

*Edgemont Bible Church*  
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*2 Thessalonians 1:11-12*

Mar. 19, 2017

**Intro:** Praying for the wrong things is probably common, but it has definite consequences on those that pray wrongfully. Sometimes we pray for health, wealth, happiness, comfort, success, a house, a job, a spouse, a promotion, or a raise. These things are not necessarily wrong to pray for, but they were not high on the list of priorities in the prayers of Jesus or Paul, Mt 6:25-34; Phil 4:11-12,19. James 4:3 says that we can also pray with the wrong motive, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

The essence of prayer is not asking things from God as much as it is listening to discern His will. The deeper one's prayer life becomes, the more in line it will be with the will of God as revealed in Scripture. As one travels down this path, they learn to desire what He desires, love what He loves, and they gladly pray Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

In verses 11-12, we do not have a specific prayer of Paul, but a general theme of what he prayed for all the churches in the NT. It shows that he prayed the right things with the right motive. It also shows that he did not pray a ritual or routine prayer. It follows a section on the return of Christ that is the believer's future hope and has practical implications for the present (see chapter 3).

### III. Praying for the Right Things – 2 Th 1:11-12

#### A. The Resource - vs 11a

##### 1. Therefore

- a. Context - 2Th 1:10 when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.
- b. Paul's prayers were so that believers would become the people that would glorify God
- c. this kind of praying permeated Paul's epistles - Ro 1:9-10; 2 Co 13:7,9; Eph 1:15-17; 3:14-21; Phil 1:4,9-11; Col 1:3,9-11; 1 Th 1:2; 3:10-13; 5:23; 2 Tim 1:3; Phi 4,6

##### 2. we also pray always for you

- a. Petitioning God for their sanctification knowing that like justification, it only comes by God's sovereign grace, not apart from man's obedience.
- b. Question arises, if God is sovereign, why pray?
  - i. always arises when the infinite God interacts with finite man
  - ii. Ex. - Every word of God is inspired yet He did not dictate it.
- c. any biblical view of the sovereignty of God will not exclude prayer.
  - i. God is sovereign
    - Job 42:2 - I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You.
    - David says, Ps 103:19 The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all.

- Isaiah says in 46:9-11 Remember the former things of old, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things that are not yet done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,' Calling a bird of prey from the east, The man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it.

ii. That does not negate the importance of human responsibility

- Samuel in talking to the people after giving them King Saul

-spoke of God's sovereign choice of them to be His people - 1 Sam 12:20,22

-said it would be a sin against God to not pray for them and teach them the good and right way - 1 Sam 12:23

- Daniel understanding Jeremiah's prophecy of 70 year Babylonian captivity - Dan 9:2-prayed for God to restore them

- Dan 9:3-19

- Knowing God's sovereign election—Ro 9:16,18,24; Paul still prays for Israel's salvation

d. Prayer aligns our hearts with God's sovereign plan

e. God also uses prayer to bring about His plan

i. effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much - Jas 5:16

ii. After Isaiah informs Hezekiah of his impending death 2 Kgs 20:1

- Hezekiah pleads with God for more time - vs 2-3

- God extends his life by 15 years - vs 4-6

- God uses that situation to advance His purposes - vs 12-17

B. The Request - vs 11b-d

1. Worthiness - that our God would count you worthy of this calling,

a. our God - reminds the readers of the intimacy they have with God

b. **axioo** - to deem entitled or fit, desire, think good, **count** or **make worthy**.

c. calling - as with all of Paul's letters - the irresistible call to salvation - vs 14; Ro 1:6-7; 8:28,30; 9:24; 11:29; 1 Co 1:2,9,24,26; 7:17-18,20-22,24; etc

d. God takes those worthy of death and makes them worthy of His Kingdom

e. The Thessalonians would also show themselves worthy as they walked in the power of the Spirit being sanctified

i. some were not walking worthy - 3:6,11

ii. Common in all churches - Ro 2:24

f. Components of a Worthy Walk

i. In the Holy Spirit - Ro 8:4; Gal 5:16,25

ii. In Humility - Eph 4:2

iii. In Purity - Ro 13:13; Eph 5:3

iv. In Contentment - 1 Co 7:17; Heb 13:5

v. In Faith - 2 Co 5:7

- vi. In Righteousness - Eph 2:10
- vii. In Unity - Eph 4:3; Phil 1:27
- viii. In Gentleness - Eph 4:3
- ix. In Patience and Joy - Col 1:11
- x. In Love - Eph 5:2
- xi. In Thankfulness - Col 1:12
- xii. In light - Eph 5:8-9
- xiii. In Knowledge and Fruitfulness Col 1:10
- xiv. In Wisdom - Eph 5:15
- xv. In Truth - 3 Jo 3-4

g. 1Jo 2:6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

## 2. Fulfillment - and *fulfill* all the good pleasure of His goodness

- a. *pleroo* - complete or accomplish
- b. eudokia - could be translated purpose or choice
- c. agathosune - goodness, virtue or beneficence.
- d. In David's writing, we see the same theme
  - i. Ps 21:2-3 You have given him his heart's desire, And have not withheld the request of his lips. Selah For You meet him with the blessings of goodness; You set a crown of pure gold upon his head.
  - ii. Ps 37:4 Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart.
  - iii. Ps 138:8 The LORD will perfect that which concerns me;
- e. When we align ourselves with God and His purposes, we can know that He hears us and will give what we ask for - Jo 15:7; 1 jo 5:14-15
- f. The opposite is also true Jas 4:3
- g. Far from being a cosmic killjoy, God is generous and gracious
  - i. Ps 107:9 For He satisfies the longing soul, And fills the hungry soul with goodness.
  - ii. Ps 145:16 You open Your hand And satisfy the desire of every living thing.
  - iii. Isa 30:18 Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you; And therefore He will be exalted, that He may have mercy on you. For the LORD is a God of justice; Blessed are all those who wait for Him.
  - iv. Ps 90:14 Oh, satisfy us early with Your mercy, That we may rejoice and be glad all our days!

## 3. Power - and the work of faith with power,

- a. Fulfill from previous phrase also governs this phrase
- b. Final portion of his prayer, that God would complete
  - i. the work of faith

- salvation is through faith alone, apart from human works -  
 Ro 3:20-30; 4:4-5; 5:1; Gal 2:16; 3:8,11-14,24; Phil 3:9

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- but genuine faith works and produces fruit Eph 2:10; Tit  
2:7,14; 3:1,8,14; Jas 2:14-26

- Paul knew their faith was real – 1 Th 1:3

ii. with power

- Paul wanted their faith to increase with power for more  
righteous deeds

- this happens only when they are filled with the Spirit – Eph  
3:16; Zech 4:6

### C. The Reason - vs 12

1. the purpose of Paul's prayer

a. that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

i. Reminder of OT “name of the Lord” - Ge 4:26; Ex 33:19; Deut  
5:11; Isa 42:8

ii. Clearly identifying Jesus as Jehovah of the OT

b. may be **glorified** in you – means to honor and exalt

c. and you in Him,

i. When believer exalt Him, He in turn exalts them

ii. 1 Sam 2:30 those who honor me I will honor

iii. Jo 12:26 if anyone serves me, the Father will honor him

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

a. The source of the power is the Holy Spirit or Grace

b. Like salvation, everything in the Christian life comes only through the  
grace of God

Praying right is inseparably tied to holy living