

**Worship Material**  
**How to live now**  
**Material from Roots Bible Study**  
**Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> November**

**Begin with an opening prayer**

Father, as we come before you now,  
draw us closer,  
lead us deeper,  
challenge us more  
and equip us to live for you now,  
wherever you send us.

**Read 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13**

**Bible notes**

One of the consequences of the rumour that the day of the Lord has already arrived (2 Thessalonians 2:2) is that some of Christ's followers are breaking with the church's orderly life by opting to live *ataktws* (v.6). The NRSV translates this as 'in idleness', which suggests that these believers see working for a living as a mundane distraction from more glorious, heavenly experiences of the salvation that has now arrived. Surely, they would say, there are enough wealthy people in the church to support those who use all their time to witness to the arrival of God's salvation! Other versions read *ataktws* as meaning 'in a disorderly way': an unruly way of life disrupts the church's orderly living by showing undue interest in other people's business. Either way, the rumour unsettles the church's well-being.

Paul sees himself and his co-workers as models of how to live faithful, Christ-like lives by refusing to be a burden to others – though Paul believes that he could have claimed financial support from a church he founded (v.9; cf 1 Corinthians 9:8-14). Those who are living idle or disorderly lives are being drawn away from traditional apostolic teaching into the realms of what we might call today 'fake truth'. Hence Paul's sharp reminder: 'anyone unwilling to work should not eat' (v.10; similar sayings are found in Proverbs 6:6-9, 12:27, 18:9, 21:25). This is a specific address to misguided believers in his own day, not a general rule for those who are unemployed or destitute through no fault of their own. In the Early Church, widows came into this category. Paul was

quite clear that older widows should be able to rely on the church to support them, while younger widows should re-marry in accordance with Roman law (1 Timothy 5:9ff). Rather than being a burden, Paul insists that all believers should invest their energies in the church's good (v.13).

### Prayer

Infinite God, we give thanks and praise that we can glimpse you in the beauty of the Temple or church,  
in the glitz, sparkle and beauty of fine things.

Thank you that we can be transported in our minds by your Holy Spirit to see beyond this moment and this place, to see your purpose and meaning, to know your desires for us.

Thank you that we can see you in the midst of confusion and anguish, when your Spirit lights the way and calms our fears.

Thank you that we can know you in rest and in busyness, in work and play, in solitude and community.

Thank you for helping us to know how we should live now, to the glory of your great name.

**Amen.**

### A prayer to conclude

*Say this facing and calling to each other:*

Send us out to be your eyes and ears: **Now!**

Send us out to be your hands and feet: **Now!**

Send us to work and not to shirk: **Now!**

Send us out to live and love for you: **Now and always!**

**Amen.**