

# Sermon Discussion Guide

*Stand Firm*

2 Thessalonians 2:13–17

## God has sovereignly saved you (13–14)

Eph. 1:4; Deut. 7:6–8; 1 Cor. 6:11

Paul sought to encourage and comfort the Thessalonians by telling them God had sovereignly saved them by choosing them (v. 13), setting them apart by his Spirit (v. 13), and calling them to himself through the gospel (v. 14).

- Does knowing that God sovereignly saved you apart from any worth in you encourage you or make you uncomfortable? Why?
- Does the doctrine of election (God's choice in eternity of whom he would save) make God seem cold and heartless? How does knowing that his choice is rooted in his love challenge the way you think about election?
- To whom or to what are you tempted to look for ultimate security? How does Paul's description of God's sovereign work in our salvation show us where security is found?

## God will graciously sustain you (16–17)

Eph. 1:5; Rom. 5:8; Ps. 103:17

Paul prayed that God would encourage the Thessalonians' hearts and strengthen them for a life of practical godliness ("every good work and word").

- How would beginning your prayers with reminders of who God is and what he has done for you, like Paul does in verse 16, change your prayers?
- Even though God has already given believers eternal comfort and good hope in Christ, Paul asks God to comfort believers' hearts. Why?
- In what ways do you need to "experience your theology"? Are there certain truths (e.g. God's love for you; your eternal comfort and good hope in Christ) that you know intellectually, but sense you haven't really been impacted by in such a way that your thinking, affections, and behavior have been changed?

## Therefore, stand firm in the truth (15)

1 Cor. 11:23–25; 1 Cor. 15:3–4; 2 Thess. 3:6

Paul exhorted the Thessalonians' to stand firm in the apostolic traditions he taught them in light of the fact that God had sovereignly saved them.

- In what areas of your life are you tempted not to stand firm in the truth?
- In what ways does reflecting on God's sovereign work in your salvation (vv. 13–14) encourage you to stand firm?