

2 Thessalonians

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Summary: *Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy greet the Thessalonian church again, thanking God for their growing faith and increasing love amid ongoing persecution. Paul assures them that their suffering is evidence of God's righteous judgment — God will repay affliction to their oppressors and grant relief to the afflicted when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire. Those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel will face eternal destruction away from the Lord's presence, while Christ will be glorified among his saints on that day.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *This chapter contains one of the most vivid descriptions of Christ's return in judgment in the Pauline corpus. The language draws heavily on Old Testament theophany traditions — flaming fire (Exodus 3:2, Isaiah 66:15), angels as divine attendants (Deuteronomy 33:2), and divine vengeance (Isaiah 66:4, 15). The phrase 'eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord' (v. 9) is Paul's most explicit statement about the nature of final judgment.*

Translation Friction: *The severity of the judgment language in verses 6-9 stands in tension with modern sensibilities but is consistent with Old Testament prophetic tradition and Jesus's own warnings. We render the Greek faithfully without softening. The authorship of 2 Thessalonians is debated among scholars; we render the text as it stands without adjudicating authorship questions.*

Connections: *The 'revelation' (apokalypsis) of the Lord Jesus (v. 7) parallels 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 but emphasizes judgment rather than reunion. The flaming fire imagery echoes Exodus 3:2, Isaiah 66:15, and Daniel 7:9-10. The prayer for God to 'fulfill every resolve for good' (v. 11) anticipates the pastoral concerns of chapter 3.*

¹Paul, and Silvanus, and Timotheus, to the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²From god our father and the lord jesus christ, grace to you, and peace. ³We are obligated to give thanks to God always for you, brothers and sisters, as is fitting, because your faith is growing abundantly and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. ⁴Because of this, we ourselves boast about you among the churches of God for your endurance and faith through all the persecutions and hardships you are facing. ⁵This is evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering. ⁶Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense suffering to them that trouble you; ⁷and to give relief to you who are suffering along with us. This will happen when the Lord Jesus appears from heaven with his mighty angels. ⁸He will come in blazing fire, bringing judgment on those

who do not know God and on those who refuse to obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹They will suffer the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, ¹⁰When he will come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that trust (because our testimony in the midst of you was believed) in that day. ¹¹To this end we always pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, ¹²According to the grace of our god and the lord jesus christ, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in him.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The greeting nearly mirrors 1 Thessalonians 1:1 with one addition: 'our' (hēmōn) modifies 'Father,' which the shorter first letter lacked in the SBLGNT. This subtle addition emphasizes the relational bond between the writers and God.
2. The fuller greeting includes the source — 'from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ' — which the SBLGNT text of 1 Thessalonians 1:1 omitted. Grace (charis) and peace (eirēnē) again bridge Greek and Hebrew blessing traditions.
3. The phrase *opheilomen* ('we are obligated, we ought') replaces the spontaneous thanksgiving of 1 Thessalonians — Paul frames gratitude as a moral duty given the evidence of their growth. The verb *hyperauxanei* ('is growing beyond measure') is found only here in the New Testament and may be another Pauline coinage. The growth in faith and love answers the prayer of 1 Thessalonians 3:10-12.
4. The compound verb *enkauchasthai* ('to boast in, to glory in') intensifies the boasting — Paul takes personal pride in the Thessalonians' faithfulness. He boasts 'among the churches' (*en tais ekklesiāis*), using the Thessalonians as an example to other congregations. The present tense *anechesthe* ('you are bearing') indicates ongoing, current suffering.
5. The noun *endeigma* ('evidence, proof, sign') indicates that their faithful endurance under persecution serves as evidence — not that suffering earns the kingdom, but that their perseverance demonstrates the genuineness of their faith and thus God's righteous judgment in counting them worthy. The phrase 'kingdom of God' (*basileia tou theou*) is relatively rare in Paul (cf. 1 Thessalonians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Galatians 5:21).
6. The phrase *eiper dikaion* ('since indeed it is righteous') appeals to the principle of divine justice: those who inflict suffering will receive suffering. The verb *antapodounai* ('to repay, recompense') echoes the *lex talionis* principle but placed in divine hands — God repays, not the believers (cf. Romans 12:19, Deuteronomy 32:35).
6. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Deuteronomy 32:35. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
7. The noun *anesin* ('relief, rest, release') is the opposite of *thlipsis* ('affliction') — the present pressure will be replaced by release. The word *apokalypsis* ('revelation, unveiling') describes Christ's return as the removal of a veil — what is now hidden (Christ's glory and authority) will become visible. 'Angels of his power' (*angelōn dynamēōs autou*) portrays the angels as instruments of divine power.
8. The phrase *en pyri phlogos* ('in flaming fire') draws on theophany language — God's presence is associated with fire from the burning bush (Exodus 3:2) to Sinai (Exodus 19:18) to Isaiah's vision (Isaiah 66:15). 'Vengeance' (*ekdikēsis*) is not emotional retaliation but judicial retribution — the enactment of justice. The two groups — 'those who do not know God' (likely Gentiles) and 'those who do not obey the gospel' (possibly those who heard but rejected) — may be two descriptions of the same group or two distinct groups.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Exodus 3:2 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Exodus 19:18 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 66:15 — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
9. The phrase *olethron aiōnion* ('eternal destruction') describes not annihilation but permanent ruin — separation from God's presence. The preposition *apo* ('away from') defines the destruction as exclusion from God's presence (*prosōpou*, 'face') and glory. This echoes Isaiah 2:10, 19 where people flee from 'the splendor of his majesty.' The penalty is defined relationally — loss of God's presence — rather than as physical torment.
9. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Isaiah 2:10. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
10. Christ's glory will be visible 'in' or 'among' (*en*) his saints — believers become the medium through which Christ's glory is displayed. The verb *thaumasthenai* ('to be marveled at, to be admired') suggests awe and wonder. The parenthetical 'because our testimony to you was believed' assures the Thessalonians they are included among those who will marvel. 'That day' (*en tē hēmera ekeinē*) is the eschatological 'day of the Lord.'
11. The phrase *pasan eudokian agathōsynēs* could mean 'every good resolve' (the Thessalonians' desire for goodness) or 'every desire of goodness' (God's good pleasure). The former fits better: Paul prays that God would empower their good intentions. 'Work of faith' (*ergon pisteōs*) echoes 1 Thessalonians 1:3, forming a thematic link between the two letters.

12. The mutual glorification — Christ glorified 'in you' and you glorified 'in him' — creates a remarkable reciprocity. Believers reflect Christ's glory, and Christ's glory elevates believers. The phrase *kata tēn charin* ('according to the grace') grounds everything in unmerited favor — neither the worthiness (v. 11) nor the glorification (v. 12) is earned. The single article before 'our God and the Lord Jesus Christ' (*tou theou hēmōn kai kyriou Iēsou Christou*) has been debated — some read it as equating God and Christ, though most scholars see two distinct referents sharing one governing article.

2

Summary: *Paul corrects a misunderstanding that the day of the Lord has already come. He insists that two events must occur first: a great rebellion (apostasia) and the revelation of the 'man of lawlessness' who will exalt himself above every so-called god, even seating himself in the temple of God and claiming to be God. Something — or someone — is currently restraining this figure, and once the restrainer is removed, the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of his mouth. Those who follow the lawless one do so because they refused to love the truth. Paul then thanks God for the Thessalonians' election and urges them to stand firm in the traditions they were taught.*

What Makes This Remarkable: *This passage is one of the most debated in the Pauline corpus. The identity of the 'man of lawlessness' (*ho anthrōpos tēs anomias*), the 'restrainer' (*to katechon / ho katechōn*), and the 'mystery of lawlessness' (*to mystērion tēs anomias*) have generated centuries of interpretation without scholarly consensus. Paul assumes the Thessalonians already know what he means ('Do you not remember?' v. 5), leaving modern readers without the key to his allusions.*

Translation Friction: *We render the Greek without identifying the man of lawlessness with any specific historical or future figure. The 'restrainer' is rendered with deliberate ambiguity matching Paul's own shift between neuter (*to katechon*, v. 6) and masculine (*ho katechōn*, v. 7). The phrase 'God sends them a strong delusion' (v. 11) raises difficult theological questions about divine agency in deception, which we note without resolving.*

Connections: *The man of lawlessness draws on Daniel 11:36 (the king who exalts himself), Ezekiel 28:2 (the prince of Tyre who claims to be God), and Isaiah 14:13-14. Jesus's warning about false messiahs and signs (Matthew 24:24, Mark 13:22) parallels the deceptive signs of the lawless one. The 'breath of his mouth' destruction echoes Isaiah 11:4. The 'mystery of lawlessness' contrasts with the 'mystery' revealed in Christ (Colossians 1:26-27, Ephesians 3:3-6).*

