

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.