
The Thessalonian Epistles 22

Taking Care in Prayer 2Thessalonians 1:11-12

A study of things to come or eschatology should move us to pray, to pray, ***Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven.*** As we see things waxing worse and worse, we should see that we are not sufficient of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, and thus go to Him for fresh supplies of grace to help in our time of increasing need.

The Baptist preacher, John Bunyan who wrote *Pilgrim's Progress*, once said, *When thou prayest, rather let thy heart be without words than thy words without heart. Prayer will make a man cease from sin, or sin will entice a man to cease from prayer.*

We do not want to be guilty unholy reverence of just throwing in words and worn out phrases as we commune with God in prayer, nor do should we feel that we are to use the king's English and form such informal petitions, so as to indicate we have no relationship with our God.

The tragic fact is that some contemporary commentaries either skip over this prayer or make some superficial comments about it tell us the premium that all too many Christian leaders/writers put on prayer.

In dealing with *Taking Care in Prayer*, we will examine first, *Care in the Character of Prayer*; second, *Care in the Content of Prayer*; third, *Care in the Cause of Prayer*.

I. ***Care in the Character of Prayer***



11a ¶ ***Wherefore also we pray always for you,*** we ought to have concern over the nature or character of our prayers; in other words, in essence, what are my prayers about? A bunch of selfish wish lists, a long litany of meaningless phrases, or a communing and conversing with God our Creator, a talk with the Lord of this Universe, worshipping our

triune God, fellowship with our loving Father, our glorious Saviour, and our Holy Comforter.

1. **Wherefore also we pray, “Wherefore”** points back to the previous verses, regarding the Thessalonian church’s glory to Christ at His return. Notice how they all prayed, Paul, Silas, and Timothy. The nature of this prayer is one of agreement and unity, two or three agree in prayer, Christ takes notice.

2. **always for you**, a minister’s job doesn’t end with the preaching and teaching; as a matter of fact, the apostles set a standard when they recognized that they should be given to prayer and the ministry of the Word.

- a) This doesn’t mean they were always praying for them every minute of the day.
- b) We should pray for each other each day we have our prayer time with God.
- c) The nature or character of this prayer is not only in mutual agreement, but it is without ceasing, persevering, asking, seeking, and knocking, as James 5:16 says, ***the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much!*** Don’t give up on what God can do through prayer.

II. Care in the Content of Prayer

11b ***that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power:*** Sometimes our prayers are just, ‘bless

Sister Smith' and are so general that they don't mean much, but specific prayers show concern and are substantial, or full of significant substance, not just jibber jabber, or vain repetition, though an eloquent and lengthy prayer doesn't impress God in and of itself. Here we have the content of this prayer consisting of three particular petitions:

1. *that our God would count you worthy of this calling,* this is the first petition, we are not worthy of ourselves to be called unto salvation, we are made worthy through Christ, but we should seek to be counted or considered worthy by the way we live our lives, of this effectual calling unto salvation. People saying, He is a Christian, a follower of Christ, in its proper sense.

a) Their prayer connected them with the church by using ***our God*** and was that they would do as stated in the following verses:

(1) Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

(2) Colossians 1:10 That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God;

b) The content of this first petition was a noble and needful request that would be befitting to any church.

2.

and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, this is the second petition, that all their holy desires for God's goodness would be completed, fulfilled, and satisfied in them.

- a) A classic passage bears this out: **Psalm 37:4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.**
- b) God is not, as one put it, some sort of cosmic killjoy, Satan tried that lie in the Garden, and he was actually the cosmic killjoy.
- c) God desires good for us, but we must realize what good really is, the Lord only knows, and pursue it as it is defined in His Word.
- d) Once more, the content of this second petition is worthy to bring before God for the church.

3.

and the work of faith with power: this is the third petition; assuredly, faith without works is dead.

- a) This same word, **fulfill** is applicable here, faith with works is alive, quick and powerful which grows as faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God, so it increases, as the Spirit fills us, flushing out our filth, and expanding our capacity to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- b) This **power**, δυναμις *dunamis* *doo'-nam-is*, God's dynamite, is explosive and effectual to destroy the works of darkness.

- e) The content of this third petition, yet, again, of effectual powerful faith, is a necessary element to pray for, as without faith it is impossible to please God.

III. Care in the Cause of Prayer

A **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.** We should have a pure motive, reason or cause for our prayers. James says that we have not because we ask not, we ask and receive not because we consume it upon our lusts; hence, wrong motives, wrong cause. The Cause and Effect Relationship to selfish causes bring about the effect of unanswered prayers.

A **That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you,** take note of the use of **the name of our Lord**, connected with **Jesus Christ**, points to the Old Testament usage of **the name of the Lord, Jehovah, Yahweh**, signifying Christ's deity as Jehovah; this confirms all the more to these Thessalonians that the Jews were wrong about Christ. You cannot glorify God properly unless you see Christ as God.

- a) The end of all we do should be to glorify our Saviour. **1Corinthians 10:31--Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.**

- b) This is an inward work, **in you**, there it must begin, or the

outward manifestation is of no count, and will not glorify Christ and we miss the whole purpose of our existence which is to glorify God.



The heavens declare the glory of God (***Psalm 19:1-2***). The heavens declare that God is perfect and reveal His wisdom, power, and purpose in designing all of creation to an intelligent end.



The heavens cannot declare the love of God, nor the grace of God, that is where we come in. We are to show forth in our lives ***the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ—Ephesians 2:7***. We are to be illustrations, epistles of Christ, that manifest the power and grace of God in us, of what God can do to change a person's life and what He can do in and through a person.



and ye in Him, this reciprocal glory beyond human expression, but it is promised in ***1Samuel 2:30...for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed***. Also, in ***John 12:26 If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour***.

2. **according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.** If what we do is in the mere energy of the flesh it will come to nought, but if by the grace of our God, and here Christ our Saviour being God, it shall flourish into eternal fruition.
3. This, too, is a prayer cause or motive that is absolutely essential to incorporate into our prayers.

As we consider the rapidly approaching coming of Christ we should realize that we should remember that passage in **2Peter 3:10-12** *But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. 11 ¶ Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, 12 Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?. We have a higher purpose and a higher cause, a cause much bigger and much greater than ourselves, that Cause being our Creator, our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ.*

Lesser causes that were bigger than individuals or groups of individuals have spurred people on to make tremendous sacrifices and accomplish great feats of strength, perseverance, ingenuity, and courage. Many heroes have risen to the occasion where the odds were against them, such as at Iwo Jima, 9-11 firefighters, the list is virtually endless.

We who are the people of God, who have a Cause much greater, need to, in our prayers, and in our service dedicate ourselves to pray for great things from God and do great things for our God, for our God is great and He does great things! This Cause, our God being so much greater than we

are, let us be moved to press forward to advance the cause of Christ till He returns.
