

June 11, 2017

“Stand Firm and Hold Fast”

Focal Passage: 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17
(NASB)

Cross References: 1 Corinthians 1:20-31; 11:1-2; 16:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; Ephesians 1:4-23; 1 Peter 1:3-9

Lesson Idea: We need to stand firm and hold fast to the Word of God.

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

June 4 Job 11-13	June 5 Job 14-16
June 6 Job 17-20	June 7 Job 21-23
June 8 Job 24-28	June 9 Job 29-31
June 10 Job 32-34	June 11 Job 35-37

Background:

Paul thanks the Lord for the Thessalonians and for the blessings they had received from the Lord through salvation. This passage reminds us to celebrate what we have received from the Lord and to stand firm in faith and truth.

From David Guzik, *2 Thessalonians*

But we are bound to give thanks: Paul repeats his idea from [2 Thessalonians 1:3](#), that he was obligated to thank God for His work in the Thessalonians, in light of the greatness of that work.

Brethren beloved by the Lord: Paul is first thankful that they are **beloved by the Lord**. God’s love for us is the primary motivation for all His work in and through us.

2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. 14 It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. 15 So then, brethren, stand firm and hold to the

traditions which you were taught, whether by word of mouth or by letter from us.

16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and good hope by grace, 17 comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word.

DISCUSSION:

- v 13. Why should we “always” thank God for our brothers and sisters in the Lord? What does “beloved by the Lord” mean in your life?
- For what has God chosen us? What is “sanctification,” and how does it come to us? (see Ephesians 1:4-23; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 1 Peter 1:3-9)
- v 14. How and why did God call us? How would you describe “the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ?” (see 1 Corinthians 1:20-31)

NOTE: from Guzik:

By the Spirit and belief in the truth: God’s work of sanctification uses two great forces, the Spirit and the belief in the truth. The Spirit of God and the word of God are essential to our sanctification.

To which He called you by our gospel: The call for this salvation comes through the gospel, the gospel Paul preached (we preach Christ crucified, 1 Corinthians 1:23), and the gospel that will enable us to obtain the glory of Jesus. . . **For the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ:** This is the same glory John wrote of in 1 John 3:2 - we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.

- v 15. How do you “stand firm?” (see 1 Corinthians 16:13) What does it mean to “hold to the traditions” you were taught? (see 1 Corinthians 11:1-2) When should we not hold to traditions?

NOTE: from Guzik:

Therefore, brethren, stand fast: Therefore means that Paul wants us to consider what he has written up to this point. In this letter, he has given

compelling reasons why Christians must stand fast and not be moved.

- Stand fast because the current distress (the persecutions and tribulations described in 2 Thessalonians 1:4).
- Stand fast because of the coming judgment of this world (in flaming fire taking vengeance, 2 Thessalonians 1:8).
- Stand fast because of the strength of coming deception (all power, signs, and lying wonders, 2 Thessalonians 2:9).
- Stand fast because of our glorious destiny (the glory of our Lord Jesus, 2 Thessalonians 2:14).

Stand fast and hold the traditions: The command to stand fast implies a location, and this tells us what they must stand fast upon. They must keep standing on God's word, delivered both by the authoritative word of the apostles (by word) and the letters of the apostles (our epistle).

Traditions: The Bible recognizes that traditions can be a dangerous feature of religious systems (Matthew 15:2-3) or the traditions of man (Colossians 2:8). But Paul has in mind the apostolic traditions preserved for us in the record of the New Testament.

"The word *paradoseis*, which we render tradition, signifies anything delivered in the way of teaching; and here most obviously means the doctrines delivered by the apostle to the Thessalonians; whether in his preaching, private conversation, or by these letters." (Clarke)

It is only this anchor of God's word that can enable us to stand fast under the weight of our present tribulation, and the weight of our coming glory.

- v 16. How does Paul connect Jesus Christ and God the Father? What have we received because of His love? How would you describe "grace?"
- v 17. What does Paul desire for God to do for the believers? How does comfort and strength from the Lord affect your works and words?

Comfort your hearts and establish you: Paul asked God to do two things in the Thessalonian Christians. First, he wanted God to comfort their hearts. Second, he asked God to establish them in every good word and work. This prayer for comfort and continued testimony and work for Jesus is fitting in light of the special needs of believers under pressure.

APPLICATION:

- ✓ What do you need to do to stand firm and hold fast to what you were taught?
- ✓ What would comfort and strength do for your heart today?

Lesson by Bro Stan

NOTE: from Guzik: