

The Prayer Life of a Christian Colossians 4:2-6

INTRO: Check the writing of Paul and you will see that he never writes a letter without urging folks to pray. Yes, it is our Christian duty to pray; but dear saint, remember it is also your privilege to pray.

Christian pray! A lack of prayer means a lack of power, purpose and provision. Berridge said: "Add decays begin in the closet; no heart thrives without much secret converse with God, and nothing will make amends for the want of it" (from Why Revival Tarries, Ravenhill 22).

I. VSS 2-4, AN APPEAL FOR SERIOUS PRAYING

A. Vs 2a, "Continue in prayer." Paul is saying be FAITHFUL in prayer, persevere in prayer.

1. The Greek word for "continue" is *proskartereo*. This is a compound word made up of *katereo* – "to be steadfast, to endure" and the preposition *pros* adds intensity to the meaning.

a. We are to be courageously persistent in prayer. Hold on to prayer and don't let go. The God of the good times is still God in the bad times....

b. The saints of Colossae are being called to persist in prayer.

2. The Scriptures urge Christians to be persistent in prayer.

a. Ephesians 6:18, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit...."

b. Luke 18:1, "...men ought always to pray and not to faint."

c. I Thessalonians 5:17, "Pray without ceasing."

d. Romans 12:12, ".....continuing instant in prayer."

3. As children of God, we need to devote ourselves to prayer. Continuance in prayer does not mean constant vocalization of prayers to God, but it does refer to a God consciousness that corresponds to every experience in our lives.

B. 2b, "Watch in the same [prayer]." Our prayer life is to be WAKEFUL and WATCHFUL.

1. "Watch and pray" is a principle of scripture and is found throughout the Word of God.

a. Matthew 26:41, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the

- flesh is weak.”
- b. Mark 13:33, “Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time [of His coming] is.”
2. “Watch” – wakeful, alert – On the Mount of Transfiguration, the disciples slumbered. It was only when they awoke that they saw the glory of Jesus Christ (Lk 9:32).
 - a. We need to stay physically awake.
 - b. We need to be spiritually awake. I Corinthians 15:34 tells us that it is important for believers to be spiritually alert. “Awake to righteousness and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame.’
 3. “Watch and pray” also means to watch for things that we ought to be praying about.
 - a. Devoted prayer is specific prayer, prayer for a need.
 - b. If we are not concerned about specifics, we will not persistently pray.
- C. Vs. 2c, Pray with “thanksgiving.” We are to pray with an attitude of thanksgiving.
1. Five times in the epistle of Colossians, Paul emphasized an attitude of gratitude:
 - a. For salvation – 1:12-14
 - b. For growth – 2:6-7
 - c. For fellowship with Christ and the local assembly - 3:15.
 - d. For the opportunity to serve – 3:17.
 - e. For all the blessings of God to believers – 4:2.
 2. Believers have many blessings and privileges to be thankful for:
 - a. The presence of God – Psalm 75:1, “Unto thee O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near.....”
 - b. For the Gospel – Romans 1:16, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel fo Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation....” Not ashamed, thankful.
 - c. For daily provision – “Give us this day our daily bread.”
 - d. For God’s purpose in our lives– Rom 8:28.
 - e. For victory– I Cor 15:57; II Cor 2:14, “And we know that all things work together.”

II. VSS 3-4, A DESIRE FOR AN OPEN DOOR

A. Vs 3, Paul wanted to have strength and opportunity to do the work that God had for him to do – getting the Gospel out. Paul always urged others to lift him up in prayer. When it came to prayer his cry was, “Brethren pray for me.”

1. Preacher, he is in jail; he is bound to a Roman soldier! In Ephesians 6:20, he says: “I am an ambassador in bonds.” The prayer request that he gave the Colossians is like the one he gave the Ephesians (6:19-20). When we look at Philippians 1:12-13, we see that Paul believed in the sovereign work of God and in prayer!

a. “Door” in the New Testament usually means opportunity (I Cor 16:8-9; I Cor 2:12).

b. God’s people are to pray for open doors because it is God who opens the door (Acts 14:27).

c. God not only opens doors; He shuts them as well (Rev 3:7).

2. “To speak the mystery of Christ.” This refers to the Gospel. A mystery refers to something hidden in the Old Testament but revealed in the New.

a. Paul requests that the Colossians pray that he might have opportunity to tell others about what Christ has done for sinners (I Cor 15:3-4).

b. Paul’s pulpit was a table at which he sat writing many of the epistles and greeting visitors. During the years of Paul’s imprisonment, he gave the gospel to:

1- Felix – Acts 24:10

2- Herod Agrippa – Acts 16:1

3- Roman soldiers – Phil 1:13

4- Members of Caesar’s household – Phil 4:22 and many others

3. The prayer of the apostle was not for release from prison, nor was it for release from duty. His prayer, his desire, his prayer was for strength so that he could work until his course was finished. He wanted to hear the words “Well done thou good and faithful servant” when his life came to a close. Let us not ask to be released from spiritual duty, let us rather ask for strength to do our duty as Christians.

B. Vs 4, Paul wanted to make the Gospel message plain as he “ought” to.

1. Paul had a compulsion, a burning desire to get the Gospel to the lost (I Cor 9:16).
2. The need of our day is the Gospel. We ought to preach the Gospel:
 - a. Boldly – Eph 6:19
 - b. Wisely– Prov 25:11, “A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”
 - c. In love – Eph 4:15
3. Every God called man wants to speak as he ought when it comes to the Gospel, every Christian should have that desire as well.

III. VSS 5-6, A DESIRE TO WITNESS TO THOSE WITHOUT

- A. Vs 5, Every Christian ought to desire to see the lost saved.
 1. “Them that are without” speaks of the lost; those outside God’s family, without the church and without God and without hope.
 2. “Walk in wisdom.”
 - a. “Walk” refers to our daily conduct. The unsaved watch the saved with a critical eye.
 - b. “Wisely” – see what God would have you to do and do it. See from God’s Word how you are to live and live it!
 3. “Redeeming the time.” This means to take every opportunity to witness (Rm 13:11-14).
- B. Vs 6, The speech of a Christian is to be:
 1. “With grace” – this means to be thoughtful, sensitive, gentle, loving, kind, truthful, etc. in your speech.
 2. “Seasoned with salt.”
 - a. Gracious speech is to also be effective. We are not to compromise the truth.
 - b. Salt stings when rubbed in a wound, but it can help prevent infection and corruption.
 3. Know how to respond with the right thing at the right time. Our speech is to have a spiritual flavor so “that it would never be flat or unprofitable, but forceful and telling, free from evil” (Thomas 128).

CONCLUSION: Pray that God will open doors for the Gospel to be preached.
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