

Work Hard

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Date: 27 February 2011

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[0:00] Chapter 3 of 2 Thessalonians, and I'll begin reading in verse 6 and read to the end of the chapter. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, to keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you receive from us.

For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone's food without paying for it.

On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow.

For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule. If a man will not work, he shall not eat. We hear that some among you are idle.

They are not busy. They are busy bodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat.

[1:21] And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right. If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of him.

Do not associate with him. In order that he may feel ashamed. Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.

Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you. I, Paul, write this greeting in my own hand, which is the distinguishing mark in all my letters.

This is how I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Pastor Jason. An old-fashioned farmer throwing a seed out on the field.

And so when he came to a city, he was not very particular about who he spoke the gospel to. He gave it to everyone, anyone that he could. And some landed here and some landed there.

[2:33] But wherever it landed, it landed on people's hearts. Who had sin already burrowed down deep into it.

And sin had become a part of who they were. And it had become a part of their lives and how they lived. And that's how it was in Thessalonica. The gospel came to these people and it saved them. But their lives didn't poof, magically, all of a sudden turn perfect. They weren't insta-saints overnight. Their lives needed ironing out. Some of the sin that was a part of who they were was so ingrained into the fabric of how they did things that it took a lot of work to smooth it out.

And maybe you have been there. Maybe you are still there. There are some sins that are just stubborn. And the Thessalonians' stubborn sin was idleness.

And so as Paul winds down the second letter to the Thessalonians, he corrects them again about this stubborn sin of idleness, just like he did in his first letter.

[3:45] Now, to be honest, as I look out on you, on Grace Fellowship, I don't think this is a particular problem for you.

And I don't say that so that you turn off your ears. There are things that we need to learn from this. But you have jobs, most of you. And you work hard.

And you earn your living. And I don't think there are a lot of busybodies around, people meddling in other people's affairs that are none of their business. And so I want to encourage you.

Not every sermon has to come and smack you on the head. There are some sermons that need to come and encourage you. And that's the first thing that I want you to hear and understand, is that you are doing well in this area.

I'm very glad that I didn't have to come to this passage and, as I looked at it, say, boy, I know quite a few people that need to work on this. And get ready and unload.

[4:47] Brothers and sisters, you're doing well. So keep up the good work. And that's actually what Paul said to most of the Thessalonians. I want to direct your attention to verse 13. And as for you, brothers, never tire of doing what is right.

And that's the first thing I want you to hear. We're going to be talking tonight about people that are idle, that they were busy buddies, they weren't doing what they were supposed to, and some things that needed to happen, and need to happen in any church where this problem comes up.

But most of all, most for you, most of you, I want you to hear that you have every reason to be encouraged. You're doing well. Keep up the good work. Never tire of doing what is right.

And it is easy to lose heart in this matter when you're on the shop floor, and your nose is to the grindstone, and your fellow over there, he's slacking off.

And I'm not rewarded, and he's not punished. And that can be discouraging. It's easy to get tired of doing what is right sometimes.

[5:57] And so I want to come alongside of you, just like Paul came alongside the Thessalonians, and say, you're doing well. Keep it up. Your hard work is not in vain. At the proper time, you will be rewarded.

The Lord is not unjust. And so, with that being said, this sermon has two major, big points. The first one is explanation, and the second one is application.

And underneath each of those two main points, there's four smaller points. So there's four points of explanation and four points of application. And that's the roadmap.

I didn't want to say eight points, because that seems like a whole lot. And it's not that way. It's just four little points. So let's get started. First, I want you to see the situation.

The situation. The situation is simple enough to describe in a sentence. Some folks in Thessalonica were not working for their living.

[6:57] They were living off of others. And you see that in verse 11. We hear that some among you are idle. They're not busy. They're busy buddies. And a lot of commentators have speculated, and they may be right, that this misunderstanding that we've seen earlier about eschatology, this misunderstanding about that subject of when is Christ going to come, is the day of the Lord already happened, that, they think, might be the reason behind this idleness.

The Thessalonians thought that Jesus was coming really soon, or that the day of the Lord was already upon them, and so what's the point of working? And that's a possibility, and I think I said something like that when I went through 1 Thessalonians last year.

But I think I might have been wrong, and I sort of want to posit another possibility. As I've studied and as I've read, I think there's a separate, these are actually two separate issues.

