


Concern for the Church

Materials I Need:







Legend:


-  = Option 1, Appropriate for 1st – 2nd Grade
 = Option 2, Appropriate for 3rd – 6th Grade


Memory Work:

**“But the LORD is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.”
2 Thessalonians 3:3**

 **Hook:**

- What Do You Want To Be When You Grow Up? (Discussion).** ,  Bring in magazines, newspapers, books, or advertisements that show pictures of different occupations. Talk to your students about all the different jobs people have. Each day they go and do their jobs; working so they can earn the money to take care of their families. Talk about what occupations their parents have, and what they might want to do when they have a family someday. After Paul told the Thessalonians about Christ's return, some of them thought He was coming so soon that they might as well just quit working and wait. Paul did not mean for these men to quit their jobs and simply sit around waiting. These lazy people had nothing better to do than to gossip and talk about things that didn't concern them. It is true that Jesus is coming back, but we are to stay busy, minding our own business and working hard until that time.
- Got Nothin' To Do? (Discussion).** ,  How do you like to spend your time? Do you like to be busy, always having a project to work on, or having something productive to do? Are you efficient with the time you have? Are you diligent to complete your chores so that you can do something else? Or do you procrastinate, taking forever to complete the work you have to do because you are afraid that someone may give you something else to do when you are finished? God designed His children to work. We are to be diligent to complete what we need to do, and not spend all of our free time in wasted activities. When we have too much idle time on our hands, we can get into other people's business, creating mischief. When you have nothing to do, what do you do?
- Help For the Needy (Discussion).** ,  Ask the students if they have seen people who stand by the side of the road with “Will work for food” signs. When we see people that are needy, what should we do? Many people call the church each week for financial help. How do we help them? Unfortunately most of our calls from the community come from people we don't know. Many of them know that churches help poor people, and they try to take advantage of them. When people call, we try to figure out if their need is real or not. The Bible says, “He who will not work, should not eat.” We never give money to someone we don't know, but very often we give food coupons. We try to find out if they are working or not. We try to get them plugged into our church and have them join a small group. Most people don't want to do that. For those people in our church who have a hard time financially, we have a special fund to help them if they lose their job or unexpected problems come up.


 **Work Makes Us Strong (Object Lesson/Discussion).** 🐛, 🦋 Bring in barbells (or other weights), pictures of “strong men”, and books about muscles and how they work. Allow those students who would like to try lifting the weight to try it (be sure to supervise). Ask the students how we keep our muscles strong, if lifting weights is hard work, and what other types of work help our muscles stay strong. Point out that any use of our muscles keeps them strong and healthy and that God created our bodies to work. If we don’t work, we become lazy and our bodies become unhealthy.

 **Will Work for Food (Role-Play/Discussion).** 🐛, 🦋 Preparation needed: Prior to class, make a sign out of cardboard that says, “Will work for food” or “Homeless, anything will help, God bless”. Wear old looking dirty clothes. Be sitting on the floor of the room, and as each student enters, ask if they would help. If they offer you a job, decline and make up some sort of reason. After all students are in the room, ask if any of them have seen anyone who was asking for help. What did they think? Ask if they ever wondered whether the people could get a job if they tried. Have any of their families ever had to rely on others to make ends meet? Be sensitive to any of the students who may have been in this situation so that they are not looked down upon. Talk about how we must all work or we will not eat or have shelter. If we can help other believers who are legitimately in need of help we should do so. But for those who are just lazy, we should admonish them and encourage them to be diligent in their efforts to find work.



Book:

Presentation Ideas –

 **Sluggard Teacher (Role-Play).** 🐛, 🦋 Discuss with the students just what it means to work to the glory of God by first demonstrating the work of a sluggard which yields no glory to God at all. Prepare a role-play which will convince the students that the teacher is not ready for the lesson, and then proceed to “wing it” through the beginning of the lesson. When you are sure that the students are plenty embarrassed for your slothful and foolish ways, begin a discussion with the students that explores the kinds of things that were communicated to the students in such a lesson shot from the hip. Ask if there was any glory involved in this lesson. With careful preparation, the teacher should be a total disgrace so that no glory is evident anywhere. Then ask what it would look like if a teacher worked to the glory of God when preparing his lesson. Be sure to include enough time to really teach the lesson.

