

The Enduring Church: An Exposition of 2 Thessalonians

Prayerful: Depend On a Faithful God

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

The Lord's Day Evening | March 31, 2019

Five Marks of An Enduring Church

1. Steadfast: Respond To Adversity In View of Christ's Return (1:1–12).
2. Wary: Reject False Revelation, Signs, and Wonders (2:1–12).
3. Discerning: Know the True Gospel from a False Gospel (2:13–17)
4. **Prayerful: Depend On A Faithful God (2 Thessalonians 3:1–5).**
5. Disciplined: Don't Tolerate an "Easy Money" Philosophy (3:6–17).

Paul has Five Concerns In His Prayer Request

1. The rapid spread of the gospel through Paul and others (1). Only God can grant success.
2. The right response to the gospel by those who hear (1–2). Only God can grant faith.
3. The protection and perseverance of the true church (3). Only God can defeat Satan.
4. The obedience of the church to the apostles' teaching (4). Only God can enable obedience.
5. The love of the church for God (5). Only God can turn our hearts toward him.

What is absent from Paul's prayer requests:

1. Requests for health, wealth, fame, fortune, "success," healing, prosperity, luxury, ease, comfort, glory, praise, making a name for himself, Bentleys, corporate jets, diamond rings, bling, etc.
2. Flattery and manipulation. Paul did not thank anyone except God (see 1:3); did not put confidence in (believe in) himself or teach others to; did not put confidence in others or teach others to, did not promote, praise, compliment others. He found a way to encourage them while at the same time reminding them that all they have comes from a faithful God.

Result of Paul's Prayer Request: God is exalted, man is humbled.

"So much the more men exalt themselves, so much the less will they surely be disposed to exalt God." –Jonathan Edwards

Application

Pray this way, and beware of prayers and teaching that exalt man and humble God so that the spread of God's fame in all the earth is not paramount in the life of a believer. Church is not about you, it's about God.