

The What and Why of Prayer
Dr. Michael A. Cox
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Text: 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12

2 Thessalonians: [Bibliography](#) or [Manuscripts and Greek Exegesis](#)

UBS 4th Edition Paragraph Topic: The Judgment at Christ's Coming

Central Idea of Message: Prayer should focus on God's agenda such that Jesus Christ would be glorified in his people and that his people would become more like him.

Introduction: Praying for others is the duty of every Christian. Having said this, what shall be prayed and why? It is my hope that the present text will provide some answers to these two questions as we explore the what and why of prayer.

I. What to Pray for Others (v. 11)

A. That our God may count them worthy of their invitation

1. Our: not just my God, but our God
2. Worthy
 - a) Only by the blood of the lamb
 - b) Worth is never based upon personal merit, but rather on personal faith and individual yieldedness
 - c) It is wondrous that God counts anyone worthy of his invitation to be part of Christ's body even before the process is completed
 - d) Our Christian lives should be as significant and influential as our invitation to salvation from God is significant and influential
 - e) All that the Christian does should be characterized by God's gracious summons
 - f) A faith response to this invitation makes one who was formerly a disobedient enemy of God into an obedient ally of God, even a joint heir with Christ

B. That God would fulfill every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power

1. Desires for goodness originate with God: pray for good things
2. The work of faith with power originates with God

3. Paul is praying for works marked by faith and demonstrating God's infinite power: what works of faith are evident in your life?
4. Effectiveness in the Christian life is totally dependent upon the power of God (cf. Larson 93)
5. **The extent of the power of God unleashed in our lives is totally dependent upon our yieldedness**
6. The relationship of Christians with Christians reveals that this is no "out-of-sight, out-of-mind" relationship (cf. Larson 93)
7. I have often been praying the wrong things for others!

II. Why to Pray for Others (v. 12)

A. That Jesus may be glorified in you

1. Everything that is asked in prayer should connect directly or indirectly with bringing glory to Jesus
2. Paul says that the glory brought to Jesus is conveyed through each individual Christian
3. **Christians do not live for themselves but for the purpose of reflecting the magnificence of Jesus**

B. That you may be glorified in Jesus

1. Equated grace and equated givers of grace
 - a) According to the grace of God
 - b) According to the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ
 - c) Divine grace is what generated God's invitation to all people to come to him through his crucified and risen son
2. Those who glorify the Lord Jesus will be glorified in him (cf. Tolbert 89)
3. Reciprocal glorification (cf. Faussett)
4. There is infinite glory in being a child of God

Conclusion: Prayer should focus on God's agenda such that Jesus Christ would be glorified in his people and that his people would become more like him. How does your prayer-life match up?