 **Hard-Working Men (Illustration/Coloring Page).** 🐛, 🦋 2 Thessalonians 3:8, 2TH03.GF1.

 **Lazy Man (Illustration/Coloring Page).** 🐛, 🦋 2 Thessalonians 3:11, 2TH03.GF2.

Bible Adventure for K-2nd Grades –

Paul had devoted much energy and prayer to the Thessalonian church. He loved them dearly and was delighted to see their faith in God and their love for one another grow and grow. He wrote the letters of 1 and 2 Thessalonians to encourage them and challenge them to rely on the Holy Spirit’s power to endure under very difficult trials and persecutions. He gave them hope that Jesus Christ would indeed return and gather them up to live with Him forever. Then He would punish those who had rejected God and had caused the Thessalonians such trouble and pain.

However, just because Paul loved the Thessalonians dearly did not mean he only told them things that made them feel good. If they were incorrect in their thinking, or persistent in sin, Paul did not hesitate to rebuke them and bring them back to the truth of God. You know all about this from personal experience. It is out of deep love that your parents discipline you and do not let you continue in your sinful behavior. It was the same with the Apostle Paul and the Thessalonians.

The sin that some of the Thessalonians were involved in was using waiting for Christ’s return as an excuse for laziness (another word for laziness is idleness). Paul said in 2 Thessalonians 3:11, “We hear that some among you are idle. They are not busy; they are busybodies.” Now Paul had told them that Christ would return and His return would be unexpected, but he certainly did not mean that people should just quit their jobs and simply wait around for Christ to come back. Paul let them know that it is God’s

design that we work for the food we eat and the things we need to live. These people who were not working were running out of money for food. The other believers around them thought perhaps they should go ahead and give these poor men food. But that presented a problem—why should one man work hard for his food and another man do nothing and still get fed? Paul made it absolutely clear, “If a man will not work, he shall not eat” (3:10).

The fact that some of these men were being lazy led to other sin. Because they had lots of free time on their hands, they started going around and getting into other people’s business. They stirred up a great deal of trouble meddling where they didn’t belong. That is why Paul referred to them as “busybodies.” Paul would not tolerate their behavior and gave some very serious and important instruction: “Keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us” (3:6). Paul wanted these lazy men to be ashamed of their idleness. That is why he instructed other Christians to warn them and not associate with them in their sin. Paul himself went out of his way to set an example of working hard so as not to be a burden to others. “For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone’s food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you” (3:7-8).

We can see clearly from Paul’s letter to the Thessalonians that while we look forward to Christ’s return, we are to work hard as God has designed us to do. We are to be an example to the unbelieving world around us and not turn them away from the truth of the Gospel because we are lazy. And while we are working hard, we are not to be “busybodies” meddling in other people’s affairs and causing trouble. Start now, while you are young, learning how to be a hard worker. Don’t resent it when your parents give you chores to do because they are preparing you to be a hard working adult, doing everything for the glory of God. Then you will be an example to those who don’t know Jesus and they will be drawn to Him.

Bible Adventure for 3^d – 6th Grades –

Even though the apostle Paul was in Thessalonica only a short time, he was able to teach the new believers there some of the basic truths of Christianity. One of these truths was the return of Christ for His church. This was an event Paul and the other believers looked forward to very much. They thought it would likely happen in their lifetime. After Paul left Thessalonica, the believers there went through a lot of suffering and persecution. This made them long to be with Jesus even more. Paul told them that God would be faithful and would protect them from the evil one. As time went on, some false teachers told them that they had missed Christ’s return and were in the middle of the Day of the Lord, a period when God would judge this sinful world. Of course, this upset these new Christians very much. Paul was able to reassure them in his second letter to the Thessalonians that they had not missed Christ’s return.

Because they thought that Christ’s return was very soon, another problem soon arose in the church. Some of the believers quit their jobs and stopped working, thinking that they would not be on the earth much longer, so they didn’t need to earn a living. Sometimes this was even a disguise for laziness. In the third and final chapter of 2 Thessalonians, Paul writes about this problem too.

Paul had told the Thessalonians that Jesus would return unexpectedly. Many of them thought this also meant in the very near future. They thought to themselves, “If Jesus is coming back so soon I’d better quit my job and make sure I’m ready to go when He comes.” This was not what Paul had in mind at all. No one was to just sit around and wait for Jesus’ return. More problems were caused by those believers who had this attitude. As time went by, the ones who were not working ran out of food. Those who were working felt they should give their hungry brothers some food, but then this brought up the question: Why should one man work hard for his food and another do nothing and still get fed?

