

The Right Focus for Difficult Days Ahead 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

2 Thessalonians 1:11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power, ¹² 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.

Introduction

Today is the last Sunday of 2021. Next Sunday, we will begin a new year, 2022. Every year, when we come to the beginning of the year, I usually preach a message to challenge you in some way concerning the church or your own spiritual walk with the Lord.

This is that Sunday, and in the Lord's providence in our study of 2 Thessalonians, we come to a text that is well suited for this purpose. This is a text that calls our attention to what really matters and helps us see clearly what our purpose is in this world.

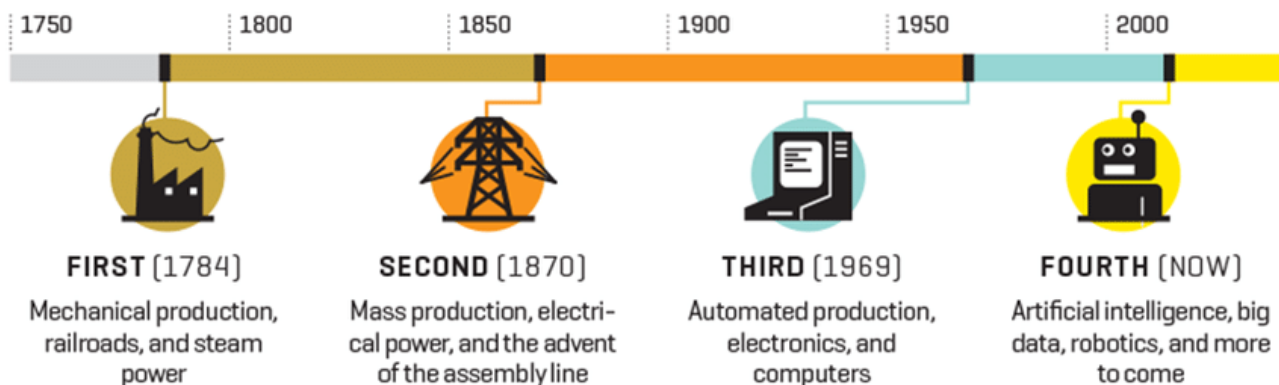
The last couple of years have been difficult and strange to say the least and based on what I'm

reading, the next few years may challenge us even more. And because of this it is very important that we keep our focus right and on the right things and the right person.

Most of us have very busy lives, and we look back and wonder where did 2021 go. Time seems to be moving fast these days. Life is but a vapor, but it seems lately that our steam is coming out of a steam engine with great force and speed rather than the casual lifting off our coffee in the morning.

We know that at least mechanically speaking, time is not moving faster, but at least our perception of it is. Not only is our perception of time faster but even things are really moving faster.

In only the last 237 years we have seen the world dramatically change. For thousands of years, we did most things from getting food, working, building and what little traveling by manpower, real men doing the work , but in the last 237 years we have seen 4 industrial revolutions



We've gone from steam power to Artificial intelligence.

From men shoveling coal in a steam engine to move people and product to biochips in Sweden inserted in the hand to track your vaccine status and more.

<https://coronaneews123.wordpress.com/2021/12/23/sweden-biochip-implants-for-proof-of-submission-to-highest-death-report-test-vaccines-in-history/>

One of the major objectives of the 4th industrial revolution is the merging of humans with A.I. The bringing of the human brain and physical anatomy into complete integration with computers. A.I.

There are things in the works right now that I will not even speak of because, if I did, you might think I'm crazy. So I will wait and when it shows up then it can be proven.

Technology is in a rapid development unlike anytime in recent history.

- Globally, there are about 1.35 million tech startups around the world.
- The number of smart devices collecting, analyzing, and sharing data should hit 50 billion by 2030.
- The Internet adoption rate sits at 59% in 2021.

- The computing and processing capacity of computers hits double figures every 18 months.
- The world has produced 90% of its Big Data in the past two years.
- Every second, 127 new devices are connected to the internet.
- In Q1 of 2021, 4.66 billion people are using the internet.

There are 4.88 billion phone users in the world as of January 2021

By 2025, there will be 75 billion connected devices in the world.

Google got 2.5 trillion searches in 2020.

By 2040, 95% of purchases will be online.

There are 3.96 billion social media users in the globe as of 2021.

AI will replace around 85 million jobs in the US by 2025

91.6% of Fortune 1000 companies are investing more in Big Data and AI.

