

LIFE GROUP SERMON SUMMARY QUESTIONS

2 Thessalonians

These questions are for the **February 7, 2016** sermon, "Pattern for Prayer." Please read the sermon passage (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12) together out loud.

Sermon Outline:

As we pray for one another, note . . .

1. **The requests we are to make** (2 Thessalonians 1:11)
 - A. That God makes afflicted friends worthy of his calling (11a)
 - i. God is working for good even when our situation does not feel good.
 - ii. God's call to the elect is sovereign and effectual (Romans 8)
 - B. That God will fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power (11b)
 - i. Pray that God's will be done.
 - ii. Pray that God's power will be seen and felt.
2. **The results we are to seek** (12)
 - A. That the name of God will be lifted up and glorified.
 - i. Consider the "witness" or relational connectedness that prayer brings.
 - ii. Sometime it is more powerful to be with God than to do things "for God."
 - B. The grace of God.
 - i. The believer is not isolated from bad and hard things in this life.
 - ii. God is with his people and carries them through hard valleys--this is grace.

Life Group Discussion Questions

1. Based on #1, above: It is not wrong to pray for deliverance from affliction, but Paul teaches us here to focus on a different goal in prayer: that your afflicted friend (and you) would pray for God's grace to make our friends worthy of his calling. How would obedience to this way of praying change your current prayers? Which friend would most benefit from you focusing on their changing character in the midst of their affliction?
2. Based on #1, above: We looked at the example of a diamond-cutter, whose hammering chisel made the diamond more valuable and beautiful. Reflect on this: "God's working for good doesn't feel good."
3. Based on #1, above: Rather than a situation working out as we think it should, it is more important that a situation works out in a way where God's will is done and the people around the situation see and feel God's power. Discuss the ways your prayer life would change if you prayed like that.
4. Based on #2, above: One of the most important realities is that we live in this life with God, by the power of his Holy Spirit (John 17). In what ways do you sense God's nearness when you pray?
5. Based on #2, above: Reflect on this John Bunyan quote: "You can do more than pray after you've prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you've prayed."