

## 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17

### Stand Fast

<sup>13</sup> But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, **brethren beloved by the Lord**, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, <sup>14</sup> to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>15</sup> Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

<sup>16</sup> Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, <sup>17</sup> comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.

**Baseball season is upon us: Boys and girls – all over playing baseball – Child or grand Child?**

A) One of the toughest pitches to hit in baseball is the curve ball.

B) If you are going to be a good hitter in baseball you have to learn to hang in there – curve ball.

C) Clayton Kershaw – strong believer – Arguably the best pitcher in baseball today 1.79 Era

D) Fastball clocks 92-98 mph!

1) Curveball – that 75 mph but it breaks 5 feet!

**So he starts off throwing a 95mph fastball – High and inside – batter pulls away**

A) Batter look – too close – Next pitch is a curve looks like coming at your head – Breaks 4-5 ft - strike –

B) Have to learn to Hang – to dig in stand fast and not Bail out -

If not – **rubber legs** – all over the Place

**Same is true on a spiritual perspective – spiritual stability is crucial**

A) **Spiritual instability** leads to disappointment, doubt, discouragement, and ineffective witness.

B) James described the person lacking spiritual stability as "*a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways*" (James 1:8).

C) Unstable people are often crushed by their trials

**Paul wrote to this Church in 1 Thess 3:8 – Now we live if you stand fast in the Lord**

A) When the trials come – when the curve balls of life come your way – STAND FAST in the Lord

B) Don't get discouraged – don't bail – Dig in and hang in there –

1) The best is still YET TO COME!

C) This is what Paul has been wanting the believers in Thessalonica to understand – best yet to come/ **why Prophecy**

**But a year or so after Paul left there – false teachers came into the church – Confused them.**

A) Message: Missed the rapture – they were in the tribulation – Reason for the intense persecution

B) Paul is writing to clear up the confusion – they were not in the tribulation /

1) They hadn't missed the rapture

C) Here is why: We saw in our last study here in Ch.2

Where Paul declared :

**D) The tribulation cannot happen until:**

1) The falling away comes first v.3

2) The Lawless one is revealed v.3-4

3) The one who restrains, Holy Spirit working in the Church is removed.

**Now Paul closes this section by describing what should be our Posture as believers living in these end times STAND FAST**

A) Paul begins by affirming their conversion -

<sup>13</sup> But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, **brethren beloved by the Lord**,

B) **Beloved by the Lord** – Beloved by Paul too- My heart – God smiles at you – **me too {rejoice**

1) New in the Lord – blessed by you

2) Been walking – not pretentious – love the word **honored to be your pastor**

<sup>13</sup> But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, **brethren beloved by the Lord**, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, <sup>14</sup> to which He called you by our

gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now in v.13-14 we have before us what has been called Christian Theology in Miniature

A) A mini – picture of Christian theology

- We were chosen by God V.13
- Drawn or Set apart [ sanctified] by the spirit
- Called according to the gospel V.14 – Good news of Jesus – Savior for sinners
- Required to believe. V.13
- For this purpose to be destined for glory! V.14

B) That in a nutshell is the Christian faith!

1) Chosen by God drawn by the Holy Spirit / presented with the gospel / required to respond / Result – Glory

C) Glorious truth and reality that we are destined for Heaven

That being the case what should be our Posture in the mean time – as we are left here in this crazy world? V.15

Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

Paul's word: Stand Fast –

A) Military term – Idea of digging in – Soldiers on front line.

B) Defending a Position – Stand your ground!

C) Question How do we stand fast? Answer that question today!

1) The exhortation to stand fast is found in several other places in the NT – breakdown today  
Start here in V. 15 –

#1 Stand Fast in the truth –

“Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.”

A) Paul has in mind the *apostolic traditions* preserved for us in the record of the New Testament.

B) Traditions speaks of God's word, delivered both by the teachings of the apostles (**by word**) and by the letters of the apostles (**our epistle**).

C) Hold = a tight grip – not a casual or careless hold

1) We might even call it a death grip!

D) Truths that ARE worth – DYING FOR!

Henry Dempsey was flying his 15-passenger turboprop plane from Lewiston Maine to Boston.

At 4,000 feet he heard a noise in the back of the plane where the rear stairs are. He turned the controls over to his co-pilot and walked to the back.

The plane hit turbulence knocked him against the door and it fell open.

Dempsey was sucked part way out, fell face down on the steps and grabbed for something -- anything that might save his life. He caught a railing and held on.

The co-pilot thought he had fallen out and diverted the flight to a nearby airport.

When he landed they found Dempsey with his face 12 inches off the runway and with his hands so tight around that rail that his fingers had to be pried open.

Listen that is the type of grip we need to have when it comes to the word of God – the teachings of the apostles that have been handed down

A) Christians today need to hear these words again. "Stand fast." – Ever changing culture

B) See If we detach ourselves from God's Word we are going to waver!