People check their mobile phones about 150 times daily.

<https://techjury.net/blog/how-fast-is-technology-growing/>

There is what the World Economic Forum says is a Great Reset coming. Everything will be affected.

From the removal of currency in your pocket to how you shop and what you own.

They say, that Covid and Climate change are driving this.

My point is that things are about to change more drastically in the years ahead than they have ever changed.

But with the advancements in tech and some of the changes that are very troubling to say the least, a few things will stay the same no matter what industrial age we are in.

God is still Holy and Sovereign, Men are still sinful and Evil. Men will still die no matter how much AI they make.

And Christ and the Gospel will remain the only way to Heaven.

So although these days are perilous days we live in and they seem to grow darker by the day. All that means to me is our lights can be brighter than ever.

Matthew 5:14–16 (NKJV)

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all *who are* in the house. ¹⁶ Let

your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

and with that should come an even greater urgency to make everything count for the Lord and His Glory.

- I. The Context of this Prayer
- II. The Constant nature of this Prayer
- III. The Content of this Prayer
 - A. Your Walk
 - B. Your Work
 - C. Your Worship.

- I. The Context of this Prayer

¹¹ Therefore we also pray always for you.

2 Thessalonians 1:4–10 (NKJV)

⁴ so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure,

⁵ *which is* manifest evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer;

⁶ since *it is* a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, ⁷ and to *give* you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, ⁸ in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹ These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 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.

The persecution and trouble the believers were facing and experiencing is what led Paul to talk about the return of Jesus Christ to Judge the world and to rescue the saints so that they can bring glory to God and be admired by all the saints for eternity, is the reason for the therefore.

The word “Therefore” is actually

εις ο και προσευχομεθα παντοτε περι
υμων

2 Thessalonians 1:11 (NASB95)

11 To this end also we pray for you always,

2 Thessalonians 1:11 (ESV)

¹¹ To this end we always pray for you,

2 Thessalonians 1:11 (YLT)

¹¹ For which also we do pray always for you,

So unto this end that you would be able to be counted worthy to bring glory to God.

That these Christians would be able to endure in a God honoring way and be ready, prepared and worthy when the Lord returns was the motivator for Paul's constant intercession on their behalf in prayer.

It is the same today. We are facing mounting hostility to the Christian faith here in America and the persecution will continue to get greater. We have lived in relative ease in years past. We have been in the Bible belt where there are churches everywhere. It was a place where a Biblical worldview was more common than absent. But those days are gone.

Two things have happened in the Bible belt. Some churches have let the world in and have had to loosen their belts so that they are not so restrictive. This comes from a steady diet of junk food from the world that satisfies the desires of the flesh. This has

made churches like this very unhealthy and at risk of sudden death.

Other have have tightened there belts because they don't have a steady diet of prayer and solid biblical teaching and preaching, so they have lost weight and are starving. Their evangelisms has all but dried up and the mission zeal has decreased and as a result they are dying.

I have found that there is a common thread that is running thru these unhealthy churches.

Very little if any persecution.

Very little if any preaching and teaching on the second Coming of Christ.

Both are great motivators for prayer and the practice of the Christian faith.

If you are being persecuted, that will drive you into the presence of God in prayer, and to His Word for spiritual food and to the assembly of God's people for strength and encouragement.

And if you are learning about and believing in the soon return of Christ. It is a great motivator that will drive you into the presence of God in prayer and practice of the Christian faith and to His Word for spiritual food and to the assembly of God's people for strength and encouragement and evangelism and missions.

Paul knew this...that both persecution and the return of Christ were great motivators for the Christian faith and practice.

Listen to Peter's words too,

2 Peter 3:10–11 (NKJV)

¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up. ¹¹ Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner *of persons* ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness,

2 Peter 3:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

The writer of Hebrews
Hebrews 10:23–25 (NKJV)

²³ Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. ²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but

exhorting *one another*, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

Jesus' words,
Matthew 24:38–44 (NKJV)

³⁸ For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be. ⁴⁰ Then two *men* will be in the field: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴¹ Two *women* will be grinding at the mill: one will be taken and the other left. ⁴² Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.