¹Now concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our being gathered together to him, we ask you, brothers and sisters, ²That you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by message, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is drawing near. ³Let no one deceive you in any way, for that day will not come unless the rebellion comes first and the man of lawlessness is revealed, the son of destruction, ⁴He will oppose and exalt himself above every so-called god or object of worship. He will even seat himself in God's temple, claiming to be God. ⁵Do you not remember that when I was still with you I kept telling you these things? ⁶And you know what is restraining him now, so that he may be revealed at the proper time. ⁷For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only the one who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way. ⁸And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. ⁹The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan, with all power and false signs and wonders, ¹⁰With all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. On account of the fact that they received not the devotion of the what is genuine, that they might be saved. ¹¹For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie, ¹²so that all who refused to believe the truth and took pleasure in wickedness will be condemned. ¹³But we are obligated to give thanks to God always for you, brothers and sisters beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as firstfruits for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. ¹⁴He called you to this through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹⁵So then, brothers and sisters, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught, whether by our spoken word or by our letter. ¹⁶Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, ¹⁷Comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good message and work.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The noun *episynagōgēs* ('gathering together, assembling') is related to the *synagōgē* ('synagogue, assembly') and refers to the believers' reunion with Christ at the *parousia*, described in 1 Thessalonians 4:17. The preposition *epi* ('to, upon') indicates movement toward Christ as the gathering point.
2. Three possible sources of the false teaching are identified: *dia pneumatos* ('through a spirit' — a prophetic utterance), *dia logou* ('through a word' — oral teaching), or *di' epistolēs* ('through a letter' — a written communication). The phrase *hōs di' hēmōn* ('as if from us') suggests someone may have forged or misrepresented a Pauline letter. The verb *enestēken* ('has come, is present, has arrived') is perfect tense, indicating a claim that the day of the Lord had already arrived — not merely that it was near.
3. The noun *apostasia* ('rebellion, revolt, apostasy') denotes a decisive falling away — from what is debated (from God, from faith, from political order). In the Septuagint it describes political rebellion and religious unfaithfulness. The SBLGNT reads 'man of lawlessness' (*anomias*) rather than 'man of sin' (*hamartias*) found in some manuscripts. The title 'son of destruction' (*ho huios tēs apōleias*) is the same title applied to Judas in John 17:12 — a person defined by and destined for ruin.
4. The language closely parallels Daniel 11:36 ('the king shall exalt himself and magnify himself above every god'). The phrase *eis ton naon tou theou* ('in the temple of God') could refer to the Jerusalem temple (either the historical one or a rebuilt future temple), to the church as God's temple (1 Corinthians 3:16), or to a metaphorical enthronement in the sphere of divine authority. The verb *apodeiknynta* ('declaring, proclaiming, showing') implies an official claim — a public self-deification.
4. [TCR Cross-Reference] Echoes Daniel 11:36. See the TCR's OT rendering for the Hebrew behind this passage and the translation rationale.
5. This verse is both informative and frustrating for modern interpreters — Paul had taught them orally about these matters, and the Thessalonians knew what he meant. We do not have that oral teaching. The imperfect *elegon* ('I kept telling') indicates repeated instruction, not a single conversation. Paul's rhetorical question implies mild rebuke: they should not have been shaken by false claims about the day of the Lord.
6. The neuter participle *to katechon* ('the thing that restrains') is one of the great mysteries of Pauline interpretation. Proposed identifications include the Roman Empire, the rule of law, the Holy Spirit, the preaching of the gospel, an angelic power, or God's providential timing. Paul's 'you know' (*oidate*) assumes shared knowledge we no longer possess. The phrase *en tō heautou kairō* ('at his own time') indicates the lawless one has an appointed moment of revelation, which is currently being held back.
7. Paul shifts from the neuter 'what restrains' (v. 6) to the masculine 'the one who restrains' (*ho katechōn*) — possibly indicating both a force and a person behind it. The 'mystery of lawlessness' (*to mystērion tēs anomias*) means lawlessness is already operative but in hidden form — it has not yet been publicly revealed. The KJV's 'letteth' meant 'restrains' in 1611 English but now means the opposite, making the KJV misleading here. The phrase *ek mesou genētai* ('removed from the midst') does not specify who removes the restrainer.
8. The verb *anelei* ('will destroy, will slay') combined with *tō pneumati tou stomatos autou* ('with the breath of his mouth') echoes Isaiah 11:4: 'He shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.' The lawless one's destruction is effortless — a mere breath from Jesus suffices. The phrase *tē epiphaneia tēs parousias* ('the appearance of his coming') combines two technical terms for Christ's return: *epiphaneia* ('manifestation, appearing') and *parousia* ('coming, presence'). The combination emphasizes visible, overwhelming presence.
8. [TCR Cross-Reference] References Isaiah 11:4: — the TCR OT rendering of that text provides the Hebrew source and explains the translation decisions involved.
9. The lawless one has his own *parousia* — a satanic parody of Christ's coming. The triad *dynamei kai sēmeiois kai terasin* ('power and signs and wonders') mirrors the language used for apostolic authentication (Romans 15:19, 2 Corinthians 12:12), but qualified by *pseudous* ('of falsehood, false'). The deception is not in the supernatural character of the events but in the source and purpose — they serve to deceive, not to reveal truth.
10. The phrase *tēn agapēn tēs alētheias* ('the love of the truth') is distinctive — Paul does not say they rejected the truth but that they rejected the love of truth. The disposition toward truth matters as much as intellectual assent. The present participle *apollymenois* ('those who are perishing') describes a current state and trajectory, not a fixed category. The deception succeeds only against those who have already refused truth.
11. The statement that God sends (*pempei*) the delusion is theologically difficult. The logic follows the Old Testament pattern of judicial hardening: when people persistently refuse truth, God confirms their choice by giving them over to it (cf. Romans 1:24-28, 'God gave them over'). The 'lie' (*tō pseudei*) has the definite article — 'the lie,' a specific falsehood, perhaps the claim of the lawless one to be God (v. 4). This is not arbitrary divine cruelty but the consequence of refusing truth: one is left with what one chose.
12. The verb *eudokēsantes* ('took pleasure in, delighted in') is the same word used for God's good pleasure (*eudokia*) — but here directed toward unrighteousness. The contrast is stark: they found delight in *adikia* ('unrighteousness') rather than in *alētheia* ('truth'). Condemnation follows not just intellectual rejection but moral complicity — they enjoyed what was wrong.
13. The SBLGNT reads *aparchēn* ('firstfruits') rather than *ap' archēs* ('from the beginning') found in some manuscripts. 'Firstfruits' portrays the Thessalonians as the initial harvest of a greater ingathering. Two means of salvation are named: *hagiasmos pneumatos* ('sanctification by/of the Spirit') — the Spirit's transforming work — and *pistei alētheias* ('faith in the truth') — the human response. Together they describe God's initiative and human reception.

