"GOD'S PEOPLE NEED THE LORD"

2 Thessalonians 3:1-5

8-5-2026

INTRODUCTION:

***Even you who are saved desperately need the Lord.**

I. We need the Lord for successful ministry (v. 1-2)

We need to pray to Him that:

--His Word may run!

--His Word may shine!

--His messengers may be unhindered (v. 2)

II. We need the Lord for supernatural protection (v. 3)

III. We need the Lord for simple obedience (v. 4)

IV. We need the Lord for spiritual virtue (v. 5)

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It is obvious that the unsaved need the Lord.

They Him to be forgiven, adopted, justified, redeemed, unshackled (free).

But we often forget how much we as believers need Him.

Note the emphasis in verses 1-5 involves the believer's desperate need for *"the Lord."*
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V. 1-2 *"The Lord"* is implied by the requested prayer to Him
V. 3 *"The Lord"*
V. 4 *"The Lord"*
V. 5 *The Lord"*

Jesus said: *"Without me, ye can do nothing"* (Jn. 15:5).

However, we frequently think that certainly there must be some things I can do without needed God's help.

ILLUS: the Hymn: "I Need Thee Every Hour"

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V. 1

"Finally" - Paul now wraps up this epistle with some practical exhortation. The Christian life is not merely theoretical; it is practical.

"Pray" - Be praying; not a one-time prayer; but continual prayer support.

"For us" - Even the great Apostle Paul and his highly acclaimed co-workers Timothy and Silas needed prayer!

No one is beyond the need of prayer. If God doesn't do it, the job will not get done!

The frequent requests Paul makes for prayer (Ro. 15:30-31; Eph. 6:18-19; Col. 4:3; Philemon 22; I Th. 5:25) reveal that he was deeply convinced of the power of prayer (Hiebert, p . 330).

"The word of the Lord" - the Lord's Word

As Paul preached, he did not preach His word, but God's Word. The only word worthy of *"free course"* is God's.

"Free course" - (*treko)* - lit. that the Word of the Lord (The Lord's Word) may <u>run</u>; may have <u>swift progress</u>.

The Word was used in the LXX of the running of a warrior in battle. . . and. . . is further applied to the [Old Testament] prophets as His 'runners'" The image being portrayed is that of the herald in his urgency (Linguistic Key, p. 611).

Paul by using an athletic metaphor drawn from the race track, shows that God's
Word is:--active
--living *("quick")*
--powerful (Heb. 4:12)

"Free course" - pray that God's Word would: --be unhindered
--move quickly

Paul is perhaps alluding to Psalm 147:15 - *"HE sent forth His commandment upon the earth: His Word runneth very swiftly"*

Paul was bound in chains, but he said that God's Word is not bound (II Tim. 2:9).

*"**Glorified" -*** God's Word is glorified (well thought of; adored and praised) when it reveals its power to swiftly move into hearts and minds and radically transform people.

Acts 13:48-49 - *"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. And the Word of the Lord was published throughout all the region."*

God is concerned that His Word the Bible is glorified. God's Word is glorified when it is: believed (trusted) and obeyed (followed).

"As it is with you" - God's Word was glorified by the Thessalonians because they did not receive it as the word of men, but as it is the word of God. God's Word came to them in power (SEE: I Th. 1:5-10).

V. 2

Paul requests prayer that he and his companions (as they preach, witness, evangelize, and disciple) might be *"powerfully delivered [rescued] from unreasonable* (lit. "out of place" - outrageous, perverse) *and evil* (morally wicked) *men."*

Satan has his cultists, con-artists, poisonous humanists, and question-infested agnostics-- who have no desire for solid truth -- positioned to waste the precious time and disrupt the important work of God's servants.

Paul faced trouble in almost every city he visited (SEE: Acts 17:5-10; 18:6-17)

"For all men have not faith" lit. "the faith" Two possible ideas:

1) They don't have <u>saving</u> faith
(they don't have <u>true</u> faith, the faith to believe)

2) They don't have the capacity to believe the body of truth regarding Jesus Christ

In contrast to men not having faith, Paul says God is faithful (worthy of faith).

II. We need <u>the Lord</u>
for supernatural <u>protection</u> (v. 3)

"The Lord is faithful" - He is trustworthy, reliable, worthy of your faith. "Great is thy faithfulness."

"Stablish" - We need the Lord to support, strengthen, "prop us up" in *"every good word and work"* (2:17).

Our strength - *"I can do all things <u>through Christ</u> which strengtheneth me."*

"Keep" = to protect or guard

"Evil" = lit. "The evil"
1) The Evil One - Satan
2) The particular evil that continually stumbles you.

III. We need <u>the Lord</u>
for simple <u>obedience</u> (v. 4)

Observe how Paul's confidence (persuasion) is not in the Thessalonians but in the God of the Thessalonians.

Paul's confidence was never in the power of believers, but in the power of <u>God</u> in believers (Phil. 1:6 - *"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."*)

Your obedience to God depends on:
1. Your relationship to Him
2) Your reliance on Him

The word *"command"* means: a military order passed down from a superior officer. . . He (Paul) repeats this word in 3:6, 10, 12 (Wiersbe, p. 160).

"We command you" - via this epistle, which Paul implicitly raises to the status of the rest of Scripture (since it is God who would enable such obedience).

IV. We need <u>the Lord</u>
for spiritual <u>virtue</u> (v. 5)

The word *"Lord"* is used with god (i.e. the Father) and Christ because both the Father and Son are one <u>Lord</u>.

Paul is expressing a wish (desire) that the Lord will guide you into His own love and endurance.

"The verb '*direct*' conveys the picture of opening up the way by the removal of obstacles so that the desired goal may be reached" (Hiebert, p. 336)

"Direct your hearts" - to guide the core of one's being. Our hearts being *"deceitful above all things and desperately wicked"* (Jer. 17:9) need God to prompt them to have the right affections and stability.

"The Love of God" - God's love. The same love that God has.

God is the only source for true (*agape*) love.

"Beloved, let us love one another, for love is <u>of God</u>" (i.e. from God) (I Jn. 4:7).

Loving others is a matter of letting God love through you.

"The patient waiting" - lit. the endurance (*hupomonane*), the ability to remain under pressure without giving up or giving in.

"The patience of Christ" means to have the same ability to endure that Christ had (Heb. 12:2 - *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us."*)

This ability to endure hardship will be most needed prior to the second coming of Christ.

CONCLUSION:

Where does our confidence rest?

Is our reliance on self or God?

God warns us: *"Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall"*

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