

“What A Way To Pray!”
2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

Introduction:

1. What Are The Top Ten Issues Facing Today’s Church?
 - In 2005, LifeWay Christian Resources Surveyed 1,300 Church Leaders To Come Up With This List – What Do You Think Is #1?
 - Very Diverse Issues, But The Top 5 Issues:
 - #5 - Doctrine
 - #4 - Evangelism - The Decline Among Christians In Personal Sharing Of The Gospel!
 - #3 - Leadership - The Need For Clear, Biblical Vision And Direction By Church Leaders!
 - #2 - Discipleship - The Need For Involvement Of Every Believer In Being Continually Transformed Into The Image Of Christ!
 - #1 - Prayer - The Need For More, Ongoing, Passionate Prayer In Both Personal And Church Life!
 - #1 Issue - Prayer!
 - As One Of The Survey Participants Stated:
 - Gary Butler - “In order for today’s church to remain strong in the midst of an evil society, it must be a praying church! If we as believers want to see the same mighty move of God that the early church saw, we must pray just as the early church did. Show me a praying Christian and church and I will show you a victorious Christian and church!”
 2. Why Do We Pray?
 - Many Times, Because Of Problems & Pressures We Face!
 - In My Personal Life / Job / Family / Church / Etc!
 - During These Times, It Seems Like We Really Have A Purpose For Prayer!
 - But The Bigger Question Is: Why Do We NOT Pray?
 - Is There Not A Purpose?
 3. At The Close Of 2 Thessalonians 1, Paul Knew That This Young, Persecuted, Struggling Church Needed Prayer!
 - Anyone Would Think That They Needed Prayer!
 - Because Of All The Pressures They Faced!
 - 1:4 - “All your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure!”
 - And So Paul Prayed For Them!
 - 1:11a - “Wherefore Also We Pray Always For You!”
 - But How Did Paul Pray For Them?
 - This Is The Rest Of The Story!
 - 1:11-12! What A Way To Pray!
 - He Didn’t Just Pray For Their Temporary, Physical Needs – He Prayed For Their Eternal, Spiritual Needs!
 - His Prayer Was:
 - Persistent! “Always!”
 - Personal! “For You!”
 - But It Was Also Purposeful!
 4. See Three Purposes For Paul’s Prayer For These Christians!
 - These Purposes Ought To Be Our Purposes For Prayer!
- * The First Purpose Of His Prayer Was For The People Of God!
1. ***For The People Of God – To Be Approved!***
 - 1:11b - “That our God would count you worthy of this calling!”
 - By God’s Consideration!
 - “Count You Worthy!”
 - The Facts Here Are:
 - We Are Not Worthy Of God & His Grace!
 - We Cannot Make Ourselves Worthy Of God & His Grace!
 - Only God Can Make Us Worthy!
 - And This Is What His Prayer Was All About!
 - For God To Continue To Do His Work In Us – To Make Us & Count Us Worthy! Of

What?

- Of God's Calling!
 - This Prayer Is For God To Make His People What He Called His People To Be!
 - A "4H" Calling!
 - A Hopeful Calling! Ephesians 1:18 - "That ye may know what is the hope of his calling!"
 - A High Calling! Philippians 3:14 - "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus!"
 - A Holy Calling! 2 Timothy 1:9 - "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began!"
 - A Heavenly Calling! Hebrews 3:1 - "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus!"
- This Calling For God's People Cannot Be Obtained Apart From God & Apart From Prayer!
 - Is This Why You Pray For God's People?

* The Second Purpose Of His Prayer Was For The Plan Of God!

