2Thess #188

Separation is not done in a spirit of vindictiveness.

Open back up in 2Thessalonians chapter 3 RF. This may be our closing message, if not today than perhaps next message.

Obviously its up to God the HS - but I am getting a sense we are finishing our study of the letters to Thessalonica.

2Thes 3:12 Now we command and exhort such persons in the Lord Jesus Christ to work peacefully and eat their own bread.

The reminder is - to have your own life in order and take responsibility for your own walk with GOD.

[2Th 3:13](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/13/s_1119013) But as for you, brothers *and sisters,* do not grow weary of doing good.

[2Th 3:14](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/14/s_1119014) If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person *so as* not to associate with him, so that he will be put to shame.

/[2Th 3:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/15/s_1119015) And *yet* **do not regard *that person* as an enemy**, but **admonish***that one* as a brother *or sister.*\

[2Th 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/16/s_1119016) Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all!

[2Th 3:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/17/s_1119017) I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand, and this is a distinguishing mark in every letter; this is the way I write.

[2Th 3:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/18/s_1119018) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

This is important to take in the full context of verses 12, 14 & 15 and look backward into verse 6 as well.

This is all interconnected.

The Apostle Paul is reiterating his command from verse 6 – to use the doctrine of separation, yet do so without anger and vindictiveness.

/2Thes 3:6 - *that you keep away from every brother or sister who leads a disorderly life*

Those whose apathetic life had spiraled away from truth, the congregation were called to be alert and begin to apply the doctrine of separation.\

The hope in these types of situations, is that the Bels closest to the person who is backsliding will address this in private first.

This is why spiritual growth is so vital; we want to be there for others - especially those we are closest too.

 REPEAT

Yet, if we do not know how and when to address the difficult situations we may make matters worse.

/2Thes 3:14 - *so that he will be put to shame.* The Greek verb for this phrase is *entrepō.*

It is a call for an inward look upon self. Its design is that someone is presented with a hard truth about their negativity or sin. So, they can re-gather themselves, they can accept responsibility.\

If the result is shame, then that just shows they are living in the flesh.

EN-TRAP-O, the two Greek root words put together, mean to turn inward, to look inside.

The goal is not to leave someone feeling completely broken and useless, but more so of a wake-up call.

Folks this is a very slippery slope, a difficult obstacle course and I warn against jumping the gun in any situation without all the details.

In this case, we had several months of problems in the same area and witnesses of the problems as it was growing – one such witness was Pastor Timothy.

/The Apostle Paul is walking a tight rope to a degree in this last portion of the letter. He is reminding everyone that they need to keep their own house in order and avoid being busybodies. Yet there is an occasional calling for Christians, with a level of maturity, to step up and be the leader in addressing personal conflicts and troublemakers in a ministry.\

Now the proper protocol is a chain of command, which we have studied in the past.

Both the Apostle Paul and Timothy had been to Thessalonica and already laid down the law and gave fair warning.

The Apostle Paul is now calling on those who had leadership skills to step up to the plate. The call was probably for deacons or an elder who was studying to be a pastor-teacher first.

Then it becomes a matter of how they want to handle the issue. Sometimes those close friends or family members need to be tapped into and used in these challenging conflicts.

 REPEAT

Yet only if those friends and family members are mature enough to have leadership skills.

/There is an incredibly delicate balance when dealing with personality conflicts in any group, the larger, the more challenging it will be. If you are dealing with people who don’t recognize the doctrine of authority and a chain of command, it will quickly escalate into anarchy. Its imperative to know who has matured and has leadership abilities in certain areas.\

The person who is not a leader in their own life, being organized and balanced in thought in action, will only bring gas to the brush fire.

There is an art to handling conflict in larger groups of people and without spiritual maturity, you may be the one who enflames the issue instead of resolving it!

/ [2Th 3:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/15/s_1119015) And *yet* **do not regard *that person* as an enemy**, but **admonish***that one* as a brother *or sister.*

 The Apostle Paul uses a strong verb, as a reminder of the serious nature of the in fraction – *noutheteō,* a firm or very strong warning woven into a reprimand.\

NEWTH-A-TAYO, it is a strong warning, it may be a part of a reprimand but it is done for the purpose of saving someone.

It is not blatant yelling or vindictive behavior, done from anger or revenge motivation.

It is done with love even though it may be very firm and appear un-loving at first.

/The truth is not always the easiest pill to swallow when it points directly at your own failures and weakness. To admonish a brother or sister In Christ, can be very challenging, it can never be rooted in an emotional foundation. It is better to take a step back and remain silent, then to take a step forward with emotions driving your effort.\

Jump over to Matthew chapter 18 RF.

The greatest command that Jesus spoke of was love for one another;

/Jhn 13:35 “By this all *people* will know that **you are My disciples: if you have love for one another**.”

Jhn 13:34 “I am giving you **a new commandment**, that you **love one another;** just as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

(Jhn 15, 1Jhn 3, 1Jhn 4, 2Jhn 1:5, Rom 12:10, Rom 13:8, Gal 5:13, Eph 4:2, 1Pet 4:8…etc., etc.)\

Sadly, when people become stubborn and hard, we have to love them from a distance.

We, as growing Christians, can never allow a bitter root and anger to build up toward others – it is a soul poison.

