

# STANDING FIRM

Part Eleven: *proper living*

November 12, 2023

As Paul concludes his second letter to the Thessalonians, he speaks to them as a dedicated Christian and devoted pastor. He is done discussing prophecy and wants to share his top four desires for the new Christians in Thessalonica.

## **In 3:1-2, Paul tells the Thessalonians what he wants from them.**

Paul had a brilliant mind, and he was a gifted speaker. Still, he knew every aspect of his ministry had to be powered by God for him to have a supernatural impact on the world (Col. 1:29). So, Paul continually asked people everywhere he went to pray for him continually (Rom. 15:30-32; Eph. 6:19-20; Col. 4:3; 1 Thess. 5:25).

1<sup>st</sup> - Paul asked the church to keep praying for his missionary team's needs.

2<sup>nd</sup> - Paul asked the church to keep praying for the gospel to spread rapidly and be honored.

3<sup>rd</sup> - Paul asked the church to keep praying for the safety of his missionary team.

## **In Vs. 3-5, Paul tells the Thessalonians what he wants for them.**

1<sup>st</sup> - Paul wants the church to have faith in the Lord.

Paul tells the Thessalonians they do not need to live in fear because the Lord will give them strength and protect them from the evil one (2 Tim. 4:16-18).

2<sup>nd</sup> - Paul wants the church to be obedient to the Lord.

Paul tells the Thessalonians to continue to do the commands of Christ that he taught them (Matt. 28:20; Phil. 2:12-16).

3<sup>rd</sup> - Paul wants the church to grow in love and endurance.

The Greek word translated *lead* in Vs. 5 means "to clear a path by removing all obstacles." Paul wants the Lord to remove anything in the Thessalonians' hearts that hinders them from fully understanding and experiencing God's love and Jesus' endurance.

- Paul wants the Lord to help the Thessalonians see how much He loves them so they can fulfill the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:34-40; 1 John 4:19).
- Paul wants the Lord to help the Thessalonians see how Jesus endured trials and temptation so they can endure trials and temptation like Christ (Heb. 2:17-18; 4:14-16).

## **In Vs. 6-15, Paul tells the Thessalonians what he wants them to do.**

1<sup>st</sup> - Paul tells church members to separate from Christians who refuse to work. Vs. 6-10

In his first letter, Paul told the church to keep working until Jesus returned (1 Thess. 4:11-12; 5:14). Now, he is issuing a stern command in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to keep away from Christians who refuse to work. Paul followed his command from the Lord by reminding the Thessalonians that he, Silas, and Timothy gave them the proper example to follow (2 Thessalonians 3:7-10).

### *Why should you not feed a lazy person?*

- God wants and commands us to work (Gen. 2:15; Exodus 20:9; Psalm 104:14, 23).
- The Bible condemns laziness (Prov. 10:26; 12:27; 15:19; 24:30-34).
- God wants lazy people to be hungry (Prov. 16:26).

Paul is addressing the issue of those who are not willing to work – not those who cannot work. Christians have a responsibility to care for those who cannot work (Matt. 6:3-4; Gal. 2:10; 1 Tim. 5:3; Heb. 13:16; James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17).

2<sup>nd</sup> - Paul tells idle church members to quit being busybodies. Vs. 11-13

The idle in the church were not content with not working; they were using their off time to wander around bothering people who were working (1 Tim. 5:13). Paul commands these people to settle down and go to work. Then, in Vs. 13, Paul admonishes the faithful workers not to grow weary of doing good (Ga. 6:9). He gives this encouragement because he did not want the Thessalonians to become indifferent to people with real needs (Ps. 37:21, 26; 41:1; Prov. 28:27; Acts 20:35).

3<sup>rd</sup> - Paul tells working church members to warn the idle and lazy. Vs. 14-15

Since this was the third time Paul had dealt with this issue, he tells the church to take note of the idle and lazy people in the congregation and not fellowship with them. Their isolation was to produce repentance.

### ***Takeaways...***

1. We need to ask people to pray for us.
2. We need to examine our level of faith, obedience, love, and endurance.
3. We need to warn idle and lazy members and urge them to go to work.