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Loving the Brethren, Living Your Life, Behavior Toward Outsiders  
1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

### Introduction

I do not know why we mark the beginning of a new year 10 days after the Winter Solstice, but so we do, which makes this the first Sunday worship service of 2021 and the second Sunday in Winter - so only 11 weeks until Spring! That is an encouragement for those of us who prefer it to be warm because the days are getting longer, and yet also a delight to those of you who like winter sports because it means you still have plenty of time for snow and ice skating.

Our New Year's Eve service was fairly small, but very good as people shared how God sustained them through the nonsense and chaos of 2020 and how they were looking forward to what God would continue to do in and through them in 2021. Contrary to society at large which has this tendency to be hopeful that a new year will bring positive changes as if altering the digit on the year designation is magical, a Christian's hope is founded solely in our sovereign God who is at work to change us into the image of His son (Rom. 8:29).

Realistic expectations for 2021 in regards to our nation and society should be pessimistic since the reasons for the chaos of 2020 has not changed and may be getting much worse. As I put out on the front sign this week, "*hope in man brought us 2020,*" and continued hope in man will only result in continued fear, hysteria, riots and government totalitarianism. Hope in man is following the devil's plans. Man boasts of being able to be his own savior, but his own sinful corruption will turn what should be helpful into something detrimental. Medical science already had answers to COVID-19 before the pandemic even became widespread since that was already figured out in battling the first SARS coronavirus in 2002-2004. But medical incompetence, politics and people in key positions that want to make a lot of money on this blocked what was known to create an unknown and very expensive vaccine that may or may not work to give immunity and may or may not have detrimental long term side effects. Their hands are stained with the deaths of hundreds of thousands - but a lot of these are also people that have no qualms about abortion, so causing the deaths of others to achieve their own goals is not a detriment to them. Too many politicians have been acting like demi-gods as if they can provide safety for everyone if we only do what they demand. Lacking omniscience, they have proven themselves to be both fools and evil, and much of society seems to have forgotten President Regan's adage that "government is not the solution - government is the problem." You should be pessimistic if your hope is in man. In fact, you should be despondent because the solutions man is offering are downright depressing.

However, Christians have every reason to be optimistic. Not because it is a new year, but because every day of the year our purpose in life transcends the things much of our society has come to value so highly such as materialism, safety, pursuit of pleasure, freedom from morality, and freeloading - reaping the benefits of the hard work of other people, also known as socialism. The maturing Christian is moving in the opposite direction. We thank God for material blessings, but see them as a means to further His kingdom instead of amassing for our own kingdom. Our treasure is in heaven (Matthew 6:19-21). We use proper caution but move forward without fear to live life fully because our health and safety are ultimately in God's hands (Psalm 127:1). We enjoy the pleasures God gives to us, but our greatest pleasure is serving Him for His glory (Colossians 3:17). We pursue godly morals because they free us from the bondage of sin (Romans 6). We work as best we can so that we may provide for ourselves, our family and have the means to help those who have legitimate needs (Ephesians 4:28).

Hope does not arise from a new year, but in our God who has given us His precious and magnificent promises that have all been guaranteed by Jesus' Christ rising from the dead. The God of hope has given us reason to hope for the present and for eternity. And while the beginning of a new year is a great time to make resolutions to make changes in your life, God is making those changes in true Christians all the time in the process of sanctification.

We have been seeing this in our study of 1 Thessalonians. Acts 16 records the beginning of that church in the midst of opposition, and 1 Thessalonians confirms how quickly they grew to be a model church in evangelism and in standing firm to opposition. As we started into chapter 4 last week, we also saw there were areas in which they could still improve. They were doing well, but Paul pleads and exhorts them to walk and to please the Lord still more. God had radically changed them from pagans to saints, but He was still changing them to become even more godly in how they lived. God is still doing that same work in believers every day in our own time.

Last week we covered 1 Thessalonians 4:1-9 in which Paul reminded them of the instructions they had given to them by the Lord Jesus that God's will for them was sanctification, and specifically that they abstain from sexual immorality and instead follow God's design for sexual purity within marriage. The ancient Greek culture was very immoral, so Paul speaks strongly to them about this subject also reminding them that the Lord is an avenger and rejecting this instruction was rejecting God who had given to them the Holy Spirit. As I pointed out last week, Paul's pleas and exhortations to the Thessalonians have the same direct application in our own culture that has become blatantly immoral and especially so among cultural and political leaders. New believers are to learn to abstain from their former practices while those who have been Christians longer continue to resist the temptations and influence of the culture and instead become brighter shining lights of righteousness.

