Genesis chapter 2.
- This is the easiest book to find. It's the first one. Genesis chapter 2. Okay, so the story of this world, the history of this world is that God created all things.
- And listen what he did in the beginning. It's chapter 2 and verse 8 to 9. Now the Lord God had planted a garden in the east, in Eden, and there he put the man he had formed.
- The Lord God made all kinds of trees go out of the ground, trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
- And look at verse 15. The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.
- [ 26 : 29 ] So if you know the story, this is before man rebelled. This is before sin came into the world. So God created us to work.
- But let's continue. Chapter 3 in Genesis. Man rebelled. Man went against what God had said. Look in verse 17.
- Look what he says to Adam. Chapter 3, 17. To Adam he said, Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, you must not eat from it.
- Cursed is the ground because of you. Through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you and you will eat the plants of the field.
- By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground since from it you are taken. For dust you are and to dust you will return.

[ 27 : 34 ] So God created us to work but the result of sin is that this work became difficult and painful. The work itself is good and right and it's what we're to do being workers but it's because of sin that this work is hard.

So we're not to be people who sponge off others wasting our time doing nothing wasting our lives on Facebook Twitter watching TV endlessly playing video games reading useless magazines wasting our time we're to be people who are workers first and foremost because that's what we're created to be.

We're going to be workers in this new earth that God gives us if we have faith in him and that's what we need to be now. he's going to remove the pain and the hardness of the work which I can't wait for but we need to be workers now and again not that we need to be employees but we're to be workers if you're a student then you need to be a good worker in that if you don't have a job maybe you're looking for one or you're retired or maybe for some reason you're on sick leave you're unable to work what could you do there are many things that we can do in terms of voluntary work we can be involved in things without having to necessarily be employed what about stay at home parents it is good and right to be working and it is hard work in that role and I just want to say at this point it's really important to remember this we talked about having faith in

Jesus but we're not to work for the Lord to earn or even maintain his favour and salvation that is impossible and can't be done our lives in this world is not about how good we are or how much we work it's about faith in Jesus we work for the Lord as he's calling us to live like this because he has already shown us his favour and given us his salvation we need to get the order right or we're going to have a very unhappy life and a very hard life ok so on to Paul's instructions he's very practical the first instruction to the church from Paul is that they're to keep away from the idle believer Paul commands the believers in Thessalonica to stay away from the believer who's idle and disruptive who doesn't live according to the teaching they received the teaching that they need to be people who work he says in verse six so he says we command you brothers and sisters to keep away from every believer who is idle and disruptive and does not live according to the teaching you receive from us but what's this idleness about the word does not necessarily mean physically doing nothing sitting down resting because that's a good thing to do it's more of an active word that he's talking about the following word is helpful in understanding the idleness and that is disruptive they were idle disruptors

Paul very helpfully explains it in verse 11 look at verse 11 we hear that some among you are idle and disruptive they're not busy they're busy bodies they were being busy bodies they were interfering with other people's business other people's work they were sponging off the generosity of others and these idle disruptors were living in a way that was causing hassle in the church and it was not according to the way Paul had previously instructed them they were claiming to be in need so were benefiting from this social welfare in the church but that was what was available for truly needy people do we find ourselves to be idle people are we busy bodies do we skip out on work or responsibilities that we have employment or otherwise in the home with family just knowing that someone else will look after it or if we don't do it someone else will finish the job if we do no work someone else will provide for me are we quick to interfere in other people's business are we busy bodies it's tempting isn't it it's usually the easier option sin makes work hard so the other option for now seems easier but that's not how the Lord wants us to live in Ireland

[ 32 : 50 ] I don't know about some guys in the UK we have this culture of social welfare we have a social welfare culture where people say I'm not going to bother working because the government is going to pay my wage we have this attitude that it's okay to be lazy we have a calling in sick culture I don't feel like working today I work for Amazon I work from home and the way I call in sick I don't go and see any managers all I have to do is I call this number it's an automated voice and I have to say my name and why I'm not coming into work say it's Tom I'm sick I'll be in tomorrow that's it it's so easy it's tempting isn't it you're very tired but no that's not what the Lord has asked us to do and let's look at Paul's example he gives us an example in his instructions for work Paul reminds them about having to follow their example what does it say verse 7 the later part of verse 7 and 8 to 9 we were not idle when we were with you nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it on the contrary we worked night and day laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you we did this not because we do not have the right to such help but in order to offer ourselves as a model or example for you to imitate they set an example of working hard to earn their living so as not to be a burden to anyone they were with the thessalonians with the intention of spreading this gospel this message which we remember is all of our responsibility but yet they worked hard so as to provide for themselves during this time they wouldn't be a burden and if you remember in

Acts Acts was written by a guy called Luke and Luke tells us that Paul was a tent maker he made tents and this may very well have been what Paul was doing with the thessalonians by day he made tents by evening and night he spread this message because he would be an example of a hard worker and so he wouldn't be a burden in verse 9 Paul mentions here and he further elaborates to another church in Corinth that the apostles actually had a right to be supported in verse 9 we did this not because we do not have the right to such help but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate he gives up this right in earning his own living to be an example so this is a helpful example for us isn't it seeing how this work of gospel spreading of spreading this message can be done regardless of whether you have a secular job or a job specific to

