

“2 Thessalonians 3—Part 2”

This article was posted in the “Among Friends” section of the Church of God Big Sandy’s website (churchofgodbigandy.com) for the weekend of June 20, 2026.

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BIG SANDY, Texas—At our Bible study on Wednesday night, I continued a series about 1 and 2 Thessalonians. The title of the presentation was “2 Thessalonians 3—Part 2.”

Throughout most of this series, I have covered a chapter of the book in one presentation. In 2 Thessalonians 2, I covered it in two consecutive presentations. Before the Wednesday-night presentation, I decided to cover 2 Thessalonians 3 in three consecutive presentations.

- On June 10, we covered 2 Thessalonians 3:1-13.
- On June 17, we covered 2 Thessalonians 3:6 and 2 Thessalonians 3:14
- On June 24, I plan to cover 2 Thessalonians 3:15-18.

Before I read from 2 Thessalonians 3, I mentioned other scriptures as background information.

Shunning bad ideas

- 2 Timothy 2:16—Paul reminded friends to shun profane and idle babblings, since they often lead to an increase in ungodliness.
- Titus 3:9—Paul reminded friends to avoid foolish various behaviors—specifically mentioning “disputes, genealogies, contentions and strivings.”
- Psalm 1:1—Blessed is the person who does not walk in the counsel of the ungodly.
- Proverbs 1:10—If sinners entice you (with bad ideas), do not consent.

A time to shun people

- Proverbs 1:15—Do not walk in the evil path with sinners.
- Proverbs 13:20—Walking with wise people is wise, while the companion of fools will be destructive.
- Proverbs 22:24-25—Being around angry people can cause problems.

2 Thessalonians 3:6

Let’s read this verse in four different translations.

- New King James Version—“We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.”

- Revised Standard Version—"We command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from any brother who is living in idleness and not in accord with the tradition that you received from us."
- James Moffatt Translation—"Brothers, we charge you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to shun any brother who is loafing, instead of following the rules you received from us."
- The Amplified New Testament—"Now we charge you, brethren, in the name and on the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah) that you withdraw and keep away from every brother (fellow believer) who is slack in the performance of duty and is disorderly, living as a shirker and not walking in accord with the traditions and instructions that you have received from us."

2 Thessalonians 3:14

Let's read this verse in four translations.

- New King James Version—"If anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed."
- Revised Standard Version—"If anyone refuses to obey what we say in this letter, note that man and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed."
- James Moffatt Translation—"If anyone will not obey our orders in this letter, mark that man; do not associate with him—that will make him feel ashamed."
- The Amplified New Testament—"But if anyone [in the church] refuses to obey what we say in this letter, take note of that person, and do not associate with him—that he may be ashamed."

Excommunication and disfellowship

If you have been around religious organizations in your life, you might have heard about two words that generally mean the same thing: "excommunication" and "disfellowship."

- Those two words are used to explain when a congregation decides to remove a person from its group.
- In a minute, I will show you two examples in the Bible about Paul removing a person from a group—so the action has some biblical basis.
- For the record—It is my perspective that there have been way too many examples of excommunication or disfellowship that were done for flimsy reasons and therefore did not produce good results.
- For the record—I personally regret the times in my 52 years (of serving as an assistant pastor and pastor) that I did not provide the help that people needed.

■ Praise God that those individuals have a relationship with the “God of all comfort” to receive the strength and stability that He has to offer (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

In Corinth

■ 1 Corinthians 5:1-2 mentioned two factors in a situation.

■ First—There was a member of the assembly who had practiced sexual immorality.

■ Second—The behavior was known throughout the congregation. (For your information, church leaders and friends have more room to work privately with your sinful condition if details about your situation are not permeating throughout the congregation.)

■ 1 Corinthians 5:3—Paul decided that something had to be done.

■ 1 Corinthians 5:5—The man was “delivered” to Satan “for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”

■ 1 Corinthians 5:9-13—When Paul taught brethren to avoid people committing immoral actions (Paul listed a variety of behaviors), he stressed the difference between people outside and people inside.

While Bible students understand the instructions about viewing sins inside the Body of Christ differently from viewing sins outside the Body of Christ (as mentioned in verses 9-13), please try to show as much mercy as you can for those inside the church (Matthew 9:13, Galatians 6:1 and 2 Corinthians 2:6-11).

Letter to Timothy

■ 1 Timothy 1:18-19—Paul encouraged Timothy to be committed to God and reminded him that people can become shipwrecked.

■ 1 Timothy 1:20—Then, Paul mentioned two individuals (Hymenaeus and Alexander) who were “delivered to Satan that they may learn not to blaspheme.”

Paul’s reminders about avoiding

Paul taught there were times to avoid people.

■ Romans 16:17—“Note those who cause divisions and offenses (contrary to the doctrine which you have learned) and avoid them.”

■ 1 Timothy 6:3-5—After Paul mentioned people exhibiting a variety of negative behaviors, he said: “From such withdraw yourself.”

■ 2 Timothy 3:5—After Paul again mentioned people exhibiting another variety of negative behaviors, he said: “From such people turn away!”

John’s reminders about avoiding

John said there were times to avoid people.

■ 2 John verses 10-11—John described a way to respond if someone did not bring the correct doctrine to you.

- “Do not receive him into your home.”
- “Do not greet him.”

I support the fact that there are times when disciples should follow John’s advice in 2 John 10-11. But I believe that other parts of the Bible show us that we should discern when to use various approaches.

Next week

The next scripture in our series (2 Thessalonians 3:15) is important to help us to evaluate what biblical approach is most effective in the experiences we face.

- 2 Thessalonians 3:15—“Yet, do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”
- Also, please consider Matthew 9:13.