

# Take Your Stand on God

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Sunday, August 25, 2024 ▪ Nat Porter

**A Believer's Personal** \_\_\_\_\_ :

**S:** \_\_\_\_\_ (2BS)

**C:** \_\_\_\_\_ (CBG)

**G:** \_\_\_\_\_ (D4G)

**L:** \_\_\_\_\_ (LBL)

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## ***2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:5***

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<sup>13</sup> But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth. <sup>14</sup> To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>15</sup> So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.

<sup>16</sup> Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, <sup>17</sup> comfort your hearts and establish them in every good work and word.

<sup>1</sup> Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you, <sup>2</sup> and that we may be delivered from wicked and evil men. For not all have faith. <sup>3</sup> But the Lord is faithful. He will establish you and guard you against the evil one. <sup>4</sup> And we have confidence in the Lord about you, that you are doing and will do the things that we command. <sup>5</sup> May the Lord direct your hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ. (ESV)

## ***Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions***

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**Open:** What are some ways people with different personality types tend to respond to and deal with stress, adversity, and conflict? How do you tend to respond, and why?

**Read & Discuss:** 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

1. In verse 13, Paul says, "*God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved.*" **Read Deut. 7:6-8; 1 Cor. 1:26-29, 1 Thes. 1:4-5.** From each of these passages, what can we learn about being chosen by God? How does knowing that you are chosen by God impact your daily life and faith?
2. Verse 14 indicates that God has called His chosen ones to "obtain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." How does 2 Thessalonians 1:9-12 help us envision what it means to share in the glory of Christ? (See also 2 Cor. 3:18, Rom. 8:29-30, 1 John 3:2.)
3. The "So then" in verse 15 points back to the previous verses (*either just verses 13-14 or perhaps all of verses 1-14*). How would Paul have intended these prior verses to provide motivation for the imperative to "stand firm" and "hold fast" in the midst of their current afflictions?
4. In practical terms what does it look like to "stand firm" or "hold fast" in regard to the biblical truths we have been taught? What are some reasons Christians might struggle or even fail to do this?

**Read & Discuss:** 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

5. Paul begins chapter 3 with a personal request for prayer. He probably could have requested prayer for a number of things, but only mentions a few. What do these indicate he considered most central and important in his life and ministry? What might it look like for you to pray this way yourself?
6. In verses 3-4 why is Paul able to be confident in a positive outcome for the Thessalonian believers, that they will be able to stand firm and hold fast to the things Paul has taught? How and when can we have such confidence in the things that we desire or pray for ourselves or others?
7. In verse 5 Paul asks the Lord to "direct [their] hearts to the love of God and to the steadfastness of Christ." How would you put this desire in your own words? How would this relate to being able to stand firm in the midst of affliction?

**Reflection:** This passage instructs believers to focus their attention on the decisive and sovereign work of God to save, sustain, and comfort His people as they seek to stand firm in the midst of difficulties, suffering, and affliction. What is God speaking to you personally about where to focus your attention in the midst of any challenging circumstances you are facing? What changes might that involve?

**Pray:** Ask the Lord to help you focus on what He has declared to be our firm foundation. Pray that God gives us the ability to exchange our present anxieties for confidence in Him.