The eschatological problem, the questions about, and the confusion about the end times, and the last days, and this problem of idleness, of not working. As you look at the two letters, they're addressed in different sections, in both times.

And the way idleness is instructed, or how Paul instructs them on idleness, he doesn't really bring in a lot of concerns about correcting their view in the last days.

[8:33] And so I think it might sort of be reading into the text to see that these two things are related. I don't think they necessarily are.

And as I've studied and as I've read some more, I think there's something else that's going on behind this, that's keeping this stubborn sin of idleness alive and kicking. And it was called, it's the social phenomenon called patronage.

And you might not know what that is, and let me explain it. The Roman Empire, as a society, worked on a very different way than our society works.

We have, for the most part, relationships that are legally constructed, where we have contracts and things like that. But their society, the basic foundation of how different groups related to one another, and how you had representation, and how groups got along, was through this institution of patronage.

And the way this worked was that there were certain people in the upper classes, or the more powerful, the more politically positioned people, acted as patrons to the people who were in the lower classes.

[9:45] And so these patrons would protect, would provide for their clients in exchange for food, in exchange for honor, in exchange for them, praising them, and doing good things for them.

And so, really, what does that have to do with Thessalonica? It's simply this, is that system of patronage, was part and parcel of what it meant to live in Thessalonica, as it meant, and elsewhere in the Roman Empire.

And, I think it was this system that is actually behind this ongoing problem of idleness. So, there were wealthy people in Thessalonica who would take clients from the poorer people, and they would act as their patrons.

And so, this is how it would work. The rooster crows, rise and shine, and the client gets out of bed, and he goes to the house of his patron, and when the patron enters the room, all the clients are standing there, and they actually praise and honor and greet this man, and in exchange, he would give them bread.

He would give them their food that they needed to eat. And, it really was that simple. And so, now, of course, the patrons were expecting more than just a nice, friendly morning greeting.

[11 : 13] They also expected the clients to go around and sort of act as PR agents, public relations agents, for these patrons. And so, they would expect their clients to go around and talk well about them to all different sorts of people.

And then, in the courts, when there was a case that maybe had some, something to do with that, their patron, they were expected to go there and talk and witness for these things and talk well about their patron.

And, I think that's what Paul is saying when he says that some of you are busybodies. You're meddling in affairs that really don't belong to you. And so, they were entangling themselves in all kinds of issues that they really had no business being in.

That was none of their concern. And, these clients were always on this sort of full-time political election, public relations mode when they really should have been minding their own business and working and earning a living.

And so, this whole system had spun off of it a group of people who abused it and who quit working for their living.

[12 : 26] They were living off the abuse of this corrupt social system. And, doesn't things like that happen in our own day?

So, that's the situation. Now, secondly, Paul gives the command. The command. Look at verse 12. Such people, we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat.

So, Paul looks at this whole social system, I think is what's going on, and he looks at these people who are participating in it, and he says, stop it. Settle down. Live quietly.

Mind your own business and earn your own bread. No more living off of others. No more participating in this system. No more meddling in affairs that don't belong to you. Instead, go to work. Go to work.

And so, how serious was Paul about this command? You notice he said, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, I command you. This command doesn't come from me, Paul is saying.

[13 : 33] It's coming from the Lord. From the Lord Jesus himself. And so, it doesn't matter what society is saying. It doesn't matter what your rich patrons are saying.

It doesn't matter what they want. It doesn't matter what the rich and powerful are saying. Jesus is saying, work for your living. Live quietly. No more idleness.

And the word idleness, literally, it sort of means, it means disorderly. It means out of line. And so, these people were out of line with the Christian teaching.

They were out of line with what Jesus expected, what Paul taught. And so, the gospel, it demands a certain kind of life. It demands a certain life that fits the gospel, a certain kind of walk.

But these people were out of step with that. And so, Paul commands them to get in place like a drill sergeant commands the recruits to walk the right way.

[14 : 33] He comes in and he tells them to walk right. No more waking up bright and early to go to your patron's house. But it's time to wake up bright and early and go to work and earn a living.

Do something productive. Work with your own hands. Now, that's the command. Now third, I want you to see the principle behind the command.

The principle. And you see it in verse 10. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule. If a man will not work, he shall not eat.

The man will not work, he shall not eat. Now where did Paul get that idea? Where did Paul come up with that?

Whose idea was that? Well, it was God's idea. It sounds a lot like something that God said a long, long time ago.

