

# **Prayer and the Rapture**

2 Thessalonians 1:11

We close the first chapter of 2 Thessalonians with another great prayer by Paul. I pray that I have well taught you the all importance of constant prayer daily in your lives.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER**

And

## **THE POWER OF PRAYER**

And prayer is not just for us, God desires for us to be in continual conversation, fellowship with Him.

In Paul's brief letter to the believers of Thessalonica he has already prayed or addressed prayer some 6 times.

In 1 Thessalonians 1:2

He gives thanks for these believers "*I hope you pray for One Another in this assembly,*" everyone here needs your prayers.

In Thessalonians 2:11

Once again Paul thanks God for the positive way they receive the Word of God, and people I give thanks to God for every one of you and the way you receive His Word.

In 1 Thessalonians 3:9-10

He again gives thanks to God for the joy they bring to him.

Then

In 1 Thessalonians 5:17

He beckons them to pray without ceasing,

and

In 1 Thessalonians 5:25

He request that they be in prayer for him, as I constantly ask that you be in prayer for me and my family.

Now we come to 2 Thessalonians where in 2 Thessalonians 1:3

**Paul gives thanks for the way their Faith increases in more areas of their lives  
and therefore their love grows even greater.**

And now as Paul closes chapter 1,  
we find him in prayer for these wonderful warrior believers.  
In verse 11, all that has been going on to and by these believers causes  
Paul to go into prayer once again.  
Over and Over throughout 1 and 2 Thessalonians Paul goes into prayer.

Oh, believers, I pray  
*that you constantly walk by  
Faith in the Holy Spirit,*  
(in a manner worthy of God)

I pray  
*that you constantly pray to God the Father;*  
(that is pleasing to God)

I pray  
*that you constantly glorify JC;*  
(for which God called us)

I pray  
*that you constantly love One Another  
with Spiritual Love*  
(commanded by JESUS CHRIST)  
and

I pray  
*that you constantly grow in the Knowledge of  
JESUS CHRIST in His Word.*

## 1 Thessalonians 1:11

<sup>11</sup> **To this end** (goal) **also** (along with teaching and other prayers This introduces the purpose of the following prayer, and that is that) **Jesus Christ** (will be honored in them and by them.)

**we pray** This is a Present Indicative, meaning that Paul was in **CONSTANT PRAYER**. *Oh, people, I pray that every one of you realize how important and how powerful prayer is.*

*Prayer is not just for you;*

*God desires fellowship with everyone in Christ.*

*God does not like it when we stop communicating with Him.  
Please make prayer part of every hour of your day.*

JESUS CHRIST was in constant prayer with His Father;  
How much more do we need to be in prayer with Our Heavenly Father?

(verse 11)

**for you always**, constantly, continually; let us pray for each other...always.

What is interesting here, we learn that our prayers should have a goal.

**to this end** an objective in view, why we are coming to God in prayer, even if it is to express our sorrow, our anger, our disillusionment, etc.

We have studied this under three stages of prayer.

Firstly

**PRAYER PREPARATION** of course this is not necessary in every prayer, but often we should spend some time, thinking about concerning what we are getting ready to pray to God.

**Can I ask this? This is what JESUS CHRIST prayed before the cross, can I ask that this cup pass from me...no, for this is the reason I am here.**

So some valuable time can be spent even before we go into prayer.

Secondly

Then **THE PRAYER** communicating with God

Thirdly

**PRAYER PURSUIT** living according to your prayers. For Paul this means continue to teach the truth of the Word of God. For you, it may be just to continue to live by trusting Him.

**To this end also we pray for you** for your advantage **that** (introduces what Paul prays for them: in order that) **our God** (GOD the FATHER), (our—noting personal relationship between Paul and these believers) **will count you worthy of your calling,** (and He will if you walk worthy of Him)

as stated in 1 Thessalonians 2:12

12 **walk worthy of God who calls you to His kingdom**

And 1 Thessalonians 4:1...

<sup>12</sup> **you receive instruction from us** (teaching of the Word of God) **as to how you ought to walk to please God.**

**That our God will count you worthy of your calling,**

Paul has introduced our being chosen by God in 1 Thessalonians 1:4 and 4:7, and again here.

