

# 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

## Prayer Activism in 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

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Pastor Adam Hall

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### 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 (ESV)

**11**To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, **12**so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### Introduction

- in the article called "Prayer Meeting \_\_\_\_\_", Clint Humphreys writes:

Charles Spurgeon reflected on the significance of corporate prayer meetings. He said:

*How could we look for a Pentecost if we never met with one accord, in one place, to wait upon the Lord? Brethren, we shall never see much change for the better in our churches in general till the prayer-meeting occupies a higher place in the esteem of Christians.*

*Do we want change in our lost society? Yes, we all do. But have we lost our confidence in the Lord and in corporate prayer together, appealing to him? Have we started to look sympathetically at the Marxist presupposition (adopted by both the Right and the Left) that everything is political?*

*If Christians are concerned about all of the activism which has spilled the banks of society, then maybe we should all start with this other kind of grand activism—the activism of corporate prayer.*

- we have all seen the rallies and the gatherings for certain political ideas for a while now

- but are we willing to gather together for \_\_\_\_\_?

- Paul in his letters to the Thessalonians has a serious emphasis upon prayer, this cannot be denied

- now, we need to be a people who focus upon communion with the Lord together!

#### Review

- by means of review, there are \_\_\_\_\_ reasons why Paul wrote 2 Thessalonians

i) 2 Thessalonians 1 – Paul wrote this book to \_\_\_\_\_ these Christians that were under persecution

ii) 2 Thessalonians 2 – Paul wrote this letter to deal with the \_\_\_\_\_ teachings with regards to the 2<sup>nd</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord Jesus

- some people were teaching that the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming of Jesus had already come

iii) 2 Thessalonians 3 – Paul wrote this book to deal with the ongoing issue of \_\_\_\_\_ in the congregation

- some in the congregation were teaching that since that Jesus was coming soon they did not have to work and Paul addresses this terrible idea in chapter 3

- in 1:3 this section starts out with \_\_\_\_\_ with Paul thanking God

- in 1:4 Paul \_\_\_\_\_ in the Lord's work among them

- in 1:5-10 Paul speaks about the horrors of \_\_\_\_\_ and the hope in Jesus Christ

- Paul writes this section to \_\_\_\_\_ the Thessalonians that those who are afflicting them will be afflicted by God

- Paul reminds them of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the relief that the Lord will bring to them at the \_\_\_\_\_ coming of Jesus

- now we are in this section in 2 Thessalonians on Paul's \_\_\_\_\_

- we know that Paul is no stranger to addressing the topic of \_\_\_\_\_ with these Christians in Thessalonica

- in fact one of the major \_\_\_\_\_ in 1 and 2 Thessalonians is prayer!

- 5:17 Paul commands that we are to \_\_\_\_\_ without \_\_\_\_\_

- we see that Paul does practice what he preaches here in 3:10 Paul writes that he prays for this congregation \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_!

- furthermore we see that Paul models how we are to pray in this book

- 3:12-13 – we are to pray that our \_\_\_\_\_ grows more and more

- we are to pray that we would grow in \_\_\_\_\_!

- Paul finally teaches us about \_\_\_\_\_ in prayer

**1 Thessalonians 5:18** give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

- and what do we see Paul doing throughout 1 and 2 Thessalonians? \_\_\_\_\_ the Lord!

- Paul thanks God \_\_\_\_\_ times (1:2; 2:13; 3:9) in 1 Thessalonians and 2 times in 2 Thessalonians (1:3; 2:13) for His \_\_\_\_\_ within the Thessalonians!

