

2Thessalonians 1:11–12

A Prototypical Apostolic Way of Praying for Suffering Believers

Thursday, June 30, 2022 ▫ Read 2Thessalonians 1:11–12

Questions from the Scripture text: What does the apostolic team do (v11)? How often? That God would count the Thessalonians as what? And that God would fulfill what? With what sort of works from them? For what Name (v12)? That what might happen to that Name? in whom? And who else would be glorified in Whom? According to what?

What is an apostolic way of praying for believers who are enduring persecution? 2Thessalonians 1:11–12 looks forward to the second serial reading in morning public worship on the coming Lord's Day. In these two verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that when believers are suffering persecution, one of the main things to pray for them is for their holiness.

The previous six verses had described God's goodness to count the Thessalonians worthy of the kingdom for which they suffered (v5). Now, the apostle prays for them to receive that very thing. The "His" in v11 is supplied by our translators, but it is not in the original. The apostle might be praying that God would fulfill all the goodness that pleases Him. But, it reads more naturally that by His power, He would fulfill every one of *their* good pleasures that comes from *their* faith.

That is to say that even as it is God Who has given them faith, and it is God Who has given them whatever good desires they have, so also it must be God Who supplies the power by which they can act from this faith and good desire. If we want others to do good works, then it is well to tell them what good works are and to urge them to do them. But it is even more vital to pray for them, for it is God who "fulfills" it all by His power.

If our ultimate goal is "that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified," then this is how we will pray for believers under pressure. That this opportunity to see Christ's glory shine in their actions would be fulfilled. Indeed, it is an extraordinary grace of God that His chosen way of being glorified in believers is that believers would be glorified in Him. In Jesus, the Thessalonian believers would be empowered to believe and to do that which is good. This is glorious! And by doing so in them, Jesus would show Himself glorious.

There is no room here for questioning God's providence in persecution. The apostle, and those who follow him by the same Spirit, will be too busy marveling at "the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" and praying that that He would be glorified for it.

What difficult situation are you in? For what desire for good or work of faith does this situation present an opportunity? How would Jesus be glorified in you through this? How would you be glorified in Him?

Sample prayer: Lord, when we are suffering we often forget that we are being counted worthy to suffer for the kingdom and to live for Your kingdom. Forgive us for missing opportunities to show Your glory in our good purposes and works of faith. Turn our hearts toward glorifying You, and fulfill those good desires, we ask, through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP1 "How Blessed the Man" or TPH433 "Amazing Grace"

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(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Second Thessalonians, chapter 1, verse 11 and 12. These are the words of God. Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling and fulfill all the good pleasure of goodness and the work of faith with power. 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 So far, the reading of God's inspired and inerrant work.

So we read in verse 4 that he gives. Thanks for their faith. In all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure. And that they are being counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which, they also suffer the suffering. Of course, being something that gives them the opportunity to prize the kingdom of God, prize, having God himself and all of his blessedness over current comfort or ease or pleurability of things.

When those things are in conflict with the opportunity to prize the kingdom and he says that it is righteous of God that he is counting them worthy of the kingdom in this way. So he's thanking God for their faith and when you thank God for faith, you recognizing that God is the one who gives faith When you thank God for patience.

You're recognizing that God, is the one who gives patience. You don't come to pray and he say, dear God, you should be really thankful for how patient I've been lately. Don't you see how much better? I've been doing That would be a horrible thing to say, Even though before we kneel down to pray, we often feel like that in our hearts.

Oh, I've been patient for almost an entire day or an highly advanced levels of sanctification a day and a half and we start to feel proud of ourselves. Like we're doing pretty amazing instead of thankful to God and amazed at the miracle that he's enabled us. Sustained us in doing a little good for a little while, But if we thank God for the patience, if we come and we say, oh Lord, I have seen so much but Really and truly it is better than I had previously been how merciful you are to me that someone who is still such a sinner as I am now and still.

So impatient, as I often find myself, being that you have, granted, a measure of patience. And so when you the one who thanks God for something ought to be the one who prays for more of that good thing and that's what he does. Says therefore we always also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling.

What calling? Well, The calling to be a Christian, the calling to go through suffering as a Christian. The calling to appear glorious with Jesus. When he appears. That's where it's going, right? So he takes vengeance in flaming fire on those who do not know God. And we thought about that a little bit in the midweek sermon last night.

How dreadful the hell is that? We can't even imagine and yet it is. We just got finished in verse 10. Well a week ago we got finished. Sometimes that weak makes it hard to remember when he comes in that day to be glorified in his saints and to be admired among all those who believe.

