

# Speaking to the soul



## Daily work

**Make it your goal to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we instructed you before. Then people who are not believers will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others. 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12**

These are fascinating verses. Paul urged his hearers to strive eagerly to live quiet lives. The Greek literally means “seek restlessly to be still”! What on earth was he getting at? I believe he was saying that he wanted the Thessalonian Christians to have a quiet confidence as they threw themselves enthusiastically into their daily work. He wanted them to find peace in getting on with doing whatever the Lord had called them to do. It is clear that some people in the church had given up their jobs because they believed that the Lord might return at any moment. Paul was not at all happy with this. He urged them to get on with their work. He referred to them working with their hands, which suggests that the church was made up of slaves and manual labourers. The Greeks despised such work, but Paul was keen that they should know that if this was what God had called them to do, then they should put their hearts into it.

It's very tempting to look down on our work. We see other people doing things that seem so much more significant and possibly much more interesting than what we do. Or perhaps we pine for our next holiday or the time when we can retire and leave it all behind us. Paul would encourage us to see the importance of whatever God has called us to do, and to be fully committed to it. He gave two reasons why this was important. Firstly, if we work hard we will gain the respect of those around us, and that will cause them to look to the God who inspires work. But secondly, through working hard, Paul says we will not be a burden on others. Clearly in Thessalonica there were those who were sponging off others, as they awaited the return of the Lord. The apostle was not happy with this and urged them to get

to work. We all need to thank God for the gift of our daily work and to do it in a way that will glorify him.

## **QUESTION**

How do you view your daily work?

## **PRAYER**

Lord God, thank you for the work that you have called me to do. Help me to give my full self to it. Amen

