

GET TO WORK
(1 Thessalonians 4:11-12)

I. The actions needed.

- A. Paul first says, "Study to be quiet."
 - 1. The word "study" carries the idea of being ambitious.
 - 2. Instead of being ambitious to draw attention to yourself and be what some call successful, be ambitious to not draw attention to yourself.
 - 3. Paul told Timothy to warn those that would be rich, or have as their main desire to be rich.
 - 4. This is the same idea.
 - 5. Don't give so much effort to being successful that you are constantly drawing attention to yourself and seek such.
 - 6. Paul told Timothy that Christians should pray for leaders that we may lead quiet and peaceable lives (1 Timothy 2:2).
 - 7. Christians need to be careful to do their work and not get caught up in the turmoil and mobs of this world.
 - 8. Christianity is designed to bring peace, but when we get caught up in the turmoil of this world we defeat that purpose of Christianity.
- B. Paul then says they were to do their own business.
 - 1. We would say, "Mind your own business."
 - 2. I don't know about you, but I have enough problems of my own without sticking my nose in the business of others.
 - 3. Without a job, there is plenty of time to fall into this.
 - 4. The old adage, "Idle hands are the devil's workshop" is not in the bible but it is biblical.
 - 5. There is definitely a place for concern for our brethren (Philippians 2:4).
 - a. This is having concern about the spiritual and physical welfare of brethren and friends.
 - b. We need to look out for one another.
 - 6. The line between showing concern and being nosy in others business must not be crossed.
- C. Paul also stated the action working with our own hands is needed.
 - 1. God has always wanted those created in His image to work (Genesis 2:15-17).
 - 2. In the Greek culture, work was viewed as the employment of slaves and despised by people.
 - 3. Paul wanted them to understand that the Lord viewed work as honorable and necessary.
 - 4. There is nothing wrong with work and it is not a four-letter word as many treat it.
 - 5. We need to take care of our families and not have to rely on others to take care of us unless it is absolutely necessary because of job loss or health concerns.
 - 6. The Lord sets for us the example in all things, even work.

7. We know the Lord worked tirelessly doing the will of the Father, that which He was sent to do.
8. When we fail to provide for our families out of choice, we are worse than unbelievers (1 Timothy 5:8).

II. The answer to their problems.

- A. The answer to their problems was to do what they had been taught.
- B. He reminds them that they had been commanded to do just these things while he was with them.
- C. A lot of problems in life would be solved if we would just do as the Bible teaches.
 1. The Bible is crystal clear in a great many matters that pertain to our lives.
 2. If we would do as we have been taught, our lives would be much more peaceful and enjoyable.
- D. We are taught how to love our families and those around us, yet often we have trouble loving the way we should.
- E. We are taught how our heart is to be right with God and man, yet we don't do as we are taught.
- F. We are taught how we are to worship yet many don't do as the Bible teaches.

III. The aim of this teaching.

- A. There has to be a reason for this besides the fact Paul was a hard worker and he thought others should be as well.
- B. If you notice verse 12, there are two reasons for these actions.
- C. The first is that we might "walk honestly toward them that are without."
 1. Walk is the way we live our lives.
 2. Our lives are open for those outside of Christ to see.
 3. If we are lazy and refuse to work, we are not living honestly before non-believers and are setting a terrible example for them.
 4. It should be the goal of every Christian to set the best example in every area of life before the lost.
 5. Those outside of Christ watch for things in our lives to point out and justify themselves.
 6. We don't need to give them ammunition by being lazy.
 7. One version says that we are to walk becomingly.
 - a. This carries the idea of setting an example others would want to follow.
 - b. We are to draw people by our work ethic.
 - c. No one is drawn to laziness.
- D. The second reason to work is so that we lack nothing.
 1. Barclay wrote, "The effect of the conduct of some of the Thessalonians was that others had to support them. Paul told them that they must aim at independence and never become spongers on charity. It is the Christian's duty to help others; for many, through no fault of their own, cannot attain independence; but it is also the Christian's duty to help himself."

2. The Lord doesn't want His people to be parasites.
3. Some, though extremely hard workers, don't have enough and they deserve help.
4. Many times precious resources are used up on the parasites that need to be given to the truly needy.
5. The Christian is obligated to take care of himself and his family if physically able.