

1 Thessalonians 3:6-8 Commentary

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1Thessalonians 3:6 But **now** that **Timothy** has **come** to us from you, and has **brought** us **good news** of your **faith** and **love**, and that you **always think * kindly** of us, **longing** to **see** us **just** as we **also** long to see you, (**NASB: Lockman**)

Greek: [Arti de elthontos \(AAPMSG\)](#) [Timotheou pros emas aph' humon kai euaggelisamenou \(AMPMSG\)](#) [hemin ten pistin kai ten agapen humon, kai hoti echete \(2PPAI\)](#) [mneian hemon agathen pantote, epipothountes \(PAPMPN\)](#) [hemas idein \(AAN\)](#) [kathaper kai hemeis humas](#)

Amplified: But now that Timothy has just come back to us from [his visit to] you and has brought us the good news of [the steadfastness of] your faith and [the warmth of your] love, and [reported] how kindly you cherish a constant and affectionate remembrance of us [and that you are] longing to see us as we [are to see] you, ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: Now Timothy has just returned, bringing the good news that your faith and love are as strong as ever. He reports that you remember our visit with joy and that you want to see us just as much as we want to see you. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: But now that Timothy has just come straight from you to us - with a glowing account of your faith and love, and definite news that you cherish happy memories of us and long to see us as much as we to see you - ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: But even now, Timothy having come to us from you also brought to us the good news of your faith and divine and self-sacrificial love, and that you have a kindly remembrance of us always, passionately desiring to see us even as we also are passionately desirous to see you,

Young's Literal: And now Timotheus having come unto us from you, and having declared good news to us of your faith and love, and that ye have a good remembrance of us always, desiring much to see us, as we also to see you,

1 THESSALONIANS OVERVIEW

Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
LOOKING BACK			LOOKING FORWARD	

Personal Reflections Historical			Practical Instructions Exhortational		
Ministry In Person		Ministry in Absentia (Thru Timothy)	Ministry by Epistle		
Word and Power of the Spirit		Establishing & Comforting	Calling & Conduct	1Th 4:13ff Comfort	1Th 5:12ff Commands
1 Salvation	2 Service	3 Sanctification	4 Sorrow	5 Sobriety	
Exemplary Hope of Young Converts	Motivating Hope of Faithful Servants	Purifying Hope of Tried Believers	Comforting Hope of Bereaved Saints	Invigorating Hope of Diligent Christians	
Written from Corinth Approximately 51AD					
Modified from the excellent book Jensen's Survey of the NT					

OUTLINE OF 1 THESSALONIANS CHAPTERS 1-3

CHAPTER	THEME
1	An Exemplary Conversion
2	An Exemplary Witness
3	An Exemplary Follow-Up

BUT NOW THAT TIMOTHY HAS COME TO US FROM YOU, AND HAS BROUGHT US GOOD NEWS OF YOUR FAITH AND LOVE: *Arti de elthontos (AAPMSG) Timotheou pros hemas aph' humon kai euaggelisamenou (AMPMSG) hemin ten pistin kai ten agapen humon:*

- Acts 18:1,5
- Proverbs 25:25; Isaiah 52:7; 2Corinthians 7:5, 6, 7
- 1Corinthians 13:13; Galatians 5:6; Colossians 1:4; 2Thessalonians 1:3; 1Timothy 1:5; Philemon 1:5; 1John 3:23
- [1 Thessalonians 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Now ([737](#))(**arti**) marks the point of time as related to the past or to the future whereas another Greek word **nun** also translated "**now**" marks the point of time absolutely. Matthew uses **arti** in his sentence "from the days of John the Baptist until **now** the kingdom of heaven suffers violence" (Mt 11:12).

Timothy has come to us from you - Paul had been alone at Athens (1Th 3:1-note) where he had issued a "command for Silas and Timothy to come to him as soon as possible" (Acts 17:15). He had subsequently moved on to Corinth (Acts 18:1) by the time Timothy returned with the good news (Acts 18:5).

The return of Timothy with his report formed the immediate occasion for the writing of this letter and is one of the ways exemplary follow up was carried out by Paul.

The **good news** was refreshing to Paul's spirit which is just the effect Solomon stated should occur writing that...

Like cold water to a weary soul, so is good news from a distant land. (Proverbs 25:25)

Comment: Have you given a "cup of cold water" to anyone recently?

The good report of Timothy that the Thessalonians had not failed under testing but were standing firm in their faith convinced Paul that their conversion was genuine and they were God's **elect**, a truth he was then able to write with assurance in this letter...

knowing (absolute beyond of a shadow a doubt knowledge), brethren beloved by God, His **choice** ("**election**") of you (see **note** 1Thessalonians 1:4)

Notice that this affirmation of their **election** in chapter 1 was made **after** the confirmatory evidence was received from Timothy. Paul's experience of unrest concerning the reality of their conversion dated to the time prior to the reception of Timothy's report, but now he was convinced that they had experienced an exemplary conversion.

Has brought us good news (2097) (**euaggelizo/euangelizo** [word study] from **eu** = good, well + **aggéllo** = proclaim, tell; English = evangelize) means to announce good news concerning something. **Euaggelizo** was often used in the Septuagint for preaching a glad or joyful message -- in other words, it meant any message calculated to have a cheering effect on those who receive it (see Septuagint use by pagans regarding "good news" of Saul's death 1Sa 31:9; 2Sa 4:10).

Their **faith** and **love** was **good news** for as Paul wrote later to Timothy...

the goal of our instruction is **love** from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere **faith**. (1Ti 1:5)

The great *evangelist* was himself "*evangelized*" (given good news) by Timothy's wonderful report!

Euaggelizo/euangelizo in its original sense could be used to refer to a declaration of any kind of good news, but in the NT it (with 2 exceptions - the present verse and the one below in Luke 1) (note: some mention Re 10:7-[note](#) as another exception but see [notes on that verse](#)) refers especially to the glad tidings of the coming kingdom of God and of salvation obtained through Jesus Christ's death, burial and resurrection. Most of NT uses of **euaggelizo** are translated "preach" or "preach the gospel," whichever fits more smoothly into the context. Below is the second NT passage that illustrates the original meaning of simply to "bring glad tidings" or "bring good news" of any nature...

