

## **THANKFUL FOR PRAYER**

Friday, November 24

Reading: Colossians 4

**Colossians 4:2** *Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.*

F.B. Meyer, the author of the great little book The Secret of Guidance said, "The great tragedy of life is not unanswered prayer, but unoffered prayer." Instead of it being something we do every day, like breathing, eating, and walking and talking, it seems to have become like that little glass covered box on the wall that says, "break in case of emergency." It is true that so very often we associate prayer with crises in our life. <sup>1</sup>

This is not the attitude that Paul expresses (4:2-6). His first word is "devote yourselves to prayer." This word "devote" means to continue, to be steadfast and faithful. It comes from the Greek word for endure. Prayer can be work! It takes effort. We should devote time, attention, and energy to our prayers.

Second, Paul says we need to be "watchful" in our prayers. This word is the opposite of falling asleep. It means to pay attention; to be alert. Prayer demands we stay alert to our relationship with the Father. We should also be alert for things around us for which we should be praying. Sometimes we make it difficult for God to answer our prayers because we make vague, general requests. "Bless all the missionaries." Be with so-and-so." As believers we should be more specific in our requests than this. When we are watchful for specific needs we will be more concerned about bringing those needs to God.

The third thing the apostle says we should be in our prayers is "thankful." How often do we pray with passion and persistence and then forget to thank God when He answers! Our prayer lives should always be seasoned with thanksgiving.

The final word Paul has for our prayer lives in this passage involves evangelism. He asks the believers to pray for an open door for him to share the gospel even while he is in chains in Rome (4:3-4). Then he encourages them to pray about their own witness (4:5-6). The way we act and what we say (and how we say it!) will either draw people to Christ or drive them away.

Are you thankful for the privilege of prayer? It is an incredible honor to be able to come before the Maker of the Universe and make our requests. It is not something that we should take lightly.

Do you appreciate the privilege of prayer enough to be passionate, persistent, and specific in your prayer time? Do you express gratitude when God answers your requests? Do you thank God for the opportunities He gives you to share your faith and bring others into the family of God?

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.lifeway.com/en/articles/sermon-prayer-life-of-a-christian-colossians-4>