

Apostolic Prayer #5 - 2 Thessalonians 1: 11-12

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, 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. (2 Thes 1:11-12 NKJV)

Paul prayed for the believers to walk in the glory and benefits of wholeheartedness. He prayed for believers to be inspired by the Spirit to respond to Jesus in a way *worthy of Him* - in wholeheartedness. He also connected this with the ability to *fulfill all of God's will* in their lives.

- We gain understanding of this prayer by understanding what Paul said just before it. Every scripture that we are looking at in these "Apostolic Prayers" ultimately has a context in which Paul was praying. Lets take a look at the verses before this..

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, 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; since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you, and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, 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. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, 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. (2 Thes 1:4-10 NKJV)

- Paul affirmed their perseverance in persecution. Earlier, he wrote that he sent Timothy to encourage them not to be shaken in their afflictions (**1 Thes. 3:2-4**).
- The Lord uses persecution and the sinful mistreatment of others to strengthen and transform us. It is the evidence or proof of God's righteous and good leadership. It is proof that God is judging or leading His people in a wise way that leads to their greatest benefit. (**2 Thes 1:4-5**)
- We must cultivate God's view of how persecution "works for us" to our great benefit. Paul highlights this clearly in 2 Cor 4.

Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal. (2 Cor 4:16-18 NJKV)

MAKE US WORTHY

God weans us from worldliness to make us worthy or fit to glorify Jesus. The word “worthy” here doesn’t mean “deserving of”, but rather “suited for”, “prepared for”, or “fitted for”. To walk worthy of the Lord is to walk in agreement with His heart and ways. We give a worthy response to God by resisting compromise and embracing God’s ways.

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 (2 Thes 1:5)

- Pressure changes the conversation that we have with God. We get connected more and more to the fact that we are living for something far more glorious and bigger than what we experience in this life.

RESPONDING IN A WAY THAT IS WORTHY TO JESUS

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 (2 Thes 1: 11)

- We have to be strengthened to escape the trap of sin and to stand in victory (**Lk. 21:36**). The phrase “be counted worthy” is translated as having strength in most modern translations. The idea is to be strengthened to respond to Jesus in a way that is worthy of who He is and to stand in victory as overcomers instead of falling into sin. By *watching*, we will receive greater insight into what God is doing, and by *praying* we receive greater strength to love and obey Jesus unto victory.

But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.” (Luke 21:34-36 NKJV)

PAUL GIVES 4 BENEFITS OR RESULTS OF WALKING WORTHY OF THE LORD

1. **Fulfill all the good pleasure (1:11)** - We want to walk in the fullness of all that God has ordained. It is God's pleasure to use His people as vessels to release His kingdom power. He is not reluctant; thus we contend with confidence for the *full release* of His purposes—individually and corporately.
2. **Work of faith with power (1:11)** - He releases His power in response to our “partnership of faith” in connecting with His heart and contending for the fullness of His purposes.
3. **Jesus may be glorified in you (1:12)** - God desires to put Jesus' glory on display through our lives so that Jesus may receive the glory due His name through others. God promised to release a greater measure of the Spirit's activity (***Joel 2:28***) as we turn to Him with all our heart (***Joel 2:12***)
4. **That you are glorified in Him (1:12)** - We experience His glory in us as we have moments of sensing His presence, and experience the grace to walk in Christlikeness.

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Cor 3:18 NKJV)