

The Context and Content of a Prayer

A Call to Spiritual Reformation, Week 3

Chapter 2 Overview

- I. Chapter Introduction (39-40)
- II. Thankfulness for signs of grace (40-44)
 1. Paul gives thanks that his reader's faith is growing (v.3)
 2. Paul gives thanks that their love is increasing (v.3)
 3. Paul gives thanks that they are persevering under trial (v.4)
- III. Confidence in the Prospect of Vindication (44-50)
 1. For believers, there will be vindication
 2. For others, there will be retribution

Chapter 3 Overview

- I. Paul's Petitions (51-57)
 1. Paul prays that God might count these Christians worthy of their calling
 2. Paul prays that God by his power might bring to fruition each Christian's good, faith-prompted purposes
- II. The Goal of Paul's Prayer (57-60)
 1. Paul seeks the glorification of the Lord Jesus
 2. Paul seeks that glorification of believers
- III. The Ground for Paul's Prayers (60-62)

Discussion Questions

Chapter 2

1. For what does Paul give thanks? For what do you give thanks?

2. What kinds of things in people's lives should call forth our most profound gratitude to God? Why?

3. How does Paul's anticipation of Jesus' return shape his values and his prayers?

4. What other New Testament teaching can you think of that encourages us to live (and pray!) with eternity's values in view?

Chapter 3

1. What does it mean to pray that God might count Christians we know to be worthy of God's calling? How can you incorporate such petitions in your prayers?

2. What good, faith-prompted purposes have you been developing? How much have you prayed that God will bring such purposes to fulfillment? What concrete steps can you take to improve your praying in this area?

3. What is Paul's twofold goal in this prayer for the Thessalonians? How should such a goal shape your prayers?