

# WORTHY OF HIS CALLING

## Pray for Me the Prayer for You 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

**Main Point:** God's people should pray for and encourage one another in the work of the gospel in this world that's full of evil.

### **Pray for the work of the gospel in a wicked world (1-2).**

- *Pray for the advancement of the gospel and the fruit of repentance and faith (1).*
- *Pray for protection against evil for those who share the gospel in this world (2).*

As Paul came to the conclusion of his welcome and introductory instruction in 2 Thessalonians, he asked for prayer! This wasn't something that was unusual for Paul. Paul prayed a lot in his letters, and he also asked for pray a lot in his letters (Romans 15:30-32; 2 Corinthians 1:10-11; Ephesians 6:18-20; Philippians 1:19; Colossians 4:1-4; 2 Thessalonians 3:1-2). These prayer requests were always focused on one thing: God's grace and protection for the work of the gospel! Paul's prayer request in 2 Thessalonians followed suit. He asked for the church to pray for the advancement of the gospel and the fruit of repentance and faith. Paul's request was simple. In a wicked world, we need the work of God to bring success to the work of the gospel. Paul wanted to see results of the gospel everywhere as in Thessalonica. His heart looked to the Lord to produce repentance and faith like in his brothers and sisters in the Thessalonian church. However, Paul knew that not everyone would believe. There are wicked and evil people in this sinful and fallen world, so Paul asked for prayer for protection against evil for his work of the gospel in this world. Nothing has changed. We still live in a wicked world. There are still unbelievers who seek to do harm to the cause of Christ and those who love and serve him. Therefore, pray for the work of the gospel in a wicked world. Our brothers and sisters serving in this world need the prayers of the church!

1. Paul often pointed to the reality of wickedness and evil in this world. How do we see this reality still today? How do we see the world downplay and attempt to refute this reality? Why is it important for Christians to recognize evil rather than ignore or normalize it?
2. Paul asked for prayer in the work of the gospel. Why do you think he often asked for this type of prayer? Do you think your prayers matter to the work of the gospel in say Iran, Somalia, or Moldova? If so, how, and why?
3. Paul asked for prayer for protection in the work of the gospel. Why did he ask for this? Do you think people still need this type of prayer today? Consider the work of the gospel in Afghanistan or Sudan, why do believers there need God's protection? What about you? Do you need protection? Why, and how?
4. Pray! Take time in your group to pray for the work of the gospel in an evil world. Use <https://peoplegroups.org/> to perhaps find and pray for specific groups of believers around the world.

### **Trust in the Lord's faithfulness to protect and direct you in his work in this world (3-5).**

- *God has the power to protect his servants from evil (3).*
- *God has the power to empower his servants to obey (4).*
- *God has the power to sustain his servants in love and faithfulness in Christ (5).*

Paul did something important at this point in his letter. He moved from a prayer request to an encouragement, but the encouragement was connected to the prayer request. The very thing Paul

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asked the Thessalonians to pray for was what Paul expected them to do! Paul knew that they too needed God's protection in their work of the gospel. They too served in a wicked world that's full of unbelievers and those who would seek evil against the church. As a result, Paul encouraged the Thessalonians to trust in the Lord's faithfulness to protect and direct them in his work in this world. His encouragement was three-fold. First, he reminded them that God has the power to protect his servants from evil. They should remember this for their prayers for Paul and others, and they should remember it for their own life of faith in the Lord. Second, God has the power to empower his servants to obey. Paul had confidence *in the Lord* related to the Thessalonians. What an important reminder! Paul's confidence wasn't in the flesh, but it was in the Spirit. He knew that God could – and does – empower his servants to obey. Third, God has the power to sustain his servants in love and faithfulness in Christ. The desire of Paul's heart and the request to the Lord from his mouth was that God would lead the Thessalonians to remain in his love and stay steadfast in their faith and walk in Christ. Remaining worthy of his calling requires dependence on the Lord. Paul encouraged them with these important truths for a life of faith that's worthy of the gospel call of Christ!

1. Do you believe that God has the power to protect his people from evil in order to protect his call and kingdom purpose in their lives? What are some examples of this in Scripture? Can you think of any examples in the lives of well-known missionaries or even in lives in your church?
2. What about when a believer is killed or victimized by wicked and evil people? Does the Lord's protection fail? Biblically, how are they protected by the Lord even in the face of death? Use Scripture to find the answer to these questions.
3. Do you believe that God has the power to empower his people to obey? What are some examples of this in Scripture? How have you experienced this in your life or seen it in the life of another believer? Study, and share. Encourage one another!
4. Do you believe that God has the power to sustain his servants in love and faithfulness in Christ? What are some examples of this in Scripture? How have you experienced this in your life or seen it in the life of another believer? Study, and share.
5. In living worthy of your calling, are you trusting in the Lord's faithfulness to protect and direct you in his work in this world? If not, why not? If so, why, and how? Pray for one another that the Lord will grow faith in all of your hearts to trust in his faithfulness.