There was another problem with these men who weren’t working. They had all kinds of extra time on their hands and did not use it wisely. They started going around and poking their noses into other people’s business and stirring up a lot of trouble. What do you think Paul told the Thessalonians to do about these troublemakers? He used some pretty strong words in 2 Thessalonians 3:6: “Keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the teaching you received from us.” We know from this that Paul had taught the Thessalonians that they needed to work hard while they were waiting for Christ’s return. When Paul was with them, he set an example for them by working to support himself. He didn’t ask any of the Thessalonians to house or feed him. Paul didn’t want any non-believers to see Christians being lazy or causing problems. When he was with the Thessalonians he had told them, “If a man will not work, he shall not eat.” Notice Paul said those who “will not work.” He knew there were those who were injured or sick and were unable to work. The church was to tenderly care for such

people. But if a man was able to work and chose not to, they were not to provide food for him. That would only encourage the laziness. Paul said that “such people we urge in the LORD Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat.”

Jesus told His disciples that only God knows the exact hour and day when He would return. Because we have no way of knowing, God wants us to stay busy doing the things He asks us to do. He has a plan for each of us and, as Ephesians 3:10 says, we were “created in Christ to do good works.” If we all just sat around waiting for Christ to return, we wouldn’t be following God’s plan for us. Unbelievers would see us and wonder why we were not being responsible to care for ourselves and our families. We would be a burden to those who were working because they would have to care for us. Paul had the right idea, and he used this closing part of his letter to encourage his fellow believers to continue in what they were doing—spreading the Gospel and caring for one another.

Aim Questions:

1. **With what problems were the Thessalonians dealing?** *(False teaching about the return of Christ; people who would not work for their food.)*
2. **Why did some people think they didn’t need to work?** *(They thought Jesus was coming back so soon that they could stop working.)*
3. **What was their real motive?** *(They were lazy and looking for excuses to get out of work.)*
4. **How did these lazy people spend their time?** *(Meddling in other people’s business)*
5. **What did Paul say to do?** *(Stop spending time with them until they learn to work.)*
6. **How does God want us to live in light of His return?** *(He wants us to work hard and not burden others.)*



Look:



Who Really Needs Help? (Discussion/Activity). 🧑, 🦋 Ask the students to give some examples of people who need help. List them on the whiteboard. Then ask what kind of help these particular people need. Their needs may be financial, spiritual, medical, or physical. Has laziness contributed to any of these people’s situation? Ask what work the students can do to help these people. Have the students draw a picture of themselves working to help one of these people.



Yurt Circle Burdens (Activity/Object Lesson). 🧑, 🦋 You will need a long, soft, clean rope. (A rock climbing rope is ideal.) Tie the rope in a square knot at its ends so that it is a circle. You may need to double the rope over to make the appropriate diameter for the size of the group. This activity will serve as an object lesson demonstrating that a team (or a local body of people) must each work and carry his or her own load, and that when even a single sluggard person slacks, the whole body is affected; others are forced to carry an unnecessary burden. **ACTIVITY:** Lay the rope down on the ground in a circle and have the students step up to the edge of the rope with their feet directly under their shoulders. Students then pick up the rope and hold it near their sternum with hands together, knuckles up. Have students slide back to make the rope taut. Instruct students to keep their body straight and rigid. On the count of three, all persons in the circle will lean back slowly at the same time. Everyone will be supported by the equally distributed weight. If it is not working, have the students adjust the position of their feet to cause balance. Now that the concept is understood, tell one of the students to be a slacker and allow their body to go limp and bent. This will cause undue stress on that one section of the circle. Others will have to make exaggerated efforts to keep the circle in tact. After each effort to achieve a successful balance, debrief with the students what just happened and ask them what effect the sluggard had on the group. Before you introduce the sluggard in the circle, many adjustments will already be necessary to make the yurt circle work. Use this time to encourage and establish teamwork. A successful yurt circle is fun. The burden of each other’s weight, when balanced, will become a joy. Liken this activity to real burdens in the church community. Ask the students how they can bear one another’s burdens. To vary the activity, you may appoint several sluggards to go limp and see if the rest are able to support them. As long as bodies are straight and rigid, a yurt circle can even have every other person leaning into the middle instead of leaning out. Another activity with the rope is to see if the students can manipulate the rope from the floor at their heels, all the way over them and back down to the floor at their toes without using their hands or arms.




