

## **Tentmaking and the Ministry of the Word (Parts 1 and 2)**

Acts 18:1-5

What was Paul's work?

How did his work situation change in verse 5, and why?

### **1. The serious sin of idleness**

2 Thessalonians 3:6–10 *Now we command you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is walking in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us. <sup>7</sup> For you yourselves know how you ought to imitate us, because we were not idle when we were with you, <sup>8</sup> nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you. <sup>9</sup> It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate. <sup>10</sup> For even when we were with you, we would give you this command: If anyone is not willing to work, let him not eat.*

1 Thessalonians 5:14 *And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle*

### **2. The blessing of working to enable generosity**

Acts 20:35 *In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'* ”

Ephesians 4:28 *Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.*

### **3. The humility to engage in any type of labor**

1 Corinthians 4:12 *and we labor, working with our own hands.* (cf. 2 Cor. 11:7)

### **4. The ministry opportunities provided by certain types of labor**

1 Thessalonians 2:9 *For you remember, brothers, our labor and toil: we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.*

## **5. The joy and (at certain times) wisdom of not being a burden on others**

1 Thessalonians 2:9

1 Corinthians 9:12 *we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ*

2 Thessalonians 3:8 *nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with toil and labor we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you.*

## **6. The necessity of avoiding covetousness and insincerity**

Acts 20:33 *I coveted no one's silver or gold or apparel.*

1 Timothy 3:3 *An overseer must be ...<sup>3</sup> not a lover of money.*

1 Peter 5:2 *shepherd the flock of God that is among you ... not for shameful gain, but eagerly*

2 Corinthians 2:17 *For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.*

1 Thessalonians 2:3–9 *For our appeal does not spring from error or impurity or any attempt to deceive,<sup>4</sup> ... we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.<sup>5</sup> For we never came with words of flattery, as you know, nor with a pretext for greed—God is witness.<sup>6</sup> Nor did we seek glory from people, whether from you or from others, ...<sup>9</sup> we worked night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, while we proclaimed to you the gospel of God.*

## **7. The right of those who teach the word to receive pay**

2 Thessalonians 3:8–9 *nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it ...<sup>9</sup> It was not because we do not have that right, but to give you in ourselves an example to imitate.*

Luke 10:7 (cf. Matt. 10:10) *And remain in the same house, eating and drinking what they provide, for the laborer deserves his wages.*

1 Corinthians 9:4–14 *Do we not have the right to eat and drink?<sup>5</sup> Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?<sup>6</sup> Or is it only Barnabas and I who have no right to refrain from working for a living?<sup>7</sup> Who serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard without eating any of its fruit? Or who tends a flock without getting some of the milk?<sup>8</sup> Do I say these things on human authority? Does not the Law say the same?<sup>9</sup> For it is written in the Law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain." Is it for oxen that God is concerned?<sup>10</sup> Does he not certainly speak for our sake? It was written for our sake, because the plowman should plow in hope and the thresher thresh in hope of sharing in the crop.<sup>11</sup> If we have sown spiritual things among you, is it too much if we reap material things from you?<sup>12</sup> If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right, but we endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ.<sup>13</sup> Do you not know that those who are employed in the temple service get their food from the temple, and those who serve at the altar share in the sacrificial offerings?<sup>14</sup> In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.*

## **8. The wisdom of not asking for or expecting pay for the ministry of the word (the necessity of initiative from a church family)**

1 Thessalonians 2:6 *we could have made demands as apostles of Christ.*

1 Corinthians 9:12 *If others share this rightful claim on you, do not we even more? Nevertheless, we have not made use of this right...*

2 Corinthians 11:9 *And when I was with you and was in need, I did not burden anyone, for the brothers who came from Macedonia supplied my need. So I refrained and will refrain from burdening you in any way.*

Galatians 6:6 *Let the one who is taught the word share all good things with the one who teaches.*

1 Timothy 5:17–18 *Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching.* <sup>18</sup> *For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer deserves his wages.”*

## **9. The priority of each local church on providing for its own pastors**

2 Corinthians 11:8 *I robbed other churches by accepting support from them in order to serve you.*

## **10. The value of allowing unhindered focus on the ministry of the word**

Acts 6:2–4 *And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.”* <sup>3</sup> *Therefore, brothers, pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty.* <sup>4</sup> *But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.”*

Acts 18:3–5 *and because he was of the same trade he stayed with them and worked ...* <sup>5</sup> *When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus.*

## **Conclusions**