This morning we will be examining 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12 and the second area of Paul's encouragement to them to walk and to please God. Please follow along as I read.

*<sup>9</sup> Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; <sup>10</sup> for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more, <sup>11</sup> and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life and attend to your own business and work with your hands, just as we commanded you, <sup>12</sup> so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.*

### **Loving the Brethren - 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10**

**Current Practice.** Paul introduces this section of the passage with "*now concerning.*" This is not a whole new subject as suggested in some commentaries, but rather the second area that he wanted to address related to verse 1 in his plea and exhortation for them to walk and to please God as he had instructed them previously.

The particular subject, φιλαδελφίας / philadelphias, is translated as "brotherly love" in some versions, but the emphasis of the word is not on the type of love, but on who is being loved, and so is better translated as "love of brother," or by extension, "brethren." The difference is between Paul writing about "having a brotherly kind of love for others" and writing concerning "love for your brother." In classical Greek this word was used only for a sibling by birth, but throughout the New Testament it is used for someone that became your spiritual sibling by the new birth. As I have already pointed out numerous times, Paul's reference to these Greeks as his "brothers" is very significant. The gospel has brought Jew and Gentile together to be part of one family, the family of God.

Paul would have to write to other churches about the nature and practice of loving one another as siblings, the Corinthians being a primary example, but he gives two reasons here why neither he nor anyone else really had any reason to write to Thessalonians about this. First is that they were already taught by God to love one another. This springs from Paul already telling them in verse 8 that God had given to them His Holy Spirit. The apostle John would later also point out that the Holy Spirit is the

teacher of believers (1 John 2:20-27) which matches John 6:45 and its reference to the fulfillment of Isaiah 54:13 and Jeremiah 31:33-34 that as part of the new covenant, the followers of the Messiah would be taught by God.

There are two different words for love used in this verse. “*Love of brother*” is a compound word joining the Greek word for love, φιλία / philia, with the word for brother. This particular word for love speaks of affection and its related actions. The word used in reference for what God had taught them about loving one another is much stronger and deeper. It is ἀγαπάω / agapaô, the love God has for us and demonstrated in Jesus Christ. It is a love that sacrifices itself for the best interest of the one so loved and is most fully expressed in Jesus Christ when He died on the cross on behalf of sinners as the price of redemption (Romans 5:8). He who knew no sin became sin on our behalf that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:21). The just died for the unjust so that He might bring us to God (1 Peter 3:18).

This is the self-sacrificial love that Jesus commands His followers to have for another saying, “*A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another*” (John 13:33-34). There are also many instructions in the Scriptures about loving in this manner. For example, 1 Cor. 13:4-8 describes the characteristics of this love as a correction to a very fractured church that was not loving. And though Paul does not mention the word in Philippians 2:3-4, those verses give a great description of its core characteristics,<sup>3</sup> “*Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;*<sup>4</sup> *do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.*” But even with this love being commanded and described in the Scriptures, take note that Paul states that they were taught by God to do this. What does he mean?

While intellectual understanding and learning by the example of others are important, this kind of love cannot be achieved by those alone. It only comes as a result of God changing you internally so that your motivations and therefore the behaviors that arise out of them reflect Christ in you and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The love of God is poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who is given to us (Romans 5:5). The love of God residing in us by the Holy Spirit then prods us to love others in this manner (1 John 3:17). We love because He first loved us (1 John 4:9), and because we love the Father, we love those born of Him (1 John 5:1). God teaches us to love other believers both externally through His word and internally through His Holy Spirit.

Why would Paul need to write to them about love (φιλία / philia) of a brother when they were already taught by God to have an even greater love for one another? He does not.

The second reason that neither Paul or anyone else needed to write to them about this love is that they were already putting into practice what God had taught them and did love one another as specifically noted in verse 10. Paul had already commended them for their “labor of love” (1:3), and I don’t think it is a stretch by any means to include the change in how they treated one another as part of the report about their faith that had gone forth beyond Macedonia and Achaia (1:8-10). Jesus Himself said that people would know we are His disciples by our love for one another (John 13:35). Tertullian at the end of the second century quotes the heathen remarking in amazement, “*behold how these Christians love one another.*”

The comments Paul has to make about those who had stopped working because of their anticipation of the Lord’s return suggests that their love may have even gone too far in supporting such people. In 2 Thessalonians 3:10 he has to even remind them of what he had taught them earlier that “*if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat either.*” It is loving to meet the real needs that people have, but that is not to be exploited by people who will not do all that they can to support themselves.

