



## The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and Philemon

### *The Prayers Requested for the Apostle*

#### *Colossians 4:2-6*

- I. Paul's Request for Prayer (Colossians 4:2-4)
  - A. The General Admonition (Colossians 4:2)
    1. The consistency of prayer
      - a. In order for these believers to continue in prayer it must be assumed that they were already praying.
      - b. They should continue doing what they had already been doing.
      - c. Before proceeding, it would do us well to have a proper understanding of what constitutes prayer.
        - (1) What it includes
          - a) Most Christians think of prayer as simply asking and receiving from God.
          - b) The Bible points out that prayer also involves the making of requests (Philippians 1:4; Philippians 4:6). Yet, considering the whole counsel of God indicates that prayer is not merely asking and receiving nor is it simply limited to making requests.
          - c) This is why the Lord taught that prayer should include a time of praise. When asked by His disciples how they should pray, the Lord began by speaking of the greatness of the Father's name (Matthew 6:9).
          - d) Prayer often includes a time when requests are made and praise occurs.
          - e) Prayer portrays God's greatness and man's frailties.
        - (2) What it is—simply stated, prayer is talking to God.
      2. The diligence in prayer
        - a. Watchfulness (see Matthew 26:41; 1 Peter 4:7)
          - (1) Our responsibility toward others
            - a) While preaching sounds the trumpet of alarm in the ears of men, prayer sounds the alarm in the ears of God.
            - b) As a watchman, each believer has a responsibility to his brother or sister in Christ.
            - c) While some believers are spiritually sleeping, unaware of their present danger, other believers ought to be standing upon the tower of watchfulness and calling upon the Lord.
            - d) This was the point of Paul's teaching in Ephesians 6:18 when he said, "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints."



- (2) Our strengthening in the battle
  - a) Many of those in the world perceive prayer as a crutch or a tool that shows weakness.
  - b) Yet, the saint of God knows prayer to be one of the most powerful weapons during times of war.
  - c) As the Lord Jesus prepared to face the mob that would soon arrest Him, He spent His remaining time in earnest prayer (Matthew 26:36-46). It was during this time that He taught the disciples saying, “Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak” (Matthew 26:41).
  - d) Prayer does not distract the believer from the battle at hand; rather, it strengthens him and aids him during even the fiercest parts of the battle.
  - e) Prayer reminds the believer who he is, who his enemy is, and who God is—His power in answering
- b. Thankfulness
  - (1) Our heartfelt giving of thanks should always coincide with our prayers to God.
  - (2) Our passage confirms this truth, as do a host of other passages (Daniel 6:10; Ephesians 1:16; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 1:3; 1 Thessalonians 1:2; 1 Timothy 2:1).
  - (3) An unthankful spirit always affects one’s prayer life eventually developing into a vicious repetitive cycle.
    - a) A lack of prayer instills a lack of thankfulness.
    - b) Those who fail to be thankful, fail to cultivate a consistent prayer life.
    - c) This lack of thankfulness exposes our true problem which is a heart lacking humility.
    - d) As our heart fills with pride, we fail to realize the goodness of God and our need to continually seek His face with this spirit of thankfulness.
  - (4) The solution involves conditioning ourselves to have a prayer life consisting of a genuine time of thanksgiving.
  - (5) True thankfulness should eliminate many of the prayers consisting of nothing but self-serving desires.

## B. The Specific Desire (Colossians 4:3-4)

1. The purpose of prayer (Colossians 4:3)
  - a. Those called to prayer—understood *you*
  - b. Those requesting prayer—“for us”
  - c. The need for prayer—“a door of utterance”
    - (1) The open door of hearing
      - a) Every unsaved person will have windows of opportunities when he becomes most receptive to the gospel of Christ.



- b) The Devil works hard to keep people in darkness and will distract them by every means necessary (i.e., the death of a loved one, a crying child, a ringing phone, busyness, etc.).
- c) The salvation of a soul involves a spiritual battle that can only be won by the Lord's intervention.
- d) There is a window of time when the lost are most receptive to the gospel.
- (2) The open door of speaking
  - a) A window of opportunity also suggests a window of opportunity for the saved to speak for Christ.
  - b) This is the very reason the apostle Paul stressed the importance of the saints of God beseeching the Lord to open to them a door of utterance (Ephesians 6:19).
- d. The promise of prayer—"to speak the mystery of Christ"
- 2. The place of prayer (Colossians 4:3)
  - a. The situation identified—"I am...in bonds"
  - b. The cause identified—"to speak the mystery of Christ, for which"
  - c. The boldness identified
    - (1) Paul was in prison for preaching the gospel.
    - (2) Yet, he coveted prayer that he might speak the mystery of Christ—WHILE IN PRISON.
- 3. The promise of prayer (Colossians 4:4)
  - a. The deed—"That I may make it manifest"
  - b. The duty—"as I ought to speak" (Colossians 4:6; Ephesians 6:20)

## II. Paul's Admonition to the Saints (Colossians 4:5-6)

### A. A Proper Walk (Colossians 4:5)

- 1. The attribute of a proper walk—"in wisdom"
  - a. The explanation of a wise walk—"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise" (Ephesians 5:15)
  - b. The need for a wise walk—"the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16)
- 2. The witnesses of a proper walk—"toward them that are without" (1 Corinthians 5:12-13; 1 Thessalonians 4:12; 1 Timothy 3:7; Revelation 22:15)
- 3. The benefit of a proper walk—"redeeming the time" (Ephesians 5:16; Romans 13:11-12)

### B. A Proper Talk (Colossians 4:6)

- 1. The attributes of a proper talk
  - a. Always with grace
  - b. Seasoned with salt (Ephesians 4:29)
- 2. The purpose of a proper talk—"that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man" (1 Peter 3:15)