

# Sermon Outline

## STANDING FIRM IN THE LORD ... | Geoff Lin

Readings: 17:1-15; 1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:13

Q. What do you worry about?

The Thessalonian story so far ...

### 1. What Paul worries about (2:17-3:5)

1 Thess 2:17 But, brothers and sisters, when we were orphaned by being separated from you for a short time (in person, not in thought), out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you. 18 For we wanted to come to you—certainly I, Paul, did, again and again—but Satan blocked our way. 19 For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you? 20 Indeed, you are our glory and joy.

Eph 6:12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

1 Thess 3:1 So when we could stand it no longer, we thought it best to be left by ourselves in Athens. 2 We sent Timothy, who is our brother and co-worker in God's service in spreading the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you in your faith, 3 so that no one would be unsettled by these trials. For you know quite well that we are destined for them. 4 In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know. 5 For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter had tempted you and that our labors might have been in vain.

Q. What are "these trials" to which Paul is referring?

- "our labours might have been **in vain**" (3:5) = "our visit to you was not **without results**" (2:1)

### 2. What brings Paul joy (3:6-10)

1 Thess 3:6 But Timothy has just now come to us from you and has brought good news about your faith and love. He has told us that you always have pleasant memories of us and that you long to see us, just as we also long to see you. 7 Therefore, brothers and sisters, in all our distress and persecution we were encouraged about you because of your faith. 8 *For now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord.* 9 How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy we have in the presence of our God because of you? 10 Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you again and supply what is lacking in your faith.

- "**good news** about your faith and love" (v6) = "**gospel** of Christ" (v2)

- "**night and day** we pray most earnestly" (3:10) = "we worked **night and day** in order not to be a burden to anyone while we preached the gospel of God to you" (2:9)

- "Now we really live, since you are standing firm in the Lord"

For discussion: share a story of someone standing firm in the Lord

### 3. What Paul prays for (3:11-13)

1 Thess 3:11 Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus clear the way for us to come to you. 12 May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. 13 May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.

i. personal: for himself (v11)

ii. horizontal: for their relationships with each other (v12)

iii. vertical: for God's work in them (v13)

Q. What if people have stopped standing firm in the Lord?

1 Thess 1:4 For we know, brothers and sisters loved by God, that he has chosen you ...