2. ***For The Plan Of God – To Be Accomplished!***

- 1:11c - "And fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power!"
 - Another Purpose Is For God's Plan To Be "Fulfilled!"
- "Thy Will Be Done!" (Lord's Prayer)
 - "All The Good Pleasure Of His Goodness!"
 - A Prayer Of Submission To His Will!
 - And His Will Is Always Good!
 - Because He Is Always Good!
 - Whatever God Chooses To Do Or Not To Do Is Good & Right, No Matter What It Is!
 - Deuteronomy 32:4 - "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he!"
 - Psalm 25:8 - "Good and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way!"
 - What Did The Thessalonians Think About This Prayer?
 - God's Will Is Always Good, Because God Is Always Good! Therefore, We Can Submit To His Will & Pray: "Thy Will Be Done!"
- Thy Work Be Done!
 - "And The Work Of Faith With Power!"
 - A Prayer Of Sincerity For His Work!
 - His Work Is Always A Work Of Faithfulness!
 - And His Good Will & His Good Work Go Hand In Hand! And His Work Will Also Be Fulfilled / Accomplished! How?
 - "With / In Power!"
 - In A Clear, Effective, Powerful Way!
 - Is This How We Pray For God To Work? In Your Life? In Your Family's Life? In Your Church's Life?
 - God's Work Is Always Good, Because God Is Always Good! Therefore, We Can Sincerely Pray For It To Be Done "With Power!"
- Prayer Is A Part Of God's Plan! Prayer Is His Will! Prayer Is His Work!
 - Is This How You Pray For God's Plan?
 - In Submission? With Sincerity?

* The Third Purpose For His Prayer Was For The Place Of God!

3. ***For The Place Of God – To Be Acclaimed!***

- 1:12 - "That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ!"
 - The Greatness Of The Glory Of God Is In View Here! And Ought To Be In View In Our Prayers! Another Purpose Of Prayer!
- Prayer Glorifies His Name!
 - Prayer Exalts The Name Of Jesus!
 - "What's In A Name?" When It Comes To The Name Of Jesus, Everything! His Name

- Encompasses All That He Is! It Is His Very Person / Position / Perfections!
- The Purpose Of Prayer Is To Glorify His Name!
 - This Is Why You Ought To Pray! If For No Other Reason! It Is Not So Much About You / Your Needs / Your Problems / Or Even Others – It Is About Jesus!
 - When You Properly Pray, You Put Jesus In His Proper Place In Your Life! You Exalt Him! You Glorify Him! But Also:
 - Prayer Glorifies His Namesakes!
 - “And Ye In Him!”
 - As You Exalt Jesus In His Proper Place – He Brings You Up With Him!
 - This Was Christ’s Desire!
 - High Priestly Prayer - John 17:21-24 - “That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. / And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: / I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. / Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world!”
 - Participation / Perfection / Presence Of The Glory Of Christ!
 - Prayer Glorifies Christ & Christians! How?
 - It Is Not Something Earned! It Is Given As A Gift! Not Based On Why We Are Or What We Do – But On Who He Is & What He’s Done!
 - “According To The Grace Of Our God And The Lord Jesus Christ!”
 - When We Pray, We Glorify Him & We Are Glorified In Him!
 - He Brings Us To Where He Is! To The “Throne Of Grace” – Where “We May Obtain Mercy, And Find Grace To Help In Time Of Need!” (Hebrews 4:16)

Conclusion:

1. **IE:** “In one region of Africa, the first converts to Christianity were very diligent about praying. In fact, the believers each had their own special place outside the village where they went to pray in solitude. The villagers reached these “prayer rooms” by using their own private footpaths through the brush. When grass began to grow over one of these trails, it was evident that the person to whom it belonged was not praying very much. / Because these new Christians were concerned for each other’s spiritual welfare, a unique custom sprang up. When ever anyone noticed an overgrown “Prayer path,” he or she would go to the person and lovingly warn, “Friend, there’s grass on your path!”
2. Have You Forgotten The Purpose Of Your Prayer?
 - Is There “Grass On Your Path?”
 - There Is Purpose For Prayer! And Much Need For It!
 - For The People Of God!
 - To Be Approved!
 - For The Plan Of God!
 - To Be Accomplished!
 - For The Place Of God!
 - To Be Acclaimed / Glorified / Exalted!
3. Begin Praying With Purpose Today!

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