

How do we maintain the Christian life? Paul shows us in this study a lovely way to call the power of God in action for us. This is direct communication with God through prayer. No one ever becomes a Christian just by watching how a Christian lives. An observer might think the Christian is earning his way to heaven by trying to be good. How can anyone ever guess how to become a Christian? Paul urges Christians to cultivate regular prayer life (4:2). Sweet communion and fellowship with the Father is at the very heart of what Jesus purchased for us, with His own blood. He died so we can have and be restored into an intimate relationship with God and His people.

Some view prayer as a duty rather than a delight. Prayer is commanded of us, so it is a duty in one sense. But it is sort of like being commanded to eat a large portion of your favourite dessert. Paul does command us to pursue what our soul longs for: an ever-deepening relationship with the soul-satisfying God. No one or nothing else will satisfy. Yet, people waste years searching in vain for what will quench their insatiable thirst. Rather, let us persistently labour to enjoy God's presence in soul-satisfying communion with Him.

Our prayer life is to be continued, steadfast, watchful and full of thanksgiving. Even those who maintain an intimate relationship with God in prayer have times when praying seems pointless. The solution is to not stop praying but to keep going. To pray continually and watchfully we need to discipline our way of life. Praying is to be with thankfulness. As we pray in faith let us be thankful to God for all He is doing. You may not see Him working in that family or that friend.... however, rest assured that He is. What do your prayers consist of? Are they all for you, your circumstances, your trials? Or do they cover the proclamation of the gospel to others? Do you pray regularly for the leaders in your church fellowship, for missionaries, for your friends who are suffering? Paul asked them to pray for him, so he would be given all the strength and grace to do what God wanted him to do.

In 4:5 Paul conveys, do not waste God given time, one day you will give account. Let us watch it, no idle, careless talk, or frenzied activity where there should be rest and quiet. No laziness when we should be active. Paul's focus is centred on sharing the mystery of his saviour. That mystery is "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" But as Christ is shared, there are certain standards the believer needs to follow. There is a definite way we are to typify "*Christian living*". Walk wisely before people, make the most of your time given to them, your speech should be gracious, God-honouring and worthy of one who belongs to God. What wise advice we have here for "*Christian living*".

1) Read Col.4:2-6; What are some requirements for an effective prayer life?

Paul urges the Colossians to be "*watchful and thankful*"- watchful for what and thankful for what?

2) Is it easy or difficult for you to ask people to pray for you, and why?

How do you determine who you should ask to pray for you?

3) What does it reveal about Paul that he asks the new Christians in Colossae to pray?

4) Could your prayer life be described as “*devoted*” or have you given up keeping watch?

5) Col 4:3; What hits you about Paul’s request for prayer?

What was the mystery he wanted to share? What happened because he shared it?

6) Col 4:4; what is requested in this verse? How is this a challenge for us?

Why is it so important for us to “*speak clearly*” about the gospel?

7) In Colossians 4:5; express this verse in your own words?

Who are the outsiders?

What are some of the ways in which you feel you can use your time to help those who are far from God?

8) What keeps you praying for those people even though you do not know them?

9) Col.4:6; what does our speech always to have in it?

Read James 3:6-12; how does James describe the tongue?

What does it mean for our speaking to be sprinkled/seasoned with salt?

10) Col.4:2-6; what really grips you from this section?

Is there anything you need to change in your life? How is this possible?

11) James 5:16- here “*we see a clear operative correlation between the way we live and the effectual power of our prayer life*” Respond.

How does this passage affect the content of your prayers?

Do you know how to explain the gospel to someone? Share.