

(Bible used = NIV 1984 translation)

Way in: Christian leaders sometimes speak of ‘the 80/20 principle’ to indicate that 20% of the people do 80% of the work and giving. What reasons can you think of for why a person might choose to be part of the 80%?

Read 2 Thessalonians 3: 1 - 18

Question 1. Notice that the great evangelist, preacher and apostle Paul recognises that even he needs the Thessalonians to pray for him (verse 1). Also (verse 2) that he anticipates that ‘the devil’ will be working against him.

- a. What role do we have in supporting (1) our church leadership (2) the ‘outreach’ of our church?
- b. Do you have any experience of ‘the devil’ interrupting any works you have been involved in? How was this overcome?

Question 2. Here are some modern situations, (1) An adult child has moved back home to live with mum and dad in order to reduce expenses. (2) A homeless person begging for your spare change. (3) A co-worker who consistently shirks his/her responsibility on joint projects?

- a. Which of the above seems most similar to the situation Paul describes in the Thessalonian church? And why?
- b. Many people today want to work but are unemployed through no fault of their own. Are they the ‘idle’ people whom Paul was writing about?

Question 3. ‘Being busy all the time’ isn’t of itself a good thing. What matters is that we should be doing what God wants us to be doing – neither more or less’.

- a. Do you think this statement is true?
- b. If everyone in the church is currently very busy, how does the church take on any new work God might be calling us to do?

Question 4. ‘Waiting for Jesus to return, and busy doing useful work for God’.

- a. Does this description sum up your individual life?
- b. Does it sum up the life of our church?

Question 5. Verses 14 & 15.

- a. How, in practice in our church today, would you respond or work through the situation described.