2Thess #179

Who serves as a soldier at his own expense?

Open back up today in our anchor study of 2Thessalonians chapter 3 RF.

Let us keep Jay Lujano in prayer, he is the husband of a faithful member of the congregation - Karyn. They are from California and right now Jay is fighting against cancer.

Pick it back up in 2Thessalonians chapter three verse six – which is at the point the Apostle Paul is buckling down and giving orders about the problem within the congregation.

2Thes 3:6 Now we command you, brothers *and sisters,* in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother *or sister* who leadsa disorderly life and not one in accordance with the tradition which you received from us.

This was the doctrine of separation - it was not the extreme measure, as we noted in Corinth.

Which became a period of excommunication, this was telling the congregation to stop having fellowship and give fair warning to these Bels.

Do not feed into their laziness and do not offer support for this behavior.

[2Th 3:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/7/s_1119007) For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined way among you,

[2Th 3:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/8/s_1119008) nor did we eat anyone’s bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you;

We just spent several hours on the issue of apathy and laziness.

It is a true detriment to the Christian walk.

As I had already taught you, the Apostle Paul kept his tent-making business active for a period of time until he had established several congregations.

He had also trained some of his men in tent-making techniques so they always could turn a profit when they needed it.

Now notice the statement the Apostle Paul makes, which is in reference to the spiritual gift of church leadership. Especially pastor-teachers, evangelists and at that historic point - apostles.

/[2Th 3:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/9/s_1119009) **not because we do not have the right***to this,* but in order to **offer ourselves as a role model** for you, so that you would **follow our example**.\

This is never a comfortable subject for me to teach…I realize many pulpits touch on this subject on a regular basis and I would warn against sitting under that type of teacher.

That is between you and GOD.

[2Th 3:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/10/s_1119010) For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.

That is a factual and solid doctrinal statement for all able-body Believers to follow.

It may seem harsh and unloving and yet I can show many doctrinal statements that are hard pills to swallow and they seem harsh.

Truth is not always a fluffernutter sandwich, with lollipops or unicorns dancing around in your life.

 REPEAT

[2Th 3:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/11/s_1119011) For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies.

Verse 9 needs to be taught and I will do so inside of one lesson and be done with it, even though it could easily turn into a short series.

Turn in your bibles to 1Corinthians chapter nine RF.

Now occasionally you hear a Christian who doesn’t know scripture, tell you there is no real office today for a pastor…or that they read the Bible on their own and have no need to sit under a teacher.

The first thing I would have you tell them is to research men like Titus, Timothy, John Mark, Luke, James, Jude…and when they finish that. get back to me.

 I’ll give you another half dozen names for them to research.

Then you can hand them a few scriptures like these;

/Jer 3:15 “Then **I will give you shepherds** after My own heart, who will **feed you knowledge** and **understanding**.

Eph 4:11 And **He gave some** as apostle, some *as* prophets, some *as* evangelists,  some *as* **pastors and teachers**, 12 **for the equipping of the saints** for the work of ministry, for **the building up of the body of Christ**;\

By the way (EPH 4) it was the LORD Jesus Christ HIMSELF, who GAVE out these spiritual gifts.

/2Chron 15:3 “For many days Israel was without the true God and **without a teaching priest and without *the* Law**.

Rom 10:15 But **how are they to preach unless they are sent**? Just as it is written: “HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GOOD NEWS OF GOOD THINGS!”

 (1Cor 12:28-29, 2Tim 4:5, Act 13:1, 1Pet 5:1-3, Rom 12:4-8) \

Now as we pick it up in 1Corinthians nine, realize this was a point in the Apostle Paul’s ministry where he was finally peeling away from tent-making and preparing to only focus on his calling as an apostle.

Unfortunately, one of his more financially, comfortable congregations were not so generous.

In fact, many kept playing – ‘*the sitting on the fence game*’ with the Apostle Paul.

By that I mean, many folks in Corinth were doubting his authenticity as a teacher and as an apostle.

It gave many of them excuses to listen to other teachers and not have to truly support the MAN OF GOD that was ordained by Christ and placed right in front of them.

 REPEAT

This among several other writings of the Apostle Paul is ripe with divine sarcasm.

1Cor 9:1 Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?

/[1Co 9:2](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/2/s_1071002) If **I am not an apostle to others**, at least I am to you; for **you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord.**

The Corinthian Christians had more reason than most to know Paul was a genuine apostle, because they had seen his work up close, they heard his accurate teaching.\

This was nothing more than arrogance, greed and blatant disrespect.

This is why the Apostle Paul had to use some sarcasm and he had to put his foot down firmly.

Some of the attacks on the Apostle Paul came when he wasn’t physically there and many came from Bels listening to Judaizers or Gnostics.

The Apostle Paul wrote about 5 letters to Corinth, only two were salvaged or at least considered legit enough to be canonized.

[1Co 9:3](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/3/s_1071003) My defense to those who examine me is this:

[1Co 9:4](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/4/s_1071004) Do we not have a right to eat and drink?

The consistent bucking against the authority of a pastor or any church leader, comes from a deep root of arrogance.

Not to supply basic needs for a pastor-teacher when they arrive to teach is an insult.

To have people speak behind your back about receiving compensation for your time, spiritual gift and effort is a disgrace.

The Apostle Paul… the greatest Bible teacher, responsible for nearly half of the NT - had many struggles at several congregations.

This was an ongoing theme in some regions for him.

Think about our LORD, even in HIS ministry, many rejected HIM.

/Mat 13:57 And they took offense at Him. But **Jesus said** to them, “**A prophet is not dishonored except** in his  **hometown and in his *own* household.**”\

[1Co 9:5](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/5/s_1071005) Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord, and Cephas?

