

COUNTER CULTURAL

Deliver Us from Evil — 2 Thessalonians 3:1-3
November 5, 2017

Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored. - **2 Thessalonians 3:1**

I. UNDERGIRDING BY PRAYER

- Paul recognized his need for prayer and asked for it frequently (vs. 1; Col. 4:3; 1 Thess. 5:25; Eph. 6:19).
- Paul's requests for prayers always centered around gospel proclamation, not his own comfort or prosperity.
- Oftentimes, we do not receive from the Lord simply because we do not take the time to pray, or we pray with impure motives (James 4:1-3).

II. DELIVERED FROM EVIL

- This world is filled with those who have no faith in the living God (vs. 2; Matt. 7:13-14; John 3:19; Phil. 3:18-19).
- It is okay to ask to be delivered from evil and to flee when it is encountered - if possible (vs. 2; Matt. 6:9-13, 10:23).

III. PERSECUTION AND SUFFERING

- Persecution and suffering will come to genuine believers (Mark 10:30; 1 Thess. 3:1-6; 2 Tim. 3:12; 1 Pet. 4:12-13; Rev. 2:9-10).
- When we live a life in obedience to God and counter cultural to the world, we must expect trouble (Matt. 10:22; John 15:18-21).
- There is a blessing attached to persecution (Matt. 5:10-12).
- Our hope and joy lies in union with Christ and eternity with him (Heb. 13:13).

IV. 10 WAYS TO PRAY FOR THE PERSECUTED CHURCH

1. Sense God's presence (Heb. 13:5)
2. Experience God's comfort (2 Thess. 2:16-17)
3. See God open doors to evangelism (Col. 4:3)
4. Boldly share the gospel (Acts 4:29)
5. Forgive and love their persecutors (Matt. 5:44)
6. Know we are praying for them (2 Tim. 1:3)
7. Be granted wisdom in covert ministry work (Acts 9:23-25)
8. Remain joyful amid suffering (Acts 5:41)

KNOW: Troubles come and go in life. We are called to hold fast in a changing culture and to pray for those who are enduring the struggle.

DO: Pray for those who are persecuted

Suggested Reading:

Tortured for Christ by Richard Wurmbrand (LifePoint Library #272.909 WUR)

Questions/Discovery Points for Life Groups/Families

Please read 2 Thessalonians 3:1-3

1. What specifically is Paul asking prayer for in our passage from Sunday?
2. Why is he asking for prayer? What is his reasoning in verse 2? It seems pretty generic, doesn't it? Why does that reasoning cause us to need to be prayerful?
3. What does Paul believe about the Lord that he expresses in verse 3? Does that seem to be true in your own life?
4. What are some things that we learn best through suffering? Why do you think God allows it?
5. In what ways, if any, did this message from Sunday increase your desire to consider and pray for those who are persecuted?