

“THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF PRAYER”

Suffering Glorifies Christ Today

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

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HELP FOR TROUBLED TIMES

A Brief Series from 2 Thessalonians 1

“The Encouragement of Praise” 2 Thessalonians 1:1-4

Suffering Helps Us to Grow

“The Encouragement of Perspective” 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10

Suffering Prepares Us for Glory

“The Encouragement of Prayer” 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

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I. PRAYER: AN INVALUABLE DISCIPLINE

“You can never do more than pray until you have prayed.”

A. What Is Prayer?

- *“We tend to think of prayer as something we DO in order to produce the results we believe are needed or, rather, to get God to produce the results. Go into any Christian bookstore and note the number of books devoted to techniques of prayer. We are interested in knowing what works and developing the skills that will ensure that our prayers are effective. As a result, our prayer tends to be a shopping list of things to be accomplished, an attempt to manipulate the symptoms of our lives without really entering into a deep, vital, transforming relationship with God in the midst of what we think we need.” -- M. Robert Mulholland Jr., Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation, pg. 105.*
- *“Prayer is the act by which the people of God become incorporated into the presence and action of God in the world. Prayer becomes a sacrificial offering of ourselves to God, to become agents of God’s presence and action in the daily events and situations of our lives.” -- M. Robert Mulholland Jr., Invitation to a Journey: A Road Map for Spiritual Formation, pg. 108.*

B. Why Is Prayer Important?

1. It _____.
2. It _____.

3. It _____.

4. It _____.

II. PRAYER: AN ESSENTIAL INVOLVEMENT

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

There were three concerns in Paul’s prayer.

- A. Their Worthiness – Worthy of Their Calling
That God would count them worthy of their calling.
- B. Their Will & Walk – Goodness and Faith Fulfilled
That God would fulfill their desire for goodness and the work of faith with power.
- C. Their Witness – Jesus Christ Glorified
That the name of Jesus Christ would be glorified in them.

III. ENHANCING YOUR INTERCESSORY PRAYER

- A. Be specific.
- B. Read God’s eternal perspective into the situations of others.
- C. Reflect on the development of other people’s faith.
- D. Remember the ultimate goal.

“It is easy to forget that at the heart of Christianity is a crucified God. God does not watch His suffering world with detachment. He comes into people’s pain; agonizes and bleeds with them. This is the way He has chosen to repair the damage by working patiently and painfully inside the problem.

“Even for Jesus there were some things that could only be learned through suffering. Paul discovered that God’s grace was enough for him only through being tormented by a thorn in the flesh. Christians are called to believe, sometimes in the teeth of the evidence, that God can transform every situation.” – David Day, “Suffering” in The Bible for Everyday Life, pp. 385-86.

Won’t you join the Lord in His work of meeting people in their pain and bringing them encouragement and healing?

You are just an intercessory prayer away.