[15 : 35] Doesn't it? And so we go back and back and back to the very beginning and man is in the garden. And what is he there for?

Well, he's to work it and take care of it. And young people, children, listen to me. You need to get this into your brains.

This needs to penetrate. Work is not a curse. Work is what it means to be a human. To work is to be a human.

And so when your parents tell you to make you do chores and when they tell you to mow the lawn and they tell you to shovel the snow, they're not treating you badly. They're treating you like a human.

A human. Amen. Genesis 2.15. The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.

[16 : 35] Now the garden was a wonderful place to work, wasn't it? It was a wonderful place. I couldn't even imagine. And so as Adam and Eve, they took care of the garden, they were able to eat from all the trees of the garden except for that one.

But that was a lot of trees that they could eat from. And he was able to enjoy all the food that was there. It was very wonderful. It was very good. But then, man fell.

Did that change everything? No. It changed a lot of things. It changed some things. It changed how work was going to feel and how work was going to be.

Now work was going to be hard. And God cursed Adam. And he cursed the ground. By the sweat of your brow, you will eat your food.

That was the curse for Adam. And so do you see where Paul was getting his principle? It's really easy to go from by the sweat of your brow, you will eat your food to if a man will not work, he will not eat.

[17 : 49] He shall not eat. So 2 Thessalonians, chapter 3, verse 10, is a corollary. It's an implication of Genesis 3.

No sweat, no food. No work, no food. That's the way it's supposed to be in this fallen world. That's how God has designed it for now.

But some of those Thessalonians were not living that way. They weren't living in reality with that.

And so they needed to be reminded again, no sweat, no food.

No work, no food. And that's the principle. But before we move on from that principle, I want you to notice something that it says will not work.

It does not say cannot work. The principle is saying something about people who will not work. It isn't saying something about people that cannot work.

[18 : 56] And, of course, you're saying, yes, yes. I know that. Of course, that's true. If someone cannot work, we're going to be the first ones to help them out. And I want to agree with you and I completely do agree with that sentiment.

But I want to press on you to think hard before you whip out this quote that if a man will not work, he shall not eat.

And label someone as lazy. There are plenty of reasons to complain about the abuse of our welfare system in the United States, of our social welfare system.

Everyone knows that. Everyone knows about the stories of single moms who keep on having babies just to stay on welfare, to make more money while they're on welfare. And I am not excusing that behavior at all.

But I do want to caution you to be careful about how you label people, especially people that you do not know. Don't be swift to judge people that you don't know.

[20 : 06] Don't be swift to call people lazy when you're not entirely familiar with their situation. Fifty, sixty, seventy years ago, it was nothing to refer to black people in the South as lazy.

And from the Southern white perspective, it probably looked like they were lazy. They weren't doing the work that we're doing. But were those people right?

Well, not necessarily. A lot of times it wasn't that black people wouldn't work, it was that they couldn't work because people wouldn't hire them.

Because there was actual discrimination that kept people from being educated and from having good jobs and kept them down in the business world.

And the church should have been the first in line to take care of that and to love those people and to train those people and to help. But to a large extent, in the South, that was, it was, they failed.

[21 : 16] And that's why they're still, for the most part, black churches and white churches. people were too, I guess, Christians felt and said things that they shouldn't have done.

And so all I'm trying to say at this point is be careful. It's easy to think that you have all the answers and to know who's lazy and who's not. There's a lot of other reasons that people cannot work besides some physical disability.

And we just, we want to be sensitive to those things and wise about those things. So that's the principle. Now, here's the fourth point of the application.

The discipline. The discipline. Paul doesn't leave it in the hands of these idle people to just, to solve the problem, to take care of it, to make sure that they go to work.

He also puts it in the church's lap and he makes it the church's responsibility to discipline them so that they get to work. And you can see how serious this is.

[22 : 23] Paul tells the church to discipline a member if this behavior is going on. You see it in verse 6 and you see it in verse 14. He says, disassociate yourselves from these people.

Verse 14, take special note of them. Do not associate with them in order that they may feel ashamed. The church is to mark them out and to stay away from them.

To take them out of membership. To not mingle with them. And the idea is they're a yeast and this sin can spread.

And so you're to be very careful when you're around them. Not to get too emotionally attached, too spiritually attached. not saying you treat them badly. Of course not.