Again, this does not teach nor even imply Calvinism—God elected JESUS CHRIST and all who are “in Christ” share that election, and we are in Christ **by Faith** in JESUS CHRIST as Savior.

King James

**and fulfill all the good pleasures of His goodness**

NIV

**and that by his power he may bring to fruition your every desire for goodness**

Berean Study

**and that He will powerfully fulfill your every good desire**

Holman

**and will, by His power, fulfill every desire for goodness**

Weymouth

**by His mighty power fully gratify your every desire for what is truly good and fulfill every desire for goodness**

Let us see what the text is saying:

**To this end also, we pray for you always** (to what end?)  
**That ...our God...**

- |    |  |     |
|----|--|-----|
| 1) | <b>will count you worthy of your calling</b> | and |
| 2) | <b>fulfill every desire for goodness</b>     | and |
| 3) | <b>the work of faith with power</b>          |     |

**1) GOD FULFILLS;** This is in the subjunctive mood, meaning maybe God will fulfill or maybe not.

Now what will determine if God fulfills or not?

First as we will see, our desires must come from a **Spirit Filled Life** and **Guided by His Word** then, as it fits into **His Plan and His Purpose** for you at that particular time.

**2. THE DESIRE** is on their part- **our part-** (the believers' part). The Greek word actually means **TO PLEASE** and in this case it is not to please self but to please God.

We should be motivated by A DESIRE TO PLEASE GOD,  
Not self  
Not others  
But God.

***Example:***

*It is my desire to be the Pastor-teacher that God would have me be, not that you would have me be or that I would desire of myself.*

*Every husband should desire not to be the husband their wives would have them be, but the husband that God would have them be.*

*And the same principle applies to the wife, to be the kind of wife, God would have you be.*

What is interesting is that in 1 Thessalonians 4:11

11 **make it your ambition to lead a quiet life**  
(and now)  
**we should have a desire for goodness.**  
**and fulfill every desire for goodness.**

## Ok, what are we to desire?

**Goodness** this is a rich Greek word, while it means **GOODNESS**, **BENEVOLENCE**, it really describes one's character.

Now here is a desire that God will fulfill, that we have a character of Christ... benevolence, Christ love.

**and the work of faith with power,** This is extremely important theological phrase in **THE WORD OF GOD.**

First there is no definite article before **work**.

*And we know that Faith has no power.*

*The 'Power of Faith' is in the 'Object of Faith.'*

## So what does this phrase mean?

It is found in the prepositional phrase: “**with power**”

**with power** is the secret to all this...

## **THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.**

**Production of Faith** comes not from the Faith but *from the Object of Faith.*

To explain these kinds of phrases,  
let us go back to our Eternal Salvation Faith.

Our Faith is in the PERSON of JESUS CHRIST,  
so when we say **work** or **production of faith** is our Salvation,  
and this because of **the Object of that Faith: JESUS CHRIST.**

The book of James is about **WORKS**  
and so many miss the point of James  
by emphasizing our **DOING WORKS**, do and do.

But it is **THE WORK OF FAITH** that James is talking about.  
Faith in the Holy Spirit produces Divine work.

Galatians 5:6

<sup>6</sup> ...**nothing else matters but faith expressing itself in love.** NIV

This of course refers to Spiritual Love.

2 Thessalonians 1:11

<sup>11</sup> **and the work of faith** (in the Holy Spirit) **with power** (of the Holy Spirit.)

## *Principle*

**IT IS BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT  
THAT THEIR DESIRE OF GOOD WILL BE ACCOMPLISHED.**

<sup>11</sup> Paul prays for the goal that they will walk in power of the Holy Spirit by Faith and this for the final purpose that...

<sup>12</sup> **so** for the purpose that **that**:  
**so that** introduces the results of the power of the Holy Spirit  
**the name of** or the person of **our Lord Jesus will be glorified in you**, The battle is inside of each of us...your soul...your volition **and you in Him**,

oh, people, here is the wonder of Christianity  
—our intimacy with GOD THE FATHER and JESUS CHRIST—

Nowhere is anyone  
‘ in Allah ’  
‘ in Mohammad ’  
‘ in the god of Mormons ’  
‘ in any of the Hindu’s gods ’  
etc.