Lu 1:19 And the angel answered and said to him (Zacharias), "I am Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God; and I have been sent to speak to you, and to **bring** you this **good news**. (that he would have a son, John the Baptist).

Hiebert comments that instead of using **euaggelizo** "He might instead of it have used "reported," but he prefers this expressive term to convey the cheerful effect the report had on its recipients. Elsewhere Paul always uses this verb to mean the preaching of the good news of the gospel. The news Timothy brought was so good that it was a veritable gospel to him. Of course that report was not a part of the gospel message but did announce the outworking of the gospel in the lives of the Thessalonian converts. **It was good news concerning the good news they had preached at Thessalonica.** ([Hiebert, D. Edmond: 1 & 2 Thessalonians: BMH Book. 1996](#)) (Bolding added)

Your faith and love - John Calvin writes that "In these two words (faith and love) he states concisely the sum total of godliness. All who aim at this double mark are beyond the danger of error for the whole of their life. (Calvin adds that) All pastors are reminded by this of the kind of relationship which ought to exist between them and the church. When things go well with the Church, they are to count themselves happy, even though in other respects they are surrounded by much distress. On the other hand, however, if they see the building which they have constructed falling down, they are to die of grief and sorrow, even though in other respects there is good success and prosperity.

EBC - The report was both spiritual and personal. Spiritually, they had progressed in faith and love; their trust in God had been sufficient for their difficulties. Yet room for improvement remained (cf. 1Th 3:10-note). Likewise their progress in loving others was uplifting news, though even here there was also room for growth (cf. 1Th 3:12, 4:9, 10-notes 1Th 3:12; 4:9, 10). ([Gaebelein, F. Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary 6-Volume New Testament. Zondervan Publishing](#))

Faith (4102)(**pistis**) indicates that the Thessalonians had not just made an intellectual decision for Christ, but that they were firmly persuaded and convicted of the truth of the Gospel that Christ had died for their sins, was buried and rose on the third day according to the OT Scriptures. Furthermore they had surrendered to that truth and had a walk or conduct that was consistent with their surrender or as James 2:14-26 would say, they had works that demonstrated the authenticity of their faith. In short, faith shows itself genuine by a changed life and Timothy brought Paul the good news that these godless, hopeless, pagan Gentiles (see the Gentiles former abysmal condition in Eph 2:12-note) had turned from idols to serve a living and true God and were looking expectantly for Jesus' return (which served as a powerful motive to order their steps accordingly, cf 1John 2:28, see 1Pe 1:17-note) (see related topic on the **obedience of faith**) (See also **work of faith... labor of love** in 1Th 1:3-note)

Although Paul linked **faith** and **love** together in many NT passages, one that is very apropos regarding the good news of the Thessalonians is from Galatians...

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but **faith** working (energeo) through **love**. (Galatians 5:6)

Comment: Nothing done or not done in the flesh, no matter how outwardly pious appearing and ceremoniously religious, makes any difference in one's relationship to God. What is external is immaterial

and worthless, unless it reflects genuine internal righteousness wrought in a transformed heart by the Spirit as the saint abides in the Vine, Christ Jesus {John 15:5}. The point is that saving faith proves its genuine character by works of love. The one who lives by faith is internally motivated by love for God and Christ {Mt 22:37, 38, 39, 40}, which supernaturally issues forth in reverent worship, genuine obedience, and self-sacrificing love for others. And this was the good news Paul received from Timothy regarding the saints in Thessalonica.) (Compare similar good news Paul received regarding the saints at Colossae - Col 1:4-note)

Love (26)(**agape**) describes their unconditional, sacrificial love, the same love that God is (1Jn 4:8,16) and that God shows (Jn 3:16, 1Jn 4:9). It follows that this quality of supernatural, divine love is only made possible by the indwelling and enabling of the Holy Spirit (Gal 5:22-note;). The only way the Thessalonians could demonstrate to Timothy a love like Christ was by yielding to His Spirit and allowing Him to live His life through them and that same principle applies to us as believers today. **Agape** love does not depend on the world's criteria for love, such as attractiveness, emotions, or sentimentality.

Agape is volitional

Phileo is emotional

Biblical **agape love** is the love of choice, the love of serving with humility, the highest kind of love, the noblest kind of devotion, the love of the will (intentional, a conscious choice). **Agape** is not based on pleasant emotions or good feelings that might result from a physical attraction or a familial bond. **Agape** chooses as an act of self-sacrifice to serve the recipient. From all of the descriptions of **agape** love, it is clear that true **agape** love is a sure mark of salvation and thus this news was indeed very good news to Paul's ears!

Hiebert comments that...

Faith speaks of their characteristic attitude Godward, while **love** is their characteristic attitude manward. Their **faith** had its most significant exhibition in **love** toward others, especially their Christian brethren. If their **faith** separated them from the world, their **love** united them more closely to each other. The two terms summarize their religious and ethical excellence. The two must always go together. "Paul's formula '**faith** working through **love**' (Gal 5:6) expresses the intimate relationship between the two qualities." ([Ibid](#))

AND THAT YOU ALWAYS THINK KINDLY OF US, LONGING TO SEE US JUST AS WE ALSO LONG TO SEE YOU: kai hoti echete (2PPAI) mneian hemon agathen pantote, epipothountes (PAPMPN) hemas idein (AAN) kathaper kai hemeis humas:

- 1Th 1:3; 2:9; 1Corinthians 11:2; Colossians 4:18; 2Timothy 1:3; Hebrews 13:3,7
- 1Th 3:9,10; 2:17; Philippians 1:8
- [1 Thessalonians 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Always (3842) (**pantote** from **pás** = all + **tóte** = then, at the time that) means at all times or on all occasions. How fitting is this description of the Thessalonians saints, for in chapter 1 **pantote** describes the missionaries' giving of thanks writing...

We give thanks to God **always** (pantote) for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers (1Th 1:2note)

Compare Paul's letter to Philemon...

I thank my God always, making mention of you in my prayers, because I hear of your love, and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints (Philemon 1:4-5)

Always think kindly of us - Literally he says they "always have a good remembrance of us", the **present tense** signifying this was the Thessalonian saints' continuing heart attitude toward the missionaries. How encouraging for Paul to know that the Thessalonians looking back on his visit with such fond memories. Have you ever written someone to let them know you are thinking kindly of them?

