

Believers should pray for the Gospel to spread,
for protection from evil, and for one another
to stay faithful to Christ
2 Thessalonians 3

2 Thessalonians 3:1

- Pray that the Gospel will spread quickly at home and abroad.
- The first thing Paul asked for in prayer was that the Gospel would spread quickly and be honored as it was among the Thessalonian church.
- Paul wrote that those who prayed for him joined him in his ministry (Romans 15:30; 2 Corinthians 1:11; Philippians 1:19).
- For Paul, prayer was not a passive thing. It is an active way to participate in what God is doing in the world.

2 Thessalonians 3:2-3

- Pray for protection from evil people and the Evil One.
- Throughout Paul's ministry, the Holy Spirit warned him that he faced prison and hardship in every city (Acts 20:23).
- Paul wrote that he was imprisoned more often, flogged more severely, and faced more danger from all sides than others (2 Corinthians 11:21–30).
- At the time of this writing, Paul and his associates were in Corinth, and some of their opponents there were stirring up trouble and brought him before the Roman court (Acts 18:1–18).

2 Thessalonians 3:2-3

- In Philippians, he wrote that he was thankful for his time in prison because he was able to reach people with the Gospel – such as the imperial guard – that he wouldn't have been able to reach otherwise.
- His ability to endure in prison had given other believers the confidence to continue to preach the Gospel boldly and without fear (Philippians 1:12–14).
- Here Paul distinguished between “wicked and evil men” and “the evil one” (Satan). He prayed for deliverance and protection from both, but listed them separately, only promising protection from “the evil one.”

2 Thessalonians 3:2-3

- This is reminiscent of the ending of the Lord's Prayer, "deliver us from the evil one" (Matthew 6:13 NIV).
- In the Greek, Matthew 6:13 doesn't just say "deliver us from evil;" it says "the evil." In Greek, the use of a definite article ("the") makes an adjective ("evil") into a noun ("the Evil One" or "the evil man") without having to explicitly have the word "one" or "man" in the sentence; it is implied by the definite article.
- In the Lord's Prayer, "the Evil One" is a common title for the Devil in Matthew.

2 Thessalonians 3:4-5

- Pray that your Christian friends and family will stay faithful to Christ.
- Paul repeated the confidence he and his coworkers had in the faith of the Thessalonians, which he mentioned at the beginning of his first letter.
- He was praying for them to continue in the love of God and the steadfastness of Christ.
- Verse 5 has the format of a “wish prayer” as we saw earlier in Thessalonians, but it is not wishful thinking. They prayed with confidence that their prayers would be answered.

2 Thessalonians 3:4-5

- The apostles had confidence that the Thessalonians were already being faithful to their teaching and would continue to follow the commands of the apostles (3:4).
- We all need prayer as we grow in the Lord.
- No matter how spiritually mature we are, how far along in our faith, we all need prayer to continue in the faith.
- We will always face new temptations, new challenges, new struggles, or old ones that return.

2 Thessalonians 3:4-5

- The Greek word translated “steadfastness” means a patient enduring.
- It comes from combining two words: *meno*, “to remain or abide” (the same word used in John 15 for abiding in Christ, as a branch abides in a vine), and *hypo*, which means “under.”
- The word means “to abide under pressure,” to remain faithful under the weight of all the challenges life throws our way.
- We have to persevere to the very end (Matthew 24:13).

2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

- Believers should not be idle but should work hard.
- The apostles had taught them to earn their keep when they were with them.
- Since writing the first letter, Paul received word that some of them had become idle busybodies.
- 1 Thessalonians was a letter of encouragement and thanksgiving with gentle reminders, but the tone really changed in 2 Thessalonians. Because of the news he had received about the Thessalonians, Paul realized they needed more correction and rebuke.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

- Some believe it is connected to their false belief about the Second Coming.
- If Christ had already come and they were about to enter the kingdom of heaven, why bother working?
- Some believers may have focused on the spiritual that they didn't see a need to bother with basic physical things such as working.
- They may have even justified this belief by saying that the rest of the church community should provide for their physical needs while they handled spiritual things.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

- Paul and his coworkers didn't have to work at secular jobs.
- They could have lived on donations toward their ministry, but they intentionally chose to be an example to their churches by working hard, laboring "night and day" so they wouldn't be a burden to anyone.
- When Paul and his coworkers came into a new city, they would rent a space in the marketplace and set up shop as tentmakers.
- There they worked at their trade, but they also used their shop as an arena for religious dialogue.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

- It is clear from Paul's writing that working to provide for yourself (if physically able) is a non-negotiable value of Christianity.
- In the early church, churches acted like a family in that if any persons among them were unable to provide for themselves, such as widows or the disabled, the whole community pitched in to care for that person (1 Timothy 5:1–16).
- Working to provide for yourself is a Christian value.
- This command is focused on working hard enough to support your family and provide for the poor.