I. The Context of this Prayer

II. The Constant nature of this Prayer

¹¹ Therefore we also pray always for you

Paul understood that one of the primary responsibilities of a faithful pastor is to **pray** for his flock **always** and thereby reach into the divine resource of God's power and purpose (Acts 6:4). Though the time a pastor can spend teaching his people is limited to meetings, he can pray for them **constantly**. MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [*1 & 2 Thessalonians*](#) (p. 253). Chicago: Moody Press.

Prayer is considered a discipline of the Christian life. It is absolute necessity for spiritual growth and survival.

As Charles Spurgeon once said,
He who pursues sin prays little but he who pursues prayer sins less.

Of all the things a Christian should do. Prayer is the most neglected and often relegated to the urgent or emergency needs physically.

If we are in an accident, or lose our jobs, or given a life threatening diagnosis, have a death in the family, our car breaks down, or a hundred other physical needs we might since the need to offer of a prayer.

But the spiritual needs of the salvation of souls, the spiritual growth and protection of the believers and the need for enlightenment and discernment

and many more spiritual needs are rarely mentioned.

Have you ever thought that one of the reasons we have such a shallow christianity and lack of biblical discernment and a proliferation of false teachers is directly due to the lack of prayer about these matters.

The church is in dire need of men and women to pray for her. She is being seduced by the world and is not prepared for what is coming her way. The challenges that are facing the church and will face Christians in the near future are going to be some of the most difficult in recent history in America.

The New Testament sets the pattern for the Christians in Prayer.

At the very beginning when the disciples were waiting for the promise of the Holy Spirit, the disciples and the women gathered to pray in the upper room

Acts 1:13–14 (NKJV)

¹³ And when they had entered, they went up into the upper room where they were staying: Peter, James, John, and Andrew; Philip and Thomas; Bartholomew and Matthew; James *the son* of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot; and Judas *the son* of James. ¹⁴ These all

continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

Acts 2:41–42 (NKJV)

⁴¹ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added *to them*. ⁴² And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

The example and command to pray

Romans 1:9 (NKJV)

⁹ For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of His Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers,

Luke 18:1 (NKJV)

Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart,

Ephesians 6:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ pray without ceasing,

The Content of Paul's Prayers

Ephesians 1:16–18 (NKJV)

¹⁶ do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, ¹⁸ the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Ephesians 3:14–19 (NKJV)

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ..., ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the

saints what *is* the width and length and depth and height—¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Philippians 1:9–11 (NKJV)

⁹ And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, ¹¹ being filled with the fruits of righteousness which *are* by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Colossians 1:9–11 (NKJV)

⁹ For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; ¹¹ strengthened with all might, according to His glorious power, for all patience and longsuffering with joy;

1 Thessalonians 3:10–13 (NKJV)

¹⁰ night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and perfect what is lacking in your faith?

¹¹ Now may our God and Father Himself, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our way to you. ¹² And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we *do* to you, ¹³ so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints.

One other point I would like to make is that some find it difficult to pray or see the need to pray when when we learn of the doctrine fo the Sovereignty of God. That simple means that God is in control and governs all things down to the smallest detail on this planet and among the people on it. Nothing happens apart from the Soveriegn plan of God.

The Bible strongly affirms God's absolute sovereignty. Humbled by God's rebuke, Job declared, "I know that You can do all things, and that no purpose of Yours can be thwarted" (Job 42:2). In one of the clearest, most direct statements of God's sovereignty anywhere in Scripture, David wrote,

“The Lord has established His throne in the heavens, and His sovereignty rules over all” (Ps. 103:19). Proverbs 16:33 notes that “the lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord.” In Isaiah 46:9–11 God declared,

Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things which have not been done, saying, “My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure”; calling a bird of prey from the east, the man of My purpose from a far country. Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass. I have planned it, surely I will do it.

The Lord Jesus Christ, Paul wrote to Timothy, “is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords” (1 Tim. 6:15; cf. Pss. 22:28; 47:2, 7; 95:3; Dan. 7:13–14; Mal. 1:14; Matt. 28:18; Rev. 17:14; 19:16).

But the Bible also teaches that God’s sovereignty does not negate human responsibility

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [*1 & 2 Thessalonians*](#) (pp. 254–255). Chicago: Moody Press.

This can be a tremendous comfort when you are facing a difficult time in life, whether it be persecution or a life threatening illness or death of a loved one.

The bible is clear that for the believer

Romans 8:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.

But, also Paul knew and taught consistently that God's plan will be accomplished and nothing will stop it.