1) We are going to become unstable and confused about morality – Holiness – our place/ impact

C) So WE need a Death grip to the truths of scripture

1) Worth dying for!

Last week I shared the statistics that 57% of Americans believe that "Whatever is right for your life or works best for you is the only truth you need to know."

A) 38% of Elders believe that - compared to 74% of Millennials

B) I said that Elders represented those who were over 60 - I was wrong on that Elders are those over 70

1) Bought you 10yrs - worth coming to church today

Elders born before 1945

C) **Baby Boomers** Born 1946-1964  
**Gen X 1965-1976**

1) Gen Y - Millennials 1977-1995

Gen Z Centennials 1996...

But the sad statistic is that 57% of Americans no longer believe in the Absolute truth of Scripture.

A) Jesus told a Parable of two builders - Sand - Rock

B) Rock - One who hears the Word of God - believes it - puts it into practice.

1) The guy who built on the sand - Hears - but doesn't believe or doesn't put into practice

C) **When the storm comes** - Sand - house shifts and crumbles -

1) Rock - stands - because it was built upon the Rock of God's word.

D) One of the reasons our nation has shifted - more and more unstable - moved away from God's truth!

In order to **STAND FAST** As individual believers we must build our lives - on the truths of God's word

A) Not the ideas and beliefs of our ever changing culture.

B) Stand fast by holding a death grip - to the truths of scripture.

1) Even if it means - Uncool - don't fit in

C) Now That doesn't mean that we will lose our ability to **relate to our culture and reach the culture for JESUS.**

1) Which is often the Fear of the Millennial's and the centennial's Gen Y and Z

D) We are going to become too rigid - come across as unloving.

E) How do we avoid that?

#2 **Stand Fast in the Grace of God Galatians 5:1-2**

**Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.**

The believers in Galatia had started in Grace - **Grace = Getting what you don't deserve!**

A) We deserved God's wrath - we were shown His Kindness - Deserved Hell - Given Heaven

B) We embraced Christ - everything changed for us

C) The Galatian Christians - began that way - a work of God's Spirit in their hearts

1) Embraced the work of Christ - saved by grace through faith alone - not of works -

D) But now they were thinking that they were going to be made complete thru the efforts of the flesh

E) Thru following the rules & regulations of the law

1) Relying upon their performance instead of the performance of Jesus

**THE Big thing was circumcision - in order to be really saved - Grown men.....**

A) Paul stood fast in the truth Defending the truth of the Gospel - saved by grace thru faith - ALONE

B) PAUL was so passionate in his defense - he even said I wish those saying you have to be circumcised in order to be saved - **cut themselves off!**

C) Paul writes to these believers to **Stand fast - Stand firm - in the liberty thru Christ that set you free -**

1) Don't place yourselves under bondage again -

D) We can be in Bondage to sin - INTERESTING also bondage to religion

1) Rules - rituals - regulations

**Stand fast in Grace – Peter in 1 Peter 5:12 called it the Grace in which we stand**

A) It is the foundation of our relationship with God

**B) Trusting in the finished work of Christ**

1) Every blessing flows through that work of Jesus in our relationship to Him

C) Like a conduit through which water flows

**Basis of our relationship with God and the basis of our relationship with others**

A) See those who are lost – those who are still wrestling with sin

B) Not anger – compassion – Paul declared – **accept for the grace of God there go I!**

**John 1:14 is one of the most compelling descriptions of Jesus in the Bible –**

**And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. – John 1:14**

Full of – overflowing with/ Jesus was this perfect blending of Grace and truth!

**Jesus was Passionate about truth**

A) Two separate occasions - He cleansed the temple.

**B) Turned my fathers house – (which is supposed to be a house of prayer – people come to meet with God)**

1) You have turned it into a Den of thieves

C) He made a whip - Disciples wondering – what are you doing Jesus? – How long that take – 30 minutes

D) Jesus was Passionate about religious people NOT laying trips on people.

1) White washed tombs .... Coffin – looks good – but what is inside it – dead mans bones

**Jesus was Passionate about TRUTH  
Jesus was also passionate about grace**

A) John 4 – goes out of His way – Samaritan woman

B) JEWS avoided Samaria – outcast – tough journey through the mountains – Jesus goes there on purpose

1) Woman outcast – immoral – loose – shamed

**C) Even the Samaritans shunned her – drawing water from the well – hottest part of the day –**

1) Avoid the stares whispers and remarks of the other women.

D) Jesus goes out of His way – Shows her grace.

1) She can be saved.

**Jesus goes out of His way – Zacchaeus –**

A) Tax collector – traitor – worst of sinners

B) Jesus has lunch with him – Gets saved

C) What can we learn from Jesus – about living in a culture – **that is moving away from God?**

**Jesus stepped right into that culture – He dialoged with them – Showed love to people others avoided**

A) But He also shared the truth.

B) Interesting the order John gives – full of grace and truth – grace was first -

1) Can't effectively share truth until you have really experienced grace!