Paul specifically states in verse 10 that their practice of love toward the brethren had already gone well beyond their local fellowship of believers. Notice he states it extended to the “*brethren who*

*are in all Macedonia.*” We already know from the earlier chapters that the “*word of the Lord had sounded forth*” from them into Macedonia and south into Achaia. Prior to this we know from Acts 16-17 that Paul and his co-workers had established churches in Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea in Macedonia. This verse indicates that the proclaiming of the gospel by the Thessalonians had its effect for there were now brethren *in the whole* (ὅλος / olos) *of Macedonia*” which was about 300 miles wide East-West from the Aegean to the Adriatic Sea, and was 150 miles or more long North-South. (MAP). Paul’s statement here is that beyond just preaching the gospel, they had developed loving, sibling relationships with these believers.

That is just the way it is supposed to be in any healthy church. As new people become believers, they also become brothers and sisters in the family and loving relationships are quickly developed. I am told over and over that is what people have experienced here, often not really recognizing it until they move away and have a hard time finding the same sense of family in the new churches they try out. If you are not experiencing that yourselves whether here or somewhere else, then follow the example of the Thessalonians and you practice it yourself. Don’t wait for a special invitation to develop deep and abiding friendships. You initiate it wherever you find other believers, and if there are no other believers there, you initiate it by preaching the gospel so that there are, and then keep proclaiming Christ so that the family keeps getting bigger and bigger. That fits exactly with what Paul urges them to do at the end of vs. 10.

**Excel Still More** - “*But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more.*” This is the same phrase we saw last week in verse 1. It is to excel, abound, overflow in excess and encompasses both quantity and quality. Even a church that does well at loving the brethren can always improve in that love in both quantity and quality. What do I mean?

In terms of quality, it means that you and I can always improve in the characteristics of the love we show to one another. The Corinthians were a mess and so Paul had to explain to them in strong terms what was missing in their spirituality was love. He then gave them specific descriptions of their lack often putting it in the negative to increase the emphasis. On the positive side, love is patient, kind, truthful, and bears, believes, hopes and endures all things so that it never fails. They were lacking in each of these areas. The quality of your love will increase as it gains those characteristics. From the negative, Paul states that love is not jealous, it does not brag, it is not arrogant, it does not act unbecomingly, it is not self-seeking, it does not hold grudges, or rejoice in unrighteousness. These are all corrective for they were jealous, braggarts and arrogant resulting in many factions in the church. All of those stem from pride and demonstrate their lack of humility. They were also rude and selfish even at their communion love feasts so that some were hungry while others were gluttonous and drunk. They were provoked and held grudges taking each other to court before unbelievers. They also tolerated flagrant sin in their midst and thought themselves to be good for doing so. True love will be and do the opposite of those.

As mentioned earlier, the quality of love improves as we walk in humility to seek out the best interest of others at our own sacrifice as described in Philippians 2. The love we are to have for the brethren is to reflect that of Jesus Christ and demonstrate that the Holy Spirit indwells us. For those reasons alone, we will always be improving in our love until we are completely conformed into His image at His return (Phil. 1:6; 1 John 3:2).

In terms of quantity, this is simply a matter of expanding our horizons in loving other believers in this manner. It means greater openness and availability to love those you already know and quickly making room for new relationships to develop. While hermits are honored and being sequestered is considered to be very spiritual in some segments of the church, both of those are directly opposed to the commands of God to love one another because you simply cannot do that if you isolate yourself. This also means that groups of close relationships can and will form in the church, but there are not to be any cliques which exclude others.

Let me quickly expand on that. The circle of friends in a church are always to have a wide opening into them. While I am sure that there has been cliques here at times since it is simply part of human nature, that has not been my general observation. Perhaps that is due in part to being too busy to notice I have been excluded from a group, and besides, I fully recognize as a pastor that I am often viewed as a father figure and children who are having a party do not necessarily want dad to be there. However, nearly every time I have heard an accusation by someone about being excluded from a clique, after investigation, I found the group had given multiple invitations to that person to join them. My point is simple, loving relationships in a church are a two way street. You have to be willing to both extend such love and to receive it. Don't isolate yourself. Get involved in the body life of the church for in doing so you will "*excel still more*" at loving your brothers and sisters in Christ.