- Small Group Response (Skits).** 🐜, 🦋 Allow each small group time to discuss today's lesson about work. What is work ethic? What is the opposite of this diligent kind of work? Have the students in each small group develop a skit to contrast this work ethic with laziness. Encourage creativity. Provide time in the big group to perform these skits, or have a single teacher circulate through all the small groups with a video camera to record each skit and show them next Sunday.
 - Memory Verse Challenge (Memory Verse Activity).** 🐜, 🦋 Have the students unscramble the words in the box and fit them in the spaces to complete 2Thessalonians 3:3 NIV. Encourage the students to look up the verse in their Bibles, **2TH03.GF3**. (*Answers: strengthen, He will, evil one, protect, the Lord, faithful.*)
 - Aim Questions (Worksheet).** 🐜 Have the students answer the Aim Questions about today's Bible Adventure, **2TH03.GF4**.
 - Passage Review Questions (Worksheet).** 🐜, 🦋 This booklet contains many questions from the Scripture passage covered in today's lesson. Students may work on them in class and complete them during the week at home, **2TH03.GF5**.
 - 2 Thessalonians 3:3 (Memory Verse Song).** 🐜 Words and music for today's memory verse are available upon request from Children's Ministry.
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Took:

- How Do I Spend My Time? (Take-Home Page).** 🐜, 🦋 Send **2TH03.GF6** home with your students and have them keep track of how they spend the time they have this next week. If nothing else, it might help some of the older students to see the wasted time they have in their day. What if Jesus returns this week? What will He catch us doing? Will He find us working hard at the jobs He has given us, minding our own business, or will He find a "lazy-bones" who is more interested in what everyone else is doing.
- Earn Your Keep (Game).** 🐜, 🦋 Each table group will need:
 - 2TH03.GF7** copied onto cardstock
 - game markers for each student
 - 1 die or game spinner

Have the students place their markers in the starting square. Have them each roll the die and travel around the game board following the instructions in the square in which they land. They must reach the finish line on an exact roll, teaching them again that they have to work hard to earn their keep. This game may be sent home as a reminder that we as Christians need to work diligently until Christ's return.
- What Would My Resume Say? (Worksheet).** 🐜, 🦋 Bring in pictures of people doing work. You may wish to make a large collage by having each student paste a picture onto a large piece of butcher paper in front of the class. While they are doing this, they can talk about what each of the people are doing in the pictures. Examples of pictures: fireman, fisherman, nurse, doctor, mechanic, secretary, etc. Ask the students what type of work their parents do. Ask them what they would like to do when they grow up. Use **2TH03.GF8** also for them to place their own option for future employment. Talk about what the Bible says about work. See Proverbs 13:4, Proverbs 28:19, 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, 1 Timothy 5:8, 1 Timothy 6:1-2, and 2 Thessalonians 3:6. When they die and stand before God and explain to Him their life, what would they be able to say?
- Don't Be Idle (Activity).** 🐜, 🦋 At the close of this morning's lesson it would be most appropriate if your entire class went outside and pulled weeds, picked up trash, swept sidewalks, etc., around the church. Bring your own tools for this activity. Check with the church office to see if anything specific needs to be done. If it is raining you could clean the restrooms.

 **Thanks For Working Hard! (Craft).**   Have the students make a thank-you card for a parent or grandparent who works hard to provide for them. Their expression of thanks will be a special treat for them. Supply the students with assorted materials to make and decorate these cards.

