

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 19 - LIFE APPLICATION**

**Keep fanning the flame of faith.**

## NOTE TO PARENTS

During 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.

### Introduction from our pastor, David Chadwick:

"There's something special happening at MOHC. **We had 37 baptisms last week!** More and more people are giving their lives away in service to others. More and more generosity. **How can we fan the flame to keep it going?** Paul gives us the answer in these verses."

### Discuss 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20, Fanning the Flame

#### 4 ways our church can do this:

1. Always make God's word our ultimate authority. (Read **1 Thessalonians 2:13**) **Why was Paul thanking God continuously?** *(Because the church had believed the word of God as taught by Paul - that it is the word of God and not of man, and that they were living in obedience under its authority.)*
2. Stay strong in the suffering. (Read **verses 14-16**) Paul talks about the suffering that he (in his travels to preach the gospel), and the Jews in God's churches in Judea, had suffered because of their faith in Jesus. **What did he tell this church to do?** *(Be imitators of God's churches in Judea, staying strong in the suffering like they did)*
3. Know there is an enemy. (Read **verses 17 and 18**) **Who is the enemy?** *(Paul wanted to return to visit the churches in person and encourage them, but Satan prevented this from happening.)* **Why would Satan keep Paul from visiting the churches?** *(Discuss. To keep him from encouraging them, to keep them from sharing their testimonies with each other, and to Paul, to keep them from being strong together, etc.)* Satan desires to discourage us and hinder our faith, but God is in control and can use Satan's attempts to discourage us by using them to strengthen our faith in Him. For example, Paul wrote the letters to the Thessalonians because he could not visit them, but because of this, we and millions of people throughout the ages can read them now!

4. Keep our eyes on the prize. (Read **verses 19 and 20**). Paul wanted us to always remember that bringing people to faith in Jesus is always the most important thing we can do for Jesus. **What does Paul say about the Thessalonian church?** (Paul says that the Thessalonian Christians are his hope and joy and that he will boast about them when Jesus comes back!) **What do you think it means, that he will “boast” about them?** (He will “brag”/be proud of the fact that Jesus used him to bring them to faith in Jesus.) **What does Paul say about them in verse 20?** (They are his glory and joy.)

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

**What does all of this mean for our church?** That we need to keep our eyes on the prize! And the prize is always desiring to help other people come to faith in Jesus and the joy that comes from seeing them do so.

Paul talks about how the Thessalonians are his joy, crown, and glory. And, when we stand before the reward seat of Jesus after the rapture, **Jesus will reward all his followers, including Paul, for how they’ve helped other people come to faith in him.** Paul’s reward in heaven will largely be the people who have come to faith in Jesus because of his ministry. That includes all of us in the church, and we are to continue fanning the flame of the Holy Spirit’s life of bringing people to Jesus in the years to come.

### FAMILY CHALLENGE

1. **How do you think our church helps people grow strong in their faith?** (Discuss together. Some things to discuss: The preaching of the Word, music that inspires our faith, baptisms, Hope U, strong Hope Kids and Avodah ministries, Kids’ Talks, men’s and women’s Bible studies, Hope gifts that inspire us to give to help others, etc.)
2. **How can we serve together and “fan the flames of faith” as a family?** (Invite others to church and to some of the events like the preschool family events, Big Kids events, Hope U Family, etc.)
3. **How about outside of our church? How can we serve together?** One way would be to help with the events that are offered for our P2 community surrounding the church, or you could check out the ministries of City of Hope to see where your family could serve together. Also, parents and kids can serve together in several areas within the church. Just Go!

## **PRAYER**

*Dear Jesus, We thank You for Paul and his faith and also his love for the church. Please help our church to continue to grow strong and to bring more and more people to faith in you. We know that we need to be a part of helping people know You. Help us to serve You well and to continue to “fan the flame of faith.” In Your Name we pray, Amen.*