But you're to be careful with them and not to associate with them. But notice, it was for a redemptive purpose. When we go through the expectations of members for the new members class, this is a point that you have to emphasize is that when we do church discipline, we're doing it for redemptive purposes to save that person.

[23 : 42] It's for the person's good. And so it is here, it's for the idle person's good so that they will feel ashamed. And it's supposed to work like this, that the idle person feels ashamed when he is excluded.

When he's, when people aren't relating to him like the same as they were before or they've taken him out of membership of the church, the person is supposed to feel ashamed.

There's a lot of people that think shame is always wrong and it's not right to shame people, but Paul says there is a very good reason that someone should feel ashamed. And it's when they're not working for their living.

And so the idea was that you put social pressure, you put spiritual pressure on that person to come to grips with how serious the sin of idleness is.

And to put that pressure on them so that they feel compelled to see how serious it is and to get right, to repent. And incidentally, it's from this passage that we get our church discipline procedure that we call exclusion.

[24 : 56] And in our constitution it says this, exclusion is a lesser discipline that removes one from membership, but does not consider him as an unbeliever. This will be done with due admonition and reproof and only applies to infractions that are not deemed to be deserving of excommunication.

So not all sins are necessarily equal. Some sins are going to demand excommunication. But you notice that this matter of working for your living or not working for your living, it doesn't rise to that level.

And it takes wisdom to know what that level exactly is. But Paul says, exclude them, but do not regard them as an enemy, but still as a brother.

Warn him as a brother. And so that's the church's responsibility towards these people. If we see a person that's consistently not working for his living, because they're unwilling to work, not because they can't work, but if they're unwilling to work, we are to take action.

We're certainly not to feel guilty about not supporting them. And we're not to feel guilty about their bills going unpaid and their electricity being turned off.

[26 : 19] If a man will not work, he shall not eat. But on the other hand, we're not just to ignore that whole situation and act like it's not there.

Instead, we warn him, we reprove him, we teach him, we correct him, we show him that this is walking disorderly, and if he will not respond to that correction, that reproof, then there's the matter of exclusion.

And it's all in the hope that that person will repent. It will repent. Well, that's the explanation. We've seen the situation, the command, the principle, and the discipline.

And now I want to move to application. And like I said, I don't think for a lot of you there's a lot of one-to-one application exactly.

Most of you are working. Most of you are working hard. And so Paul's word for you is keep it up. Keep doing what you're doing. Don't get tired of that. But there are other ways.

[27 : 28] that this passage intersects our lives and where it demands that we make sure that we're taking action in the right way. And the first application comes out of verse 6.

In verse 6 it says, keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live. And this is the part I want to focus on here. Who does not live according to the teaching you received from us.

Now the word teaching there is the word for tradition. It's the tradition that you've received from us. And a tradition in that sort of language is something that you have received from someone else and now you're faithfully handing it down to another person.

So it's something you have received and now something that you are giving to another person. Lots of times in Paul's epistles he talks about the tradition, the tradition that you have received, the tradition that we've handed down to you.

The gospel is called the tradition that he gave. And then in this passage he calls the life that is according to that also a tradition.

[28 : 38] And so when Paul disciplined people, when he disciplined them, he was very careful that he was handing down the exact right doctrine, the set of doctrine, the set of the way to live in a way that they could receive it.

And that life and that doctrine they went together. And so that's how he disciplined. He was giving them this tradition. And so it's our responsibility as pastors to not only teach you the things to believe from the word of God, but the way to live.

And both go together. And so that's our job. We don't change it. We don't come up with our own ideas. We don't modify things. We don't fiddle with it.

We've received it and now we pass it on. And if it comes intact to you, then we've done our work.

And you could say, well, I'm not a pastor, so I don't see how this really applies to me.

And I think it does apply to anyone who's a parent. Because God has given it into your hands to disciple your own children. The church is to disciple the children, but you're the first line of those who are to be discipling.

[29 : 59] You spend the most time with them. You know them the best. You are with them. And so it's the parent's job to a great extent to disciple your children and what it means to be a Christian.

So you want to teach them what to believe and how to live. And so the first point of application here is parents teach your children to work.

Teach your children to work. Working hard, being productive, earning your bread is part of what it means to be a Christian.

It's part of the tradition that Paul handed down to his churches. It's the teaching of Christianity. And so God has called you as parents.