### **Godly Ambitions** 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

In the next two verses Paul brings up another area in which he is pleading with and exhorting them to walk and to please God. While this is a new section in one sense connecting five infinitives, the conjunction "and" grammatically connects it to the previous verses, and there is also a logical connection in pointing out particular ways that love of brothers is to be shown in dealing with a problem that had developed among some of the Thessalonian believers.

Paul begins by using the infinitive of the Greek verb, φιλοτιμέομαι / philotimeomai, which is variously translated as "*to have as one's ambition,*" "*to aspire,*" "*to seek,*" "*to seek earnestly*" and "*to study.*" It is a compound word joining the words for love / fondness with honor. This is not in a sense of self seeking pride, but in endeavoring to do what is honorable and hence ambition or aspiration. Paul used it of himself in Romans 15:20 describing his "aspiration" to preach the Gospel in places where it had not yet been proclaimed. Young even translates that as "*so counting it honour to proclaim the good news.*" Paul also uses this in 2 Corinthians 5:9, "*Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him.*" The sense here then is that Paul is instructing the Thessalonians about particular behaviors or actions he wants them to have as their ambition, to aspire to, to count as an honor to do in practical ways of showing love to the brothers.

**A Quiet Life.** The first endeavor listed is to lead a quiet life. While the word used here, ἡσυχάζω / hāsichazō, can be translated as silence after a speech, rest after labor or peace after war, the meaning here is set by its context and its usage of the noun form in 2 Thessalonians 3:12, "*to work in quite fashion and eat their own bread*" which is contrasted there to those who were "*leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies*" (vs. 11). The usage of the word here implies that some of the Thessalonians were living in excitement and restlessness due to their wrong understanding of the doctrine concerning the return of Jesus which Paul will correct later in this chapter and then again in 2 Thessalonians. There were two wrong views that could lead to lives that were without peace of mind and tranquility of spirit.

The first was a wrong application of the doctrine of Jesus' imminent return. I will expand on this next week, but the Scriptures clearly teach that we are to be anticipating Jesus to return at any moment, however, that is not to be taken as if He is going to return at any moment and therefore should focus solely on that and stop working and living a normal life. We got a sense of this some years ago when Harold Camping gave a date for Jesus' return and as that date approach many of his followers stopped working, stopped paying bills, some even sold their homes and businesses to give money to Camping so that message could be proclaimed.

In 2 Thessalonians Paul deals with another wrong understanding of this doctrine among those that thought Jesus had already returned and they had missed it. I think we can all understand the frantic behavior that would cause.

What does leading a quiet life look like? Titus 2:2-8 gives a good description.<sup>2</sup> “*Older men are to be temperate, dignified, sensible, sound in faith, in love, in perseverance.*”<sup>3</sup> *Older women likewise are to be reverent in their behavior, not malicious gossips nor enslaved to much wine, teaching what is good,*<sup>4</sup> *so that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children,*<sup>5</sup> *to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, being subject to their own husbands, so that the word of God will not be dishonored.*<sup>6</sup> *Likewise urge the young men to be sensible;*<sup>7</sup> *in all things show yourself to be an example of good deeds, with purity in doctrine, dignified,*<sup>8</sup> *sound in speech which is beyond reproach, so that the opponent will be put to shame, having nothing bad to say about us.”*

**Attend Your Own Affairs.** The second aspiration Paul lists is “*to attend to your own business,*” or as the ESV translates it, “*to mind your own affairs.*” The verb here, *πρόσσω* / *prassō*, means to carry out some activity, and the particular activity in this phrase is “the one’s own” (*τὰ ἴδια* / *ta idia*) and hence what pertains to you as opposed to what pertains to someone else. Paul states this positively here about what they should be doing which implies they were doing something else, but in 2 Thessalonians he is very direct that they were acting like busybodies by meddling in the affairs of others where they did not belong.

Those who are busy about the business of their own lives have less time to get involved in things that do not pertain to them. Perhaps you have made this observation yourself that working people tend to be too busy earning a living and living out their lives to be involved in the affairs of other people while the indolent have too much time on their hands and get involved in all sorts of things that are none of their business. Parallel to this observation is that those who work - whether that is at home or at a job - tend to be responsible people who contribute to society while those who are lazy tend to become irresponsible leeches on society that cause problems for everyone else.

What is true in society in general is also true in the church. Those that are involved using their spiritual gifts become a blessing to all, while those that only sit in the pews at best become the complainers that become a drain on the rest of us. This is where the tie to love comes back in. If you love your brother, you are going to make it your ambition to live your life in a way that will be a blessing to others instead of a drain. That begins by making sure your own affairs are in order and that your life is proceeding in a godly manner.

