

**Prayer and Expectation**  
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**Original: 3-2-03; Revised: 7-23-17; 11-30-25**

**Text:** 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

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

**UBS 4<sup>th</sup> Edition Paragraph Topic:** Pray for Us

**Central Idea of Message:** Believers should pray for the rapid spreading of God's word and have confidence in God's faithfulness to direct hearts toward steadfastness in Christ.

**Introduction:** Only the foolish believe prayer is unimportant. Prayer that agrees with God's will always results in divine empowerment; thus, when one places faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that one can expect God's faithfulness in return.

Here are Paul's instructions to the Thessalonians concerning prayer and expectation.

**I. Instructions Concerning Prayer (vv. 1-2)**

**A. Pray for the ministers (v. 1)**

**1. Pray that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly**

- a) By word of mouth
- b) By radio
- c) By television
- d) By audio tape
- e) By video tape
- f) By internet
- g) By magazine
- h) By book
- i) By newspaper
- j) By billboard
- k) By bumper sticker

**2. Pray that the word of the Lord may be honored**

- a) Few people today respect the Bible
- b) God's word must be esteemed and obeyed
- c) Honored by sinners accepting and acting on it

**B. Pray that ministers of the gospel may be delivered from perverse and evil men (v. 2)**

- 1. Not all people have faith
  - a) Not because they cannot
  - b) Because they will not

- c) **Faithless people can generate militant opposition to gospel truth and Christian values**
  - d) Some who are faithless not only refuse to believe that Jesus is the Christ but also threaten those who do
- 2. Perverse people and wicked things impede our way to the throne of God
- 3. Pray to be delivered from evil
  - a) Evil men: outrageous, perverted
  - b) Evil women
  - c) Evil thoughts
  - d) Evil words
  - e) Evil actions
  - f) Evil pictures
  - g) Evil businesses
- 4. Paul's prayer requests mentioned nothing about health, wealth, or good luck!
- 5. **It is human to pray for personal safety but it is divine to prefer to pray for the spread of, and success of, the gospel!**

## II. Instructions Concerning Expectation (vv. 3-5)

### A. Have confidence in God's faithfulness (v. 3)

- 1. Faith on our part is responded to by faithfulness on God's part (cf. Faussett)
- 2. He will strengthen us: empower by the Spirit
- 3. He will protect us from the evil one: Satan cannot snatch away the status of any believer
- 4. **Many people may prove to be fickle but God always proves to be faithful!**
  - a) God is trustworthy
  - b) God is dependable
- 5. This is no guarantee that hardship, or even martyrdom, will not come
  - a) Look at Jesus
  - b) Look at Paul
- 6. **God's deliverance is rarely, if ever, accomplished by removing his own out of tough situations, his way is to supply strength and grace to stand firm in the faith, even in the face of opposition**

### B. Have confidence in God's people (v. 4)

- 1. Paul had confidence that the Lord would continue to work out his good pleasure in all believers (Phil. 2:13)

2. Godliness certainly runs counter to mankind's natural inclinations
3. Paul had confidence that these believers would continue to follow his own instructions
4. Be one of these people unlike the fickle, inconsistent, untrustworthy, undependable ones!

**C. Have confidence in God's love (v. 5)**

1. The Lord Jesus directs hearts into the love of God: true love for God is inseparable from love for Christ
2. The Lord Jesus directs hearts into the steadfastness of Christ
  - a) Christ never faltered in the face of opposition and even death
  - b) God wants all believers to be solidly planted in the word and in the faith
  - c) The truth is this: "we stand no longer than God holds us up" (Henry 6:802)
  - d) Let God be the one holding you up from this day forward!

**Conclusion: If you want the faithfulness of God evident in your life, you must place your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.** Hymn #383, "How Firm a Foundation."