

The Parchments

Studies for making fully devoted followers of Christ



Colossians: Nurture Who You Are

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Core Competency:

Prayer “I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.”

Come and listen, all who fear God, and I will tell what He has done for me. I cried out to Him with my mouth, and praise was on my tongue. If I had been aware of malice in my heart, the Lord would not have listened. However, God has listened; He has paid attention to the sound of my prayer. May God be praised! He has not turned away my prayer or turned His faithful love from me. (Psalm 66:16–20)

Using This Study

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details emphasized or repeated in the passage.

② EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

③ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.

COLOSSIANS 4:2-18

Introduction

Recently, I watched part of a men’s figure skating competition. When one skater, in particular, successfully completed a quadruple jump, the sportscasters were ecstatic. The skater was touted as a great jumper with near perfect form. The skating analysts replayed the jump numerous times, slowing the camera down to do a frame-by-frame analysis of what made this skater land effortlessly where countless other contestants had fallen.

This kind of technique analysis is very common in many avenues of life. For example, go into Barnes and Noble and you will discover a whole section of books devoted to analyzing the techniques, philosophies and style of the most successful CEOs. Christians commonly do this as well. Believers carefully examine the actions, attitudes, and teachings of Jesus in an effort to grow in relationship to Christ and reflect his character.

S.D. Gordon in his book, *Quiet Talks on Prayer*, wrote the following:

"How much prayer meant to Jesus! It was not only his regular habit, but his resort in every emergency, however slight or serious. When perplexed he prayed. When hard pressed by work he prayed. When hungry for fellowship he found it in prayer. He chose his associates and received his messages upon his knees. If tempted, he prayed. If criticized, he prayed. If fatigued in body or wearied in spirit, he had recourse to his one unfailing habit of prayer... There was no emergency, no difficulty, no necessity, no temptation that would not yield to prayer."

Jesus' prayer life reflected his love for and intimate understanding of the Father. He understood that to maintain a relationship with the Father, to be obedient, to bear up under temptation, he must be devoted to prayer. If Jesus, in whom the entire fullness of God's nature dwelled bodily, prayed, how much more should we be driven to prayer?

This Week

This week deliberately, persistently spend time in prayer. Prayer is fellowship with God and is a reflection of your relationship with Him. Seek to know God. Delight yourself in Him. Pour out your heart to him. As you do, you will be united in heart with Him and He will conform you to the image of Jesus so that you can walk in His steps!

① EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the passage.

Read Colossians 4:2-18

2 Devote yourselves to prayer; stay alert in it with thanksgiving.

3 At the same time, pray also for us that God may open a door to us for the message, to speak the mystery of the Messiah, for which I am in prison,

4 so that I may reveal it as I am required to speak.

5 Act wisely toward outsiders, making the most of the time.

6 Your speech should always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer each person.

7 Tychicus, our dearly loved brother, faithful servant, and fellow slave in the Lord, will tell you all the news about me.

8 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know how we are and so that he may encourage your hearts.

9 He is with Onesimus, a faithful and dearly loved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you about everything here.

10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you, as does Mark, Barnabas's cousin (concerning whom you have received instructions: if he comes to you,

welcome him),

11 and so does Jesus who is called Justus. These alone of the circumcision are my coworkers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.

12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you. He is always contending for you in his prayers, so that you can stand mature and fully assured in everything God wills.

13 For I testify about him that he works hard for you, for those in Laodicea, and for those in Hierapolis.

14 Luke, the dearly loved physician, and Demas greet you.

15 Give my greetings to the brothers in Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her home.

16 When this letter has been read among you, have it read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.

17 And tell Archippus, "Pay attention to the ministry you have received in the Lord, so that you can accomplish it."

18 This greeting is in my own hand—Paul. Remember my imprisonment. Grace be with you.

② EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN?

1. Verses 2-3 call us to pray. What does it mean to devote yourself to prayer? (Look up this verse in the amplified Bible translation, if available).

- 1 Thessalonians 5:17
- Romans 12:12
- Luke 11:9-10

2. a) What is accomplished in prayer?

- b) Does God "need" us to be devoted to prayer? (see Luke 18:1-7)

3. To what or to whom are we to be alert in prayer? How does an alert prayer differ from one that is not an alert prayer?
4. Why are we repeatedly instructed to express thanksgiving in prayer?
5. What practical steps could you take to help you to be devoted to prayer?
6. In verse 3-4, Paul asks for prayer for his missionary efforts.
 - a) How could you or your life group change to include regular prayer for a missionary or missionaries with ties to CLBC?
 - b) Paul mentions Epaphras' prayer life in verse 12. For whom might you be contending in prayer?
7. a) Who are the "outsiders" in verse 5?
 - b) Think of those that God has placed in your sphere of influence. Who might be an outsider that God has deliberately brought into your life?
8. Based on verse 6, how can you be:
 - a) Wise?

- b) Gracious?
 - c) Seasoned with salt?
9. Practically speaking, what, if anything, can a believer do so that he/she will know “how you should answer each person”?

③ EMBRACE His Word

Why does this MATTER to me?

Summarize your thoughts on the passage:

In one statement, write what God wants you to KNOW...

In one statement, write how God wants you to FEEL...

In one statement, write what God wants you to DO...

Sermon Notes

30 CORE Competencies

10 Core Beliefs

Trinity *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation by Grace *Ephesians 2:8-9*

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God *Psalm 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion *Psalm 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 Core Practices

Worship *Psalm 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer *Psalm 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness *Matthew 6:33*

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community *Acts 2:44-47*

I live life with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in the world.

Giving Away My Time *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money *2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith *Ephesians 6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 Core Virtues

Joy *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, me, and others.

Faithfulness *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I demonstrate loyalty in my relationships with others in response to God's loyalty to me.

Self-Control *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience *Proverbs 14:29*

I endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