Swete comments

Loving remembrance of former teachers is a Christian duty, and, in connection with faith and love, a fair evidence of Christian character.

Think (memory)(3417)(**mneia**) means a recalling to mind or memory and thus a recollection or remembrance. It means to recall information from memory, but without necessarily the implication that persons have actually forgotten.

A review of Paul's uses of **mneia** below shows they are all in the context of prayer or praying specifically for someone, making mention of them in prayer

Here the noun **mneia** is combined with the verb for **have** or **hold** (echo) which is literally rendered "have memory" or "maintain a recollection" and figuratively means to hold in one's remembrance or think of someone.

The writer of Hebrews instructed the saints to...

Remember (present imperative = continually) those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. (He 13:7-note)

Comment: The saints in Thessalonica heeded both of these commands admirably and to the glory of God.

Paul was always thankful to be remembered by the saints, writing to the Corinthians...

Now I praise you because you remember me in everything, and hold firmly to the traditions (oral teachings - there were no "Bible" for most believers at this time), just as I delivered them to you. (1Corinthians 11:2)

Mneia is distinctly Pauline word, used 7 times by him in the NT...

Romans 1:9 (note) For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make (poieo) **mention** (mneia) of you,

Ephesians 1:16 (note) do not cease giving thanks for you, while making (poieo) **mention** (mneia) of you in my prayers;

Philippians 1:3 (note) I thank my God in all my **remembrance** of you

1Thessalonians 1:2 (note) We give thanks to God always for all of you, making (poieo) **mention** (mneia) of you in our prayers;

1Thessalonians 3:6 (note) But now that Timothy has come to us from you, and has brought us good news of your faith and love, and that you always **think** (echo + mneia = hold in remembrance or memory) kindly of us, longing to see us just as we also long to see you,

2 Timothy 1:3 (note) I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly **remember** (echo + mneia = hold in remembrance) you in my prayers night and day,

Philemon 1:4 I thank my God always, making (poieo) **mention** (mneia) of you in my prayers

Mneia is use 10 times in the **Septuagint (LXX)** (Dt 7:18; Job 14:13; Ps. 111:4; Isa. 23:16; 26:8; 32:10; Jer 31:20; Ezek 21:32; 25:10; Zech 13:2). Here is a representative use in a prophetic promise from the Covenant keeping God...

Jeremiah 31:20 "Is Ephraim My dear son? Is he a delightful child? Indeed, as often as I have spoken against him, I certainly still **remember** (literally = a verb + mneia = remember remembrance) him; Therefore My heart yearns for him; I will surely have mercy on him," declares the LORD.

Kindly (18) (**agathos** [word study]) means intrinsically good, inherently good in quality but with the idea of good which is also profitable, useful, benefiting others, benevolent (marked by or disposed to doing good). **Agathos** is one whose goodness and works of goodness are transferred to others. Good and doing good is the idea. **Agathos** describes that which is beneficial in addition to being good. **Agathos** is that which is good in its character, beneficial in its effects and/or useful in its action. **Agathos** describes the believer's deeds that remain and withstand being tested by fire at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1Cor 3:12, 13)

Paul uses **agathos** in his prayer for the Thessalonians in his second epistle praying...

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, Who has loved us and given us eternal comfort and **good** (agathos) hope by grace, comfort and strengthen your hearts in every good work and word. (2Th 2:16, 17)

Comment: Here the hope is classified as **intrinsically good** because of its cheering and sustaining effect on the believer who cherishes it.

Longing (1971) (**epipothéo** [word study] from **epi** = an intensifier, epi = upon marks direction of the desire + **potheo** = to yearn) means to have a strong desire for something, with implication of need. It mean to long for, have great affection for, yearn for someone or something, desire earnestly, long for greatly, intensely crave possession.

Epipothéo - 9x in 9v - NAS = desires(1), long(3), longing(4), yearn(1).

Rom 1:11; 2 Cor 5:2; 9:14; Phil 1:8; 2:26; 1Thess 3:6; 2Ti 1:4; Jas 4:5; 1 Pet 2:2. (Lxx = Deut 13:8; 32:11; Ps

42:1; 62:10; 84:2; 119:20, 131, 174; Jer 13:14).

Vincent comments that the prefixed preposition **epi** "does not mark the intensity of the desire, but its direction."

Epipothéo describes the yearning of personal affection of the Thessalonians for their spiritual parents. The fact that the Thessalonian believers were continually (**present tense**) "longing to see them" revealed their affectionate attitude toward the missionaries. The Thessalonians clearly cherished the memories of Paul's time with them and were strongly desirous of his fellowship with them again.

Richison writes that "The desire of the gospel team is reciprocal to the Thessalonians'. They felt the pain of enforced separation just as much as Paul desired to see them. There is a mutual love between the gospel team and the Thessalonians. It is always encouraging to a father's heart to know that his children walk according to the principles of the family. ([Ref](#))

As **John** wrote...

I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth (3John 4)

Paul used **epipothéo** to express his desire to be with Jesus writing

For indeed in this house we groan, **longing** (epipothéo) to be clothed with our dwelling from heaven. (2Cor 5:2)

The use of **epipothéo** in the psalm helps paint a beautiful picture...

Psalm 42:1 ([note](#)) As the deer **pants** (epipothéo = present tense = continually) for the water brooks, so my soul **pants** (epipothéo = present tense = continually) for Thee, O God

Just as ([2509](#)) (**kathaper** from **katha** = as + **per** = very) serves as an emphatic marker of comparison (see terms of comparison) between events and states and is translated with the following phrases - even as, as well as, according as, just as.

Paul writes that this longing for reunion and fellowship was mutual, where **just as** marks the longing as equal on both sides.

See ([1492](#)) (**eido**) literally means perception by sight (perceive, see) as in Mt 2:2 where the wise men "saw His star".

Paul expressed a similar longing for the saints at Philippi some 100 miles northeast of Thessalonica and the site of his first successful "church plant" in Europe...

For God is my witness, how I long (epipothéo) for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. (Php 1:8-note)

Comment: What a miracle of divine grace for this heretofore proud Pharisee to have tender heart-longings for these former pagan idol worshiping Gentiles!

