

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 Paul's Prayer

1

Introduction

What things are truly important in life? What is it that you pursue? When you pray, what is your heart's desire? What is success?

These are important questions to consider.

For many, success lies in material things – cars, houses, toys.

For others it is position and power – getting that promotion. All these things are temporal. When we stand before God, these things will have little value or importance.

So what things are important? What should we pray for?

2

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power, ¹² that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3

The Resource of Prayer

2 Thessalonians 1:11a

Therefore we also pray always for you

We must look at the context of this passage. “What is the **therefore** there for?”

Paul has encouraged and/or warned his readers of the return of Christ. He will visit retribution to unbelievers (Tribulation period and ultimately in the Great White Throne Judgment).

For the believer Jesus will bring relief, rest, and reward.

In the light of these things, it is only natural that Paul would turn to prayer.

4

The Resource of Prayer

2 Thessalonians 1:11a

Therefore we also pray always for you

Paul's ministry focused on **two primary issues** for his readers.

The **first** is that they would come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. He traveled on his mission journeys to this end.

The **second** focus was that those who accepted the Gospel of Jesus Christ would be brought to spiritual maturity. This has to do with an understanding of Spiritual things and then living their lives in relation to that understanding.

5

The Resource of Prayer

2 Thessalonians 1:11a

Therefore **we also pray always for you**

None of us can change other people. We can present truth, but only God can convict a person and bring internal change.

Paul was faithful in sharing the truth of the Gospel, but also the truths about the reality of who God is, how believers are to live, the nature of the church and the believer's role in the church, and the timeline of God's work here on earth – past, present, and future.

He **prayed always for his fellow believers!**

6

The Request of Prayer - Worthiness

2 Thessalonians 1:11

Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power.

This request encompasses the entire spectrum of Christian character.

Count you worthy can also be translated “**make worthy**.” God takes sinners, worthy only of death (Rom. 1:32), and makes them **worthy** of His kingdom by imputing Christ’s righteousness to them (2 Cor. 5:21).

But Paul prayed that the Thessalonians would also counted **worthy**.

This talks about their spiritual walk as believers. Paul wrote, “that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory” (1 Thess. 2:12; cf. Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:10).

7

The Request of Prayer - Worthiness

2 Thessalonians 1:11

Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power.

The Bible lists several components of the worthy walk. A worthy walk is a **walk**

in the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:4; Gal. 5:16, 25), **humility** (Eph. 4:2), **purity** (Rom. 13:13; Eph. 5:3), **contentment** (1 Cor. 7:17), **faith** (2 Cor. 5:7), **righteousness** (Eph. 2:10), **unity** (Eph. 4:3; Phil. 1:27), **gentleness** (Eph. 4:2), **patience** (Col. 1:11), **love** (Eph. 5:2), **joy** (Col. 1:11), **thankfulness** (Col. 1:12), **light** (Eph. 5:8–9), **knowledge** (Col. 1:10), **wisdom** (Eph. 5:15), **truth** (3 John 3, 4), and **fruitfulness** (Col. 1:10). In short, “He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked” (1 John 2:6), because that pleases God (1 Thess. 4:1). Paul prayed that God would enable them to manifest the spiritual virtues that would make them worthy to be called Christians.

8

The Request of Prayer - Fulfillment

2 Thessalonians 1:11

Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power.

Paul also prayed that God would fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness. Fulfill could also be translated “complete,” or “accomplish” and Good pleasure could be translated “purpose.” Paul asked that the Lord would bring about all His goodness.

Things that find ultimate “good pleasure” are found only in God and His blessings. He is good and delights in giving His blessings (which give pleasure and are good) to those who seek Him.

9

The Request of Prayer - Power

2 Thessalonians 1:11

Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power.

The verb “fulfill” in the preceding phrase also governs this phrase. Paul’s final request for the Thessalonians was that God would complete the work of faith He had begun in them (1 Thess. 1:3) with power. Scripture is clear that salvation is by faith alone, entirely apart from human works (cf. Rom. 3:20–30; 4:4–5; 5:1; Gal. 2:16; 3:8, 11–14, 24; Phil. 3:9). But Paul also knew that genuine saving faith works inevitably to produce spiritual fruit (cf. Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14).

10

The Request of Prayer - Power

2 Thessalonians 1:11

Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power.

Paul knew the Thessalonians' faith was genuine because it produced such works. Yet he wanted their work of faith to increase in power, so that there would be more righteous deeds. He sought for them what he wanted for the Philippians: that they would be "filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God" (Phil. 1:11). That happens only through the filling of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 3:16; cf. Zech. 4:6) and the rich indwelling of the Word (Col. 3:16).

11

The Request of Prayer - Reason

2 Thessalonians 1:12

That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The ultimate purpose of Paul's prayer was not for them, but for the name of our Lord Jesus to be glorified in their lives. To glorify the name of the Lord means to honor and exalt all that He is.

When believers glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, they in turn will be glorified in Him. Paul has in view here both eternal glory and temporal honor. In John 12:26 Jesus promised, "If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor." Christ will honor those whose lives honor Him.

12

The Request of Prayer - Reason

2 Thessalonians 1:12

That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul closed the passage by reminding his readers that the ability to glorify Jesus Christ is **according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.** Like salvation itself, everything in the Christian life comes by **grace.**

13

So What ...

We will all face “hard times”. These are allowed into our lives to draw us closer to Jesus. We should all long for a deeper relationship with Him, and to let our light shine in this world.

So lets pray for each other like Paul. Let's pray that:

- We would walk worthy.
- That God would fulfill the good pleasure of His goodness in our lives.
- That the work of faith would be evident in our lives with power.
- That all we do would bring Glory to Jesus!

14