14. The noun *peripoiēsis* ('obtaining, possession') appeared in 1 Thessalonians 5:9 for 'obtaining salvation.' Here the object is even grander: the glory of Christ himself. The chain is: God chose (v. 13), God called (v. 14), and the instrument of the call was 'our gospel' (*dia tou euangeliou hēmōn*). The human proclamation is the means of the divine call.
15. The noun *paradoseis* ('traditions, things handed down') is a technical term for authoritative teaching transmitted from teacher to student. Paul uses the same word that Jesus criticizes when applied to human traditions that override God's word (Mark 7:8), but here the traditions are apostolic and Spirit-guided. The two channels — *dia logou* ('through spoken word') and *di' epistolēs* ('through letter') — validate both oral and written apostolic teaching as authoritative.
16. Unusually, Paul names Christ before the Father in the prayer, perhaps because the eschatological teaching has focused on Christ's parousia. The singular participles ('who loved... and gave') with a compound subject again suggests a unity of action between Christ and the Father (cf. 1 Thessalonians 3:11). 'Eternal comfort' (*paraklēsin aiōnian*) and 'good hope' (*elpida agathēn*) are the gifts that sustain believers through present affliction and eschatological uncertainty.
17. The two optative verbs — *parakalesai* ('comfort, encourage') and *stērixai* ('establish, strengthen') — complete the prayer begun in verse 16. Paul reverses the expected order to 'work and word' (*ergō kai logō*) rather than 'word and work,' possibly emphasizing that action accompanies and sometimes precedes verbal expression. The prayer is for inner strengthening ('hearts') manifested in outward conduct ('every good work and word').

3

Summary: Paul requests prayer for the spread of the word and for deliverance from wicked people, expresses confidence in the Lord's faithfulness, and then addresses the problem of those living in idleness. He commands the community to keep away from every brother or sister living irresponsibly, pointing to his own example of working night and day so as not to be a burden. Those who will not work should not eat. Paul instructs the community not to associate with the idle in order to shame them into correction, but also not to treat them as enemies. The letter closes with a prayer for peace and a handwritten greeting that serves as an authentication mark.