(small stone – Peter)

/Several of the apostles were married, they never went back to fishing or any other labor except teaching and establishing the body of Christ. When they travelled, the expectations were that their wife and their families would be taken care of. The calling for the CA pastor-teacher or an Evangelist, is that they focus solely upon their spiritual gift. They exhaust themselves in the study of the WORD and do so with academic honesty.\

[1Co 9:6](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/6/s_1071006) Or do only Barnabas and I have no right to refrain from working?

We see how divine sarcasm is used, many times in these types of situations it is needed as a slap in the face, a wake-up call to the arrogant Bels.

[/1Co 9:7](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/7/s_1071007) **Who at any time serves as a soldier at his own expense**? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not consume some of the milk of the flock?

The Apostle Paul was not a simple foot soldier. As a church leader you become a Captain or a Colonel, only answering to the true General - Yahweh-Nissi!\

What military Captain or Colonel does not have a paycheck and also all the benefits of his rank?

What successful farmer works his land and does not have good food on his table?

God had commanded within HIS early formation of teaching ministries, that those who work in the spiritual gifts of church leadership should be compensated.

The protocol was with a tithe and with food, clothing and shelter supplied by the congregation.

/Num 18:24 “For **the tithe of the sons of Israel, which they offer as an offering to the LORD, I have given to the Levites as an inheritance;** therefore I have said concerning them, ‘They shall have no inheritance among the sons of Israel.’”

 (Lev 7:33-36) \

Now in the dispensation of the CA we have no command to tithe a certain amount, it is all grace.

It is left up to each Christian to find and support a ministry.

/2Cor 9:7 Each one *must do* just as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

That is the protocol for giving in the Church Age dispensation.\

Your giving is between you and GOD.

[1Co 9:8](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/8/s_1071008) I am not just asserting these things according to human judgment, am I? Or does the Law not say these things as well?

Remember the rituals and shadows of the OT came into fruition in the NT.

[1Co 9:9](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/9/s_1071009) For it is written in the Law of Moses: “YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE IT IS THRESHING.” God is not concerned about oxen, is He?

You do not restrain the worker or interfere with the worker…you support and ensure the worker has what they need to finish the job!

/Deu 25:4 “You shall not muzzle the ox while it is threshing.

1Tim 5:18 For the Scripture says, “YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE IT IS THRESHING,” and “**The laborer is worthy of his wages**.”\

One of the signs of the end times will be a lack of real, solid doctrinal teaching.

[1Co 9:10](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/10/s_1071010) Or is He speaking entirely for our sake? Yes, it was written for our sake, because the plowman ought to plow in hope, and the thresher *to thresh* in hope of sharing *in the crops.*

[/1Co 9:11](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/11/s_1071011) If **we sowed spiritual things in you**, is it too much if **we reap material things from you**?

The 3 years of Christ ministry was funded and supported by Bels. Jesus trained the apostles to go forward with the same tradition – training up leaders for the Church Age.\

The calling for a pastor-teacher is a full time, life changing spiritual gift, that needs to be respected.

[1Co 9:12](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/12/s_1071012) If others share the right over you, do we not more? Nevertheless, we did not use this right, but we endure all things so that we will cause no hindrance to the gospel of Christ.

/The Apostle Paul never took an offering in the early formation of a church; he first allowed the Bels to acclimate to grace teaching. He also was fighting an uphill battle against those who stood against his apostleship early on. The fact that these Bels at Corinth were still questioning his authority or his value, was blatant arrogance. The Christian who finds the right pastor should naturally begin to support and respect that man.\

It was shortly after this letter that the Apostle Paul would stop working as a tent-maker.

He should have been able to stop much earlier in his ministry, yet the arrogance and pettiness of many Bels was on full display, certainly in Corinth.

[1Co 9:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/13/s_1071013) Do you not know that those who perform sacred services eat *the food* of the temple, *and* those who attend regularly to the altar have their share from the altar?

Again – study Leviticus chapter 7 and Numbers 18.

[/1Co 9:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/1co/9/14/s_1071014) So also **the Lord directed** those who proclaim the gospel to **get their living from the gospel.**

This is the command of GOD, The Lord Jesus Christ established the office of pastor-teacher as a full time career.\

Let me close with the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, speaking to HIS disciples;

/Mat 10:9 Do not acquire gold, or silver, or copper for your money belts, 10 or a bag for *your* journey, or even two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; **for the worker is deserving of his support**.

Luk 10:7 “Stay in that house, eating and drinking **what they provide**; for **the laborer is deserving of his wages**. Do not move from house to house.\

This same principle was carried into the CA for the gift of pastors and evangelists.

/Gal 6:6 The one who is taught the word **is to share all good things with the one who teaches***him.*

1Tim 5:17 The **elders**(*presbyteros*) **who lead** well are to be considered **worthy of double honor,** especially those who work hard at **preaching and teaching**.\

The Greek term – PRESS-BOOT-A-ROS, was used early on as a title for pastors and church leaders.

Often it was used for men who were trained by the apostles to be teachers and leaders.

There are certain people who struggle with finances and some have medical or personal issues, so they can’t give financially on a regular basis.

Yet every Bel who is under the authority of a pastor or a ministry, should be available to volunteer if needed. Perhaps to promote the teaching to others, to give from their own talent or time…it is not always about financial support.

 REPEAT

The reality of the devil’s world is none of us can survive and can thrive if we are financially crippled.

For the pastor it is a huge distraction if he is unable to provide a normal life for his own family as well as himself.

The pastor who struggles with finances and has to seek part time work, on top of 40 or 50 hours of studying and teaching - is at a high risk of burning out, both physically and mentally.