

# **THE UNDEFIANT**

**LOVED, CHOSEN, CALLED AND ON OUR WAY TO GLORY**

*THE FREEDOM, JOY AND  
ASSURANCE OF THOSE WHO BOW IN  
HUMBLE SUBMISSION BEFORE THE  
LORD OF GLORY ...*



Transition: The lawless imprison themselves by their rebellion. They don't need bars on the windows; they choose slavery to sin. In our text Paul now draws a sharp contrast between those who are imprisoned in lawlessness ... and those God has called out of lawlessness to freedom in Christ and glory with God..

### 1. Paul gives thanks for the Thessalonians relationship with God, 2:13-14.

- (2 Thessalonians 2:13–14 ESV) But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, **because God chose you** as the firstfruits **to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit** and **belief in the truth**. 14 **To this he called you through our gospel, so that you may obtain the glory** of our Lord Jesus Christ.

A. Thanks that the Thessalonians are beloved by God.

B. Paul felt obligated to always give thanks for them.

Paul notes that the occasion was such that he ought to always, at all times give thanks.

C. Thanks that God chose them to be saved.

D. Thanks that God saved them as firstfruits through making them holy by the Spirit and through their belief in the truth.

E. Paul knew that God had chosen them because of the evidence of the work of God in their lives.

- (1 Thessalonians 1:4–6 ESV) **For we know, brothers loved by God, that he has chosen you, 5 because our gospel came to you not only in word,** but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction. ... And **you became imitators of us** and of the Lord, for **you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit.**

F. Their calling to glory was made effectual because of the power of the gospel.

The gospel is how and why glory will one day happen for people who began this life dead in their sins.

G. The glory they would obtain as a permanent possession is the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

God called them to this salvation experience through the apostles' gospel with the purpose that they would gain possession of the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ in a secure and permanent manner.

Obtain ... περιποίησις [per-ee-poy-ay-sis] – the act of gaining possession of something; especially in a secure or permanent manner.

### **NEED TO KNOW: What does it mean that God chose them to be saved?**

- (2 Thessalonians 2:13 ESV) ... thanks to God ... **because God chose you ... to be saved** ...

#### I. Simple and clear: God chose them to be saved.

Chose ... αἰρέομαι [haireomai] – to choose; to select for one's own reasons or purposes.

#### II. Our salvation is by God's sovereign choice.

- (Ephesians 1:4–5 ESV) ... **he chose us in him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, **according to the purpose of his will.**

#### III. Our salvation is according to God's sovereign purpose.

#### IV. The redeemed of the Lord were chosen by God before there was a galaxy far, far away.

★ ★ ★ **STAR WARS ...** ★ ★ ★  
"A LONG TIME AGO IN A GALAXY FAR, FAR AWAY..."

### **HOW ARE WE TO RECEIVE THIS INFORMATION?**

By receiving the word of God as the word of God. Accepting the written account from our infinite, all-knowing, all-powerful, all-wise God in his holy word. If you doubt this, then please feel free to take the following self-test to prove yourself.

#### **COMPETENCY TEST: ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS PLEASE**

##### Is God unjust?

- (Romans 9:14–16 ESV) What shall we say then? **Is there injustice on God's part?** By no means! 15 For he says to Moses, "**I will have mercy on whom I have mercy,** and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." 16 **So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy.**

##### Where were you at creation?

- (Job 38:3–6 NLT) Brace yourself like a man, because I have some questions for you, and you must answer them. 4 "**Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth?** **Tell me, if you know so much.**" 5 Who determined its dimensions and stretched out the surveying line? 6 What supports its foundations, and who laid its cornerstone?

### Who are you as a mere human to argue with God?

- (Romans 9:19–20 NLT) Well then, you might say, “Why does God blame people for not responding? Haven’t they simply done what he makes them do?” 20 **No, don’t say that. Who are you, a mere human being, to argue with God?** Should the thing that was created say to the one who created it, “Why have you made me like this?”

### Are you able to search the unsearchable?

- (Romans 11:33 ESV) Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! **How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways!**

### In what alternate universe might you live in which you believe you could know these things apart from God?

- (1 Corinthians 2:7–10 ESV) But we impart **a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.** 8 None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. 9 But, as it is written, “**What no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him**”— 10 **these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit.** For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.

