

QUESTIONS WEEK BEGINNING 22 June 2025

1. Would you say, generally speaking, that you tend to abide by people's rules or are you more of a rule breaker?

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

2. Paul understood that he and the church were engaged in a spiritual battle so he asked for prayer for deliverance from evil people (v2) and assured the church that God would protect them from the evil one (v3).

- i. Years ago we sang hymns, somewhat triumphantly, with words such as "*onward Christians soldiers, marching as to war, with the cross of Jesus, going on before.*" Do you find it helpful or awkward, especially in the current climate, to associate the Christian faith with military imagery/language?
- ii. Some Christians are very focused on Ephesians 6:10-17 and the subject of 'spiritual warfare', others less so. Where do you stand on the matter? Do you always/often/sometimes/rarely/never think about being in a battle with spiritual forces of wickedness?

2. Keeping the military theme, Paul said he was confident that the church would continue to do what he had "*commanded*" them (v4). On Sunday, Glyn quoted Warren Wiersbe who said the Greek word used here means "*a military order passed down from a superior officer*". Wiersbe also said "*What if an army were run with the same lack of obedience, order, and discipline that we often see in the local church? It would never win the war. If soldiers attended drill whenever they felt like it, they would never be equipped to face the enemy. If the recruits disobeyed their officers' orders the way some church members disobey the Word of God, they would be court-martialled*".

- i. What is your response to this quote?
- ii. How do you typically respond to God's commands in Scripture: immediate obedience? delay? or resistance?

3. In verse 5 Paul indicates his desire that the Church be directed into '*Christ's perseverance*'? What do you think that means?

Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-15

4. Paul speaks strongly against those in the church who were idle – i.e. those who could and should work for a living in order to eat rather than expecting others to do all the work for them and feed them. Paul draws their attention to how he had worked among them as an example to follow (v7-10). How do you think having a strong work ethic contributes positively to **our** Christian witness?

5. Jesus taught people to personally address those who sin against them before involving others in the matter (Matthew 18:15). In 2 Thess 3:14 Paul tells the whole Church (not just the leaders) to get involved in administering discipline towards the idle, telling them to "*take special note of*" and "*not associate with*" those who are choosing to disobey this teaching. Based on what we read here do you think we are all 'accountable' to one another in the Church and may be expected to collectively be involved, in some measure, in 'church discipline'?

6. Paul also taught the church to "*never tire of doing what is good*"? (v13). What might that mean in practice for us in today's church.

7. On Sunday Glyn suggested that this incident regarding idleness in the church in Thessalonica may have prompted Paul to teach in his other letters that people should all play their part in serving Christ.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:27-29 and Ephesians 4:16

Then have a go at answering the following question posed on Sunday
"*What part am I playing in helping the Body of Christ to grow?*
How am I supporting others in their role?"

PERSONAL QUESTION TO PONDER - PROVIDED BY CHAT GPT
If everyone in the church followed your example of service and commitment,
what kind of church would it be?