### Outline:

**1) (1:11) 3 Ways to Pray for Others**

**2) (1:12) Reasons to Pray**

**3) (1:12) What Fuels Prayer**

**1) (1:11) 3 Ways to Pray for \_\_\_\_\_**

**To this end we always pray for you,**

- the phrase "to this end" can also be translated "with this in mind" or "and in view of this"

- Paul is \_\_\_\_\_ the Thessalonians of what he has already said in 2 Thessalonians 1:3-10

- in light of the hope of the resurrection, the \_\_\_\_\_ from persecution that the Lord will bring and \_\_\_\_\_ of the wicked, Paul prays for these Christians

- do you see how much Paul prays for these Christians? "ALWAYS"

- Paul continues in prayer night and day, all the time praying for these Christians

- we see Paul's care and concern for all the churches shown by the fact that he \_\_\_\_\_ prays for them

- also Paul prays for the Philippian church

**Philippians 1:9** And it is my \_\_\_\_\_ that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment,

- also Paul prays for the Colossian Church

**Colossians 1:9** And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to \_\_\_\_\_ for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

- as Pastors and church leaders we realize we cannot change people or make them grow, that is why we commit our congregations to the Lord in \_\_\_\_\_

- the Lord does the \_\_\_\_\_ and of course He gets the \_\_\_\_\_!

- Paul prays for these Christians who are facing persecution in \_\_\_\_\_ ways

that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power

- now this does not mean that if a person is not facing \_\_\_\_\_ you should not pray this way

- these are three aspects of prayer for in \_\_\_\_\_ of life's circumstances

*i) God would make you worthy of His calling*

*ii) God would fulfill every resolve for good*

*iii) God would fulfill every work of faith*

*i) God would make you \_\_\_\_\_ of His calling*

- before we get into this prayer request we need to be reminded of the wonderful grace of God that is written here!

- they were \_\_\_\_\_ by God

- this means that they once were in spiritual darkness, dead in sin, dead to God but God showed us grace

- like each one of us, we were born into spiritual death because of the rebellion of Adam and Eve

- remember that Adam and Eve had perfect fellowship with the Lord but they rebelled against God and that caused death and many serious consequences for their sin

**Genesis 2:17** but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

- we also know that the final consequence for Adam and Eve was being cast out of the garden and out of fellowship with the Lord

**Genesis 3:24** He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

- what do we see after this great rebellion against God

- Genesis 4 – we see murder
- Genesis 6 – we see total depravity or total inability to please God
- Genesis 11 - We see pride

- but God gives \_\_\_\_\_ through Jesus Christ the Lord!

- this calling is pure grace and goodness!

- we deserve punishment for our sin, but God in His \_\_\_\_\_ shows us love and mercy through the Cross of the Lord Jesus

- what Paul is praying for here, is that these Christians live in such a way that is \_\_\_\_\_ or proper for what the Lord has called them

- \_\_\_\_\_ up to the standard of your calling!

- for instance, if God has called someone through Christ, it would be completely \_\_\_\_\_ for them to stay in their sin

- it would be \_\_\_\_\_ of their calling to remain in sin and to indulge in the sin that they previously had indulged in

- but Paul prays that because of the Grace of God given to them that they live lives \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord

- Paul exhorts the Ephesians to the same \_\_\_\_\_!

**Ephesians 4:1** I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,

ii) God would fulfill every resolve for \_\_\_\_\_

Next Paul prays that God would fulfill or \_\_\_\_\_ every resolve for good

- now "the good" that Paul is referring to is us living out "the good" that the Lord has commanded us!

- think about all the commands that Paul laid out in 1 Thessalonians 4-5

- 4:1-2 a general call to \_\_\_\_\_
- 4:3-8 – the call to sexual \_\_\_\_\_
- 4:9-12 – the call of \_\_\_\_\_ one another

- Paul seeks the Lord to do such a work of grace so that this congregation can live out a life of \_\_\_\_\_

- what we are seeing in the world right now is not goodness

- we see selfishness, we see arrogance, we see people putting themselves 1<sup>st</sup> and everyone else last

- we see hatred, lust, immorality, gossip, slander and all the other works of the flesh

- when I see my Facebook feed I often see "badness"

- Paul prays that we carry out the \_\_\_\_\_ of God in the world, that is our calling

iii) God would fulfill every work of \_\_\_\_\_

- Finally, Paul prays that God would fulfill their work of faith

- this work flows out of their faith

- you do not work for your faith, your faith is a \_\_\_\_\_ from God

- the faith that Paul is referring to here is the Christian's \_\_\_\_\_ or confidence in the person and work of the Lord Jesus

- this is a confidence that Jesus can \_\_\_\_\_ you from all your sin

- this is a \_\_\_\_\_ that you have been given a new and joyful life in the Lord

