

them the will of God concerning it. They had received "a tradition" about it (ver. 6), and this tradition was not a thing handed down from one man to another, and untraceable in its commencement; it was distinctly the word of God. Chap. 2, 15; 1 Thess. 2, 13. The command that "if any would not work, neither should they eat, was in fact the same as that given in paradise, when Adam was placed in the "garden" "to dress it and to keep it." Toil and weariness was the result of sin (Gen. 3, 19), but work was God's design for man from the first. Those who idle away their time are like the useless idols David speaks of, having eyes, ears, etc., but all of no good to any one. Psa. 115, 5-8. They are descending lower even than the beasts, for dumb animals work and are useful. Strange that the heirs of Christ's kingdom should ever descend so low!

2. *His own example.* It was not a necessary duty for Paul to work with his hands. His work as an apostle was labor enough for a man, and he had a right to be supported by those to whom he brought the word of God, 1 Cor. 9, 7-14. But, for example's sake, he had toiled for his daily bread.

3. *The example of the Lord Jesus Christ.* There was not only the command of Christ, as Lord; there was his example, as man—"I exhort you by our Lord Jesus Christ." Ver. 12. Though Lord of all, he had, through his early years in Nazareth, worked at his daily task, so that his fellow-citizens said of him, not merely, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" but, "Is not this the carpenter?" Whoever looks to share his kingdom hereafter ought to share now in his path of diligent labor.

This is a path in which every one may gain distinction. It cannot be said of all young men and women in business that they are quick and clever; it cannot be said of every boy and girl at school that they have great abilities. But of every follower of Christ it ought to be said: He or she is diligent, industrious, painstaking, not seeking to make a noise and show, but working "with quietness."

But is all this labor, this diligence, to be simply for one's own profit? Most decidedly it is for one's own profit every way, but this is not to be the source or the aim of it. The source is to be Christ's command; the aim, Christ's glory. The grand command, "Be not weary in well-doing," means something more than simply working for a living.

When the Thessalonian believers found that idle persons had abused their generosity, and looked to them for the support they should have earned themselves, they might be tempted to give up helping the needy. But Paul tells them, "Be not weary." It is the right and privilege of God's children to be

helpers of others; and who would wish to forego this right? The day-labourer may do a good turn to another; the hard-worked girl may lend a hand to a neighbour; the little child may run an errand, and if done for Christ's sake, this is "well-doing."

But was all this diligence to be expended in manual work? Look at verse 1. Here is work which even the sick and helpless may perform, and which the most active must not neglect. Many people say prayers; many more listen to prayers. But the children of God must pray, and pray that diligent, fervent prayer which "availeth much." Jas. 5, 16. And such diligent ones may indeed look for that peace which the Lord is able to give "always by all means." Ver. 16.

### BEREAN METHODS.

#### Hints for the Teachers' Meeting and the Class

Give an account of this epistle, its circumstances, and purpose. (See General Statement.) . . . Here we have our present duties in view of Christ's coming; how to live with his advent before us. . . . Note what are here required of disciples. (See Additional Practical Lessons.) . . . Note what privileges are here bestowed upon disciples. (See Analytical and Biblical Outline.) . . . ILLUSTRATIONS. Ver. 1: A rich farmer, who gave but little, was accustomed to pray for the poor at family worship. One day his little boy said: "Father, if you will give me the key to your barn, I will answer some of your prayers." Oftentimes the answer to our prayers for the progress of the Lord's cause depends upon our work for it. . . . A little girl who had planted a rose-bush prayed that God would make it grow, and then went out and watered it. . . . Vers. 6-12: Soon after the Revolution came a day known as "the Dark Day," when a strange darkness was over all New England. The Connecticut Legislature was in session, and some of the members full of alarm, said, "This is the judgment-day! Let us adjourn!" Col. Davenport, one of the legislators, said, "If this is the day of judgment, we can be at no better place than our post of duty. Let us have the lamps lighted, and go on with the business of the house!"

#### Lesson Word-Pictures.

Saint —, you are a beautiful illustration of Christian diligence, though you would blush to be told so, face to face. In the first place, you take care of yourself. You do not eat any man's bread for nought. I see you running a loom in the mill, or you may be the man overseeing the work. I see you washing pans in a kitchen, or you may be the employer that pays for the washing. I see you digging the potatoes in the garden, or