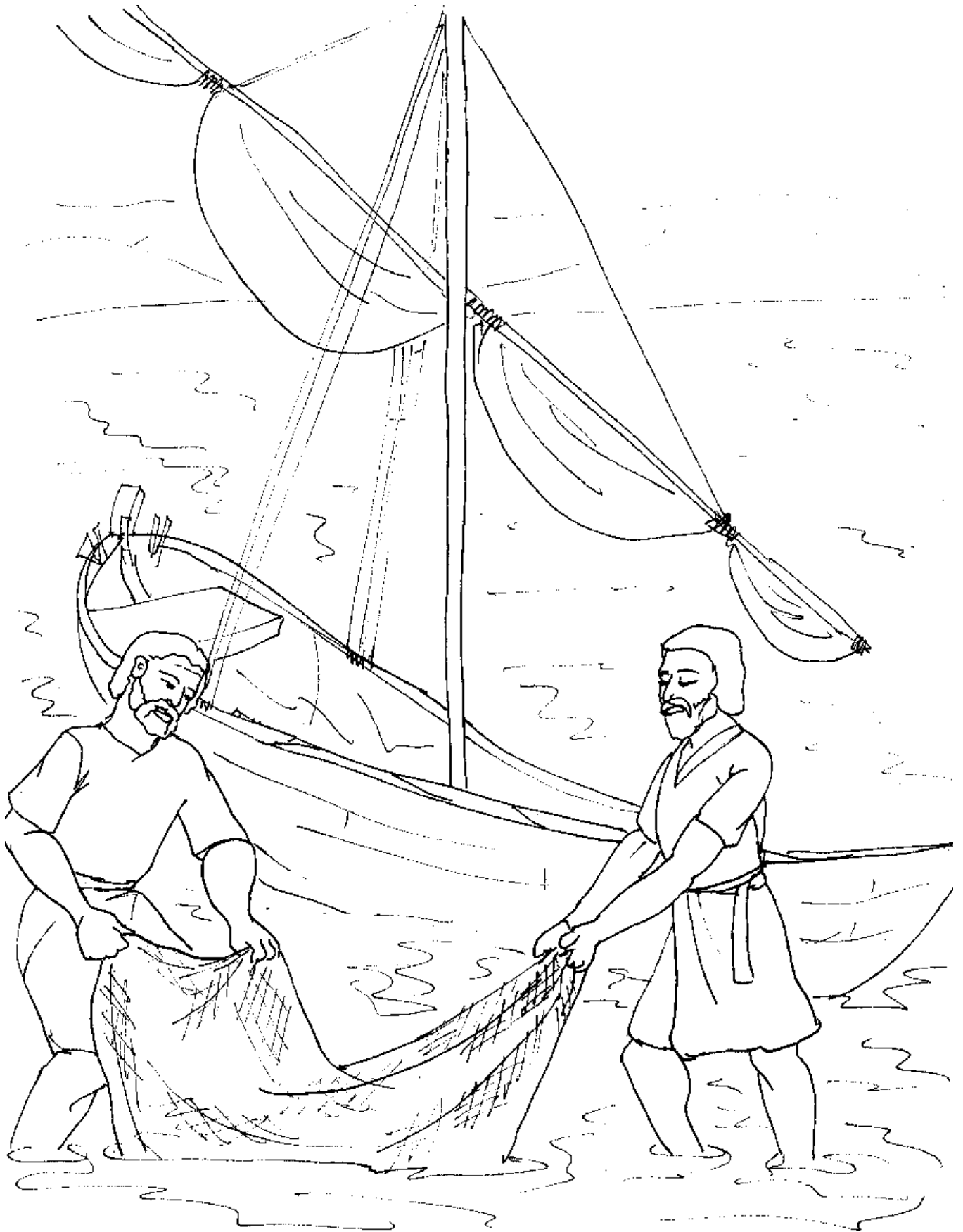
 **If I Won't Work, I Won't Eat! (Take-Home Page).**   Copy **2TH03.GF9** for each student. This should be discussed with the students, but handed to and discussed with the parents. The take-home page has tasks to be completed daily and to the parents' satisfaction. There is a space left for them to develop their own option also. Discuss with the students how some of the Thessalonians had quit working and were becoming a burden on others for support. They mistakenly thought that Christ would return so soon that they didn't need or want to work. Ask the students the following questions:

1. Have you ever refused to work or do things that you are asked to do by your parents?
2. What would happen if you didn't get fed anything, not even a snack, until your work was done?
3. How would you feel if you knew other people, like your family, were enjoying a nice meal but you weren't allowed to eat with them until all of your work was done?
4. Would you get your work done?