He's called you singles who are going to be parents to teach your children to work hard. You're to teach them everything they need to know to live a godly life.

[30 : 59] And this is a part of that godly life that they learn that it is good and it is right to sweat and to have calluses and to work for your bread.

It's not like bonus material. this is part of what it means to be a Christian. And so as soon as your children are young enough to do anything you should start them to do something productive in their family.

You don't make it impossible but on the other hand you don't make it easy either. Working in a sin cursed world is not meant to be easy always.

And most of the time it is not easy. They need to learn that from the very beginning. And as they get older and as they grow up you give them more to do.

You put more expectations on them. You expect them to do their work right. And you expect them to do it on time. And you expect them to do it well.

[32:04] And so you don't pamper them. But on the other hand Paul is really clear fathers don't exasperate them either.

Don't exasperate your children. This takes wisdom. But teach them that it's good. It's right. To sweat. To work up a sweat.

To have some calluses. It's good to work hard. And if you can pay them for their work, you want to do that too. Obviously, you want to do what's age appropriate and what you're able to.

But as they get older, you want to teach them that this is a fundamental way that life works. That all hard work leads to a profit. That's what Proverbs says.

And so hard work gives food. Hard work brings rewards. And so you don't want to give them an allowance that is totally unattached to whether they do anything good or not or work hard or not.

[33:06] that's not the way life works. That's not how God set it up. If a man works, he eats. And so you don't want to hijack that principle with so many hands outs that it gets confusing.

And also, you don't want to hijack that principle with the fact that no matter how much hard work you do, it doesn't make any difference. So be wise. Teach your children to work hard.

Secondly, help your teens find a career. If you've done a good job with your younger children, then they've learned that it's good to work hard.

And it's good to have a few calluses. And it's good to have sweated and earned something. But that's the foundation. That's the foundation. And it's necessary for a house to have a foundation.

But on the other hand, if that's where you stop, well, you can't really live in a foundation any more than you can live in a foundation. Do you see what I'm saying?

[34:14] I think I know what I'm saying here. You can't a house. Let me get my mind wrapped around this. If you have a house and you don't have a house but you just have a foundation, you can't live in it.

That's the point. And in the same way, a child who knows that work is good but doesn't necessarily know how to apply that principle to life.

It doesn't necessarily translate into a life that he can live in. So the second step is to help your teen find a career. Help your teen find a career.

We do such a great disservice disservice if we take our hands off of them right then and there.

When they're starting to develop these desires for life and a desire to settle down and they have ideas about what they want to do when they grow up and how they want to live, we do such a great disservice to them if we don't have our hands on that situation where we're talking to them.

It's madness to let them go to college without a goal, without any purpose, with a thousand really bad ideas floating around in their head, unrealistic ideas.

[35:39] And so don't be so sweet to them that you let them go into life, go into college with their minds filled with all sorts of foolish dreams that are not realistic.

You know, they think they want to do this, and they think they want to do that. And mom and dad help them to see what's possible, what they're good at, where they're gifted at, where they're strong at, what is realistic to expect from this career path.

Give them direction. Help them to think long term because young people are not good at thinking long term. And so you've been there, you've walked a lot more miles down the road, so let them know what it's like.

It's fun. It's easy, being a history major, but it doesn't make a lot of money. And so the day is gone when if you had the letters BA after your name, that just sort of magically opened the doors to a good job, to something that you could provide for your family.

It doesn't necessarily work that way. And so moms and dads, help your children to see that. Help your teens to understand that. Help them to see the realities of life. And that might mean showing them a budget.

[36:55] It might mean showing them your budget to show them, well, what does money buy and what doesn't money buy and how far does money go? And as they get older, you tell them more and you explain more.

The point is to be wise. Help your children to be wise. Help your teenagers to be wise. And help them to find a career that they can support a family with.

Now the third application is set a good example. And that's what Paul did. He said, we work night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you.

Moms, are you showing your daughters what it means to work hard in the home, as a homemaker, as someone who cares for the family?

A good example will go places that a good word can't go. Some things are better, you've heard this expression, they're better caught than taught.

[38:03] And so go in your own mind back to Proverbs 31 sometime tonight or in this week, go back to Proverbs 31. About twice a year we go through Proverbs 31 with my daughters, our daughters, and as you teach through it and you look at it closely, there's something that you run over again or you run into again and again and again, and it's this Proverbs 31 woman is a hard worker.

