



## Carstairs-Bancroft United Church

March 10, 2021

**DAILY ENCOURAGEMENT  
DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

**By Rev. Maria Szabo Berces**



Source: Our Daily Bread

Beloved Carstairs Bancroft United Church Members,

With the weather is getting warmer and warmer, more and more of us are inspired to get outside. As we do this, we have an opportunity to observe not only the beautiful landscape around us, but we might notice animals and birds getting ready for the spring as well. I saw that the magpies in our neighbourhood were collecting branches and searching in the leaves that the trees left behind from last fall, who knows for what...

Of course, the magpies are not that shocked by our human presence as the badger was, interrupted by David's jabbing. I found the attached photo really cute, but I am sure the two men had a good reason to run from the revenge of that upset wild animal.

This funny story reveals a clear cause and effect situation. Unfortunately, sometimes, we can't recognize similar clarity in our human relationships. There can be a fine line between being loving and caring, or meddling into someone's business.

It's interesting that what Apostle Paul writes to the Thessalonians sounds quite opposite. On one hand, he says: **"Yet we urge you, brothers and sisters, to do so more and more ..."** on the other hand Paul asks them **"to make it your ambition to lead a quiet life ..."** (1 Thessalonians 4:10-11) We have to know the background situation for this seemingly contradictory statement.

William Barclay explains it in his Daily Study Bible: "Many of the Thessalonians had given up their daily work and were standing about in excited groups, upsetting themselves and everybody else, while they waited for the Second Coming to arrive. Ordinary life had been disrupted; the problem of making a living had been abandoned; and Paul's advice was pre-eminently practical. He told them that

- The thought that Christ will some day come, that life as we know it will end, is not a reason for stopping work; it is a reason for working all the harder and more faithfully.
- When we Christians show that our Christianity makes us better workmen, truer friends, kinder men and women, then we are really preaching. The outside world may never come into church to hear a sermon but it sees us every day outside church; and it is our lives which must be the sermons to win men for Christ.
- ... they must aim at independence and never become spongers on charity. (while being able to care for those, who "through no fault of their own, cannot attain that independence") (<https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/dsb/1-thessalonians-4.html>)

From Paul's words, and Barclay's explanation we can gain the understanding that *"minding our own business"* implies that we **"bear much fruit"** while following the example of the **"true vine"**, Jesus. (John 15) So, let's ask the wisdom from God to gently love and care without "meddling in other people's business".

Grace and Peace to You All,

Rev. Maria



## Minding My Own Business

*Mind your own business and work with your hands.*

1 Thessalonians 4:11

### READ 1 THESSALONIANS 4:9-12

Years ago, my son Josh and I were making our way up a mountain trail when we spied a cloud of dust rising in the air. We crept forward and discovered a badger busy making a den in a dirt bank. He had his head and shoulders in the hole and was vigorously digging with his front paws and kicking the dirt out of the hole with his hind feet. He was so invested in his work he didn't hear us.

I couldn't resist and prodded him from behind with a long stick lying nearby. I didn't hurt the badger, but he leaped straight up in the air and turned toward us. Josh and I set new world records for the hundred-yard dash.

I learned something from my brashness: Sometimes it's best not to poke around in other people's business. That's especially true in relationships with fellow believers in Jesus. The apostle Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to "make it your ambition to lead a quiet life: You should mind your own business and work with your hands" (1 Thessalonians 4:11). We're to pray for others and seek by God's grace to share the Scriptures, and occasionally we may be called to offer a gentle word of correction. But learning to live a quiet life and not meddling into others' lives is important. It becomes an example to those who are now outside God's family (v. 12). Our calling is to "love each other" (v. 9). – By **David H. Roper**

### REFLECT & PRAY

**God, teach me to know what it means to love others better. Amen.**

What happens when you meddle in other people's business? What's the first thing you should do instead for others?

### SCRIPTURE INSIGHT

The church at Thessalonica, imperfect like all human organizations, was nevertheless one of the premier congregations in the New Testament. Established by Paul, Silas, and Timothy (Acts 16:1-5; 17:1-3), this church quickly became a hub of missionary activity—in part because of the profound witness the Thessalonians presented of the transforming power of the gospel. Paul applauds this transformation in the opening verses of this letter, where he says that their witness had reached throughout their land: "They tell how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thessalonians 1:9). In a first-century Greek culture that proliferated with idols, their turning away from them speaks of dramatic change—turning away from dead idols of wood and stone to the God who is not only living but life-giving to all who trust Him. From idolatry to a living faith in the living God, the Thessalonians displayed true transformation. – By **Bill Crowder**

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