

Further up, Further in

Resources for Continued Study



LOOKOUT
MOUNTAIN
Presbyterian Church

“PRAYERS TO STAND FIRM”

For individual study or group discussion

In a world of spiritual confusion and opposition, the Gospel of grace provides believers with a firm foundation. In 2 Thessalonians 2:13–3:5, Paul reminds us that through the Gospel of grace we are grounded in truth, gripped by the Word, and guided by prayer so that we may stand firm until Christ returns.

Grounds us in vital truths (vv. 2:13–14)

In contrast to the coming judgment on unbelievers (v.12), Paul reminds the Thessalonians that they are “*beloved by the Lord*” and chosen for salvation through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and belief in the truth. Their security rests not in circumstances but in God’s steadfast love and sovereign choice. John Stott observes: “*What is the ultimate secret of Christian stability? It is the love of God. Behind God’s election, call and gifts there lies a God of love. That God is love, that he has set his love upon us, that he loves us still, and that this love will never let us go, is the foundation not only of all reality, but of Christian confidence and Christian stability too. Our stability is not only impossible, but actually inconceivable, apart from the steadfastness of the love of God.*”¹

- Paul says God “*chose you*” (2:13). How does remembering that you are loved and chosen by God give you confidence in the face of trials and uncertainty?
- In your current situation, where are you most tempted to believe lies instead of holding fast to truth? How does the Spirit’s work of sanctification help you fight those lies? (cf. Romans 12:2; John 17:17)

Grips us to stand firm in the Word (vv. 2:15–17)

At the beginning of chapter 2, the Thessalonian believers were “*shaken in mind*” and “*alarmed*” by false teachings about the Day of the Lord (2:2). In today’s passage, Paul counters by urging them to, “*stand firm and hold to the traditions*” taught through the apostolic word, both spoken and written (2:15). Paul’s purpose in 2 Thessalonians 2 is not only to comfort the church but to encourage them to remain steadfast in the truth that they are eternally loved by the Father and the Son (2:16).

- In Exodus 14:13, Moses told Israel at the Red Sea, “*Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord.*” Discuss how the call to *stand firm* is a call to trust God’s truth more than our fears and shifting cultural voices.
- Reflect on the hymn *In Christ Alone*. The first stanza ends with the line, “*Here in the love of Christ I stand.*” Paul urges the Thessalonians believers to “*stand firm*” in the “*love of God*” and the “*steadfastness of Christ*” (2:15, 3:5). Share how Christ has been your “*Cornerstone*” and “*solid ground*” during difficult times.

Guides us in prayer and faithfulness (vv. 3:1–5)

Paul concludes by asking the Thessalonians to pray that the Word of the Lord would spread and that he and his companions would be delivered from opposition. He then assures them that “*the Lord is faithful*” (3:3). God will strengthen and guard his people from the evil one. As John Piper states, “*God remains the source and goal of all things, but he has chosen to make prayer the power that wields the weapon of his word. He himself remains the source to that power, but he grants to us the privilege and joy of being the instrument of his power in prayer.*”²

- Read John 17:15–18. How can Jesus’ prayer for his disciples shape the way we pray for one another to be protected from the evil one and to stay faithful in our mission?
- Read Ephesians 3:14–21. How has the Lord fulfilled his promise to establish you and guard you against the evil one? Where have you experienced his faithfulness in seasons of weakness and spiritual oppression?

DATE: November 9, 2025

SPEAKER: Chad/Brian

SERIES: 1&2 Thessalonians

PASSAGE: 2 Thessalonians 2:13–3:5

Family Dinner Table

The Life and Death Grip of Henry Dempsey

John Piper

In 1987, pilot Henry Dempsey was flying his 15-passenger Beechcraft 99 turboprop from Lewiston, Maine, to Boston when he heard an unusual noise near the rear stairs of the aircraft at about 4,000 feet. He handed control over to his copilot and went to investigate. Suddenly, the plane hit turbulence, slamming Dempsey against the rear door, which unexpectedly swung open. He was partially sucked out of the aircraft, falling face down onto the steps. In a desperate attempt to save himself, he managed to grab the railing and held on with every ounce of strength. Believing Dempsey had been swept out of the plane, the co-pilot immediately diverted to a nearby airport for an emergency landing. When the aircraft finally came to a stop, rescuers found Dempsey still clinging to the railing, his face just 12 inches from the runway. His grip was so tight that his fingers had to be pried open. That life-and-death grip with which Henry Dempsey clung to the stair railing mirrors the steadfastness Paul urges of the Thessalonians when he exhorts them to “*stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter*” (v. 15).³

- Read Ephesians 4:11–14. How can we, as believers today, develop the kind of steadfast grip on truth and our faith that keeps us from being “*blown about*” by false teachings? What practical habits, relationships, or disciplines help you hold firmly to what you’ve been taught in Christ?

³ Piper, John. *God Has Given Us Good Hope through Grace, Part 1*. September 6, 1987. [DesiringGod.org](https://www.desiringgod.org)

PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Covenant College,
denominational partner ministry

PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

Peter and Joanna Vaughn, *country*
directors for Amani ya Juu

¹ Stott, John. *The Message of 1 & 2 Thessalonians*. 1991, Downers Grove, IL. IVP. 180

² Piper, John. *The Power that Wields the Weapon*. January 13, 1985. [desiringgod.org. https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-power-that-wields-the-weapon](https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-power-that-wields-the-weapon)