**But we ARE ‘In Christ.’**

**And Christ is in us**, and, therefore,  
we can glorify JESUS CHRIST...  
think about that,  
you, unknown to the world,  
can glorify the Son of God.

This is straight from the Lord's prayer in John 17: 20-23

- 20 “**I do not ask** JESUS CHRIST praying to GOD THE FATHER on **behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word;** this includes us.
- 21 that they may all be one; even as You, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me
- 22 “**The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one;**
- 23 **I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me.**

24

**"Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am,** did you get this? JESUS CHRIST is praying that we will be with Him for all eternity **so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.**

2 Thessalonians 1:12

12

**according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Good News

In **MERCY** we do not receive what we deserve, but in **GRACE** we receive what we DO NOT deserve.

Good News

Let's examine this great prayer by Paul.

1)

The purpose of the Holy Spirit in the Church Age is to glorify JESUS CHRIST (John 16:14). It is the purpose of JESUS CHRIST to glorify GOD THE FATHER (John 17:4) and now it is the purpose of the Holy Spirit to glorify JESUS CHRIST.

- 2) The presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church Age is well documented (John 7:38-39; 1 Corinthians 2:1-16; 6:19-20; Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6 and chapter 5)
- 3) **EVERY BELIEVER** in the Church Age is Indwelt by the Holy Spirit and is a letter to the world of JESUS CHRIST written by the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:3)
- 4) The formation of the character of JESUS CHRIST in every believer who walks by faith in the Holy Spirit: This starts with the description of the fruit of the Holy Spirit; this is in the singular, yet there are 9 descriptions given (Love, Joy, Peace, Longsuffering, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness, Self-Control) yes, these are in the single forming the character of Christ in you when you consistently walk in the Holy Spirit by Faith. This is Paul's prayer and mine for you.

## Galatians 4:19

19 **My children, with whom I am again in labor** in study and teaching **THE WORD OF GOD until Christ is formed in you**

- 5) This is how we become worthy of our calling—when Christ is formed in us and we glorify Him in our lives and this by walking by the Filling of the Holy Spirit HS and loving One Another as JESUS CHRIST loves us.

## **Knowing the truth of the Rapture**

2 Thessalonians 2:1-2

**THERE ARE SEVERAL DIFFERENT VIEWS OF THE RAPTURE**

RANGING FROM  
**NO RAPTURE**  
TO  
**PRE-TRIB**  
OR  
**MID-TRIB**  
OR  
**POST-TRIB**

But the passage before us is one of the most important passages on the chronology of Rapture events and the Second Coming of JESUS CHRIST.

**Verses 1-2 Purpose of Paul writing 2 Thessalonians**  
**CONFLICT OF TWO PLANS**  
(Verses 1-2)

**Verse 1 God's Plan**

**Verse 2 Satan's Plan**

## 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2

<sup>1</sup> **Now** this Greek conjunction introduces the reason for his writing to them...**now let us move to the real problem...**  
**we request you, brethren,** believers; this is not about the gospel, this is about something very important in their Christian life.

### **with regard to**

introduces an important issue in the Church

- (1) **The Coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ**
- (2) **And Our Gathering Together to Him**

These are two truths that should be fundamental and of great importance to every believer in JESUS CHRIST.

### **The Coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ**

We have studied the **PAROUSIA** that is the **coming** of our LORD JESUS CHRIST;

What is so important is that while this word refers to the '**coming**' of JESUS CHRIST it is used for one of two historical '**comings**' of JESUS CHRIST.

To use the expression, the '**coming**' of JESUS CHRIST, can refer to one of several '**comings**'. A careful study of the context will determine which '**coming**' is being referred.

*At the Rapture of the Church* 1 Thessalonians 4:15

15 **For this we say to you by the word of the Lord,  
that we who are alive and remain until the  
coming of the Lord,**

**PAROUSIA will not precede those who have fallen  
asleep.**

THIS COMING WILL BE UNEXPECTED.  
JESUS CHRIST WILL COME  
—OUT FROM HEAVEN—  
AND CALL EVERY BELIEVER OF THE CHURCH AGE.

HE WILL NOT COME TO EARTH  
BUT WE WILL RISE IN A RESURRECTED BODY  
AND MEET HIM IN THE AIR.