### Do you honor God as God? If not, how could you prefer your darkened understanding over the wisdom of God?

- (Ephesians 4:17–18 ESV) Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 **They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God** because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.
- (Romans 1:21–22 ESV) For although they knew God, **they did not honor him as God** or give thanks to him, but **they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened.** 22 **Claiming to be wise, they became fools.**

### 2. Based on who they are and what they possess they are exhorted to stand firm, 2:15-17.

- (2 Thessalonians 2:15–17 ESV) So then, brothers, **stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter.** 16 Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who loved us and gave us eternal comfort and good hope through grace, 17 comfort your hearts and establish them in every good

work and word.

### A. Stand firm means to hold our ground.

Stand firm ... **στήκω** [steko] – to hold one’s ground; maintain a position; be steadfast or upright; to persevere, to persist; to keep one’s standing.

### B. This is the same word in Galatians 5:1 with the emphasis on freedom versus slavery.

- (Galatians 5:1 ESV) For freedom Christ has set us free; **stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.**

Standing firm in Christ means never submitting to a yoke of slavery. Lawlessness is a yoke of slavery to sin.

### C. They are not being told to stand firm in church traditions as an authoritative source of truth.

The traditions here refer to the truth that Paul and the others communicated to them by word or by letter. It would be a tragic mistake to use this verse for a proof text to embrace the traditions of the church over the written word of God.

### D. Paul prays that God will comfort their hearts and establish them in their work and their word.

## CONCLUSION: GOING FORWARD ...

### GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE UNDEFIANT ...

#### 1. Humble ourselves before others and God and in humbling ourselves we resist the devil and remain firm in our faith.

- (1 Peter 5:5–9a ESV) Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. **Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another,** for “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” 6 **Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God** so that at the proper time he may exalt you, 7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you. 8 **Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.** 9 **Resist him, firm in your faith.**

#### 2. Be faithful in your local fellowship of believers.

- (Hebrews 10:24–25 ESV) And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 **not neglecting to meet together,** as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, **and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.**

### 3. Live in a manner worthy of the gospel that saves.

- (Philippians 1:27 ESV) **Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ**, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,

### 4. Live according to our new life in Christ.

- (2 Corinthians 5:17–18a ESV) Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation**. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18 All this is from God.
- (Philippians 1:20b–21 ESV) ... with full courage now as always **Christ will be honored in my body**, whether by life or by death. 21 **For to me to live is Christ**, and to die is gain.
- (Galatians 2:20 ESV) I have been crucified with Christ. **It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me**. And the life I now live in the flesh **I live by faith in the Son of God**, who loved me and gave himself for me.

### 5. Arm ourselves with the whole armor of God.

- (Ephesians 6:13–18 ESV) Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on **the belt of truth**, and having put on **the breastplate of righteousness**, 15 and, as **shoes for your feet**, having put on the **readiness given by the gospel of peace**. 16 In all circumstances take up **the shield of faith**, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take **the helmet of salvation**, and **the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God**, 18 **praying at all times in the Spirit**, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints

### 6. More helpful thoughts for our consideration ...

- A. The person who does not live in a manner worthy of his calling does not know his calling.
- B. This person becomes nearsighted, blind and forgetful.

- (2 Peter 1:9–10 ESV) For whoever lacks these qualities **is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins**. 10 Therefore, brothers, **be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election**, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall.

C. Insecurity and a lack of assurance are the result of living in unfaithfulness and disobedience to the Lord.

D. This person fails his local church fellowship by disregarding clear instructions and giving the devil an opportunity to infiltrate with lies and contentions.

- (Ephesians 4:26–27 ESV) Be angry and do not sin; **do not let the sun go down on your anger**, 27 **and give no opportunity to the devil**.
- (Ephesians 4:31 ESV) **Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you**, along **with all malice**.

E. The person who lives in a manner worthy of the gospel brings the forgiveness and presence of God into the lives of the people around her.

- (Ephesians 4:32 ESV) Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, **as God in Christ forgave you**.

F. The person who lives in a manner worthy of the grace only, faith only, Christ only gospel brings sun and pleasant rain into the lives of all those around him.

- (Matthew 5:44–45 ESV) But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 **so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven**. For he **makes his sun rise** on the evil and on the good, and **sends rain** on the just and on the unjust.

### LET'S ASK OURSELVES ...

**WHAT PERSON AM I BRINGING INTO THE LIVES OF THOSE AROUND ME?**