

STANDING FIRM

Request: I recently read this sentence that intrigued me doctrinally – “You may not be able to control what happen TO you but you can control what happens IN you.” Could you do a study on it?

This is actually the premise of our Wednesday bible study, “Lessons from Job.”

I was also reminded of Paul’s comments to the believers of Thessalonica regarding a similar doctrinal premise in 1 Thess.3:1-10.

The Pauline missionary team (Paul, Timothy, and Silas) was at Athens when they received word that the Thessalonians were struggling in their faith regarding undeserved suffering of the angelic conflict.

Undeserved suffering is one of those times when – “you may not be able to control what happens TO you but you can control what happens IN you.”

We will study our lesson text by the following seven homiletical points.

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| • Alarm | (3:1-2) | Sent Timothy |
| • Agenda | (3:2b) | Strengthen and encourage in the faith |
| • Affliction | (3:3-4) | Suffering as part of believer’s phase II destiny |
| • Adversary | (3:5) | Satan and angelic conflict |
| • Appraisal | (3:6-7) | Satisfying report |
| • Applause | (3:8-9) | Standing firm in the faith |
| • Advise | (3:10) | Supplying what is lacking in your faith |

This lesson will study FIVE aspects of STANDING FIRM

“For now we (Pauline team) really live, if (1cc / since) you stand firm (steko / p.a.ind.2pl) in the Lord.”(3:8)

- 1. The difference between being spiritually unstable or stable under the pressures of undeserved suffering is the believer’s ability to cycle the word of God by the faith-rest technique (Heb.11: 1).**

Hearing (Rom.10: 17)

Completing (James 2:22)

FAITH CYCLE

Believing (Heb.4: 2)

Applying (2 Cor.5: 7)

- 2. Standing firm is cycling BD to completion under the most extreme pressures of undeserved suffering in the angelic conflict.**

“All this I have told you so that you will not go astray. They will put you out of the synagogue; in fact, a time is coming when anyone who kills you will think he is offering a service to God.” (NIV, John 16:1 / Paul of Taurus in Acts 9)

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

3. The spiritual advancing can have perfect peace IN his heart amidst the most severe undeserved suffering by the indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit and BD.

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace**, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.” (Gal.5:22-23) (Rom.8:6)

“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.” (Col.3:15-16)

“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (NIV, Phil.4:7)

Apart from these grace-operating assets, the believer is inadequate to deal with the pressures of undeserved suffering with a relaxed mental attitude.

Inner peace, joy, and contentment amidst great suffering can be a reality of life in a spiritual advancing believer (James 1:2-4).

4. Undeserved suffering is a normal part of the spiritual advancing believer’s life in world (phase II).

“So that no one would be unsettled by these trials. You know quite well that we were destined for them. In fact, when we were with you, we kept telling you that we would be persecuted. And it turned out that way, as you well know.” (NIV, 1 Thess.3:3-4)

“For it has been granted to you for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.” (NAS, Phil.1:29)

“Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.” (NAS, 1 Pet.4: 12-13) (Matt.13: 20-21 / rocky place / affliction and persecution arise because of the word of God).

5. The spiritual gifted pastor-teacher is responsible to prepare those under his pastoral care (classroom of bible study) to stand firm by the grace-operating assets amidst pressures of undeserved suffering (Eph.4: 11-13; 1 Thess.3: 10).

Suffering in CWL stimulates spiritual growth and dependence upon the grace-operating assets of the CWL. (2 Cor.11: 3).

It also stimulates spiritual growth momentum in other spiritual advancing believers (Pauline missionary team).

“For this reason, when I could stand it no longer, I sent to find out about your faith. I was afraid that in some way the tempter might have tempted you and our efforts might have been useless.” (1 Thess.3:5)

“This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.” (1 John 5:4)