2 Thessalonians 3:6-12

- Paul said that idleness is not only sinful because you aren't providing for yourself as you should, but it can also lead you to become a "busybody."
- This word is used only in this passage. It's a play on words, as if it were made up just to make this point.
- It comes from combining "work" with "all around," literally meaning "to work all around" or figuratively, to waste your labor being all over the place in other people's business

2 Thessalonians 3:13-15

- Believers should hold each other accountable for doing good.
- Paul used the same phrase here as in Galatians – “do not grow weary of doing good” (Galatians 6:9).
- The Christian life can be exhausting at times.
- It is a wonderful, abundant life and definitely worth it. But it can be hard to endure at times.
- It can be tough when you feel as though you are the only one “doing good” while everyone else seems to be having fun.

2 Thessalonians 3:13-15

- The psalms talk about how hard it is to watch the wicked around us prosper (Psalm 73:3–5). It can make us grow weary of doing good.
- We can start to mutter, “What’s the point?” It can be hard to remember the long-term benefits of doing the right thing.
- The psalm writer Asaph said that looking around at the unfairness of it all, his feet almost stumbled, his faith almost slipped – until he went into the sanctuary of God.
- “Then I discerned their end,” he wrote (Psalm 73:16–17).

2 Thessalonians 3:13-15

- When we grow weary of doing good, when we are discouraged by injustice, we need to remind each other to persevere in doing good.
- The community of believers exists to spur one another on to love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24).
- Paul told them to “warn” the idle believer.
- The word for “warn” literally means to admonish or exhort.
- They weren’t to associate with them; not to “mix up together” with them.

2 Thessalonians 3:13-15

- Paul told the Thessalonians to distance themselves from the idle brother, but didn't command them to kick idle believers out of the Christian community.
- Unlike those who were living in sexual sin in Corinth (1 Corinthians 5:9–13), they were still to be considered part of the Christian family and admonished “like a brother” (3:15), held accountable, rebuked, and corrected.
- Correction is one of the ways we spur one another on in the Christian life, one of the ways “iron sharpens iron.”
- Reproof and rebuke are a kind of brotherly love (2 Timothy 3:16).

2 Thessalonians 3:16-18

- When the Lord is with us, we can have peace in all circumstances.
- Paul made sure to sign this letter in his own hand because the Thessalonians may have received a false letter from someone claiming to be him, so he wanted them to know what his signature really looks like.
- All of Paul's letters gave a greeting of grace and peace to his recipients (his letters to Timothy also included mercy).

2 Thessalonians 3:16-18

- Shalom is used so much in Scripture because it only comes from God through Christ (John 16:33).
- We can only find peace in Him. Only He can bring peace to difficult situations, and His peace is supernatural, unexplainable, beyond all comprehension (Philippians 4:6–7).
- Paul said it beautifully here, that God can give us peace at all times in every way because He is the Lord of peace.
- He is the source of peace.

