

Apostolic Prayer #6 - 2 Thessalonians 2:16-3:5

Now may our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, and our God and Father, who has loved us and given us everlasting consolation and good hope by grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good word and work. Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it with you, and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith. But the Lord is faithful, who will establish you and guard you from the evil one. And we have confidence in the Lord concerning you, both that you do and will do the things we command you. Now may the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ. (2 Thes 2:16-3:5 NKJV)

Paul prayed that the Lord would comfort and establish believers, that the influence of His Word would spread rapidly, that they be delivered from wicked men and guarded from Satan's traps, and that they be led by the Holy Spirit into God's love and the perseverance of Jesus.

BREAKDOWN OF 2 THESS 2:16-3:5

This prayer followed Paul's exhortation to *stand fast (2:15)* just after he had taught them about Jesus' 2nd coming and that the Antichrist would do great miracles to deceive many *(2:3-12)*.

Who has loved us (2:16): God's love is the basis of our confidence that the Lord will answer this prayer. Divine love is the fountain or origin of all blessings that are given us as a free gift by grace.

Everlasting consolation (2:16): Paul emphasized the reality of eternal glory to strengthen the Church in the face of persecution. The assurance of eternal comfort provides temporal encouragement. We will receive a 100-fold recovery of all that we lost in being persecuted. This sure hope purifies us. Jesus highlighted this in Matt 5.

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you. (Matt 5:11-12 NKJV)

Comfort your hearts (2:17): In light of their persecution they needed to be comforted by the Holy Spirit to enable them to stand firm. The Father is designated, "the God of all comfort" (2 Cor. 1:3).

Establish you in every good word and work (2:17): He prayed for them to be energized by God's grace so that they would be established or steadfast in the face of

persecution, temptation, and labors in the kingdom. *Good word* means sound doctrine, and *every good work* refers to their godly lifestyle and kingdom labors. There is a natural tendency in our heart to drift from steadfastness.

That the Word may run swiftly (3:1): Paul prayed that the “influence” of the Word would increase rapidly among both believers and unbelievers.

- Jesus promised that the Spirit would supernaturally convict people of sin. Paul is praying that believers would have an anointing that would pierce peoples heart in a deep way.

PAUL PRAYED THAT GOD WOULD DIRECT THEM INTO LOVE AND PERSEVERANCE (2 Thes 3:5)

Direct your hearts into the love of God (3:5): At the end of the day loving God is the most powerful thing you can do. It also requires supernatural help, this is why we must pray for it.

Direct your hearts into the patience of Christ (3:5): Walking in the patience of Christ can also be translated as perseverance. It takes perseverance and patience to follow Jesus for the long haul. Below are 4 different ways patience and perseverance are needed in our walks with Jesus.

1. Perseverance to resist temptation: *This requires denying our flesh in obeying the Lord.*

Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him. Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. (James 1: 12-14 NKJV)

2. Perseverance in trials: *This speaks of loving God in difficult circumstances.*

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. (James 1:2-4 NKJV)

3. Perseverance in persecution: *He rewards those who are faithful in persecution.*

Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your

***reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.
(Matt 5: 11-12 NKJV)***

***4. Perseverance over many years:* The book of Hebrews warns us of becoming sluggish which includes drawing back from contending for the fullness of God's promises and for a breakthrough of the Spirit in our life.**

And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (Heb 6:11-12 NKJV)