

Prayer – Week One

The prayers of Paul

Do you pray? If you don't pray as much as you would like to, what is it that holds you back from doing so?

On Sunday we considered Paul's prayer in Ephesians 3:14-19. We were challenged by the way that Paul prays that we might know God better and that we might know and grow in Christ's love. Instead of praying that God would remove our challenging circumstances, more often Paul prays that we would grow to maturity in Christ.

How might we reflect on how, why and what Paul prays and apply this to our own personal and corporate prayer life?

How might we pray, your will be done, instead of my will be done and commit to growing in our knowledge and understanding of God and his glorious will and purposes?

Consider another prayer from the Apostle Paul, read **2 Thessalonians 1:1-12** and reflect on some questions Carson asks us.

- 1) Why does Paul thank God for the Thessalonian Christians?
- 2) Is it their actions or their faith that will make them worthy of the Kingdom of God. Discuss.
- 3) What does it mean to pray that God might count Christians we know to be worthy of God's calling? How will you incorporate such petitions into your prayers?
- 4) What good, faith prompted purposes (desires for goodness and deeds prompted by faith) have you been developing? Do you pray that God will bring such purposes to fulfillment? What concrete steps can you take to grow your praying in this area?
- 5) What is Paul's twofold goal in this prayer for the Thessalonians? How should such a goal shape our prayers?