



Spiritual Check-up

1 Thessalonians 3:2, 13



Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition
Commentary*, vol. 2 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996)

- Before a child can walk, he must learn to stand.
- Usually the father and mother teach the child to stand and then to walk. Paul was “spiritual parent” to these believers, but he had been forced to leave Thessalonica.
- How, then, could he help these young Christians learn to stand in the trials of life?



- In the first two chapters, Paul explained how the church was born and nurtured. Now he dealt with the next step in maturity: how the church was to stand. The key word in this chapter is establish (1 Thes. 3:2, 13).

1 Thessalonians 3:2 (NKJV)

and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, **to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith,**



- In the first two chapters, Paul explained how the church was born and nurtured. Now he dealt with the next step in maturity: how the church was to stand. The key word in this chapter is establish (1 Thes. 3:2, 13).

1 Thessalonians 3:13 (NKJV)

so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.



The key thought is expressed in **1 Thessalonians 3:8 (NKJV)**

• **For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord.**

- Paul explained three ministries that he performed to help these new Christians become firmly established.

1. He sent them a Helper (1 Thess. 3:1-5)

2. He wrote them a Letter (1 Thess. 3:6-8)

3. He prayed for Them (1 Thess. 3:9-13)





He Sent Them A Helper (1 Thess. 3:1-5)

1 Thessalonians 3:1–5 (NKJV)

1 Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone,

2 and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith,

3 that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.





He Sent Them A Helper (1 Thess. 3:1-5)

4 For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.

5 For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.



Paul Sends A Man Of Good Character.

- Timothy was a mature Christian who could help disciple and encourage the believers.
- Timothy was the ideal man to send to the church to help them stand firm.
- Timothy and Titus were Paul's "special ministers" whom he used as troubleshooters whenever the churches had problems out.



To The Church Of Corinth Paul Writes:

1 Corinthians 16:10–11 (NKJV)

10 And if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also do.

11 Therefore let no one despise him. But send him on his journey in peace, that he may come to me; for I am waiting for him with the brethren.

- He sends a mature person to be a part of the solution not a part of the problem.



What Kind Of A Person Can Help Believers Grow In The Lord? To Begin With, He Must Be A Christian Himself:

- “Timothy, our brother” (1 Thes. 3:2).
- We cannot lead another where we have not been ourselves, nor can we share that which we do not possess.

Matthew 15:14 (NKJV)

Let them alone. They are blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind leads the blind, both will fall into a ditch.”



- Timothy was also a minister. This is simply the Greek word for a servant.
- Our English word “deacon” comes from this word, diakonos. Timothy was a good team man; he was a “fellow worker.”



The Church's Conflict (vv. 3–5)

1 Thessalonians 3:3–5 (NKJV)

3 that no one should be shaken by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we are appointed to this.

4 For, in fact, we told you before when we were with you that we would suffer tribulation, just as it happened, and you know.

5 For this reason, when I could no longer endure it, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter had tempted you, and our labor might be in vain.



The Church's Conflict (vv. 3–5)

- The trials and tests that come to our lives as Christians are not accidents—they are appointments. We must expect to “suffer for His sake.”

Philippians 1:29 (NKJV)

For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake,

- We see this in all of Paul's writing because this is what he knew from experience as well as what the Lord showed him for the church.



The One Behind These Persecutions Is Satan

- The enemy of the Christian (*1 Thes. 3:5*).
- He is the tempter, and he seeks to ruin our faith. There is a powerful emphasis on faith in this chapter (*1 Thes. 3:5–7, 10*).
- As a roaring lion, Satan stalks believers; and we must resist him “steadfast in the faith” (*1 Peter 5:8–9*).

He will use any means to attack the Christian and weaken his faith in God.



- Timothy's assignment was to establish these believers and encourage (comfort) them in their faith.
- It is faith in God that keeps our feet on the ground when the enemy attacks. Without faith in God, we are defeated.

1 John 5:4 (NKJV)

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.





He Wrote Them A Letter (1 Thess. 3:6-8)

1 Thessalonians 3:6–8 (NKJV)

6 But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always have good remembrance of us, greatly desiring to see us, as we also to see you—

7 therefore, brethren, in all our affliction and distress we were comforted concerning you by your faith.

8 For now we live, if you stand fast in the Lord.



Good News

- Timothy met Paul at Corinth (Acts 18:5) and gave him the glad news that things were going well at Thessalonica.
- Timothy reported that the new believers were standing firm in spite of persecution.
- They did not believe the lies that the enemy had told about Paul, but they still held him in the highest esteem in love.
- The enemy wants to discredit our leadership and faith!
- They told lies about Paul, and tried to get others to deny the faith!
The plan of the enemy failed!



This Suggests That God's Word Is One Of The Best Tools For Establishing Christians In The Faith.

2 Thessalonians 2:15 (NKJV)

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

- When Jesus was tempted by Satan, He used the Word of God to defeat him (*Matt. 4:1–11*).
- Paul admonished the Ephesian believers to take “the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (*Eph. 6:17*) in their battle against Satan and his demonic assistants.



The Bible Is Able To Establish Us Because It Is Inspired Of God.

2 Timothy 3:16 (NKJV)

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

- It has well been said that doctrine tells us what is right, reproof tells us what is not right, correction tells us how to get right, and instruction tells us how to stay right.
- Paul sent them a man, and that man established them in the Word.





He Prayed For Them (1 Thess. 3:9-13)

1 Thessalonians 3:9–13 (NKJV)

9 For what thanks can we render to God for you, for all the joy with which we rejoice for your sake before our God,
10 night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith?
11 Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you.
12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you,
13 so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.



The Word Of God And Prayer Should Go Together

The prophet Samuel stated this to Israel:

1 Samuel 12:23 (NKJV)

Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way.



The Word Of God And Prayer Should Go Together

- Peter said, Acts 6:4 (NKJV) *but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.*”
- Paul had this same emphasis: Acts 20:32 (NKJV) “So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.



Jesus Prayed For His Disciples, Just As Paul Prayed For The Thessalonica Christians, That Their Faith Would Not Fail.

Luke 22:31–32 (NKJV)

31 And the Lord said, “Simon, Simon! Indeed, Satan has asked for you, that he may sift you as wheat.

32 But I have prayed for you, that your faith should not fail; and when you have returned to Me, strengthen your brethren.”





- Paul prayed for three specific requests. First, he prayed that their faith might mature.

1 Thessalonians 3:10 (NKJV)

night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith?



- Paul's second request was that their love might abound.

1 Thessalonians 3:12 (NKJV)

And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you,





- Paul's third request was for holiness of life.

1 Thessalonians 3:13 (NKJV)

so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.



It's Time For A

Spiritual Check-up!