What Makes This Remarkable: The 'no work, no eat' principle (v. 10) is one of the most frequently quoted Pauline sayings in secular discourse, though it is often lifted from its pastoral context. Paul is not articulating a general economic philosophy but addressing a specific problem: some Thessalonians had apparently stopped working, possibly because they believed the parousia was imminent. The closing authentication (v. 17) suggests Paul was aware that letters were being circulated under his name (cf. 2:2).

Translation Friction: The severity of the disciplinary measures (vv. 6, 14-15) reflects Paul's concern that idleness was disrupting the entire community. The balance between 'do not associate' and 'do not regard as an enemy' defines the tension of redemptive discipline. We render without softening the sharpness of Paul's instruction.

Connections: The idle/disorderly problem was already flagged in 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 and 5:14. Paul's appeal to his own manual labor (v. 8) parallels 1 Thessalonians 2:9 and 1 Corinthians 9:3-18. The authentication in verse 17 connects to Galatians 6:11 and Colossians 4:18.

1Finally, brothers and sisters, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be honored, just as it was among you, 2That we may be delivered from unreasonable and corrupt people — for all people have not faith. 3But the Lord is faithful; he will strengthen you and guard you from the evil one. 4And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will continue to do what we command. 5May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ. 6Now we command you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from every brother or sister who lives irresponsibly and not according to the tradition that they received from us. 7For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle among you, 8We did not eat anyone's food without paying for it. Instead, we labored and toiled day and night so we would not be a burden to any of you. 9Not that we do not have the right, but to give you ourselves as an example to imitate. 10For even when we were with you, we used to give you this command: if anyone is not willing to work, let that person not eat. 11For we hear that some among you are living irresponsibly, not busy at work but busybodies. 12Now such people we command and encourage in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and eat their own bread. 13As for you, brothers and sisters, do not grow weary of doing good. 14If anyone does not obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person and do not associate with him, so that he may be put to shame. 15

Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother. ¹⁶Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all. ¹⁷This greeting is in my own hand — Paul's. This is the mark in every letter of mine; this is how I write. ¹⁸May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ remain with all of you. Amen.