And so he's bringing us through the suffering, until we are sanctified by the suffering and have opportunity to displace sanctification in the suffering until there's no more suffering and there's no more need for sanctification because he is glorious and we are glorious with him in that day and he is glorified in us and we are admiring His glory.

It's a wonderful calling. Isn't it on your realize? What the end point is what the end game is and the overall plan that God is accomplishing right now through the present, sufferings not only of ourselves, but of our brothers. And when we realize what God is doing for them, we can thank God for the patience that he's giving them and their works of faith.

And we could pray to God that he'd keep giving them patience and give them more works of faith. And that's why I didn't read the word his in verse 11, which the New King James translators have been accurately supplied because those who are pleased by goodness are the same subjects of the verb or the of whom.

It has said here, work of faith with power, God doesn't do works of faith. He has his own power. He has. He is the one in whom we trust. But he does fulfill our good desires after all. The only reason we have any good desires is he gave them to us.

And so for the believer, whenever you have that desire to do good and you feel frustrated, looking at yourself, right? Romans 7, when I will to do good. Evil is right there with me, But who else is right there with you. God, the Holy Spirit. That's the difference that you get when you turn the page from Romans chapter 7 into Romans chapter 8, and why is God the Holy Spirit right there with you?

Well, because the Holy Spirit is the one who leads the sons of God, and by whom we put to death, the deeds of the body. And who, by whom we call God, our Abba, our Father, and who is applying Christ to us. He is unto us the Spirit of Christ.

If anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, then he is none of his. And so when you will to do, good, evil is right there with you because you have that remaining flushiness in you. But the willing to do good came from God, who is also right there with you.

And he, who is the one who has started to give you, those good desires is the one who will finish your fulfillment of those. Good desires. Sanctification comes from him and therefore it will be accomplished, Don't get discouraged in your pursuit of holiness and you're killing of sin because the one who gave you the pleasure in doing good, is the one who will fulfill it.

And that's what the apostle is praying here. He says therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling and fulfill all the good pleasure of goodness and the work of faith with power, it is the prayer request version of being confident of this very thing that he who began a good work in, you will complete it unto the day of Christ.

Jesus, Philippians 1, verse 6. And so the prayer request version of that we find here and the second Thessalonians 1 verse 11, continuing into first 12 that the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ may be glorified in you and you in him. So it's not just Jesus. Who's glorified when it is seen how complete a Savior he is, that is not only a toned for our sin and been counted as our righteousness.

But giving us His Spirit to apply himself to us, He's actually made us righteous and holy. Jesus is glorified as a complete Savior but along the way the mechanism by which he is glorified as a complete savior is by presenting us glorious. As Ephesians 5 describes Jesus presenting the bride to himself, whom he is perfectly cleansed and removed every, every blemish from and she is presented glorious to himself, which is what God predestined us for Romans 8, that those whom he forew, he predestined to be conformed, to the image of His Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Many, who, look, just like he does. And so, not only is Jesus going to be glorified in believers in the last day, but believers will be glorious. In Jesus, in the last day 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.

Of course, that phrase. Lord. Jesus Christ means of course, that Jesus as Yahweh and the fact that he has grace for us, also means that he is Yahwe that he is God. And so, this is what you pray for. For those who are in persecution, those who are suffering and those who are in trial, those who are in pain, who are believers sorry, should say believers who are suffering. Believers who are pers. Believers or in trial. Believers who are in pain.

The great thing to pray for them is that God would count them worthy that he would keep giving them pleasure to do goodness and fulfilling those desires for good that he would keep giving them faith and sustaining them in. Acting upon that faith. That Almighty power would be demonstrated in the weakest of circumstances, those who are suffering, and then trial.

So that's how the apostle prayed for the suffering Thessalonian believers. That's how we should pray for our brothers and sisters. Who suffer how we should pray for ourselves. When we are suffering, let's pray our Father. We knew ask this that you would give us faith and to act upon that faith that you would give us desire for goodness.

And then you would fulfill our desires to do. Good. Oh Lord, even our desires for good are so small. And we often feel frustrated that even the small desires that we have for good going fulfilled, and we cry out with the Apostle who will save us from the body of the death.

Make us also to cry out. Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ. Our Lord and we pray that you would then, fulfill all desires for goodness. Thank you for the truth. The certainty that we shall be, we shall appear glorious. When Christ appears to have his name glorified in us, and as you've already put his name upon us, help us.

So God now to walk in holiness and goodness and faith. Now that the name that is of Jesus that is on us now would be glorified in our life, Grant it. We ask in his name, Amen.