

Praying for the Gospel To Be Glorified
2 Thessalonians 3:1-2

I. We Should Pray That the Gospel May Be Glorified vs. 1

The “word of the Lord” is a *set phrase*.

Isaiah 1:9-10
Jeremiah 1:4-5
Jonah 1:1-2

Paul may use the phrase *word of the Lord* interchangeably with the phrase *word of God*.

1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2:13; 4:15

The metaphor of the word of the Lord *running* and *being glorified*.

1 Corinthians 9:24-26a [Other examples include Rom. 9:16; Gal. 2:2; 5:7; Phil. 2:16; Heb. 12:1.]

Gene Green has observed that, “The combination of ‘run’ and ‘be honored’ suggests that the apostles visualize the word as a runner who competes in the games and wins the prize, and so receives the honor that is due” (PNTC, p. 335) Jeffrey Weima concurs with this understanding of the metaphor when he writes that:

The gospel must not only run or compete in the public arena with other religions or worldviews; it must also win the competition and “be honored,” that is, be accepted “not as the word of human beings but, as it truly is, the word of God” (1 Thess. 2:13). Just as a winning athlete is openly honored in the bestowing of the victory wreath, so the gospel message is to be publicly praised in the words and obedient conduct of its adherents. (BECNT, p. 587)

Acts 13:44-49 (esp. vs. 48); 1 Thessalonians 1:6-8

II. We Should Pray That the Gospel May Not Be Hindered vs. 2

Paul does not want the progress of the Gospel to be hindered by those who are seeking to stop it through their persecution of himself and his companions.

1 Thessalonians 2:14-16a

The Greek word *átopos* (*unreasonable*, NKJV) literally means *out of place* and, in passages such as this, it has the idea of *morally out of place* or *improper* and can thus be rendered as *perverse* or even as a synonym for *wicked* or *evil*. The old Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown commentary says that *átopos* here means, “*out of the way bad: more than ordinarily bad*” (e-Sword).

Conclusion: John Stott observes in his commentary on this passage that, “There is in mission an interplay between four groups. The intercessors pray. The missionaries preach. Some hearers honour the word by believing it. Others refuse the message and oppose those who bring it” (*The Gospel & the End of Time: The Message of 1 & 2 Thessalonians*, p. 187).