TRANSLATOR NOTES

1. The verb *trechē* ('may run') is athletic imagery — the word of the Lord is personified as a runner in a race (cf. Psalm 147:15, 'His word runs swiftly'). The verb *doxazētai* ('may be glorified, honored') indicates that the word achieves its purpose and is received with respect. Paul asks for prayer not for his personal safety but for the mission's success.
1. [TCR Cross-Reference] Quotes Psalm 147:15. The TCR rendering of that OT passage preserves the Hebrew source text and documents the translation decisions behind it.
2. The adjective *atopōn* ('out of place, improper, wicked') literally means 'having no place' — people who are morally displaced. Combined with *ponērōn* ('evil, malicious'), it describes active opposition to the gospel. The understated conclusion — 'not everyone has faith' (*ou gar pantōn hē pistis*) — is almost ironic in its simplicity, acknowledging that the gospel will be resisted.
3. The wordplay between *pistis* ('faith,' v. 2) and *pistos* ('faithful,' v. 3) is deliberate: not all people have faith, but the Lord is faithful. The phrase *apo tou ponērou* could mean 'from evil' (abstract) or 'from the evil one' (personal — Satan). Given the eschatological context of the letter and the reference to the 'lawless one' in chapter 2, 'the evil one' is more likely.
4. Paul's confidence is 'in the Lord' (*en kyriō*), not merely in the Thessalonians' character — divine faithfulness undergirds human obedience. The verb *parangellogen* ('we command') is the same military-order language used in 1 Thessalonians 4:2, emphasizing apostolic authority.
5. The optative *kateuthynai* ('may he direct') is a prayer-wish (cf. 1 Thessalonians 3:11). The two goals are: *tēn agapēn tou theou* ('the love of God') — possibly God's love for them or their love for God — and *tēn hypomonēn tou Christou* ('the steadfastness/endurance of Christ') — possibly Christ's own endurance as an example or the endurance that comes from Christ. The genitives are deliberately ambiguous, encompassing both divine gift and human response.
6. The adverb *ataktōs* ('disorderly, irresponsibly') is a military term for a soldier who abandons his post or breaks formation (cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:14). In this context it refers specifically to refusing to work (vv. 10-11). The verb *stellesthai* ('to keep away from, to withdraw from') prescribes social distancing as a disciplinary measure. The 'tradition' (*paradosis*) they violate is Paul's example and instruction regarding manual labor.
7. The verb *ētaktēsamen* ('we were disorderly, we were idle') is the verbal form of the same root as *ataktōs* in verse 6. Paul presents his own conduct as the pattern (cf. 1 Thessalonians 2:9-10). The obligation to imitate (*mimēsthai*) implies that apostolic behavior, not just apostolic teaching, carries normative authority.
8. The phrase *dōrean arton* ('bread for free') is an idiom for receiving support without contributing. Paul's language nearly verbatim repeats 1 Thessalonians 2:9 (*kopon kai mokhthōn*, 'toil and hardship'), reinforcing consistency between the two letters. The right to financial support was legitimate (v. 9), but Paul chose to forgo it for pedagogical purposes.
9. Paul explicitly acknowledges his *exousia* ('right, authority') to receive financial support — he develops this argument at length in 1 Corinthians 9:3-14. His voluntary renunciation was strategic: he wanted to establish a visible pattern (*typon*, 'example, model') of self-supporting labor that the congregation could follow.
10. The conditional *ei tis ou thelei ergazesthai* ('if anyone is not willing to work') specifies unwillingness, not inability — Paul is addressing those who refuse to work, not those who cannot. The imperfect *parēngellomen* ('we used to command') indicates this was repeated instruction during Paul's visit. The principle may draw on a Jewish proverbial tradition (cf. Genesis Rabbah 2:2: 'If I do not work, I do not eat'). The command is pastoral, not economic theory — it addresses a specific community problem.
11. Paul employs a pointed wordplay: *mēden ergazomenous alla periergazomenous* — literally 'not working but over-working,' meaning 'not doing their own work but meddling in others' work.' The English 'not busy but busybodies' captures the pun. The problem is not just laziness but its byproduct: idle people who meddle in others' affairs, disrupting the community.
12. Paul combines authority (*parangellogen*, 'we command') with pastoral warmth (*parakaloumen*, 'we encourage'). The phrase *meta hēsychias* ('with quietness') echoes 1 Thessalonians 4:11 — living quietly means minding one's own affairs. 'Eat their own bread' (*ton heautōn arton esthiōsin*) means earn their own livelihood rather than depending on the community's resources.
13. The verb *enkakēsēte* ('grow weary, lose heart, give up') acknowledges the real temptation: when some members exploit communal generosity, the generous may become disillusioned. Paul addresses this directly — the irresponsibility of some must not extinguish the generosity of others.
14. The verb *sēmeiousthe* ('take note of, mark, identify') suggests a formal process of community recognition — the person is publicly identified. The verb *synanamiggysthai* ('to associate with, to mingle with') denotes social interaction, particularly shared meals. The purpose clause *hina entrapē* ('so that he may be ashamed') reveals the goal is redemptive, not punitive — shame is meant to produce change, not permanent exclusion.
15. This verse provides the critical guardrail for the discipline of verse 14. The person under discipline remains *adelphos* ('brother') — a family member in need of correction, not an outsider to be rejected. The verb *noutheteite* ('warn, admonish, counsel') implies instruction aimed at change of behavior, not condemnation. The tension between social exclusion (v. 14) and fraternal correction (v. 15) defines the narrow path of redemptive

discipline.

16. The title 'Lord of peace' (ho kyrios tēs eirēnēs) parallels 'God of peace' (1 Thessalonians 5:23), applying a divine title to Christ. The double emphasis — dia pantos ('at all times') and en panti tropō ('in every way') — asks for peace that is both continuous and comprehensive. After a letter dealing with eschatological anxiety and community conflict, the prayer for total peace is especially apt.
17. Paul typically dictated his letters through a secretary (amanuensis; cf. Romans 16:22) and then added a greeting in his own handwriting as authentication. Given the concern about forged letters in 2:2, this authentication takes on special urgency. The phrase sēmeion en pasē epistolē ('a sign in every letter') establishes Paul's handwriting as a security feature for all his correspondence.
18. The closing benediction matches the standard Pauline formula. The SBLGNT does not include 'Amen,' which appears in later manuscripts. The word pantōn ('all') may carry special weight after a letter about community discipline — grace extends to the entire congregation, including those under correction.