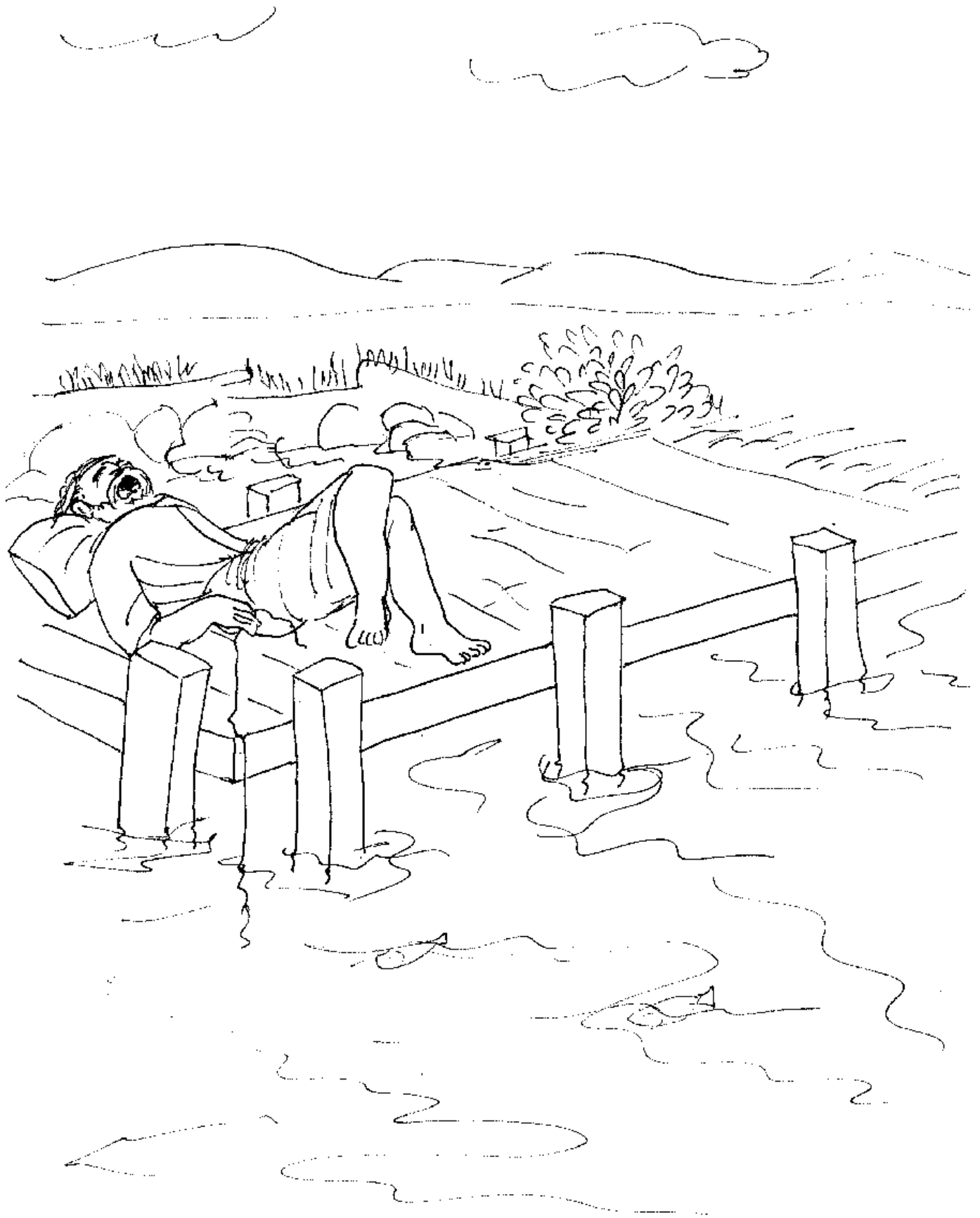
Have the students talk to their parents about today's Bible lesson and ask them to help them in the following areas:

1. Have them tell their parents that it is very important that they not become weak and pity them when they are hungry and begin to whine and make excuses for not getting their work done.
2. Have them ask their parents to be like Paul and stand firm and not submit until they have met their obligations for the day.
3. Have the students tell their parents how they want to become more like Christ and that with their parents' insistence in this, it will be of great benefit to them in the future.

Hard-Working Men



Lazy Man

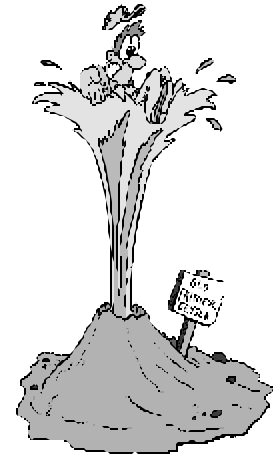


Memory Verse Challenge

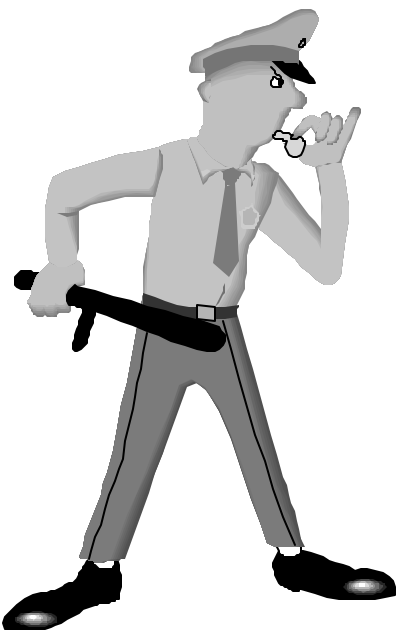


Unscramble the words in the box below and fit them in the spaces where they belong. If you need help, look up the verse in your Bible.

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eH lwil	-----
ivel neo	-----
ctetrop	-----
het Lrod	-----
tahiluff	-----



2 Thessalonians 3:3 NIV



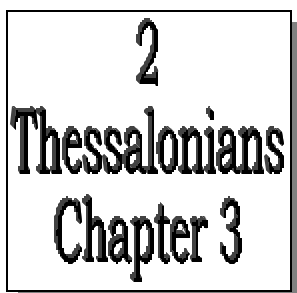
“But _____ is
 _____, and _____
 _____ and _____
 you from the _____.”

