

# How To Pray With Power and Purpose

A Basic Bible Summary by L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.  
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[The Easy Printable PDF Version](#)

## **1 Thessalonians 3:9-13**

*9 How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you? 10 Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.*

*11 Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you. 12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you. 13 And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.*

**Let's do a Verse by Verse Study  
and Learn How To Pray With Power And Purpose.**

## **1 Thessalonians 3:9**

*9 How can we thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that we feel before our God because of you?*

What do you think about Stonegate Church? I wonder if you can say with me and pray with me:

"I cannot thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that I feel before God because of you."

**To Pray With Power and Purpose, We Need To Begin By Thanking God for the Joy He Gives Through Stonegate Church!**

People who can attend Stonegate Church regularly, but who do not attend our worship services and the other opportunities we give for study, fellowship, working, and eating, are truly missing out on the joy that being a part of Stonegate Church gives us. Sometimes I feel sorry for them, and for all the joy they are missing that is right here in Stonegate Church week after week (and also in midweek).

As your pastor, I can easily and sincerely pray to God with thanksgiving for the opportunity to serve God in Stonegate Church:

*“And, I cannot thank God enough for you in return for all the joy that I feel before God because of you.”*

Stop just a moment now. Bow your head and close your eyes. Think of one or two people in Stonegate Church who give you joy and thank God for them in a prayer.

Amen!

Later, if you have the opportunity, tell them that you thank God for the joy they bring you here at Stonegate Church!

Now, thank God for Stonegate Church!

You can pray with power and purpose if you begin your prayers with thanksgiving, especially for Stonegate Church and your fellow Christians.

Paul thanked God in prayer for God's work in the church. God had made the difference in their lives. Paul knew that the Christians in Thessalonica gave him joy, because of God's work in them and in the Church. Paul gave God all the credit!

People give us joy in Stonegate Church, because we can see the difference that God is making in their lives, and they are making a difference in our lives as God works through them to bless us.

Knowing God was working in the church, affected Paul's attitude toward the church in Thessalonica. He rejoiced before God in how far they had come And he rejoiced in the potential he saw they had as God worked in the Church. He did not complain and focus on what they lacked. He focused on what they had, and what they were doing with the gifts God had given them. Seeing them use their God-given gifts brought Paul joy and he told them so.

People give us joy in Stonegate Church because we see them using their talents and working hard to bring joy to others and to make Stonegate Church a better church. We can pray for God to bless all those who serve in our church in so many ways. We can pray for everyone who visits here, that they might experience the joy we truly have in serving God in Stonegate Church.

Paul's attitude was that of a father to his church. A father rejoices in the achievements of his children and seeks to encourage them.

As we think about our congregation, we see many accomplishments (inside and outside our building) over the last several months. We want to thank God for achieving these things through us. These things would not be done apart from our active church families! And even though we know there is much more that needs to be done in many areas, we do want to be certain that we encourage one

another because of what people are allowing God to do as He works through them.

And we can joyfully pray for specific things we see that need to be done in the church and for the people to do them (if we cannot do them ourselves).

### **To Pray With Power and Purpose, We Need To Begin By Thanking God for the Joy He Gives Through Stonegate Church!**

#### **1 Thessalonians 3:10**

*10 Night and day we pray most earnestly that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith.*

### **To Pray With Power and Purpose, We Need To Pray That Everyone Will Have Their Faith Needs Met. Maybe We Also Need To Pray To Have Our Own Faith Needs Met!**

Paul tells us that the best way to meet people's faith needs is "Face to Face." Writing a letter to the Church in Thessalonica to strengthen their faith was helpful, but that could not take the place of seeing them "face to face." Coming to Stonegate Church for worship, study, and fellowship enables you and others to have your faith needs met "face to face."

You can study, listen, ask questions, and share with others what your faith needs are. Then your faith needs can be met. As you share what God is doing in your life, with thanksgiving, you meet the faith needs of others too.

Everyone is lacking faith to some extent. None of us is truly perfect in our faith and life. Maybe we believe the Bible and all the right truths, but we need our faith strengthened, and we need to be encouraged. Coming to Stonegate Church will help you acquire more of the faith you need for daily living.

Stonegate Church will not be able to meet the faith needs of her members or visitors if we do not spend time in prayer to know the needs and learn how to meet them. Paul prayed night and day, we might say, "morning and evening," that he might be able to meet the faith needs of the church. We can do the same thing. You do not need to be a pastor to pray this prayer:

*"O Lord, show me how to encourage anyone at Stonegate Church who has a faith need. Give me the wisdom and compassion to help anyone who shares a faith need with me."*

Close your eyes for just a moment and pray that prayer quietly in your mind and spirit with me:

*“O Lord, show me how to encourage anyone at Stonegate Church who has a faith need. Give me the wisdom and compassion to help anyone who shares a faith need with me. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”*

Paul's appreciation, concern, and love moved him to pray for the church. Prayer is simply talking to God, not following a formula or form. But reading through and praying through these verses can give us Power and Purpose in Prayer.

Paul prayed more than once, continuously, and earnestly to return to Thessalonica to meet the church's faith needs. Not just once, but night and day he prayed day after day.

