

1 Thessalonians 3:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith:

Analysis

And sent Timotheus, our brother, and minister of God, and our fellowlabourer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith—Timothy receives three titles: *ton adelphon hēmōn kai diakonon tou Theou kai synergon hēmōn en tō euangeliō tou Christou* (τὸν ἀδελφὸν ἡμῶν καὶ διάκονον τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ συνεργὸν ἡμῶν ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 'our brother and servant of God and our fellow-worker in the gospel of Christ'). These escalate: brother (family relationship), minister of God (divine calling), fellow-laborer (partnership in work). Despite Timothy's youth (1 Tim 4:12), Paul treats him as valued colleague, not subordinate.

To establish you, and to comfort you concerning your faith (*eis to stērixai hymas kai parakalesai hyper tēs pisteōs hymōn*, εἰς τὸ στηρίζαι ὑμᾶς καὶ παρακαλέσαι ὑπὲρ τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν)—*stērizō* (strengthen/establish) and *parakaleō* (comfort/encourage) define Timothy's mission. Young churches need both: doctrinal grounding (establishment) and emotional support (comfort) to withstand persecution. The phrase *hyper tēs pisteōs* (concerning the faith) can mean 'about your faith' or 'on behalf of your faith'—Timothy would both inform Paul about their faith and strengthen it.

Historical Context

Timothy was Paul's most trusted disciple, converted on Paul's first missionary journey in Lystra (Acts 16:1-3), circumcised to facilitate Jewish ministry despite being half-Greek (Acts 16:3), and trained through accompanying Paul on missionary travels. Sending him to Thessalonica demonstrated both Timothy's trustworthiness and Paul's concern—he sent his most valuable coworker. Timothy's youth (perhaps mid-20s) didn't disqualify him from significant ministry. His report (v. 6) would bring Paul immense relief and joy, confirming the mission's success.

Related Passages

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does Paul's treatment of young Timothy as valued colleague challenge age-based hierarchies in church leadership?
2. What role do you play in 'establishing and comforting' other believers' faith, especially those facing trials?
3. How can contemporary churches better deploy young, gifted leaders for significant ministry rather than limiting them to subordinate roles?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἐπέμψαμεν	Τιμόθεον	τὸν	ἀδελφὸν	ἡμῶν	καὶ	
And	sent	Timotheus	G3588	brother	our	And	
G2532	G3992	G5095		G80	G2257	G2532	
διάκονον	τοῦ	θεοῦ	καὶ	συνεργὸν	ἡμῶν	ἐν	τῷ
minister	G3588	of God	And	fellowlabourer	our	in	G3588
G1249		G2316	G2532	G4904	G2257	G1722	
εὐαγγελίῳ	τοῦ	Χριστοῦ	εἰς	τὸ	στηρίξαι	ὑμᾶς	καὶ
the gospel	G3588	of Christ	to	G3588	establish	you	And
G2098		G5547	G1519		G4741	G5209	G2532
παρακαλέσαι	ὑμᾶς	περὶ	τῆς	πίστεως	ὑμῶν		
to comfort	you	concerning	G3588	faith	your		
G3870	G5209	G4012		G4102	G5216		

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