Aim Questions

Answer the following questions about today's Bible Adventure.

1. With what problems were the Thessalonians dealing?
2. Why did some people think they didn't need to work?
3. What was their real motive?
4. How did these lazy people spend their time?
5. What did Paul say to do?
6. How does God want us to live in light of His return?

God created us to be workers. Ask Him to help you find work to do. Then do it to the best of your ability-and with a good attitude! You will be amazed at how great you will feel. It will help keep you out of trouble and bring glory to God!



"But the Lord is faithful and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one."

2 Thessalonians 3:3

Passage Review Questions

2 Thessalonians 3

What does Paul ask the Thessalonians to pray for? (3:1)

What did Paul ask the Thessalonians to pray that they be protected from?
(3:2)

Who does Paul say is unfaithful, and who does he say is faithful? (3:2-3)

Who does Paul have confidence in? (3:4)

What two things does Paul say will direct the Thessalonians hearts as they
continue in this life? (3:5)

What does Paul command the Thessalonians to do? (3:6)

According to Paul, whose example did the Thessalonians have to follow?

(3:7)

What two things did Paul not do while with the Thessalonians? (3:7-8)

In contrast to the above question, what did Paul do? (3:8)

Give two reasons why Paul worked so hard while he was with the Thessalonians? (3:8-9)

What rule did Paul give to the Thessalonians ? (3:10)

What was Paul confronting them on? (3:11)

What did he say idleness leads to? (3:11)

What was Paul's command to these people who were being idle and becoming busybodies (gossipers)? (3:12)

What did Paul say to encourage/exhort the believers at Thessalonica? (3:13)

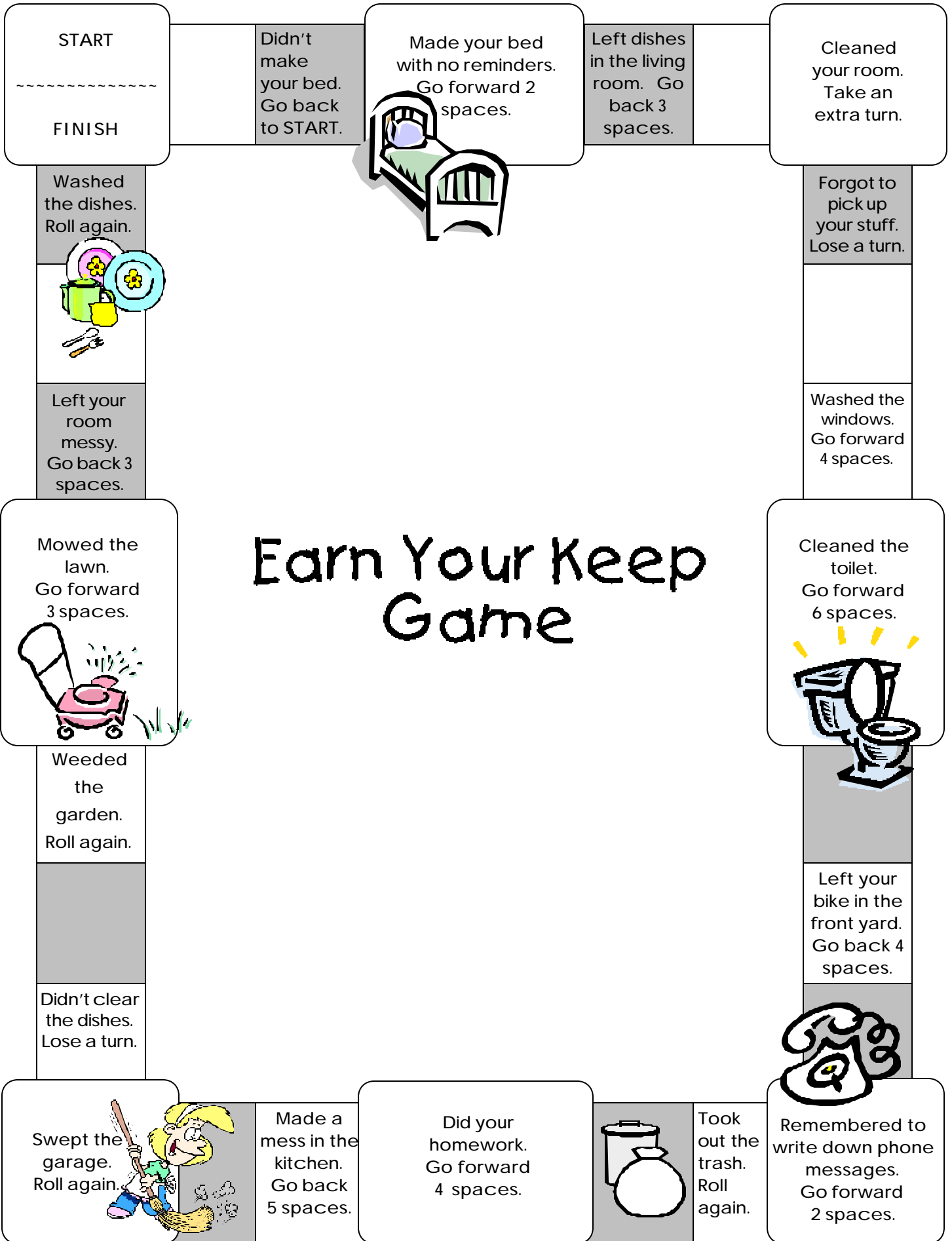
How does Paul say to treat believers who are not obeying the truth of God's Word? (3:14-15)

