Living God’s Way: Work

1 Thessalonians 4:9-12 - Small Group Notes

 25 June 2017

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

9 Now about your love for one another we do not need to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love each other. 10 And in fact, you do love all of God’s family throughout Macedonia. Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more, 11 and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands, just as we told you, 12 so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody.

Context:

This first century church at Thessalonica had been a real source of encouragement to Paul because of their continued faith and love. It was a church that was standing firm and going strong however they needed reminding to continue to live out their faith. They were really good at loving those in their community and further afield but Paul wanted them to prompt them to carry on loving people.

They had a real misunderstanding when it came to the death of fellow believers and the second coming of the Lord Jesus. This meant the gave up their daily responsibilities and became only focused on what they thought were spiritual things.

Some of them became busybodies, getting involved in needless controversies and meddling in everyones affairs. Paul challenged them to live a life which was totally counter-cultural and for them to make it their ambition to lead quiet lives, minding their own business.

Paul also made much of working with their hands. Some of the christians had stopped working thinking it unnecessary and they began becoming a burden on wealthier christians whom they relied on for practical support.

Overall the general tone of this letter was encouragement but Paul wanted to challenge their misunderstanding too.

How do you think your view of eternity and your faith in Christ shape how you live your life now?

Before discussing in more detail, do you see any similarities between this culture and our own culture?

Love More v9

How well do you think we as a church / small group love others?

What do you think the ‘brotherly love’ Paul is referring to looks like?

How do you currently love those around you?

In what ways could we love a) our church family more b) our community more?

Live Quietly v11

What are your ambitions in life?

Do you feel you currently live a quiet life?

What do you think living a quiet life / minding your business looks like in reality?

As christians who are called to share both life and the gospel (1 Thessalonians 2:8), how does this fit in with living quiet lives?

What are the merits of living a quiet life like Paul suggests?

Work Hard v11

How do you feel towards work at the moment?

How does your work affect your Christian walk?

Does our society place enough value on working?

Paul encourages us to work with our hands….

How would you define working with your hands?

Why does Paul make this such a priority for christians?

What is the danger of not working?
Is Paul simply just talking about employment or is more an attitude / lifestyle?

Why love more, live quietly and work hard……

Paul gives two main reasons for us to put these three things into practice…v12

What are they and why are they so important?
What other reasons might there be for living a holy life in view of others?

Do you feel you have the respect of those around you e.g neighbours, friends etc?

How would implementing Paul’s instructions change how they view you and ultimately the gospel?

Pray Together - Love More, Live Quietly and Work Hard