- this is a confidence in the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ to give you strength to defeat sin by the power of the Holy Spirit

- Paul helps us understand this in the book of Ephesians

**Ephesians 2:10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

- Paul speaks about this work of in the book of Philippians

**Philippians 2:12-13** Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, \_\_\_\_\_ your own salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

- I could use the illustration of the horse and the cart but I thought I would use a more Northwestern Ontario relevant illustration

- imagine if you saw someone with a sled filled with \_\_\_\_\_ gear trying to pull their snow machine

- that is just not going to work at all, you are not going anywhere and if anyone sees you up here doing that you will be the laughingstock of the \_\_\_\_\_

- that is what happens when we try and work for our faith, it cannot nor will it happen

- but God brings us \_\_\_\_\_ and gives us \_\_\_\_\_ so we can work out our salvation in \_\_\_\_\_ to God

- Paul prays that this work would continue in them!

- here we see that sanctification, or our holiness, is a progression or a \_\_\_\_\_

- meaning that we \_\_\_\_\_ by steps to becoming more and more holy

- some people teach that you can become completely holy and perfect on this earth

- they call this "entire sanctification", which means you can be completely holy and pure in your heart

- pretty much this prayer disproves any such belief!

- Paul prays that they would \_\_\_\_\_ and be fulfilled in their faith by deeper obedience!

- do you see this last phrase after he prays these three things?

- do you see how these prayers can be accomplished? "By His \_\_\_\_\_"

- I previously mentioned that the Holy Spirit is not directly mentioned in the book of 2 Thessalonians

- "by His power", here we have a reference to the work of the \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit

- the \_\_\_\_\_ of God brings these three works of sanctification to fruition

- do you remember how Jesus describes the work of the Holy Spirit in Acts 1?

- by describing the Holy Spirit as \_\_\_\_\_!

**Acts 1:8** But you will receive \_\_\_\_\_ when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

- Paul, in the book of Colossians, speaks indirectly about the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Holy Spirit as he writes about how he can function in ministry

- see how he struggles by the power of God, or the Holy Spirit

**Colossians 1:29** For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he \_\_\_\_\_ works within me.

- we cannot \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves or transform ourselves, we need to be transformed and sanctified by God the Holy Spirit through the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_!

## 2) (1:12) Reasons to Pray

**so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him,**

- Paul gives \_\_\_\_\_ reasons for prayer or we could call them two results of this prayer

- the results are i) that the name of Jesus would be \_\_\_\_\_ in this church and ii) this church would be \_\_\_\_\_ in the Lord Jesus

- this is the \_\_\_\_\_ of the work of God, that God gets all the glory

- in a world where everyone is looking for fame, everyone is looking for the spotlight, let us be a people who focus upon giving all the glory of the Lord!

- Paul is likely thinking of the book of Isaiah chapter 66 as he writes verse 12

**Isaiah 66:5** Hear the word of the LORD, you who tremble at his word: "Your brothers who hate you and cast you out for my name's sake have said, 'Let the LORD be \_\_\_\_\_, that we may see your joy'; but it is they who shall be put to shame.

- most of you know the saying that "God is most glorified in us when we are most satisfied in Him" by John Piper
- that statement is true indeed
- it could also be said, according to this passage, "God is most \_\_\_\_\_ in us when we are empowered by the Holy Spirit and the grace of God to live a life worthy of the Lord and seek to carry out the goodness and work of God"
- for our lives to give glory to God is one of the \_\_\_\_\_ things we can do
- let us not be a people who seek to give glory to ourselves, but let our lives give glory \_\_\_\_\_ to God
- just like that great song we sing – "All glory be to Christ the King! "