1 Thessalonians 3:7 for [this reason](#), [brethren](#), in [all](#) our [distress](#) and [affliction](#) we were [comforted about](#) you [through](#) your [faith](#); ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [dia touto pareklethemen](#). (1PAPI) [adelphoi](#), [eph' humin epi pase te anagke kai thlipsei hemon dia tes humon pisteos](#).

Amplified: Brethren, for this reason, in [spite of all] our stress and crushing difficulties we have been filled with comfort and cheer about you [because of] your faith (the leaning of your whole personality on God in complete trust and confidence). ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

NLT: So we have been greatly comforted, dear friends, in all of our own crushing troubles and suffering, because you have remained strong in your faith. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: how these things have cheered us in all the miseries and troubles we ourselves are going through. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: because of this we were encouraged, brethren, in your every distress and crushing affliction, this encouragement finding its source in your faith,

Young's Literal: because of this we were comforted, brethren, over you, in all our tribulation and necessity, through your faith

FOR THIS REASON, BRETHREN, IN ALL OUR DISTRESS AND AFFLICTION: dia touto parekleton, (1PAPI) adelphoi, eph' humin epi pase te anagke kai thlipsi:

- 1Thes 3:8,9; 2Corinthians 1:4; 7:6,7,13; 2Jn 1:4
- [1 Thessalonians 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

For this reason (dia touto) means because of the good report brought by Timothy.

Brethren (80) (**adelphos** from collative **a** = denoting unity + **delphús** = womb) is literally one born from same womb and so a male having the same father and mother as reference person. Figuratively, adelphos as in this verse refers to a close associate of a group of persons having well-defined membership, specifically here referring to fellow believers in Christ who are united by the bond of affection.

Our distress and affliction - Hiebert notes that...

The two nouns, "**distress**" (anagke) and "**persecution**," (thlipsis) are linked together under one article, thus forming two aspects of the whole difficult situation in which they find themselves. The former denotes a necessity or compulsion that forces itself upon one, while the latter indicates the crushing pressure to which one is being subjected. Both terms refer to the difficult external circumstances confronting the missionaries. It is precarious to seek to identify their precise cause or character. Findlay points out that the former "signifies outward constraint, whether of circumstances or duty" while the latter points to "trouble from men." But the word rendered "in" is again the preposition epi, "over," and implies that the distress and afflictions continued but the missionaries were able to surmount them and no longer feel them as evil. This helped to make the report so welcome. This reference to their own distress and affliction is a tactful reminder to the readers that Paul was also facing difficulties while away from them. ([Hiebert, D. Edmond: 1 & 2 Thessalonians: BMH Book. 1996](#))

Distress (318) (**anagke** {also transliterated as **ananke**} from **ana** = up, again, back, renewal, repetition, intensity, reversal + **agkale** = arm when bent) refers to any necessity or compulsion, outer or inner, brought on by a variety of circumstances. It can mean necessity imposed either by external conditions or by the law of duty.

Anagke - 17x in 17v (see below) **-NAS** = compulsion(3), constraint(1), distress(3), distresses(1), hardships(1), inevitable(1), necessary(2), necessity(3), need(2), obliged*(1).

Matt 18:7; Luke 14:18; 21:23; Rom 13:5; 1 Cor 7:26, 37; 9:16; 2 Cor 6:4; 9:7; 12:10; 1 Thess 3:7; Philemon 1:14; Heb 7:12, 27; 9:16, 23; Jude 1:3.

The idea of **trouble**, distress or hardship is dominant in Luke 21:23; 1Co 7:26; 2Co 6:4; 2Co 12:10. This is the predominant sense here in 1 Th 3:7 where **anagke** refers to difficult circumstances that come on one with compelling force.

The idea of an **obligation** of compelling nature (a complete obligation, a necessary thing) is dominant in Mt 18:7; Lk 14:18; Ro 13:5; 1Co 7:37; 9:16; 2Co 9:7; Philemon 14; Heb 7:12, 27; 9:16, 23; Jude 3; Lk 23:17. Anagke can be subdivided into a moral necessity (as in Mt 18:7; Heb 7:12, 27; 9:16, 23) or a spiritual necessity (Ro 13:5; 1Cor 9:16; Jude 1:3)

Anagke refers to constraint (which is the act of being checked, restricted or compelled either to avoid or to perform some action) which is either a result of external pressures (compelling forces) or moral sense of duty.

It refers to that which is necessary due to the pressure of circumstances and so refers to that which is inevitable.

It refers to a necessity (an indispensable thing, something needed for a desired result) or constraint as inherent in the nature of things.

Anagke is used of outward calamities or distresses as in Luke 21:23.

Anagke is used 21 times in the **Septuagint (LXX)**

1Sa 22:2; Esther 4:17; Job 5:19; 7:11; 15:24; 18:14; 20:22; 27:9; 30:25; 36:19; Ps. 25:17; 31:7; 107:6, 13, 19, 28; 119:143; Prov. 17:17; Jer. 9:15; 15:4; Zeph. 1:15

Here are a few representative uses...

Job 27:9 "Will God hear his cry, when **distress** (Lxx = anagke) comes upon him?"

Psalm 25:17 The troubles of my heart are enlarged. Bring me out of my **distresses** (Lxx = anagke).

Psalm 31:7 I will rejoice and be glad in Thy lovingkindness, Because Thou hast seen my affliction; Thou hast known the **troubles** (Lxx = anagke) of my soul,

Psalm 107:6 Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble; He delivered them out of their **distresses** (Lxx = anagke). (same idea in Ps 107:13, 19, 28)

Psalm 119:143 Trouble (Lxx = **thlipsis**) and **anguish** (Lxx = anagke) have come upon me; Yet Thy commandments are my delight.

Zephaniah 1:15 A day of wrath is that day, A day of trouble (Lxx = **thlipsis**) and **distress** (Lxx = anagke), A day of destruction and desolation, A day of darkness and gloom, A day of clouds and thick darkness (Refers to **Day of the Lord**)

NIDNTT has an interesting background note on the Greek ideas behind the words for **necessity**, **must** and **obligation**...

