



“Courage, Comfort, Honor, and Hope”

2 Thessalonians 2:13-3:18

God’s people need of a fresh infusion of courage, comfort, honor, and hope.

- Even many Christians live in fear today, primarily regarding issues over which they have no control.
- However, in 1 John 4:18, the Apostle said, *“There is no fear in love; but perfect love cast out all fear. He who fears has not been made perfect in love.”*
- Christians are the only people who can have real courage, comfort, honor, and hope because to trust in Jesus Christ is to trust in the sovereignty of God, for He alone knows the end from the beginning and every day in between.
- However, with the “dumbing down of doctrine” for the last half-century, most Christians cannot articulate their hope beyond going to heaven when they die.

- So, as we see the final events of God’s plan for our redemption unfolding, we must remain steadfast in our faith and walk worthy of our calling every day, in every way.

“Denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Titus 2:12-13

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- “Steadfastness” is the ability to stand firm in our faith in God regardless of the circumstances of our lives.
 - “Imminent” means something can happen at any moment without warning.
 - While the return of Jesus Christ will not occur until all other end-time events occur, the rapture of the Church can happen at any moment, and therefore, it is always imminent.
 - The timeless truth of Paul’s two letters to the Thessalonians is clear:
 - Despite the affliction and suffering we will endure.
 - Despite the apostasy and deception against which we will be called to stand.
 - Despite the evil antagonists and undisciplined believers, we must tolerate.
 - Christians are called to stand fast in the truth of God’s Word and hold to the doctrines which we were taught, *for therein lies the source of*

our courage, comfort, honor, and hope.

Signs of the imminent rapture of the Church:

- We know the spirit of the Antichrist has been on the earth since God cast Lucifer out of heaven, and he has harassed every man and woman God called to carry out His mission.
- We know the spirit of the Antichrist is increasing through the rise of lawlessness, the severity of persecution of Christians, the spiritual weakness of today's church, and the increase in false teachers and new-age religions.
- The next major events on God's prophetic calendar include:
 - The rapture of the Church –
 - The removal of the Restrainer – The Holy Spirit
 - The reign and ruin of the Antichrist –
 - The return of Jesus Christ –
- However, there is no reason for a Christian to fear the future.
- As Christians, we should wake up every morning with the joy of the Lord in our hearts, knowing we are one day closer to our deliverance from this wicked world, and our eternal union with Jesus Christ.

“There is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”

2 Timothy 4:8

1. Take Courage – 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14 – “We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren,

beloved by the Lord, for from the beginning, God chose you for salvation, through your sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

The only reason we are saved is because of God’s amazing grace, His unconditional love, and His undeserved mercy.

- God has always been the pursuer of our relationship with Him.
- While our salvation was purchased by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, it all began in the heart of God, even before the foundations of the world were laid.
- Therefore, we can take courage, knowing:
 - We are loved by God –
 - We were chosen by God –
 - We have been set apart by God and for God –
 - We are being preserved for God by the Holy Spirit –
 - We will become the trophies of God’s saving grace –

2. Take Comfort – 2 Thessalonians 2:15-17 – “Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle. 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, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work.”

Paul exhorted the Thessalonians to stand fast:

- Chapter 1:4 – while enduring persecutions and tribulations.
- Chapter 1:8 – knowing God will judge the world with fire.
- Chapter 2:9 – in preparation for the deception of the Antichrist.

- Chapter 2:14 – in knowing the glorious destiny of the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore, those who believe in Him.

The term “standfast” was an order given to a soldier. When he saw the enemy coming over the rise, he should “get a grip” on something and hold on to it as his anchor during the battle.

- The Christian’s anchor is the truth of the Word of God and the essential doctrines of the Christian Faith.
- Paul prayed that God would comfort their hearts and establish them in their work.

3. Give Honor – 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2 – “*Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.*”

Paul asked the Thessalonians to pray for him.

- That the word of the Lord would be as free to do its work for others as it had been among the Thessalonians.
- That he would be delivered from anyone who would hinder the work of God by attacking him.

4. Have Hope – 2 Thessalonians 3:3-15 – “*But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one, and we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you.*”

Paul gave the Thessalonians several directives to increase their hope during persecution.

- Verse 5 – rely upon the love of God and the patience of Christ.
- Verse 6 – withdraw from those who are disorderly.

- Verse 7 – follow his example of providing for himself.
 - Verse 12 – everyone needed to work to provide for themselves.
 - Verse 13 – don't stop doing good.
 - Verse 14 – do not keep company with those who do not obey these commands.
 - Verse 15 – don't treat them as an enemy, but as a brother, so they might repent of their sins and return to the fellowship.
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“Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with you all. The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so, I write. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.”

- While these are trying times, they are also exciting times, as God has chosen us to see the final events of this age.
- Christians should not be looking for the Antichrist. Christians should be anticipating the rapture of the Church, and looking forward to returning with Christ when He comes again.
- Just as mighty ships need anchors to keep them from drifting into the open seas, as Christians, we must anchor our souls to the truth of God's Word, the doctrines of the Christian Faith, and the daily disciplines of discipleship.