Romans 8:29–30 (NKJV)

²⁹ For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. ³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

But even with this knowledge of the perfect will of God being accomplished and that every believer will make it to the end and that all will, not might, but will be conformed to the image of Christ, he still believed passionately in the personal responsibility of the believer in his sanctification and his personal responsibilities in the disciplines of the Christian life. This led him to pray specifically for these things, knowing that God had not only determined the end,

that is the final landing spot, that all would be conformed to Christ, but also had determined the means to get there....which one of the means is prayer... Prayer is not a useless activity under the umbrella of God's Sovereignty...It is an essential support for the sovereignty of God that He as designated as such. He desires to work thru the means of prayer so that He will get more glory by the saints making there request know to God and then God answering and then all the glory goes to Him. Listen to how Paul brings ministry and an our responsibility to do ministry along side of the Sovereign plan of God

2 Timothy 2:8–10 (NKJV)

⁸ Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, ⁹ for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, *even* to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. ¹⁰ Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Philippians 2:12–13 (NKJV)

¹² Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much

more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; ¹³ for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

There is a beautiful harmony between the perfect, sovereign ordained will of God and the means of prayer and discipline in the Christian walk.

Another way of looking at this is, if you are not praying...

First, you are disobedient.

Second, you are outside the will of God for your life.

Third, you have divorced yourself from the means of being used by God to accomplish His purpose.

Or we could say it this way.

If you are praying

You are in the will of God

And you have placed yourself in the very center of the means God has chosen to accomplish his purpose.

A church that does not pray, does not participate in the Sovereign plan of God

A church that does pray will be used of God to accomplish His will.

I am very thankful to say that,

God has been moving in this church, creating in the hearts of some of our people a passion for prayer. Frankly, I've never seen anything like it. And as we go forward in the year ahead, there will be more need and demand on us to pray, both privately and cooperatively. So moving forward, we will be committing more times to the corporate prayer of this church and I hope that you will also commit more of your time to prayer privately. We need to be praying without ceasing.

I. The Context of this Prayer

II. The Constant nature of this Prayer

III. The Content of this Prayer

A. Your Walk

11 Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling

To understand what Paul is talking about, we need to understand the word... "calling"

33.312 καλέω^d; κλήσις^a, εως *f*, προσκαλέομαι^b: to urgently invite someone to accept responsibilities for a particular task, implying a new relationship to the one who does the calling—‘to call, to call to a task.’

It is rare that one can translate καλέω^d, κλήσις^a, and προσκαλέομαι^b as simply ‘to call’ in the sense of ‘to speak to someone at a distance and tell them to come.’ For example, in 2 Th 2:14 it may be necessary to render the above clause as ‘through the good news we preached, which summoned you to do this.’ Similarly, in Ac 16:10 one may translate ‘because God has urgently invited us to preach the good news to the people there.’

Louw, J. P., & Nida, E. A. (1996). *Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament: based on semantic domains* (electronic ed. of the 2nd edition., Vol. 1, p. 423). New York: United Bible Societies.

This call in the epistles (the books in the N.T. Other than the Gospels and Acts) is always the efficacious call of salvation, not an invitation that can be rejected or refused.

This is the sovereign drawing of the Father by means of the Holy Spirit to Christ.

John 6:37 (NKJV)

³⁷ All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

John 6:44 (NKJV)

⁴⁴ No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

Romans 1:7 (NKJV)

⁷ To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:28–30 (NKJV)

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

2 Peter 1:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

So this calling is synonymous with salvation.

And since this is the case, then why would Paul say

11 Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling

We know that no one is worthy or deserving of salvation. We are all sinners, and the only thing we deserve is death and Hell.

What, does Paul mean that we be counted worthy or deserving for this calling, salvation?

God takes sinners, worthy only of death (Rom. 1:32), and makes them **worthy** of His kingdom by imputing Christ's righteousness to them (2 Cor. 5:21). But Paul prayed that the Thessalonians would also prove **worthy** in practice through Holy Spirit sanctification, that they would "walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls [them] into His own kingdom and glory" (1 Thess. 2:12; cf. Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:10). As they become more like Jesus Christ, Christians become more deserving to bear His name. One important way God makes believers more **worthy** of their **calling** is through suffering (1:5).

As is sadly the case in every church, some in the Thessalonian congregation were not walking worthy. Paul rebuked them in chapter 3 of this epistle:

Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us.