The Greek approach to life was largely shaped by the consciousness of a necessity in existence and events which is subject to the laws and norms of fate. The impersonal verb-form **dei** (it is necessary) is the most comprehensive expression for this life. It reflects the sense of a determining constraint, no matter whether it was exerted by magic or laws, by men or by gods.

The general concept which expresses this feeling of having been consigned to fate (a situation which not only embraces human existence, but, in personifying a universal principle, also dominates the lives of the gods themselves) is **ananke** (anagke).

By contrast with the words which are associated with fate and nature the verb **opheilo** originally belonged to the legal sphere; it expressed initially one's legal and economic, and then later one's moral, duties and responsibilities to the gods and to men, or to their sacrosanct regulations. Whereas **opheilo** also expresses human and ethical responsibility in the NT, the typically Greek concepts of **dei** and **ananke** could only be taken over with some modification which personalized and re-interpreted them so that they express the will of God.

All words based on the word-stem **anank-** (anagk-) denote in varying gradations every form of outward or inward pressure which is exerted on men.

For the Greeks **ananke** (anagke) was the power which determined all reality, the principle which dominated the universe. At various times men ascribed a divine character to it; Plato (Leg. 818c) in fact ranked it higher than the gods. Man is under a constraint because of his natural being; the final limitation of his existence by death is also part of this compulsion (cf. W. Grundmann, TDNT I 344 f.).

In the OT the naturalist outlook of the Gk. world is replaced by a historical one. **ananke** translates several Heb. words which denote the afflictions and distresses of illness, persecution, enmity etc. which were often taken by Israelites to indicate God's alienation from them...

In the last resort, it is Yahweh alone who can save men from **ananke** (Ps 25:17), and even lead a person into it (Job 20:22; cf. Jer 9:14; 15:4). He will raise up the great **ananke** on the day of his wrath (Zeph 1:15), a conception which had powerful effect on the thought of post-exilic Judaism. ([Brown, Colin, Editor. New International Dictionary of NT Theology. 1986. Zondervan](#))

Richards writes that **anagke** refers to an "inner compulsion. Words in this group indicate inner or outward pressures. In some cases the words simply refer to troubles or afflictions--pressures that cause suffering. In most cases, however, they are linked with the channeling of choices or the constraints that cause one to choose. In the NT, outward force is not primarily intended. One is not forced to choose against his will, but the forces suggested act on and with the will. ([Richards, L O: Expository Dictionary of Bible Words: Regency](#))

Vincent writes that **anagke** "means originally force, constraint, necessity, and this is its usual meaning in classical Greek; though in the poets it sometimes has the meaning of distress, anguish, which is very common in Hellenistic Greek. Thus Sophocles, of the approach of the crippled Philoctetes: "There falls on my ears the sound of one who creeps slow and painfully (anagke)" and again, of the same: "Stumbling he cries for pain (anagke)"... The distress is that which should precede Christ's second coming, and which was predicted by the Lord himself, Matt. 24:8

Rienecker writes that **anagke** means "necessity, compulsion of any kind, distress, calamity. It refers to the whole state of things between the first and second coming of Christ (Godet). ([Rogers, C L - originally by Fritz Rienecker: New Linguistic and Exegetical](#)

Barclay writes that **anagke** "literally means the necessities of life. Certain burdens a man may escape, but others are inescapable. There are certain things which a man must bear. The greatest of these are sorrow, for only the life which has never known love will never know that, and death which is the lot of every man. The triumphant endurance enables a man to face all that is involved in being a man. ([Barclay, W: The Daily Study Bible Series. The Westminster Press or Logos](#))

Anagke is used 17 times in the NT...

Matthew 18:7 "Woe to the world because of its stumbling blocks! For it is **inevitable** (anagke) that stumbling blocks come; but woe to that man through whom the stumbling block comes! (**Comment:** Here **anagke** speaks of an inevitability or what is bound to be or to have to be. It is incapable of being avoided or evaded. In this verse it is expected that those in the world will cause {it is inevitable} Christians to be offended, stumble and sin, but they will be held responsible for causing them to stumble and they will be judged for it)

Luke 14:18 "But they all alike began to make excuses. The first one said to him, 'I have bought a piece of land and I **need** (echo = have + anagke = need) (I am constrained, "I am obliged") to go out and look at it; please consider me excused.' (It could be rendered "I have necessity" and as such is a strong expression).

Luke 21:23 "Woe to those who are with child and to those who nurse babes in those days; for there will be great **distress** (calamity) upon the land, and wrath to this people,

Romans 13:5 (note) Wherefore it is **necessary** to be in subjection, not only because of wrath, but also for conscience ' sake. (Necessity, imposed either by external conditions or by the law of duty. Denney explains, "*There is a two-fold **necessity** for submission—an external one, in the wrath of God which comes on resistance; an internal one, in conscience. Even apart from the consequences of disobedience, conscience recognizes the divine right and function of the authority and freely submits to it.*")

1Corinthians 7:26 I think then that this is good in view of the present **distress**, that it is good for a man to remain as he is (**Anagke** signifies here that which arises from the pressure of external circumstances, as a result of which people tend to do what they would not under other conditions)

1Corinthians 7:37 But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no **constraint**, but has authority over his own will, and has decided this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin daughter, he will do well.

1 Corinthians 9:16 For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under **compulsion**; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel. (Paul is under a divine constraint which he cannot escape.)

2 Corinthians 6:4 but in everything commending ourselves as servants of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in **hardships**, in distresses (Here anagke is used in the sense of suffering).

2 Corinthians 9:7 Let each one do just as he has purposed in his heart; not grudgingly or under **compulsion** (anagke); for God loves a cheerful giver. (**Compulsion** in English describes an irresistible urge to behave in a certain way. In context **anagke** refers to external pressure and coercion, quite possibly accompanied by legalism. Believers are not to give based on the demands of others, or according to any arbitrary standards or set amounts). (Baker writes that "The word "compulsion" {anagke} does not carry the emotional baggage of "reluctantly." It simply describes a difficult situation one is forced to endure. - 2Corinthians. The College Press NIV Commentary. page 330. College Press Pub)

2 Corinthians 12:10 Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with **distresses**, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ's sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong. (One source states that anagke also "leans toward bodily violence, torture, and suffering")

1Thessalonians 3:7 (note) for this reason, brethren, in all our **distress** and affliction we were comforted about you through your faith;

Philemon 1:14 but without your consent I did not want to do anything, that your goodness should not be as it were by **compulsion** (pressure, necessity), but of your own free will. (Paul wanted Onesimus to minister alongside him, but only if Philemon openly and gladly agreed to release him. In other words, Paul was not trying to pressure or coerce him to do so.)