Christians things or you don't have a job that you're paid for in your involuntary work you're at home you're a student we don't need to be a Christian worker or a foreign missionary to be gospel spreaders or even a youth worker even Paul did it he made tents in fact we need people who are tent makers people who have jobs as well so they can provide for their family and also for others who are in need so don't think what you do what you work at your job is not doing God's work it is or think that I'll be doing God's work as soon as I work for a church or in a mission or a Christian organization we are doing God's work because he called us to be his workers in the places that we are spreading the gospel as we go the everyday commission for everyday

Christians so and we remember what we said earlier we're all to be gospel spreaders everywhere we work regardless of whether it's a job or employment we're called to spread the Lord's message so Paul's final instruction for work in verses 11 to 12 is aimed at the idlers so this before it's been to the church now it's aimed at the idlers these loafers these busy bodies in the church what does it say we hear that some among you are idle and disruptive they're not busy they're busy bodies such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat Paul's very clear and straight to the point settle down earn the food you eat or some translations say earn the bread you eat if you're someone who's a sponger a loafer an idle disruptor a busy body then you need to get your act together because you're not living in the way that you were created to live and if you're not someone who follows



Jesus this still applies you were created to work but that work isn't what will save you it's only through faith not to earn his favour but if you're one of God's people in response to what he's done so Paul talks about prayer for work his instructions for work and thirdly this motivation for work why do all of this in these last few verses of the letter we can see the reasons to be motivated to be workers firstly Paul puts in an encouragement in verse 13 and as for you brothers and sisters never tire of doing what is good we need to be encouraged like this sometimes don't we have you ever continued to do what is good what is right and it becomes difficult and frustrating is there someone awkward at work is there a family member you don't get on with is one of your kids driving you mad this week is there someone that you always tell the gospel to share your faith with but they don't care but Paul encourages you don't tire of doing what is good keep going we need to keep going in it and Paul elaborates slightly more in another letter to the

[ 39 : 41 ] Galatians in chapter 6 quickly flick to Galatians it's a couple of books back chapter 6 in verse 9 so to the Thessalonians he says never tire of doing what is good to the Galatians another church another group of people chapter 6 verse 9 he says let us not become weary in doing good for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up at the right time we will reap a reward as we continue to do what is good the Lord is in control and he knows that as we work for him he will bless maybe not in the way that we would think or imagine but we will reap a reward have you ever been motivated as we move on to the end of the chapter by something because of the negative consequences of not doing it or paying your bills you want electricity in your house don't you so you pay your bills or else you live in darkness now we know that as

Christians we should pay our bills because we use what we need in our house we don't have gas we have electricity but our central heating is done with oil we don't have oil on tap and we have to buy oil and put it in a big tank behind our house and oil is really expensive but if we don't buy oil what happens we freeze we're coming up it's the end of September we're kind of pushing it now we need to start buying oil turn on the central heating or else we'll freeze so the negative consequence is we'll be freezing without the oil and naturally part of our motivation to do something will happen because we don't do it what about you guys at home if you don't clean your room no pocket money this month don't do the dishes no TV tonight naturally we're motivated and Paul has a warning for those who don't obey let's look at these next two verses in verse 14 and 15 take special note of anyone who does not obey our instructions in this letter do not associate with them in order that they may feel ashamed yet do not regard them as an enemy but warn them as a fellow believer

Paul has this warning for those who are ignoring what he says he speaks about discipline within the church a huge topic we can't cover today but there are a couple of things we can learn briefly so the Thessalonian church are not to associate with those who don't obey his instructions in this letter so this is not just for all those everywhere who don't obey inside the church and out because then there will be an awful lot of people not to associate with but Paul is saying not to associate those within the church who don't listen to him but why so they might feel ashamed so they would see that what they're doing their disobedience has consequences and that they would feel ashamed of how they're living and not just for the laugh so they'd feel bad but so that they would be brought back into that fellowship of believers the purpose of discipline is not to punish for wrong doing but to bring about restoration verse 15 do not regard them as an enemy but warn them as a fellow believer and we can learn from this attitude of discipline and as grace and

I one day god willing go on to have children I hope that our attitude to our kids in terms of discipline is not simply to punish them for doing wrong because they broke a rule punishment but to use discipline to bring them to a place of conviction and restoration that's the point of discipline and god's discipline to us to bring us back this is the attitude we need to have as a church family as well as our natural families or else if there's no gentleness and love we're in danger from moving as john calvin puts it from discipline to butchery just for the sake of it discipline needs to be sprinkled with love and the final motivation here and our ultimate motivation is the lord jesus himself look at verse 16 and 18 now may the lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way the lord be with all of you verse 18 the grace of our lord jesus christ be with you all the lord jesus is the enabler as well as the reason why we do any of this work if you remember back at the beginning of this letter paul begins it thoroughly focused on jesus and ends it in a similar way our lives are given us by him johnny prayed earlier the very breaths that we have are given to us by him and we can have peace with god and each other through jesus and it's only by grace through faith in him and it's this grace that we continually need as we seek to serve him and do his work in this world so in closing i want to read something you don't need to look it up we've heard paul talk about this work work is so worthwhile because we're created for it and paul prays that there would be this work he gives us very practical instructions as well as a motivation so listen to what he says in colossians chapter 3 whatever you do work at it with all your heart as working for the lord not for human masters since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the lord as a reward it is the lord christ you are serving let's pray you are here you