/Lev 19:17 **You shall not hate your fellow countryman in your heart**; you may **certainly rebuke** your neighbor, but **you are not to incur sin** because of him. 18 ‘**You shall not take vengeance**, nor hold any **grudge** against the sons of your people, but **you shall love your neighbor as yourself;** I am the LORD.\

Never forget what I always tell you – everything is fulfilled in TLJC. Therefore, make sure you are in the New Nature applying HIS mind to your life.

Remember what the Apostle Paul wrote in the first letter when he made have had a clue, that some problems were on the horizon at Thessalonica;

/1Thes 5:14 We urge you, brothers *and sisters,* **admonish the unruly**, **encourage**the fainthearted, **help the weak, be patient with everyone**. 15 See that **no one repays another with evil for evil,** but **always seek what is good for one another** and for all people.\

We are actually called to think and hope for the best for all people.

Just as the Apostle Paul taught in 1Corinthians chapter 13 about the power of virtue love – it never fails, it conquers all things.

/1Cor 13:4 **Love is patient, love is kind**, it is not jealous; love does not brag, it is not arrogant. 5 It does not act disgracefully, it does not seek its own *benefit;* **it is not provoked, does not keep an account** of a wrong *suffered,* 6 it does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but **rejoices with the truth**; 7 it keeps every confidence, it believes all things, **hopes all things, endures all things**.\

Now keep in mind this section of Matthew chapter 18 is the teaching and words of The Lord Jesus Christ.

Probably in HIS second year or the beginning of HIS 3rd year of HIS earthly ministry.

This was either just days or weeks after Jesus’s transfiguration on the mountain (Tabor?) in front of Peter, James and John.

This would have been a point where HIS ministry was rapidly growing and tension was very high concerning enemies seeking to discredit HIS ministry.

/Matt 18:15 “Now if your brother sins, **go and show him his fault in private**; if he listens to you, you have gained your brother.

This is always a Biblical standard with conflict, to respect everyone’s privacy and deal with the issue with discretion and a calm conversation.\

No one deserves to have their dirty laundry aired out among other people.

In fact, it is a horrible breach of the Royal Family Honor Code – it destroys the doctrine of privacy.

/[Mat 18:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/mat/18/16/s_947016) “But **if he does not listen** *to you,* **take one or two more with you**, so that ON THE **TESTIMONY OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES** EVERY MATTER MAY BE CONFIRMED.

There is always a call for legitimate witnesses in the plan of God for not only legal circumstances but personal conflict issues as well.\

Never take the word of one witness or believe a rumor, without solid evidence and two or three trusted witnesses.

Notice the proper protocol and the final steps you may have to take in very difficult confrontations, means the pastor may have to reveal the problem in a public fashion;

/[Mat 18:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/mat/18/17/s_947017) “And if **he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church**; and **if he refuses to listen even to the church**, he is to be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

Then they become the outsider, the reference is they become like an Unbel or one who is in opposition to the truth.\

Excommunication is the extreme - but occasionally it can come to that.

This only happens after a period of conflict that can not be resolved, there is no repentance and no turning back toward peace and harmony.

The Shepherd has to protect the flock.

/Once you have broken fellowship and removed this person from any responsibilities in the ministry. They are very clear on the fact that they have caused a great grievance, they have been given time and ample warnings – then you can take the extreme pathway of excommunication.\

Let us close this study out back in 2Thessalonians chapter 3 RF.

As you go there, this is very great advice from the Apostle Peter concerning this very difficult subject matter;

/1Pet 3:8 To sum up, all *of you* **be harmonious, sympathetic, loving, compassionate, *and* humble;** 9 **not returning evil for evil or insult for insult**, but giving a blessing instead; for you were called for the very purpose that **you would inherit a blessing**.

Sometimes all you can do is wish someone the best and remove them from your life. There is no need for heated arguments and bitter exchanges.\

Let us wrap our study in 2Thessalonians with the final verses;

[2Th 3:15](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/15/s_1119015) And *yet* do not regard *that person* as an enemy, but admonish *that one* as a brother *or sister.*

/[2Th 3:16](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/16/s_1119016) Now **may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance**. The Lord be with you all!\

This is one of the many titles for TLJC who is GOD.

[2Th 3:17](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/17/s_1119017) I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand, and this is a distinguishing mark in every letter; this is the way I write.

[2Th 3:18](https://www.blueletterbible.org/nasb20/2th/3/18/s_1119018) The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

/*Lord of peace* - Jesus Christ. The same title is given to Him as to the Father, *"the GOD of peace"*

Rom 15:33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen. (Rom 16:20)

2Cor 13:11 Finally, brothers *and sisters,* rejoice, mend your ways, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.\

An appropriate ending in the letter, a quick prayer, where the harmony of the Thessalonica congregation was on the Apostle Paul’s heart.

They needed to deal with a problem started by a few who were lazy and disorderly. You do not destroy the momentum of a group of Christians because a few apathetic Bels introduce some disruptions.

Never throw the baby out with the bath water!

/The Greek article in verse 16, requires the translation; "*Give you the peace"* which it is *"His to give*." *"Peace"* the outward and inward we are called to live in through or union with Christ. We are called to walk in eternal power and glory right now in time. You can only do that by a firm indoctrination into the Word and by the power of the SPIRIT.\

This reflects what the Apostle Paul taught in Romans chapter 14;

/Rom 14:17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 For the one who serves Christ in this *way* is acceptable to God and approved by *other* people. 19 So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.\

Ladies and gentlemen – you have just completed an in-depth study into first and second Thessalonians. I salute you!