### 3) (1:12) What Fuels Prayer

according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- I just absolutely love how Paul ends this section on prayer!
  - Paul indicates that \_\_\_\_\_ of this can be accomplished by human strength or human power
  - just as the prophet Zechariah declared about how the Lord accomplishes His purposes
- Zechariah 4:6** Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my \_\_\_\_\_, says the LORD of hosts.
- Biblical knowledge is good but apart from the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and power of God you are not sanctified
  - your ability to reason and to think critically is certainly an asset but apart from the grace of God and the \_\_\_\_\_ of God you are not sanctified
  - \_\_\_\_\_ is God's favor or goodness shown to those who do not \_\_\_\_\_ it
  - God showing good to people who do not appreciate or even care about His goodness is grace
  - God's \_\_\_\_\_ is even offensive to Christians sometimes
  - we see this in parable of the workers in the Vineyard
- Matthew 20:1-16** "For the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. <sup>2</sup> After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. <sup>3</sup> And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, <sup>4</sup> and to them he said, 'You go into the vineyard too, and whatever is right I will give you.' <sup>5</sup> So they went. Going out again about the sixth hour and the ninth hour, he did the same. <sup>6</sup> And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing. And he said to them, 'Why do you stand here idle all day?' <sup>7</sup> They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You go into the vineyard too.' <sup>8</sup> And when evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the laborers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last, up to the first.' <sup>9</sup> And when those hired about the eleventh hour came, each of them received a denarius. <sup>10</sup> Now when those hired first came, they thought they would receive more, but each of them also received a denarius. <sup>11</sup> And on receiving it they grumbled at the master of the house, <sup>12</sup> saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' <sup>13</sup> But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius?' <sup>14</sup> Take what belongs to you and go. I choose to give to this last worker as I give to you. <sup>15</sup> Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or do you begrudge my generosity?' <sup>16</sup> So the last will be first, and the first last."
- I have personally seen people get upset when they hear this parable because certainly God would not do that, because that would not be fair \_\_\_\_\_ this parable shows God giving favour and goodness and generosity to people who seemingly do not deserve it
  - but God is generously gracious and we see just how generous He is with us by means of the \_\_\_\_\_ of His Son
  - no one \_\_\_\_\_ salvation from God, we deserve His \_\_\_\_\_, but God gives us grace and this calling to the hope of eternal life
  - but God's grace goes even further, His grace transforms us so that God can be glorified in us

## Application

### 1) Preach The Grace Of Christ To Yourself

- how important is the grace of God that is in Jesus Christ?
- Absolutely essential!
- we have heard a lot about what is essential and what is not essential, but we all need to be reminded that the Lord's word and grace is more essential than the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat!
  
- Thanks be to God who shows us \_\_\_\_\_ in the Lord Jesus
- this grace, the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ us out of darkness, the Lord choosing us to be the people of God, is a blessed hope
  
- the work of Christ, taking upon our sin, rescuing us or saving us from the wrath to come, deals with our ultimate \_\_\_\_\_ in life which is to be restored back to God
- let the gospel and the grace of Christ be something that you do not social distance from ever as a Christian
- let these wonderful truths of Christ be on your mind continually
- I encourage you to preach to yourself the gospel of \_\_\_\_\_
- I encourage you to \_\_\_\_\_ the character of the grace of God into your heart
  
- Paul's teaching on the grace of God in Titus certainly connects to this passage  
**Titus 2:11-13** For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, <sup>12</sup> training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, <sup>13</sup> waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,

### 2) Pray For One Another

- as Paul has already encouraged us on prayer in the book of 1 Thessalonians, he continues to do so here in 2 Thessalonians
- as Paul commands us to pray without \_\_\_\_\_ in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, he gives us another way we can pray for each other
- we ought to pray that we would be fueled by the \_\_\_\_\_ of God for obedience
- we ought to pray that we would be \_\_\_\_\_ by the grace of God for obedience
- we ought to pray that we would live lives that "glorify the Lord" with our \_\_\_\_\_ in thought, word and deed
- we ought to pray that we would live lives that "\_\_\_\_\_ for good" with our obedience in thought, word and deed
- we ought to pray that we would live lives that do the "work of faith" with our obedience in thought, word and \_\_\_\_\_
- we can be passionate about many things that are not bad in and of themselves, but let us be passionate about the Lord and His \_\_\_\_\_ and have "prayer activism" and "prayer meeting activism" to the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Lord!

**Prepare for next week:  
1 Thessalonians 2: 1-6**

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to the **King of Ages**  
immortal  
invisible

**The Only God**

be honor and glory

forever and ever  
**Amen.**

1 Timothy 1:17