

What Does It Mean to Be Devoted to Prayer?

At the beginning of Colossians 4, Paul is instructing us on how to talk to God about people and how to talk to people about God. We do not have a more important ministry than our prayer ministry. All other ministries are powerless apart from prayer! You have heard it said, "When you sing you get what singing can do. When you preach you get what preaching can do. When you teach you get what teaching can do. But when you pray you get what God can do!" Colossians 4:2 begins, "Devote yourselves to prayer..." Being devoted means wholeheartedly, not half-hearted. It means to continually and steadfastly pray without ceasing. We need more than a prayer list we need a prayer life! We must take prayer seriously and not casually. Paul gives us four marks of devoted prayer.

Watchful: "Devote yourselves to prayer; stay alert..." We wrestle not against flesh and blood. We must win the war spiritually. Do you know who are the devoted and alert prayer warriors? Parents who have a son or daughter in the military or warzone. Peter also gave the instruction to stay alert in 1 Peter 4:7. And 1 Peter 5:8-9 he says, "Be sober-minded, be alert. Your adversary the devil is prowling around like a roaring lion, looking for anyone he can devour. Resist him, firm in the faith, knowing that the same kind of sufferings are being experienced by your fellow believers throughout the world." All believers have the same struggles. We are tempted by the world around us, the flesh within us, and the devil who is against us. Jesus said in Matthew 26:41, "Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." You cannot watch without praying and you cannot pray without watching.

Thankful: "Devote yourselves to prayer; stay alert in it with thanksgiving". Don't ask for more until you thank God for what you have. Have an attitude of gratitude. Start and end your day with thanksgiving. Give thanks before every meal. Say "thank you" to people. First Thessalonians 5:18 says, "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you." You might be saying, "I feel like a hypocrite giving thanks when I don't feel like it." We do not live the Christian life on feelings but on faith. If we obey God, the sincerity and feelings will follow. We walk by faith and not by sight. It does not say thank God for all things but in all things.

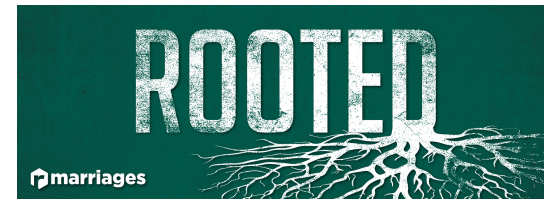
Purposeful: Paul asks the Colossians to pray for an open door to share Christ. He also admonishes them to act wisely toward outsiders. Someone said, "The purpose of prayer is not to get man's will done in heaven but to get God's will done on earth." Prayer is not telling God what to do. It is asking God to do what He desires to do and only He can do. God is the God of the open door. He opens doors no man can shut and shuts doors no man can open. There are only two kinds of people in the world. Those in Christ and those outside Christ. We are all born outsiders. How do you turn outsiders into insiders? Let your light shine. Pray for open doors, open hearts, and open eyes. We are here for those who are not yet here.

Graceful: "Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person." Our world desperately needs to see Christians who are civil. Speak the truth in love. Our speech is to minister grace to the hearer. The world does not care how much you know until they know how much you care. It is possible to win an argument and lose a soul. Prayer is the difference between what you and I can do and what God can do. If we want to accomplish things of eternal value and live a victorious Christian life, we must be people devoted to prayer.

"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful. And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should. Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone"

Colossians 4:2-6

STUDY
COMPANION
WEEK FOURTEEN



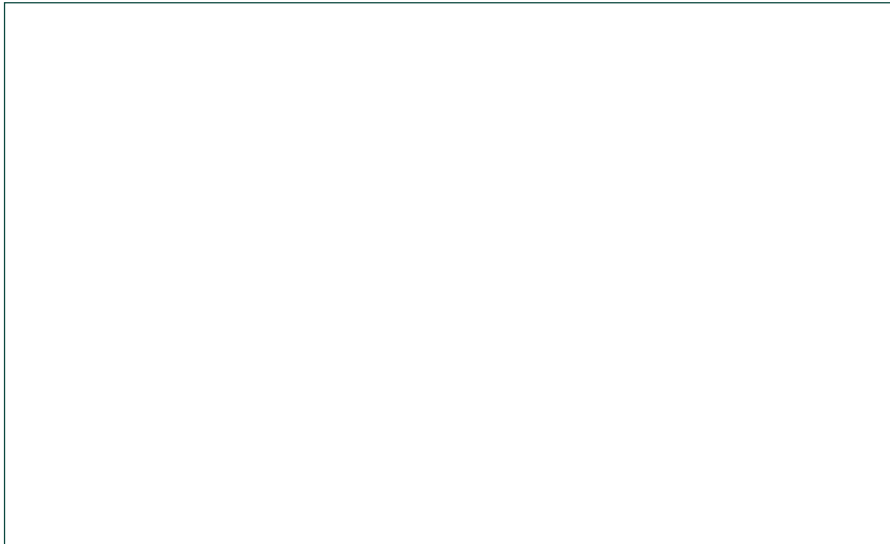
"OPPORTUNITIES
FOR THE GOSPEL"

MESSAGE NOTES & VERSES

WHAT STEPS CAN YOU TAKE THIS WEEK TO
APPLY WHAT YOU LEARNED AS A COUPLE?



OUR PRAYERS



THIS WEEK'S MEMORY VERSE:

"but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,"

1 Peter 3:15

NOTES