Hebrews 7:12 (note) For when the priesthood is changed, of **necessity** there takes place a change of law also (He is saying that the fact that the priesthood has been changed forces the conclusion that by necessity the entire legal structure on which the priesthood was based has been changed.)... **7:27** (Jesus the better High Priest) Who does not **need** daily (the Levitical priests were compelled by the Mosaic law and the fact that

they were sinners unlike the sinless Christ) , like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

Hebrews 9:16 (note) For where a covenant is, there must of **necessity** be the death of the one who made it (the provisions of a will are only promises until the one who wrote the will dies, this death being **necessary** to activate the promises)... **9:23** Therefore it was **necessary** for the copies of the things in the heavens to be cleansed with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these (In other words, it was **necessary** for the copies to have sacrifices and it was therefore **necessary** for the better covenant to have better sacrifices.)

Jude 1:3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the **necessity** to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

Affliction (2347) (**thlipsis** from **thlibo** = to crush, press together, squash, hem in, compress, squeeze in turn derived from **thláo** = to break) originally expressed sheer, physical pressure on a man. Medically **thlipsis** was used of the pulse (pressure). It is a pressing together as of grapes. It conveys the idea of being squeezed or placed under pressure or crushed beneath a weight. When, according to the ancient law of England, those who willfully refused to plead guilty, had heavy weights placed on their breasts, and were pressed and crushed to death, this was literally **thlipsis**. The iron cage was **stenochoria**. **Thlipsis** thus refers not to mild discomfort but to great difficulty.

Thlipsis - 45x in 43v - **NAS** = affliction(14), afflictions(6), anguish(1), distress(2), persecution(1), tribulation(16), tribulations(4), trouble(1).

Matt 13:21; 24:9, 21, 29; Mark 4:17; 13:19, 24; John 16:21, 33; Acts 7:10f; 11:19; 14:22; 20:23; Rom 2:9; 5:3; 8:35; 12:12; 1 Cor 7:28; 2 Cor 1:4, 8; 2:4; 4:17; 6:4; 7:4; 8:2, 13; Eph 3:13; Phil 1:17; 4:14; Col 1:24; 1 Thess 1:6; 3:3, 7; 2 Thess 1:4, 6; Heb 10:33; Jas 1:27; Rev 1:9; 2:9f, 22; 7:14.

See related discussion of **affliction** in (1Th 3:3-note) and the verb **suffer affliction** in (1Th 3:4-note)

In light of eternity tribulations today are for a moment, are "light" and are continually working in us to produce an unimaginable eternal weight of glory for

Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my **tribulations** (thlipsis) on your behalf, for they are your glory. (Ep 3:13-note)

Paul explained the inestimable value of temporal **thlipsis** when viewed with eternal vision, explaining that...

momentary, light **affliction** (thlipsis) is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen (e.g., our future glory) are eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:17,18).

In summary, the truth you need to remember regarding **afflictions** (thlipsis) is that

- (1) tribulations have a purpose
- (2) one's response to tribulations demonstrates the reality of one's faith
- (3) temporal tribulations produce inestimable future, eternal glory
- (4) God will avenge tribulations you have endured for His Name and Word

WE WERE COMFORTED ABOUT YOU THROUGH YOUR FAITH: parekleftemen, (1PAPI) adelphoi, eph' humin epi pase te anagke kai thlipsei hemon dia tes humon pisteos:

- Acts 17:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10; 1Corinthians 4:9, 10, 11, 12, 13; 2Corinthians 11:23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28; 2Timothy 3:10, 11, 12
- [1 Thessalonians 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

We were comforted - The **we** unites Silvanus with Paul in this experience of comfort. Timothy in bringing the report would likewise share this feeling of comfort, but he had been experiencing all during his journey back Corinth.

Parakaleo (3870) (**parakaleo** from **para** = side of + **kaléo** = call) means literally to call one alongside to help or give aid and

conveys an intense feeling and strong desire. Because a person can be called alongside for many purposes, the word has a wide range of meanings including to entreat, appeal to, summon, comfort, exhort, or encourage. Later **parakaleo** came to mean exhorting, admonishing, encouraging, call to one's side, call to one's aid. Our English word "encourage" means "with heart." To comfort or encourage in a sense is to give them new heart. Shallow sympathy makes people feel worse but genuine spiritual encouragement makes them feel better and brings out the best in people.

Parakaleo conveys the idea of enabling or aiding a person to meet some difficult situation with confidence. And so the noun form was used to describe an advocate in the court of law. In this context it means **comfort**, an English word derived from the Latin confortare, to strengthen greatly, and therefore conveys the idea of strengthening the cause and the courage of another.

One Greek historian uses **parakaleo** in a most interesting and suggestive way. There was a Greek regiment which had lost heart and was utterly dejected. The general sent a leader to talk to this regimen to such purpose that courage was reborn and a body of dispirited men became fit again for heroic action. And so in classic Greek **parakaleo** was used of exhorting troops about to go into battle. Sometimes, as in the present context, **parakaleo** conveys the idea of **comfort** but always with the idea of enabling a person to meet some difficult situation with confidence and with gallantry.

Titus brought a similar message from the Corinthians to Paul while he was in Macedonia...

But God, who comforts the depressed, **comforted** us by the coming of Titus; and not only by his coming, but also by the **comfort** with which he was **comforted** in you, as he reported to us your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me; so that I rejoiced even more. ([1Corinthians 7:6,7](#))

Comment: Paul had been anxiously awaiting the return of Titus from Corinth with the church's response to his first epistle which was somewhat stern. He was very concerned until Titus finally arrived, carrying all the news to which Paul was now responding in his second epistle to the Corinthians.

Through (because of) ([1223](#)) (**dia**) in this case signifies by means of. **Dia** is a marker of the instrument by which something is accomplished. In this case the news of their steadfast **faith** was the means by which **comfort** and encouragement came to the missionaries.