Stonegate Church, and the people of Stonegate Church, and the people God sends here, and will continue to send here, have faith needs. These needs will only be met when all of our church's needs (whether physical, spiritual, financial, numerical, or others) are met. So, pray for all the needs you know about that our church has. As God meets these needs in answer to prayer, the faith that is lacking in many will be strengthened and restored.

Paul felt the burden of having left Thessalonica before his work was finished, before he had given them all they needed to maintain a strong faith.

Paul wanted to give them more teaching about God and how to experience God's presence more. That is one of our major responsibilities at Stonegate Church. We teach the Scriptures so we can give more information about God. We have worship services and choir practices so we can experience God more. We teach about prayer and practice prayer to help us meet the needs of others with God's help and to experience God's presence more.

**To Pray With Power and Purpose, We Need To Pray That Everyone Will Have Their Faith Needs Met. Maybe We Also Need To Pray To Have Our Own Faith Needs Met!**

### **1 Thessalonians 3:11**

*11 Now may our God and Father himself and our Lord Jesus direct our way to you.*

**To Pray With Power and Purpose, We Need To Pray That God our Father And The Lord Jesus Christ Will Direct Our Way.**

None of us can do everything that needs to be done or that we would like to do. Stonegate Church cannot do all at once everything that needs to be done. Stonegate Church cannot meet every need that we see in the church and in the world. We cannot meet every need of every family in the church and every visitor.

What we can and must do is pray to God our Father and to the Lord Jesus Christ to direct our way. We can pray for God to show us what He wants us to do, what our focus should be, and what needs we can meet with the Lord's help.

Our God has the ability. Our Father has the love. Our Lord has the authority. So, with God's guidance and direction, we can do whatever God directs us to do.

Because Paul was in a right relationship with God, he trusted God to hear his prayer and direct him to Thessalonica. He had a Bible promise that God would do such a thing for those who asked, if they fulfilled the conditions. As we learn the promises of the Scriptures, we can pray according to these promises. Paul prayed for direction according to the Proverbs.

**Proverbs 3:6** — *In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.*

Paul acknowledged God was at work in all his achievements. And Paul prayed for God to direct or make straight his paths.

At Stonegate Church, we pray for the Lord to direct us. We pray for the Lord to show us what to do. We pray for the Lord to give us the power to do His will with a loving spirit. We pray for the Lord to send us the people of His choice to serve. We pray for the Lord to direct us to the people who need our help or to those who need to be invited to our church.

**To Pray With Power and Purpose, We Need To Pray That God our Father And The Lord Jesus Christ Will Direct Our Way.**

### **1 Thessalonians 3:12**

*12 And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we abound in love for you.*

**To Pray With Power and Purpose, We Need To Pray That Our Love for One Another Will Increase and Abound.**

Paul insisted so much in faith in God, because faith is the foundation and beginning of love for God and others.

I must believe the truth and the good things about God before I can love Him. Satan tries to destroy our love for God by trying to destroy our faith, by trying to convince us God is not good.

Paul prayed to the Lord, because only the Lord can cause people to be "filled to the full" (increase) and "overflow" (abound) with love, because God is love. To love is to be filled with the presence of God.

Only by God dwelling in our hearts can we love all people. Some people we simply will not love if God does not work His love in our hearts for them.

**To Pray With Power and Purpose, We Need To Pray That Our Love for One Another Will Increase and Abound.**

### **1 Thessalonians 3:13**

*13 And may he so strengthen your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his saints.*

At Stonegate Church, as in Paul's letter to Thessalonica, we emphasize Faith, then Love, then Holiness (or consecration of our whole lives to God).

We need all three (Faith, Love, and Holiness) in abundance in our church and in our lives. Jesus Christ is coming again, and we want to be blameless before Him and the saints who come with Him.

**To Pray With Power and Purpose, We Need To Pray As People Who Have Consecrated Their Lives Totally To God. And, We Need To Pray For Stonegate Church To Be A Holy Church, A Wholly Consecrated Church.**

Toward others, our focus is on active love for them. We want to say and do things to encourage them and help them have a more complete faith. We want to say and do those things that will further their well-being. We pray for God to help us do this.

Toward our God and Father, toward our Lord Jesus, our focus is on holiness. We pray for God to help us.

We pray for God to "strengthen or establish our hearts". We pray for an unwavering in our inner purpose to love God and live for God without sin. We pray this not only for ourselves, but for everyone in Stonegate Church.

We pray for God to help us live "blameless"— without sin, perfect, so when we see God nothing can be held against us. We pray for others in Stonegate Church to live blameless live too. We do not want God to need to "settle" anything with us or our fellow church family when we meet Him.

We need to pray for God to help us live in "holiness" — separated from doing what is wicked, from what sinners do: consecrated to loving God and others unselfishly.

Because of our faith, we love God.

Because we love God, we want to be holy.

Faith builds up love.

Love is the motive for obedience or holiness.

**To Pray With Power and Purpose, We Need To Pray As People Who Have Consecrated Their Lives Totally To God. And, We Need To Pray For Stonegate Church To Be A Holy Church, A Wholly Consecrated Church.**

Jesus Christ is coming again with his holy ones; therefore, remember these words.

**Hebrews 12:14** — *“Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.”*

— L.G. Parkhurst, Jr. Copyright © 2003 by L.G. Parkhurst, Jr. If you have found this study helpful or have questions, please write me at [lgp@stonegatechurch.org](mailto:lgp@stonegatechurch.org)