Being Accounted As Being Worthy

Luke 20:35, Acts 5:41 and 2 Thessalonians 1:5 refer to being “accounted” or “credited” with being worthy by God through His undeserved grace. In these verses, the words “are counted worthy”, “they were counted worthy” and “may be counted worthy” are forms of the Greek word “kataxioo” which means “to account worthy, to judge worthy”. The usage of the forms of “kataxioo” in the three verses mentioned above does not relate to being worthy by nature, character or actions.

2 Thessalonians 1:2-5 states: “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ...your faith grows exceedingly, and the love of every one of you all abounds toward each other, so that we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that you endure, which is manifest evidence of the righteous judgement of God, that you may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you also suffer.”

In the above, Paul is saying that the faith and patient endurance of Thessalonian believers was outward or manifested evidence of the judgement of God in relation to Him declaring believers righteous in Christ, the latter having as one of its intended aims the accounting of believers as being worthy of being members of His Kingdom. Even though these believers are not worthy in themselves of being members of His Kingdom, He credits them as being worthy through Christ by unmerited grace.

In 2 Thessalonians 1:2-5, Paul was not teaching that by God’s grace believers merit being declared worthy by their endurance of suffering. Instead, he was saying that their faithful endurance of suffering was an outward fruit of God’s gracious righteous judgment in declaring them worthy through the Lord Jesus Christ. In Greek the expression “that you” in verse 5 is “eis to” accompanied by the infinitive “may be counted worthy”. In his letters, Paul usually used the phrase “eis to” with an infinitive to refer to the purpose of someone. For example, in Romans 1:20, 3:26, 4:18, 6:12, 7:4, 1 Thessalonians 3:13 and 2 Thessalonians 2:10, Paul uses the Greek words “eis to” with an infinitive to mean “so that”. 2 Thessalonians 1:5 teaches that God’s righteous judgment has the purpose of counting believers worthy of His Kingdom by His unmerited grace.

The Greek word “axioo” means “to judge or esteem worthy or deserving, to deem fitting” or “consider worthy (or) deserving; consider suitable (or) fitting”. 2 Thessalonians 1:11 uses a form of “axioo” in the sense of God judging or considering believers suitable or fitting of His calling on their lives. 2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 states: “Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the

1 Vine, page 9.
2 Bauer, page 229.
3 Forms of the word “axioo” are used in Acts 15:38, 28:22, Luke 7:7, 2 Thessalonians 1:11, 1 Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 3:3 and 10:29. In Acts 15:38 and 28:22, “axioo” is used in the sense of “judged or considered suitable or fitting”.
4 Perschbacher, page 35.
5 Bauer, page 78.
**Lord Jesus Christ.** Verse 12 here shows that being fitting of God’s calling on our lives is according to and empowered by God’s **totally unmerited grace**.

In Galatians 1:6 and Romans 9:11, Paul stresses that God calls believers in His undeserved grace and not because they deserve or merit it through their good works. Galatians 1:6 says: “...Him who called you in the grace of Christ...” Romans 9:11 declares: “for the children not yet being born, nor having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works but of Him who calls.”

In Hebrews 10:29, a form of “axioo” is used to refer to Christ’s blood being considered or judged unclean **even though it is not this in real nature or character**. This is similar to the usage of the form of “axioo” in 2 Thessalonians 1:11. In this latter verse being counted **worthy of this calling** means being considered worthy of God’s calling. This is even though we are not worthy by nature, character or actions. In Matthew 3:11, 8:8 and Luke 18:10-14, we see how godly believers recognise their own unworthiness in nature, character and actions.

As believers, we must rejoice about the fact God counts us as being worthy of His calling and Kingdom through His totally undeserved grace through Christ.

**Bible Study Question**

1. Explain what 2 Thessalonians 1:2-5 means when it refers to being “**counted worthy of the Kingdom of God**.”