

I Thessalonians 1:2 – “We give thanks for you all, making mention of you in our prayers, remembering without ceasing your work of faith, labor of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ...”

GIVING THANKS FOR FAITH, LOVE AND HOPE

We learn from this prayer that faith works, love labors, and hope is patient. Paul was thankful for the visible expressions of Christianity by the Thessalonian church. Though an infant church, they showed signs spiritual maturity. First, they had a faith that works. James, in his epistle, was careful to point out that faith without works is dead. Faith without works is like a body without a spirit. This was a living faith. Their faith was demonstrated by agape. Agape love, sometimes referred to as charity, is the voluntary giving of help, sometimes money, to those in need. Then he gave thanks for their patient hope, that is their endurance in waiting for the Lord to return, and the things they were expecting from the Lord in answer to their prayers. When you thank God for the spiritually mature, be sure to pray for those who need to grow in faith, hope, and love. Much of my praying for others is along this line. The people who have been most helpful to me in my Christian walk were mature when it comes to these virtues. People who are born spiritually go through the same stages of development as babies who are born naturally. Their beginnings require much assistance in getting the spiritual food and care they need. They go through adolescent rebellion. As they mature, they still have times of doubt and indecision. Get to know the people you pray for. Learn what to pray for. When God leads you to come along side someone in prayer, devote your time to praying for their growth. Someone did that for you.