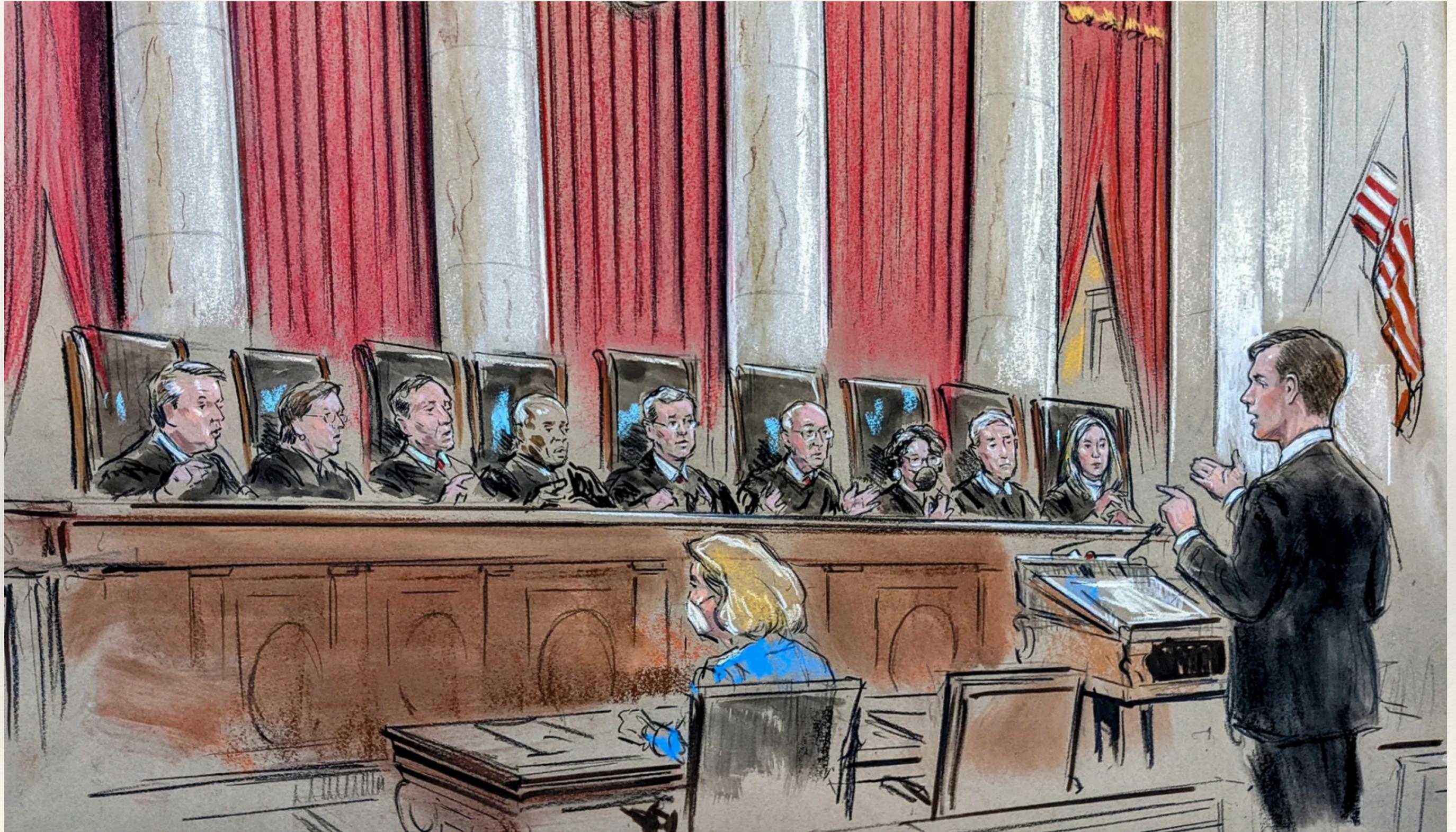
Ask Kerby



What might happen with the abortion case before the US Supreme Court?

Abortion Cases

- 1973 - *Roe v. Wade, Doe v. Bolton*
- 1992 - *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*
- 2021 - *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization*
 - The Gestational Age Act was passed in Mississippi in 2018 and bans abortion after the first 15 weeks of pregnancy.
 - The current Supreme Court decisions allow a woman to obtain an abortion within the first 24 weeks of pregnancy.



Supreme Court Justices

- Trying to predict the outcome is difficult, but it depends on how these three sets of three justices decide to vote:
 - Liberal - Justices Stephen Breyer, Elena Kagan, Sonia Sotomayor
 - Conservative - Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito, Amy Coney Barrett
 - Swing - Justices John Roberts, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh

Impact of the Decision

- The Supreme Court could rule that the Mississippi law is unconstitutional.
- The Supreme Court could rule that the Mississippi law is constitutional but also decide not overturn *Roe v. Wade*.
- The Supreme Court could rule the Mississippi law is constitutional and overturn the previous rulings in *Roe v. Wade* and other abortion cases.

If that happened, the federal ruling would no longer be in effect. The issue of abortion would revert to the states (some states with liberal abortion laws, other states with more restrictive laws).

Texas Example

- The Texas Heartbeat Bill was passed by the Texas House and Senate.
- The Bill was signed into Law by Governor Greg Abbott on May 19th, 2021.
- The Law went into effect on September 1st, 2021.
- The Law prohibits abortions in Texas after the detection of the child's heartbeat, which is currently 6 weeks gestation.
- Sometimes a heartbeat can be detected as early as 5 weeks gestation.

The Texas Example



Lives Saved by
Texas Heartbeat Law:
14,366

Action Steps

- Pray for the Justices on the Supreme Court
- Pray for the expanded opportunities of ministry of pregnancy centers
- Pray for pregnant women who believe abortion is their only option
- Support the Prestonwood Pregnancy Resource Center
- Support the Prestonwood Chosen ministry (adoption, foster care)
- Support the pro-life members of the Texas Legislature (some of them attend this church)