

Home Group Helps

1 Thessalonians 3:11-13

Living in the Light of His Return: Prayerful Preparation for Christ's Return

I. Prayer for Paul's Return (v.11) – ¹¹ Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord direct our way to you;

II. Prayer for Preparation at Christ's Return (v.12-13) – ¹² and may the Lord cause you to increase and abound in love for one another, and for all people, just as we also *do* for you; ¹³ so that He may establish your hearts without blame in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all His saints.

1. Launching Question(s):

- Give an example when you have been most impressed with another's unconditional love?

2. Observation Question(s):

- Paul seems to combine a wish and a prayer in this text. How might you do the same?

3. Interpretation Question(s):

- What is theologically significant about Paul's expression, "Now may our God and Father Himself and Jesus our Lord (combined subject) direct (singular verb) our way"? (Deut. 6:4, 1 Cor. 8:5-6 & WCF-SCQ#6)
- Looking at this prayer and at **Pro. 16:3**, "Commit your works to the LORD and your plans will be established." And, at **Psalms 37:23-24**, "The steps of a man are established by the LORD; And He delights in his way. ²⁴ When he falls, he shall not be hurled headlong; Because the LORD is the One who holds his hand."
- How does God "direct our way" (v.11)?

4. Reflection Question(s):

- The Thessalonian Church is already characterized by love (1:2-3, 3:6). Yet, Paul prays, "may the Lord cause you to increase and abound (lit. "spill over") in love for one another, and for all people."
- How can you increase your love?
- How can our church increase her love?

5. Application Question(s):

- Jesus says in **Rev. 22:12**, "Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done."
- Paul emphasizes that increasing and abounding in love will prepare us for His return.
- What can you do to be ready?