She's a hard worker. She's up before her servants and her arms are strong for the task. She is busy doing productive things and so moms, not only teach them Proverbs 31, but show them a Proverbs 31 woman in your own life, in their own house.

And men, are you setting a good example of hard work in your own home, in front of your children, in front of your sons?

I went past the field of a sluggard, and thorns had come up everywhere, and the ground was covered with weeds, and the stone wall was in ruins.

Sluggards don't take care of their house, and are you showing your son what it means to be a man, what it means to take care of a house, and a home?

[39:29] Are you showing him what it means to work hard, to earn your bread, by the way that you live? Or, does all he know about you is that you come home from work, and you sit and watch TV?

And, you know what, you might have worked hard all day, and you did. I'm sure you did, and you want to come home and do nothing but relax, and you need that time of rest and relaxation, I understand that, but just remember, he is not going to see all that hard work that you did all day. He's going to see you watching TV. And so you want to have that balance, you want to think about these things, and show him that you're a hard worker.

I mean, Paul said, night and day we were laboring and we were toiling. So set a good example, be wise. You need both, you need that example and you need the word, and so make sure that you have both.

Now the fourth point of application, and the last is this, work to give, work to give, you would be wrong to draw from 2 Thessalonians the idea that if you work hard, you have the right to spend your money on whatever you want.

[40:55] It's wrong to deduce from if a man will not work, he shall not eat, to think that means that if a man works, then he gets to spend his money only on himself.

And that is what happens in America. And that is what we naturally fall into. do. I go to work, I have a job, I work hard, I get to spend my money the way I want to and on me.

But that's, again, that's not the tradition that was handed down to you. Ephesians 4:28, it talks about the need to work hard, but it puts it into a wider perspective than what Paul does in 2 Thessalonians.

Listen to what Paul says there. anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

Paul says you can steal to eat, you can work to eat, but neither of those really cut it. the idea is that what God really wants is for you to work in order that you can share with those who are in need.

[42:15] And so if all you're teaching and all you're teaching to your children, that you work hard and you earn your bread and you're teaching them this, but if you don't teach them that that labor is not only to provide them with bread, it's also to provide those who cannot work, who are in need.

So teach them that work isn't just about them and theirs, it's about the good of others. So God hasn't called us to live to ourselves.

We were called to imitate Jesus. And we heard this this morning, that when Jesus came to obey, when he came to do his work, he wasn't looking out only for his own interests, he was looking out for ours.

And so when he worked, he didn't keep that reward just to himself. The only reason that you're saved is that he shared it with you. He gave it to you.

The righteousness that you could never have on your own, that you could never have earned, is a gift from him that he's given to you. And so he gave it away, and that's why you're saved.

[43:30] And so Jesus worked, and he gave, and so are you living Christ-like? We're called to be imitators, to be disciples, followers of Jesus.

So are we following him? Does your checkbook reflect what Jesus has done for you? If Jesus has saved you, then you know that you can no longer live for yourself, but you have to live for him, the one who loved you, and who gave himself up for you.

And you do that by working hard, by sharing with those in need. Let's pray. Our Heavenly Father, I pray that you would take these truths and plant them deep in our heart and then make them to bear fruit in our lives.

Father, you know how hard and tiring so many of us work, that we, there are so many hard workers. Thank you for what you've done in that regard. I pray that you would give us wisdom, that we would be able to handle and balance work and relaxation, and that we would be earnest about teaching our children the right way to work, and then the right way to give and to share.

[45:05] Father, give us the heart of your son, the same attitude that was in him, may it be found in us, that we wouldn't always be thinking about it ours and what concerns us, but out of love for others, love for the needy, that we would be ready to share out of the abundance that you've given to us.

Lord Jesus, thank you for living for us, for working out that perfect righteousness, and without it we would be hopelessly lost.

Thank you for obeying every single jot and tittle of the law, that in every way you fulfilled your father's will, and so now we can stand and we can be justified.

I pray, Lord, that we would live as justified sinners, we would be repenting and believing, but we would be working out of love for Jesus and out of love for our fellow man.

Give us grace as moms and dads to teach, to be wise, to set good examples for our own children. children. We pray that you would save them, show them the sufficiency, the greatness of Jesus and his righteousness for them.

[46:28] Open the eyes of our children and save them for Jesus' sake. And it's in his name I pray. Amen. Amen.