Grace Group Leaders’ Notes: 2 Thessalonians 3v6-18

***Remember:*** *Whatever else we take away, we always want to emphasise* ***grace*** *and* ***hope****, and ensure we spend a good proportion of the time* ***applying*** *the passage well.*

**1. Reminder (5 mins)**

***Q:*** *Re read* ***2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5.*** *What has God already done? What is he doing? What will he do?*

**2. Recap (20 minutes)**

**Summary (leaders):** *God will establish Christians to be full of good works (2v16/17) - sacrificial service (3v8) that flows from our commitment to hold fast (2v17) to the gospel. So, stick to the tradition you've been taught (3v6) and fill your time with good works, fulfilling your responsibilities and being a blessing to others, not shirking them and being a burden (3v8). But be careful not to grow weary as you do good (3v13). Win back those brothers or sisters who repeatedly disobey God's word by having nothing to do with them (3v6/14/15).*

***NOTE: Aim to make at least one question “chat in 2s/3s” (perhaps by gender) to vary the format.***

***Q:*** *Read* ***2 Thes 3v6-18.*** *Make a table (perhaps in groups) and compare the idle Thessalonian’s behaviour in* ***v6, v10-12*** *on one side, and with Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy’s good example in* ***v7-9.*** *Use it to help answer the questions:*

* *What is ‘walking in idleness’? (More than just not working!)*
* *What’s the alternative to walking in idleness?*
* *Why is it significant that walking in idleness is “not in the tradition that you received”?*

*[****Leaders:*** *There are lots of differences to pick out, but the most important is refusing to be a burden on others and so doing their own work(v8) compared to being a burden on others by not earning their own living (v12). Paul and co. are sacrificially taking on extra responsibility that they didn’t need to (v8) in order to be a blessing instead of shirking the responsibilities they had already been given (v6). So, we see that walking in idleness is a repeated pattern of shirking responsibility. That it is “not in the tradition received” means that it is counter to the way that God’s gospel believing people should be behaving.]*

***Q:*** *Re-read* ***verses 6, and 14-15****. Why is Paul asking the Thessalonians to have nothing to do with the idlers? What should the Thessalonians’ motivation be?*

*[****Leaders:*** *The idlers are being repeatedly (1 Thes 5v14) and deliberately disobedient, ignoring clear commands to do good (2 Thes 3v10). The Thessalonians are to have nothing to do with them in love, rather than seeing them as enemies (3v15) or being glad to cut them off. Instead, the Thessalonians should want the idle to become ashamed of their sin (3v14) and so repent and be restored back to full fellowship.****]***

***Q:*** *Re-read* ***verse 13****. Why do the Thessalonians need warning against growing weary in doing good?*

**3. Application (15 minutes)**

***Q:*** *How do the encouragements and truths from 2:13-3:5 help our efforts to be full of good works not to be legalistic, or rely on our own strength?*

***Q:*** *How are you tempted to shirk your responsibilities and be idle? How do you justify it?*

***Q:*** *What’s the difference between being weary, and ‘growing weary doing good’?*

***Q:*** *How can we encourage ourselves and each other not to grow weary in doing good?*

**4. Prayer (20 minutes)**

*Share prayer requests, particularly in view of the passage, and pray for one another.*