There is a time and place to be involved in the affairs of others as we shall see at the end of chapter 5, for we are to “*admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, and be patient with all men*” (1 Thess. 5:14). However, you can only be effective at that if you have first attended to yourself including examining yourself as Jesus pointed out in Matthew 7:5 and Paul in Galatians 6:1.

**Work.** The third ambition Paul encourages them to have is directly related to the second, “*and to work with your own hands.*” The Greek and Hebrew world were very different in this respect. The Jews valued labor and even a rabbi learned a trade. Paul was well taught himself and he became a great teacher, but he often earned his living by physically making tents. That was his trade. The Greeks looked down on those that earned their living with their hands for they viewed such physical toil as only fitting for slaves. Tradesmen were needed, but they were considered lower class, and it appears that many if not most of the Thessalonian believers were probably tradesmen. Paul elevates their position here with this admonition.

This was also a direct rebuke to any that had stopped working due to their wrong understanding and application of the doctrine of the imminent return of Christ as already mentioned. Labor is honorable. It allows us to provide for our own and have the means to share something with those that have need (Ephesians 4:28). This appears to have been a struggle for some of them to put into practice for Paul specifically points out that he had previously given them this command. He will have to do it again in 2 Thessalonians. The Thessalonians were a model church in many ways, but there were some problem areas.

## **Behavior Toward Outsiders**

Paul concludes this section with a final reason for the instructions he has given here, *“so that you will behave properly toward outsiders and not be in any need.”*

Their behavior was a witness toward outsiders, those who were not Christians. Their love toward one another was obvious and a very positive witness, though there was room for improvement as there always will be for any Christian. We are grateful that God is faithful to continue the work He began in us to conform us to the image of His son.

There were some areas that needed encouragement and by that some mild correction. They needed more diligence in living their lives out as God intended in a quiet manner which included a focus on their own affairs and working with their own hands. The implication of these instructions is that there were those among them that were not working as they should leading to being improperly involved in other people's business and being agitated. Those things would also result in improper behavior toward outsiders and be a bad witness to them - just as the Harold Camping fiasco was years ago here.

In addition, if they did what Paul was asking and exhorting them to do, then they would not have need for they would be providing for themselves. There are those that have legitimate needs because they cannot work for one reason or another, or they cannot earn enough by their labor to meet their real expenses. In Christian love we strive to meet those needs. We are confident that God will supply what is needed for anyone that seeks first His kingdom and righteousness because that is His promise (Matthew 6:33). But part of doing that is obedience to God's word which includes the commands for every believer to work to provide for themselves and others. Paul escalates his admonishment to them in 2 Thessalonians 2:13 that *“if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either.”* You may not succeed, but you had better demonstrate your willingness.

I have done some odd piecemeal jobs at times, but I have always been willing to work, and therefore I have always found some job to do. I was not always paid enough by them to meet my actual expenses, but God has always supplied my needs just as He promised. The same diligence to work was true of my father and it has been true of all three of my sons. Even when we could not find something that paid, we volunteered. That has been part of my father's legacy since his retirement. Only poor health has kept him from doing more. In one sense these are simply character traits into which we were trained, but in another sense, they are reflections of godliness, and they are characteristics of all who strive to live a godly life.

Let me conclude by stressing that last statement. I am now being told by those following a very twisted philosophy that these are racists characteristics of “white privilege.” However, there is nothing “white” about these characteristics of diligence and hard work for they enable anyone to succeed no matter what the level of melanin in their skin. These are characteristics of following God's commands whether the individual is aware of that or not. These characteristics are reflections of godliness, so never yield any room whatsoever to the demonically inspired philosophies of socialism that are blowing across our land like an ill and putrid wind. Stand firm and glorify God within and without the church by your love for the brethren and how you live your own life in godliness working diligently to provide for yourself and help others for all of those are an extension of that love.