C) Jesus reached out to people lost in sin - befriended them – ate with them – went out of His way

1) He shared with people in bondage to sin that God loved them and they could be set free!

D) He lovingly challenged them to step out of their lifestyles and trust God to change / transform them

**Jesus showed grace to the woman caught in adultery**

A) Religious leaders – the LAW ..... STONE HER

B) Jesus addressed their hypocrisy – Full of themselves – lack of love – ignored own sins

**C) Woman where are your accusers ?**

1) Neither do I condemn you – GRACE

**D) But He didn't stop there – He calls her to repentance –**

**1) Go and sin no more**

**E) Once again the perfect blending of Grace and truth**

**Listen Church: We need to remember the grace God showed us – we are lost – self seeking – pleasure**

**A) Saved by grace – not works – not rules –**

**B) We need to remember that Sanctification is a process –**

**1) Things we struggled with – experienced victory over time – the more we surrendered to Jesus**

**C) Growth is ongoing – not over night**

**1) We are all still in the process!**

**That Simple grace in Jesus – We need to carry that same heart into our culture**

**A) Jesus loves people lost in sin – Drugs – Sex – Pleasure – Perversion – Homosexuality –**

**B) People who are confused about gender**

**1) We are not confused – we know truth**

**C) Satan blinds – people reject truth – conflicted inside**

**Jesus loves them – He wants us to be like Him willing to enter our culture – seek out in love**

**A) Be examples of the blending of grace and truth**

**#1 Stand fast in the Truth**

**#2 Stand fast in the Grace**

**#3 Stand fast in Unity**

**Philippians 1:27 “Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.”**

**Purpose of the gospel**

**One of the most exciting things to watch in football is goal line stands**

**A) When it is first and goal at the 3 yard line and the defense successfully holds off the other team from scoring on 4 straight downs**

**B) It is as nerve racking as it is exciting !**

**1) In order for that to happen – it takes 11 defense players who are focused / who are united –**

**C) They have one goal / one purpose**

**1) They are going to lock arms and make this happen**

**D) They are going to lock arms and bring it together**

**1) They have to put their personal differences aside / political differences – (IMAGINE) not standing next to him / their personal agenda's aside – their personal goals**

**E) Redwood trees - Oregon Coast** – Harsh winds – they survive – interlocking root system.

**1) Never see a Redwood by itself**

**The Church that is standing fast is going to be the same way:**

**A) Lock arms with one heart, one mind, one goal – THE PURPOSE OF THE GOSPEL**

**B) Represent Jesus and be on MISSION for His glory in this world.**

**1 Corinthians 15:58**

**Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.**

**1 Corinthians 15:58**

**C) In football one of the things they teach you about holding a line is to keep your legs moving & driving**

**Easier to get knocked down if you are standing still and flat footed**

**A) Same is true spiritually – When we are moving & active, always abounding in the work of the Lord**

**B) We keep the enemy off balance –**

**1) It is almost like he can't keep up with us**

**C) Focus of Paul's prayer – v.16-17**

**Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace,<sup>17</sup> comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work**

Word – Truth – Work – His grace – Established  
– moving together in that reality

**Stand Fast in - #1 Truth, #2 Grace, #3 Unity**  
**#4 Stand fast in God's power. Ephesians 6:10-14**

<sup>10</sup> Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. <sup>11</sup> Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. <sup>12</sup> For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. <sup>13</sup> Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand therefore.....  
Ephesians 6:10-14

**#4 Stand fast in the resources God provided**

A) His strength not our strength - His power not our power

B) Some Christians are wiped out – they are battling in their own strength –

C) God has given us everything we need to stand fast!

D) The power of the Holy Spirit in our hearts  
**The Armor of God is basically knowing what Christ has done for you – Your position in Christ**

A) Belt of truth - The truth of who Jesus is – who you are in Him – Know the truth ... Free –

**Set free by the truth**

B) Breastplate of righteousness – covers the heart

1) Truth – you have been Declared righteous

C) **You today – embrace Jesus – forgiven/guilt ...**

**2 Corinthians 5:21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. NIV**

A sinless Jesus was made sin filled so that sin filled people could be made sin free. – You today  
**Stand in that Reality**

C) Fiery dart of condemnation – Loser –

1) True but this is who I am in Christ

D) Helmet of Salvation - Covers the head

1) Knowing saved - Hope of Heaven – **Assurance**

E) Assurance – **Nothing can separate us from the Love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord**

1) He who began a good work .....

2) Never leave or forsake

**Feet covered – Peace –**

- Peace with God
- Peace within
- Peace with others

**Having on the Armor of God is being aware of your Spiritual assets and Your Destiny**

A) He who is for us is greater than He who is in the World

B) Don't fight for Victory but from Victory !

Listen if you are hear today – don't know Christ – feel like being beat up by the world –

Jesus is victory – power – Give Him your heart

Forgiven – guilt removed –

New start