Barnes writes that "The sense here is, that their steadfastness was a great source of comfort to him in his trials. It was an instance where the holy lives and the fidelity of a people did much, as will always be the case, to lighten the burdens and cheer the heart of a minister of the gospel. In the inevitable trials of the ministerial office there is no source of comfort more rich and pure than this. (Albert Barnes. Barnes NT Commentary)

Comforted about you through your faith - Paul regularly derived personal encouragement from hearing about the authentic faith and walk of other believers (and don't we all?)

Romans 1:12 (note) that is, that I may be **encouraged** together with you while among you, each of us by the other's **faith**, both yours and mine.

2Cor 7:4 Great is my confidence in you, great is my boasting on your behalf; I am filled with **comfort**. I am **overflowing with joy in all our affliction**. (cp note 1Thessalonians 1:6)

Philemon 1:7 For I have come to have **much joy and comfort in your love**, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother.

THOUGHT: How do you feel when you receive news of a brother or sister standing fast in their faith? stumbling in their faith? You are either encouraged or discouraged, respectively. And if you are going through distress and affliction yourself, such news can have either a positive or negative impact on your walk! Our Christian walk is seen and/or heard about by other believers, to whom we can be either a source of encouragement or discouragement - which effect characterizes your walk beloved of God ?

Faith ([4102](#))(**pistis**) here refers to their continuing state of reliance on Christ, walking by faith. The idea of their ongoing faith is similar to that conveyed by Paul in Colossians

As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord (how? by faith), so walk in Him (how? by faith) (see note Colossians 2:6) (**Ryrie comments:** "Just as Christ is received by faith, the believer is also to walk (live) by faith, acknowledging the lordship of Christ over his life 2 Cor. 5:7)

Wayne Grudem defines **faith** that saves one's soul - **Saving faith** is trust in Jesus Christ as a living person for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life with God. This definition emphasizes that saving faith is not just a belief in facts but personal trust in Jesus to save me... The definition emphasizes personal trust in Christ, not just belief in facts about Christ. Because saving faith in Scripture involves this personal trust, the word "trust" is a better word to use in contemporary culture than the word "faith" or "belief." The

reason is that we can "believe" something to be true with no personal commitment or dependence involved in it. ([Grudem, W. A. Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine Zondervan](#)) (Bolding added)

1 Thessalonians 3:8 for **now** we really **live**, if you **stand firm** in the **Lord**. ([NASB: Lockman](#))

Greek: [hoti nun zomen](#) (1PPAI) [ean humeis stekete](#) (2PPAI) [en kurio](#)

Amplified: Because now we [really] live, if you stand [firm] in the Lord. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

Barclay: and because now life for us is indeed worth living if you stand fast in the Lord ([Westminster Press](#))

NLT: It gives us new life, knowing you remain strong in the Lord.. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

Phillips: To know that you are standing fast in the Lord is indeed a breath of life to us. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

Wuest: because now we are [really] living, if, as for you, you are standing fast in the Lord.

Young's Literal: because now we live, if ye may stand fast in the Lord;

FOR NOW WE REALLY LIVE, IF YOU STAND FIRM IN THE LORD: hoti nun zomen (1PPAI) ean humeis stekete (2PPAI) en kurio:

- 1Sa 25:6; Psalms 30:5; Phil 1:21
- John 8:31; 15:4,7; Acts 11:23; 1Cor 15:58; 16:13; Galatians 5:1; Ephesians 3:17; Ephesians 4:15,16; 6:13,14; Philippians 1:27; 4:1; Colossians 1:23; Hebrews 3:14; 4:14; 10:23; 1Peter 5:10; 2Peter 3:17; Revelation 3:3,11
- [1 Thessalonians 3 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

HOW TO REALLY LIVE

Live (2198)(**zao**) means to enjoy real life or have true life and worthy of the name Christian. The **present tense** speaks of Paul's desire that this be a continual experience. He really lives in comparison with his feelings of dread at not knowing how they were doing as the tempter was tempting them in the context of their appointed afflictions.

UBS Handbook explains **live** writing that...

The most likely explanation is that for Paul, as for Hebrew thought in general, life is not simply the opposite of death, just as peace is not simply the absence of war. There are degrees of being alive. Isolation from the community, like illness, can makes a person less alive.

In many languages, such an expression is not understood as mere figurative speech or interpreted as "spiritual truth," but as reality. Conversely, the renewal of a relationship, like the restoration of health, increases life and makes it full. So it was with the renewal, though Timothy, of Paul's relationship with the Thessalonians. Knox conveys this concept well: "it brings fresh life to us"; and so does Barclay: "it makes life worth living for us." Paul's life is bound up with that of the Christian communities he has helped to found.

Vine has an interesting note on **now we really live** explaining that it means to "enjoy life; a vivid rhetorical description of the contrast between his state of apprehension when he was in ignorance of their welfare, and the comfort and ease of mind produced by Timothy's good news. ([Collected writings of W. E. Vine. Nashville: Thomas Nelson](#))

Barnes - The same thing here affirmed is true of all faithful ministers of the gospel. They feel that they have something that may be called life, and that is worth living for, when those to whom they preach maintain a close walk with God. (Albert Barnes. Barnes NT Commentary)

EBC - Paul had been given a new lease on life. To know they continued "standing firm in the Lord," unmoved by affliction and unshaken by his detractors, was enough to stimulate Paul to renewed activity. ([Gaebelein, F. Editor: Expositor's Bible Commentary 6-Volume New Testament. Zondervan Publishing](#))

Hiebert explains it this way noting that "Before there had been a dead weight of apprehension; they felt lifeless and had no enthusiasm. But **now** in consequence of the news Timothy brought, **we live** feel like we truly live, not just exist. The **present tense**

indicates that this is not just a momentary reaction but an abiding inspiration. Paul's words are a vivid rhetorical description of the contrast between the former state of apprehension, when they were ignorant concerning the reaction of the Thessalonians under persecution, and the ease of mind and encouragement produced by the news Timothy brought. They felt that they had been given a new lease on life, could again go on living with a sense of fullness of power and satisfaction. Had the Thessalonians apostatized, it would have been a veritable deathblow to Paul. "The success of the cause of Christ, i.e., the winning of souls to Him, and the continuance of such souls in Him, was St. Paul's very life." The fact that their faith had proved itself steadfast was a demonstration that their work of proclaiming the gospel at Thessalonica had been successful, and this made life worthwhile for them. ([Hiebert, D. Edmond: 1 & 2 Thessalonians: BMH Book. 1996](#))

Spurgeon wrote that "Never is the servant of God so full of delight as when he sees that the Holy Spirit is visiting his hearers, making them to know the Lord, and confirming them in that heavenly knowledge. On the other hand, if God does not bless the word of his servants it is like death to them. To be preaching and to have no blessing makes them heavy of heart: the chariot-wheels are taken off, and they drag heavily along: they seem to have no power nor liberty.