**Introduction** - 1 Thessalonians 4:9-12

Hope in man - foundation for \_\_\_\_\_

Hope in God - foundation for \_\_\_\_\_

God changes pagans into saints

God continues to change Christians - 1 Thess. 4:1-9

**Loving the Brethren** - 1 Thessalonians 4:9-10

**Current Practice:** Love of brother: φιλαδελφίας / philadelphias - emphasis on the \_\_\_\_\_

They were already taught by \_\_\_\_\_ - 1 John 2:20-27; John 6:45 / Isaiah 54:13 / Jeremiah 31:33-34

Love of \_\_\_\_\_ - φιλία / philia

\_\_\_\_\_ love - ἀγαπάω / agapaô (Romans 5:8)

The \_\_\_\_\_ we are commanded to have for one another (John 13:33-34; Philippians 2:3-4)

Intellectual understanding & learning by example are important, but this love comes from \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom 5:5)

No need to write to love (φιλία / philia) a brother if already \_\_\_\_\_ to love (ἀγαπάω / agapaô)

No need to write about loving (φιλία / philia) a brother if they are already \_\_\_\_\_ (ἀγαπάω / agapaô) them

Their love may have already gone too far in supporting people \_\_\_\_\_ to work

Their love was extended through the \_\_\_\_\_ of Macedonia

Such love is to be a characteristics of any healthy, \_\_\_\_\_ church

**Excel Still More** - there will always be room to improve

\_\_\_\_\_ - becoming more characterized by all the elements of love - (ἀγαπάω / agapaô)

Quality improves as you walk in \_\_\_\_\_ and become more like Christ

\_\_\_\_\_ - is an expansion of loving more people this way - that cannot be done in isolation

Any circle of friends in a church needs to have a wide \_\_\_\_\_ into that circle

**Godly Ambitions** - 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12

Have ambition / aspire - φιλοτιμέομαι / philotimeomai - fondness for \_\_\_\_\_ / doing what is honorable

**A Quiet Life** - ἡσυχάζω / hāsuczazô - 2 Thess. 3:12 - contrasted with an undisciplined life



Expectation of the Lord's return resulting in stopping aspects of \_\_\_\_\_ parts of living such as work

Agitated because they thought they may have \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord's return

Titus 2:2-8 - a description of this type of life

**Attend Your Own Affairs** - πράσσω / prassō - carry out the activities that belong to \_\_\_\_\_

Those busy with their own lives do not have time to \_\_\_\_\_ in the lives of other people

Those \_\_\_\_\_ and using their spiritual gifts are a blessing to all

There is a time to be involved in the affairs of others (1 Thess. 5:14), but you must attend to your own \_\_\_\_\_

**Work** - manual labor was held in \_\_\_\_\_ among Jews but despised by the Greeks

A rebuke to those who had \_\_\_\_\_ working

### **Behavior Toward Outsiders**

\_\_\_\_\_ of other Christians is a positive witness to non-Christians that you are a follower of Christ

Leading a quiet life, attending to your own affairs and working is also a positive witness to \_\_\_\_\_

We trust God to provide for us, but that includes us being obedient to His commands for us to \_\_\_\_\_

God will supply work to those who are \_\_\_\_\_ to work - even if it does not pay well or at all

Having a good work ethic is a reflection of \_\_\_\_\_ - not racism.

\_\_\_\_\_ against ungodly philosophies and glorify Him by your love which includes a good work ethic

**KIDS KORNER** – Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help. Young Children – draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. Older Children – count how many times the word "love" is used. Talk with your parents how true love can be expressed to others so that it glorifies God.

**THINK ABOUT IT** – Questions to consider in understanding the sermon and its application. What are your expectations for 2021? Explain. Why should those who trust in man be pessimistic and depressed? Why should those who trust in God be optimistic? How did God change the Thessalonians when they first believed? How was God continuing to change them? How did the Thessalonians demonstrate their love for their Christian brothers? How is a Christian taught by God to love? What is the different between the "love of the brethren" and "love for one another" in verse 9? Why is such love a characteristic of a mature church? How can your own love improve in quality and quantity? Why is it wrong for Christians to isolate themselves? What is to be a Christians ambition? What does it mean to "live a quiet life"? What was this being contrasted to? Describe what that would look like? Is your own life marked by this? If not, what needs to change? How did a wrong understanding of the doctrine of the imminent return of Christ cause the Thessalonians to not live a quiet life? What does Paul mean by the instruction to "attend your own business"? How does that keep a person from becoming a busybody? When is a Christian supposed to be involved in the affairs of others? What was the difference between the Hebrew and the Greek attitude toward manual labor? How does labor glorify God? How does these three elements help to have a proper behavior toward outsiders? Why is it important to provide for yourself and others? How does God provide for those that cannot provide for themselves? Why is a strong work effort a reflection of godliness? Why would some people claim that a strong work ethic is racists? How can you stand firm against the current winds of demonic doctrines of socialism blowing across our land?