

GRATEFUL FOR GRACE **(Colossians 4:2-4)**

I. We will be ready to pray for others.

- A. Notice Colossians 4:2 - "Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving."
- B. When we are genuinely grateful we will seek opportunities to pray to God.
- C. We must be persistent in our prayer life.
 - 1. We need to be those that regularly pray to God.
 - 2. Sometimes we allow ourselves to get caught up in the affairs of this life and we tire out and forget to pray.
 - 3. We ought to view prayer as a privilege and a blessing and seek opportunities to go to God in prayer.
 - 4. We should recognize all the blessings and good that comes from a good prayer life.
 - 5. Think of how busy Jesus was, yet we consistently read about Him praying.
- D. We must be watchful in our prayer life.
 - 1. We need to be watchful of our needs and the needs of others.
 - 2. Remember the words of Jesus to Peter, James and John (Matthew 26:41).
 - 3. There are moments of weakness for which we need to be on guard and ready to pray for God's help.
- E. We must be thankful in our prayer life.
 - 1. Paul said "watch in the same with thanksgiving"
 - 2. The grace of God should cause us to be thankful.
 - 3. Blessings never cease so thanks should not either.
 - 4. The fourth Thursday in November is not enough.
 - 5. We should make sure that we are just as consistent in expressing our thanks to God as we are to expressing our wants to Him.
 - 6. Philippians 4:6.
- F. We must be concerned about others in our prayer life.
 - 1. Colossians 4:3.
 - 2. We often think about the personal nature of prayer but there is also the concept of the body aspect of Christianity.
 - 3. We all experience the same emotions.
 - 4. Romans 12:15.
 - 5. There are times when our words to one hurting can't help them but our words to God on their behalf can.
 - 6. We ought to be thankful for the blessing of intercessory prayer.

II. We will be ready to teach.

- A. Colossians 4:3 - "to speak the mystery of Christ."
- B. Paul had a great desire for opportunities to preach the gospel.
 - 1. Paul was in prison.
 - 2. Paul was chained to a Roman soldier while in prison.

3. To Paul, everyone was a potential convert, or at least an audience to hear the gospel message.
- C. Long ago, J.M. McCaleb wrote, "where sin has gone must go his grace..."
 1. Do we pray for doors of opportunity to teach?
 2. To we go through those doors when presented with such an opportunity?
 3. We must make sure that we are seeing opportunities and not obstacles.
 4. We have no real control over the results of our efforts.
 5. We have only to put forth the effort.
 6. We do know there will be zero results if there is zero effort given.
- D. The truth is we possess the most important and greatest message on the face of the earth.
- E. However, it is worthless if we don't use opportunities to spread it.
- F. Notice Colossians 4:4 - there is a proper way to speak this word.
 1. It needs to be plainly spoken - meaning of the word "manifest."
 2. It needs to be spoken boldly (Ephesians 6:19-20).
 3. It needs to be spoken in love (Ephesians 4:15).
- G. Remember that Paul was in prison for preaching.
 1. The temptation to speak words of compromise may have been great.
 2. However he asked for prayers that he would be bold.
 3. When Paul preached to Felix and Agrippa he was bold and plain.
 4. We must always seek to do the same.

III. **We will be ready to suffer.**

- A. Colossians 4:3 - "for which I am also in bonds."
- B. Paul was in prison for preaching the gospel and he still desired to preach it even more.
 1. Eventually, he would die for preaching the gospel.
 2. That too was alright with Paul (Philippians 1:21-23; 2 Timothy 4:6-8).
- C. The gospel message is called the "gospel of the grace of God (Acts20:24).
 1. This message of grace can sustain us in difficult times.
 2. It gives us comfort and joy to read the words of God and know that He cares for us.
- D. When Satan tries to lead us away from God, a heart filled with gratefulness for God's grace will help us defeat Satan.
- E. Notice Paul's view of his afflictions (2 Corinthians 4:17).
- F. We can make a difference in the lives of those around us by the way they see us handle adversity and how we respond to circumstances in which we find ourselves.
 1. Do we inspire others by our faith or discourage them by our fear?
 2. Can people see in us a genuine gratefulness for grace?

From a chapel speech by Michael McDaniel