How does Paul encourage them in verse 16? (3:16)

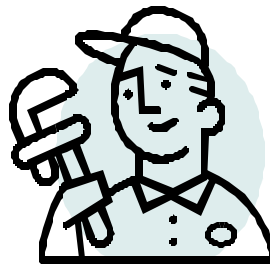
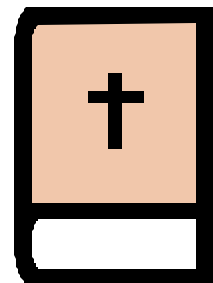
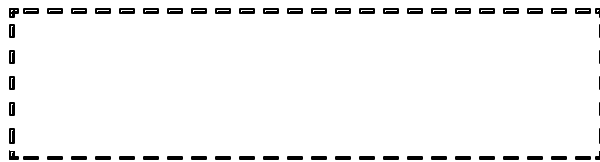
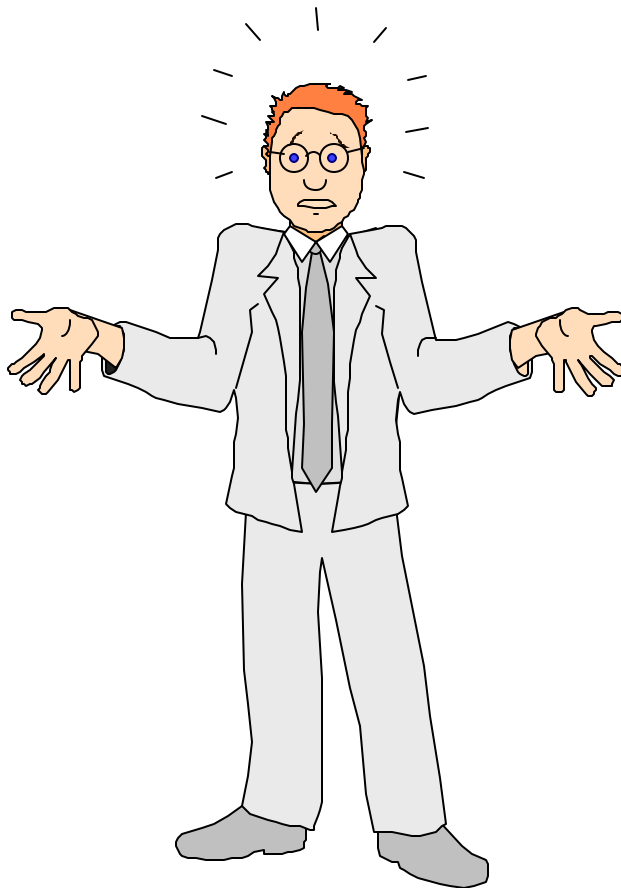
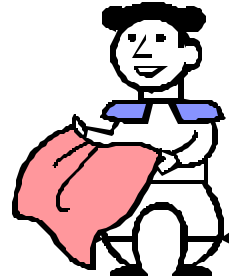
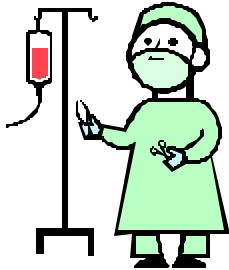
What personal touch does Paul add to the end of this letter? (3:17-18)

How Did I Spend My Time This Week?

	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
7-9 AM							
9-11 AM							
11 AM - 1 PM							
1-3 PM							
3-5 PM							
5-7 PM							
7-9 PM							
9-11 PM							
Majority of time was spent doing...							



What will my resume say?



If I Won't Work, I Won't Eat!



Work to be done	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Clean my Room							
Sweep and Vacuum the Floor							
Take out the Garbage							
Set the Table							