For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. (3:6, 11)

They were like the Jews of whom Paul wrote, “The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you” (Rom. 2:24). Though made eternally worthy by Christ’s imputed righteousness, their disobedient lives made them unworthy to be called Christians

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (pp. 256–257). Chicago: Moody Press.

axioó: to deem worthy

Original Word: ἀξιόω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: axioó

Phonetic Spelling: (ax-ee-o'-o)

Definition: to deem worthy

Usage: I account or treat as worthy.

Cognate: 515 aksióō – to reckon as worthy, matching value to actual substance – i.e. worth as it corresponds to reality. [See 514](#)

(aksios). **ἀξιόω** to consider suitable for requital or for receipt of someth. *consider worthy, deserving*

Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., Bauer, W., & Gingrich, F. W. (2000). [A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature](#) (3rd ed., p. 94). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Axiōō (**count ... worthy**) can also be translated “make worthy.” Either sense is appropriate here, for God makes worthy those whom He counts worthy

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (p. 256). Chicago: Moody Press.

reckon or declare the readers **worthy** of the **calling** they had received, to come to God through faith in Jesus Christ (cf. Rom. 8:30; Eph. 4:1; 1 Thes. 4:7). Paul consistently made what God has done for believers the basis of his appeals for them to lead lives in keeping with their destiny. Christians do not live worthily in order to obtain salvation but because they have been granted salvation

Constable, T. L. (1985). [2 Thessalonians](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 716). Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

The present prayer anticipates the evaluation of their conduct in light of *his calling* (cf. 1 Thess. 2:12; 4:7; 5:24; 2 Thess. 2:13–14), while it rests on the security of knowing that God is the one who enables them to do what is good and right (1 Thess. 5:23). This *calling* was to a lifestyle that conformed to God’s will. The divine initiative in their *calling* carried with it “great responsibilities”

Green, G. L. (2002). [The letters to the Thessalonians](#) (p. 297). Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans Pub.; Apollos.

2 Thessalonians 1:11 (NIV)

¹¹ With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling,

and that by his power he may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness and your every deed prompted by faith.

Ephesians 4:1 (NKJV)

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,

Philippians 1:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,

Colossians 1:9–10 (NKJV)

⁹ For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; ¹⁰ that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing *Him*, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

1 Thessalonians 2:12 (NKJV)

¹² that you would walk worthy of God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

Romans 8:30 (NKJV)

³⁰ Moreover whom He predestined, these He also called; whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified.

1 Thessalonians 4:7 (NKJV)

⁷ For God did not call us to uncleanness, but in holiness.

III. The Content of this Prayer

A. Your Walk

B. Your Work

¹¹ Therefore we also pray always for you that our **God would count you worthy** of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power,

Paul also prayed that God would fulfill every noble, righteous **desire** of their hearts. *Plēroō* (**fulfill**) could

also be translated “complete,” or “accomplish”;
 MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (pp. 257–258). Chicago: Moody Press.

good pleasure

eudokia: good pleasure

goodwill n. — a delightful, fixed intention of benevolent favor.

Original Word: εὐδοκία, ας, ἡ

Definition: good pleasure

Usage: (a) good-will (good-pleasure), favor, feeling of complacency of God to man, (b) good-pleasure, satisfaction, happiness, delight of men.

Cognate: 2107 eudokía – properly, what seems good or beneficial to someone; "good pleasure." [See 2106](#) (eudokeō).

eudokia (**desire**) could be translated “purpose,” or “choice.” Paul asked that the Lord would bring about all their longings for **goodness**

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (pp. 257–258). Chicago: Moody Press.

One thing is clear in scripture and that is there is only one who is good.

Mark 10:18 (NKJV)

¹⁸ So Jesus said to him, “**Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God.**”

All Goodness or good desire that comes from a believer comes from good.

James 1:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

Whatever goodness we have comes of the power and presence of the Spirit of God

Romans 15:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.

Galatians 5:22 (NKJV)

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

Ephesians 5:9 (NKJV)

⁹ (for the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),

Far from being a cosmic killjoy, God is generous and gracious. In Psalm 107:9 the psalmist wrote that God “has satisfied the thirsty soul, and the hungry soul He has filled with what is good.” In the same

way David exulted, “You open Your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing” (Ps. 145:16; cf. 104:28), while Isaiah added, “The Lord longs to be gracious to you” (Isa. 30:18). Those whose desires are in tune with God’s will can say with Moses, “O satisfy us in the morning with Your lovingkindness, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days” (Ps. 90:14).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (p. 258). Chicago: Moody Press.

