

2 Thessalonians 3:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you:

Analysis

Neither did we eat any man's bread for nought; but wrought with labour and travail night and day, that we might not be chargeable to any of you—neither did we eat any man's bread for nought (oude dōrean arton ephagomen, οὐδὲ δωρεὰν ἄρτον ἐφάγομεν, 'not free bread did we eat')—Paul took no handouts. **But wrought with labour and travail** (en kopō kai mochthō, ἐν κόπῳ καὶ μόχθῳ, 'with toil and hardship'), **night and day** (working double shifts).

Purpose: **that we might not be chargeable to any of you** (pros to mē epibarēsai, πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπιβαρῆσαι, 'in order not to burden'). Paul sacrificed sleep and comfort to avoid imposing financially. This modeled the Christian work ethic he's about to demand. Apostles labored harder than anyone before calling others to work.

Historical Context

Itinerant preachers in the ancient world typically expected support from listeners. Cynics, Stoics, and sophists all took payment. Paul's refusal to accept payment (though entitled, 1 Cor. 9:14) distinguished Christian ministry from professional speaking and demonstrated sacrificial service.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What sacrifice of comfort or convenience is God calling you to make to avoid burdening others?
2. How does Paul's work ethic challenge modern expectations of 'full-time ministry' support?
3. In what areas are you tempted to expect support you haven't earned through labor?

Interlinear Text

οὐδὲ δωρεὰν ἄρτον ἐφάγομεν παρά τινα ἀλλ' ἐν
Neither for nought bread did we eat any man's to any but with
G3761 G1432 G740 G5315 G3844 G5100 G235 G1722

κόπῳ καὶ μόχθῳ νύκτα καὶ ἡμέραν ἐργαζόμενοι πρὸς
labour and travail night and day wrought that
G2873 G2532 G3449 G3571 G2532 G2250 G2038 G4314

τὸ μὴ ἐπιβαρῆσαι τινα ὑμῶν.
not be chargeable to any of you
G3588 G3361 G1912 G5100 G5216

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 6:11 (Parallel theme): Give us this day our daily bread.

1 Thessalonians 2:9 (Parallel theme): For ye remember, brethren, our labour and travail: for labouring night and day, because we would not be chargeable unto any of you, we preached unto you the gospel of God.

Acts 18:3 (Parallel theme): And because he was of the same craft, he abode with them, and wrought: for by their occupation they were tentmakers.

Ephesians 4:28 (Parallel theme): Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

1 Corinthians 4:12 (Parallel theme): And labour, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it:

1 Thessalonians 4:11 (Parallel theme): And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;

2 Thessalonians 3:12 (Parallel theme): Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.