If - (condition of the first class with present tense, active voice, indicative mood) is not intended to question their stability and thus the **NIV** is accurate rendering it "**since you are standing firm**". However this sentence in addition to expressing his assurance that they are standing firm but also contains a reminder that they must continue to stand firm in the future.

Hiebert notes that although they are indeed at present standing firm, "the conditional form of the statement serves to remind them that they have a continued responsibility to "stand fast." The verb (*steko*) is a late formation, formed from the perfect tense of the verb *histemi*, "to stand," and carries the idea of firmness and stability. Here the present tense stresses that for the future they must go on standing firm, like soldiers repelling an enemy attack. **In the Lord** points out the sphere of their steadfastness. Their faith has brought them into a close vital union with "the Lord," Jesus Christ, and they must adhere steadfastly to Him. ([Ibid](#))

Stand firm ([4739](#)) (*steko* is corrupted from *ésteka*, **perfect tense** of *histemi* = to stand) can mean to **stand** literally ("whenever you **stand** praying... " Mk 11:25) but is used figuratively in this passage meaning to stand firm in faith and duty, to be constant, to persevere, to remain steadfast, to continue in a state.

The **present tense** expresses Paul's desire that his spiritual children continue remaining firmly committed in their Christian belief. Remember that belief always demonstrates itself to be genuine by one's conduct or lifestyle.

Steko - 11x in 11v - Mark 3:31; 11:25; John 8:44; Rom 14:4; 1 Cor 16:13; Gal 5:1; Phil 1:27; 4:1; 1 Thess 3:8; 2 Thess 2:15; Rev 12:4. **NAS** = stand(2), stand firm(4), standing(1), standing firm(2), stands(2).

The word **steko** pictures an army that refuses to retreat even though it is being assaulted by the enemy. Standing firm as a believer is clearly an important exhortation as shown by Paul's frequent use illustrated in the following passages.

In 1Corinthians Paul later exhorted the believers to

Be on the alert, stand firm (*steko*) in the faith, **act** like men, **be strong**. ([1Cor 16:13](#)) (**Comment:** Note that all four verbs are present imperative calling for this to be the believer's lifestyle or continual practice.)

To the Galatian church in danger of falling into the fleshly trap of legalism Paul wrote that

It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore **keep standing firm** (*steko* - present imperative = as your lifestyle) and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery. (Gal 5:1+)

To the Ephesian church in the midst of intense spiritual warfare **Paul** like a good commanding officer wrote

be strong (present imperative) in the Lord, and in the strength of His might. **Put on** (aorist imperative - it's urgent, do it now!) the full armor of God, that you may be able to **stand firm** against the schemes of the devil... (and to) **take up** (aorist imperative) the full armor of God, that you may be **able to resist** in the evil day, and having done everything, to **stand firm**. **Stand firm** (aorist imperative) therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. And **take** (aorist imperative) THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints. (Ep 6:10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18-see **notes** on spiritual warfare Ephesians 6:10; 11; 12; 13; 14; 15; 16; 17;18)

Paul used (*steko*) exhorting the Philippian saints to

conduct yourselves (present imperative) in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are **standing firm** (steko) in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel. (see **note** Philippians 1:27)

Paul shows us the role of prayer in **standing firm** reminding the saints at Colossae that

Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondsman of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, **that** (purpose clause -- the purpose of his intense praying) you may **stand** perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. (see **note** Colossians 4:12)

Paul again reminded and commanded the saints at Thessalonica to...

stand firm (steko - present imperative) and **hold to** (steko - present imperative) the traditions (the content of instruction that has been handed down) which you were taught (not "traditions of men" but the truths taught by Paul as he received them from the Lord), whether by word of mouth or by letter from us. (2Th 2:15)

Peter emphasizes the importance of **truth** in assuring that one stands firm reminding and exhorting the that

knowing this beforehand (that "untaught and unstable" people will "distort... the Scriptures to their own destruction"), be on your guard lest, being carried away by the error of unprincipled men, you fall from your own steadfastness (see note 2 Peter 3:17)

Jude eloquently sums up this topic of **standing firm in the Lord**, with this beautiful benediction

Now to Him who is able to **keep you from stumbling**, and to **make you stand** in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (Jude 1:24-25+)

In the Lord - In union with Him as a branch is in vital relation to the Vine. In the Lord is always and only the position and Person in Whom believers can be enabled to stand firm when the winds of affliction and the fiery darts of the tempter fly loose and fast all about us.

THOUGHT - The only way to **"stand firm"** spiritually is by remaining in communion with the Lord. Practically the only way to stand firm spiritually is by continually jettisoning self-reliance and relying wholly on the Holy Spirit Who Alone can provide the supernatural enablement (we don't just need a little "help" or a little "push" but we need to be enabled!) to allow us to stand firm spiritually. This in turn necessitates that we be continually filled with (controlled by) the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18+). Are you filled as you read this note? It is not a feeling but a state. It is based on surrendering our will to His and not grieving or quenching His power by harboring any known sin. If you have unconfessed sin, then you are not filled with the Spirit and you will not be able to stand firm spiritually. You are in a spiritually vulnerable state if that describes you today. So confess, repent and ask Him to fill you. You won't be getting more of the Holy Spirit (you have all you will ever receive), but He will have more of you so to speak!

Lord (2962) (**kurios**) signifies sovereign power and absolute authority. It is the one who has absolute ownership and uncontested power.

**So now dearly beloved of Jehovah,
You too stand firm in the Lord.**