

1st & 2nd

# THESSALONIANS

Stand Strong in the Lord!

**THIS MONTH'S THEME:**

**STAND STRONG IN THE LORD.**

**JANUARY MEMORY VERSE**

“Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.”

• **1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 NIV**

**JANUARY 26 - LIFE APPLICATION**

**A loving pastor encourages faithfulness in the church.**

## NOTE TO PARENTS

From January to Easter, we will be studying **1st and 2nd Thessalonians**, Paul's letters to the church in Thessalonica. After Paul was driven out of Thessalonica and was preaching in Berea and Corinth, he sent Timothy back to check on the churches, and he came back to report to Paul on how they were doing.

Paul was happy with Timothy's report that the church in Thessalonica was standing strong in the faith, no matter what. He wrote the letters to the church that we see in **1st and 2nd Thessalonians** to encourage them.

In this week's lesson, Paul is in Athens. He had sent Silas back to check on the church at Philippi, and he sent his beloved friend and confidant Timothy back to the church at Thessalonica to find out how it was doing. Paul had been only able to stay a few weeks during the festival, but saw the church established. He could not return to them because of threats to Thessalonian Christians that could have cost them their property and even their lives.

### Discuss 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13, Fanning the Flame

1. Read **verses 1-3**. **Why did Paul send Timothy back to Thessalonica?** *(He couldn't "bear it" any longer - he needed to know how the church in Thessalonica was doing. And he was willing to be left behind in Athens alone so that Timothy could go back and encourage the church.)* **Why did the Thessalonians need encouragement?** *(Because of their afflictions, particularly that they were being persecuted for their faith.)*
2. **In verses 4 and 5, of what did Paul remind the Thessalonians?** *(He reminded them that he had told them before that they were destined to suffer afflictions for following Jesus. Also, he wanted to send Timothy to be sure that Satan was not tempting them to be unfaithful because of their afflictions.)*
3. In **verses 6-8**, Timothy returned to Paul to report the good news that the Thessalonians were doing well, and that their faith and love were strong. Also, that they still had great love for Paul. **How did Paul feel when hearing this news?** *(This news comforted Paul in his pain and affliction, knowing that the Thessalonians were "standing fast in the Lord.")*
4. **In verse 9, why did Paul give thanksgiving to the Lord?** *(For all the joy he was feeling because of the Thessalonians' faithfulness and love.)*
5. **And in verse 10, what did Paul pray for night and day?** *(That he would be able to see the Thessalonians face to face and be able to teach them all)*

*they needed to know in person.)*

6. Read **verses 11-13**. Paul gave praise and thanks for the Thessalonian Christians. **What were his hopes for the Thessalonian church?**
  - That God the Father and the Lord Jesus would direct him back to be with the church.
  - That the Lord would make them increase in their love for one another and for the world, even those who are unbelievers and who persecuted them.
  - Finally, Paul prayed for them to be blameless and holy before the Lord, as He will return one day and we will stand before God to give an account for our lives.

### **A word from our pastor, David Chadwick:**

These verses show the heart of a pastor for his church. It shows the beauty of a church that's operating well even amid persecution in the culture. It is a model for pastors and churches alike as we walk through our own dark times in the contemporary culture.

### **FAMILY CHALLENGE**

Together, listen to the song **"Firm Foundation."** Talk about how Jesus is the firm foundation for our church and for our lives, no matter what happens. Ask your kids and family to think about things that have happened in their lives that were hard. **How can faith in Jesus help us to stand strong?**

### **How can our pastor and our church help us to remain faithful?**

Paul praised God for the faithfulness of the church, and he prayed for the church. What would Paul pray for us at Moments of Hope Church? To love one another and the world, and to be holy and blameless because we will all stand before the Lord one day. Our pastor prays all of these things for us, just as Paul prayed for the Thessalonian church!

### **PRAYER**

*Dear Jesus, Thank You for Paul's example. He loved the church so much! We thank you for our church and for our pastor and church leaders who also love us and pray for us. Help us to be strong in our faith and to love each other and the world. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.*