Paul is praying that their desire for good will toward others would be fulfilled and hence would be a reflection of the Goodness of God in them.

11 Therefore we also pray always for you that our **God would** count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and **the work of faith with power,**

The verb “fulfill” in the preceding phrase also governs this phrase. Paul’s final request for the Thessalonians was that God would complete the **work of faith** He had begun in them

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (p. 258). Chicago: Moody Press.

1 Thessalonians 1:3 (NKJV)

³ remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the sight of our God and Father,

No one taught more clearly than Paul the glorious truth that salvation is by faith alone, entirely apart from human works (cf. Rom. 3:20–30; 4:4–5; 5:1; Gal. 2:16; 3:8, 11–14, 24; Phil. 3:9).

But Paul also knew that genuine saving faith works inevitably to produce spiritual fruit (cf. Eph. 2:10; Titus 2:7, 14; 3:1, 8, 14) MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [1 & 2 Thessalonians](#) (pp. 258–259). Chicago: Moody Press.

Ephesians 2:8–10 (NKJV)

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Titus 2:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself *His* own special people, zealous for good works.

Titus 3:1 (NKJV)

3 Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work,

Titus 3:7–8 (NKJV)

⁷ that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

⁸ This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men.

Titus 3:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ And let our *people* also learn to maintain good works, to *meet* urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful.

—a truth forcefully stated by James:
James 2:14–26 (NKJV)

¹⁴ What *does it* profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can

faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, “Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,” but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what *does it* profit? ¹⁷ Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

¹⁸ But someone will say, “You have faith, and I have works.” Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. ¹⁹ You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble! ²⁰ But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? ²² Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? ²³ And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, “*Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” And he was called the friend of God. ²⁴ You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only.

²⁵ Likewise, was not Rahab the harlot also justified by works when she received the messengers and sent *them* out another way?

²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

II. The Content of this Prayer

A. Your Walk

B. Your Work

C. Your Worship.

¹¹ Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power,

¹² 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.

¹² that

hopós: as, how, that

Original Word: ὅπως

Part of Speech: Adverb

Transliteration: hopós

Phonetic Spelling: (hop'-oce)

Definition: as, how, that

Usage: how, in order that, so that, that.

3704 hópōs (an adverb that is also used as a conjunction – derived from ho, "which" and 4459 / pós, "how, in what way," J. Thayer) – that, focusing on the necessary measures (factors, desires) that are required for the intended goal to be reached.

3704 /hópōs ("so that") is stronger than simple "that," because it emphasizes the method (qualities,

prerequisites) involved to accomplish the objective (purpose) at hand.

endoxazomai: to glorify first in order of sentence

Original Word: ἐνδοξάζω

Part of Speech: Verb

Transliteration: endoxazomai

Phonetic Spelling: (en-dox-ad'-zo)

Definition: to glorify

Usage: I glorify, acknowledge the glory belonging to, recognize as glorious; pass: I am glorified in.

Cognate: 1740 endoksázō— viewed in high, personal esteem, befitting great (intrinsic) worth, perceived in a state (condition) of "acknowledged glory because recognized as glorious" (Souter). [See 1741](#) (endoksos).

12 that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him

The ultimate purpose of Paul's prayer was not for them, but for **the name of our Lord Jesus to be glorified** in their lives. The phrase **the name of our Lord**, reminiscent of the familiar Old Testament phrase "the name of the Lord" (cf. Gen. 4:26; Ex. 33:19; Deut. 5:11; Isa. 42:8),

clearly and unequivocally identifies Jesus as Yahweh of the Old Testament. To glorify the **name of the Lord** means to honor and exalt all that He is.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [*1 & 2 Thessalonians*](#) (pp. 259–260). Chicago: Moody Press.

This should consume us. Our mind, our heart, our soul and our spirit should be consumed with thoughts of glorifying Christ.

Every action, no matter how mundane or menial or repetitive, should be undertaken with the desire and the active thought to do what ever I can to glorify Christ.

Every thought should be taken captive and considered only under the umbrella of will this and can this be used to glorify Christ.

To do so should be the deepest desire of His people. At the end of his magnificent prayer for Israel's restoration from captivity,

Daniel cried out, "O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people are called by Your name" (Dan. 9:19).

