

## PRAYER ORIENTED TO CHRIST'S RETURN

*"In our pragmatic, materialistic society, where each of us seeks comfort and 'fulfillment' and respect, it is hard to follow a despised, crucified Messiah - unless we fix our eyes on the end. If we do not aim for the new heavens and the new earth, many of our values and decisions in this world will be myopic, unworthy, tarnished, fundamentally wrongheaded. . . . Can biblical spirituality long survive where Christians are not oriented to the world to come? And, in this context, can we expect to pray aright unless we are oriented to the world to come?"*

// D.A. Carson, *Praying with Paul*

### 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12

1. Thank God for signs of grace (3-4)
  - Faith that is increasing/ increasing reliance on God (3)
  - Love for each other that is increasing (3)
  - Perseverance and steadfastness under trial/ persecution (4)
  
2. Pray that our confidence will come from... (5-10)
  - Believing that our suffering identifies us with Christ and our faithful endurance gives evidence that God has justly and rightly reconciled us to himself (5)
  - Believing that God is just and will repay every evil (6, 8-9)
  - Believing that God himself will give relief when Christ returns (7)
  - Believing that Christ will be marveled at and glorified among believers (10)
  
3. Pray that God will make us *worthy of his calling* (11a; Ephesians 4:1-7)
  - To become worthy of all that it means to be a Christian - set apart; consecrated
  - Grow to Christian maturity (Galatians 4:19)
  - For God's grace to make us what he has called us to be (Colossians 2:6-7)
  - Against warped priorities
  
4. Pray that God will bring to fruition each Christian's *good purposes that are prompted by faith* (11b; Ephesians 2:10; Titus 3:1, 8)
  - For godly desires and intentions - 2 Corinthians 3:18
  - For these desires and intentions to bear fruit in our lives in word and deed (Psalm 90:16-17; 1 John 3:18)
  - For personal, familial, and corporate goals oriented to Christ's kingdom and coming
  - For God's power to bring about the fruit of righteousness in the lives of our people (Philippians 2:12-13 - spiritual vitality rather than spiritual anemia)
  
5. Pray that the name of Jesus will be glorified in us, and us in him (12a; Colossians 1:16)
  - Conviction #2 - that God will be glorified through Christ as we are transformed to become more like him (maturity and fruitfulness)
  - That we will be "strengthened [and] empowered to exhibit characteristics that we would not otherwise display."
  - Pray that all this would be done "according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ." (12b)

*"Thus Paul has returned to his eschatology, that is, to his habit of looking toward the end of history, to his conviction that Christian life can be lived faithfully only if it is lived in light of the end." (D.A. Carson)*