This is described in 1 Corinthians 15:50-54

50 **Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood  
cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the  
perishable inherit the imperishable.**

51 **Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep,  
but we will all be changed,**

52 **in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the  
last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the  
dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be  
changed.**

53 **For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality.**

54 **But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, "DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory.**

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

16 **For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.**

17 **Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.**

## *Day of the Lord Jesus*

1 Corinthians 5:5

5 **I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, physical body here on earth so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.**

*The day when JESUS CHRIST calls home His Church.*

With another emphasis on this day: 2 Corinthians 1:14

14 **just as you also partially did understand us, that we are your reason to be proud as you also are ours, in the day of our Lord Jesus.**

Philippians 1:6

6 **For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.**

Philippians 1:10

10 **so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ;**

Philippians 2:16

16 **holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain.**

These three verses from Philippians emphasize that we should desire to live in the ***Spirit Filled Life*** because of and looking forward to The Rapture, meeting the Lord on the Day of Christ.

I want to say right here that not every believer, in fact not that many believers, will live this way throughout their life, but they will meet the Lord in the air on the Day of Christ...The Rapture.

In our passage in **2 Thessalonians 2:2** Paul will refer to  
the  
**Day of The Rapture**  
as the  
**Day of Christ**

Other passages referring to *The Rapture* of the Church

John 14:1-2; Romans 8:19; 1 Corinthians 1:7-8; 1 Corinthians 16:22;  
Philippians 3:20-21; 4:5; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 2:19; 4:13-18; 5:9;  
5:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:1, 3; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1, and 8; Titus 2:13;  
Hebrews 9:28; James 5:7-9; 1 Peter 1:7 and 13; 5:4; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 21;  
Revelation 2:25 and 3:10.

*Second Coming of our LORD JESUS CHRIST  
(at the end of The Seven Years of Tribulation.)*

1. Described by our Lord in Matthew 24:15-22 and 32-34 (which we have studied); Also, the corresponding passage in Mark 13:14-23; 29-30;

Other passages referring to The Second Coming of JESUS CHRIST

Daniel 2:44-45; 7:9-14; 12:1-3; Zechariah 12:10; 14:1-15; Matthew 13:41; 24:15-31;  
26:54; Mark 13:14-27; and 14:52; Luke 21:25-28; Acts 1:9-11; 1 Thessalonians 3:13;  
2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; and 2:8; 1 Peter 4:12-13; 2 Peter 3:1-14; Jude 14-15;  
Revelation 1:7.

# The Differences between *THE RAPTURE* and the SECOND COMING

By John F. Walvoord and Mark Hitchcock  
*1 & 2 Thessalonians*

## *THE RAPTURE*

## THE RETURN (SECOND COMING)

Christ comes in the air (1 Thess. 4:16-17)	Christ comes to the earth (Zech. 14:4)
Christ comes for His saints (1 Thess. 4:16-17)	Christ comes with His saints (1 Thess. 3:13; Jude 14)
Believers depart the earth (1 Thess. 4:16-17)	Unbelievers are taken away (Matt. 24:37-41)
Christ claims His bride (Matt. 25:1-13)	Christ comes with His bride (Rev. 19:7)
Christ gathers His own (1 Thess. 4:16-17)	Angeles gather the elect (Matt. 24:31)
Christ comes to reward (1 Thess. 4:17)	Christ comes to judge (Matt. 25:31-46)
Not in the Old Testament (1 Cor. 15:51)	Predicted often in the Old Testament (Dan. 7:13-14, etc.)
There are no signs; it is imminent (1 Thess. 5:1-3)	Portended by many signs (Matt. 24:4-29)
It is a time of blessing and comfort (1 Thess. 4:18)	It is a time of destruction and Judgment (2 Thess. 2:8-12)
Involves believers only (John 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-55; 1 Thess. 4:13-18)	Involves Israel and the Gentile nations (Matt. 24:1-25:46)
Will occur in a moment, in the time it takes to blink. Only His own will see Him. (1 Cor. 15:51-52)	Will be visible to the entire world (Matt. 24:27; Rev. 1:7)
Tribulation begins (Rev. 6)	Millennium begins (Rev. 20)
Christ comes as the bright morning (Rev. 22:16)	Christ comes as the sun of righteousness (Mal. 4:2)