Daniel's primary concern was not the misery of his people, but the reputation of his God.

Paul's concern was that those who bear the name of the Lord Jesus should honor it; that they "do all to the glory of God" (1 Cor. 10:31).

Jesus instructed believers, "Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 5:16).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [*1 & 2 Thessalonians*](#) (p. 260). Chicago: Moody Press.

This should affect literally everything.

Every drive to work, every conversation, every time we mow the grass, rake the leaves, plant the garden. Every job we do in repairs on the house, every creative project make. Every dish of food we fix, every time we walk the dog and feed the chickens.

All of our our possession from cars to homes to banks accounts should be kept in the best condition possible.

All of our relationships of husband and wife, parent and child, and everyone else in our lives should reflect the gentle love and benevolence of the goodness of God.

We we should be saturated with love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

All that we do and say should be done to our very best for HIM

Every act of kindness, every track left with the gospel, every conversation with a lost person. Every service rendered in the ministry of the church should be done to our absolute best. NOT for the praise of men, but for the only audience that matters.... God.

When believers glorify the Lord Jesus Christ, they in turn will be glorified **in Him**. Paul has in view here both eternal glory and temporal honor. First Samuel 2:30 expresses this same spiritual principle: “The Lord declares ... ‘Those who honor Me I will honor.’ ” In John 12:26 Jesus promised, “If anyone serves Me, the Father will honor him.” Christ will honor those whose lives honor Him.

Paul closed the passage by reminding his readers that the ability to glorify Jesus Christ comes only through **the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ**. Like salvation itself, everything in the Christian life comes by **grace**—God’s unmerited favor (cf. Gal. 3:3). It is grammatically possible to translate this final phrase “our God and Lord Jesus Christ,” which would indicate Paul had only the Second Person of the Trinity in view. Both

translations affirm Christ's deity; He is either called God or put on an equal footing with the Father.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2002). [*1 & 2 Thessalonians*](#) (p. 260). Chicago: Moody Press.

The Walk, Work and Worship Paul is praying for here, is not for superficial believer. This is not for the half hearted, or the slightly committed. Paul is not taking or praying for the person who shows up at church periodically when it best suites his schedule.

He is not praying for the man or woman who has made a profession of faith years ago and believes that is his insurance against Hell.

Not this is for the true believer, the soil that was fertile when the seed fell.

The one who turned from his sin and gave his all to Christ.

Who left father and mother and brother and sister.

The one who was willing to hate his father and mother and brother and sister and yes, even his own life and take up his cross daily and follow Christ.

This is the Believer indeed.

Paul is praying for you believer, you christian, to have absolute abandonment to the Glory of God in your Walk, your Work and your Worship.

The dedication such prayer should engender in the believer's life is illustrated by one of most fabled organizations in American history—the Pony Express:

The Pony Express was a private express company that carried mail by an organized relay of horseback riders. The eastern end was St. Joseph, Missouri, and the western terminal was in Sacramento, California. The cost of sending a letter by Pony Express was \$2.50 an ounce. If the weather and horses held out and the Indians held off, that letter would complete the entire two-thousand-mile journey in a speedy ten days, as did the report of Lincoln's Inaugural Address.

It may surprise you that the Pony Express was only in operation from April 3, 1860, until November 18, 1861—just seventeen months. When the telegraph line was completed between two cities, the service was no longer needed.

Being a rider for the Pony Express was a tough job. You were expected to ride seventy-five to one hundred miles a day, changing horses every fifteen to twenty-five miles. Other than the mail, the only baggage you carried contained a few provisions, including a kit of flour, cornmeal, and

bacon. In case of danger, you also had a medical pack of turpentine, borax, and cream of tartar. In order to travel light and to increase speed of mobility during Indian attacks, the men always rode in shirtsleeves, even during the fierce winter weather.

How would you recruit volunteers for this hazardous job? An 1860 San Francisco newspaper printed this ad for the Pony Express: “Wanted: Young, skinny, wiry fellows not over 18. Must be expert riders willing to risk [death] daily. Orphans preferred.”

Those were the honest facts of the service required, but the Pony Express *never* had a shortage of riders....

Like the Pony Express, serving God is not a job for the casually interested. It's costly service. He asks for your life. He asks for service to Him to become a priority, not a pastime. (Donald S. Whitney, *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life* [Colorado Springs, Colo.: NavPress, 1991], 109–10. Italics in the original.)

