

“Continue In Prayer”
Colossians 4:2-4

Introduction:

1. Please Turn Back In Your Bibles With Me:
 - To The Last Chapter:
 - In Our Study Through Paul’s Letter:
 - To The Colossian Church:
 - Colossians 4!
 - Where - After Providing:
 - Specific Instructions:
 - To Christians - In Chapter 3:
 - About How We Are To Function:
 - In The Church!
 - In Our Homes!
 - And In Society At Large!
 2. In The Verses We Come To This Morning:
 - He Adds Another, More General Instruction:
 - That Applies To Us All!
 - And That Instruction Is This:
 - 4:2 - “Continue In Prayer!” (2x)
 - Prayer:
 - Is To Be The Atmosphere:
 - In Which You Live:
 - As A Christian!
 - Does This Describe Your Life In Christ This Morning?
 3. Now - There Is A Lot:
 - That Pertains To The Prayer Life:
 - Of A Christian!
 - But All That **Information** About Prayer:
 - Will Be For Naught:
 - Without Personal **Application**:
 - Through Actual Prayer!
 - And So - As Paul Begins To Put On:
 - The Finishing Touches To This Letter:
 - He Wants To Remind Us All To:
 - “Continue In Prayer!”
 - As If Your Life Depended On It!
 - Because, In Many Ways, It Does!
 4. So - This Morning:
 - We Are Going To Look Once Again:
 - At Prayer - And Four Great Reasons:
 - That Ought To Motivate You:
 - To A Greater & Fuller Life Of Prayer!
 - As Paul Writes:
 - 4:2-4 - “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving; / Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds; / That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak!”
 5. So - If You Are A Christian Today:
 - You Need To - “Continue In Prayer!”
 - Because:
1. **There Is Still So Much To Pray For!**
 - The Word For Prayer:
 - In 4:2 - Is A Common Word For Prayer:
 - Because - Prayer Ought To Be:
 - A Very Common Thing:
 - For A Christian / For A Child Of God!
 - But Paul Doesn’t Just Tell Us:
 - To “Pray” - He Tells Us:
 - To “**Continue** In Prayer!”
 - This Means That:
 - There Needs To Be:
 - A Growing Devotion:
 - To Prayer In Your Life!

- The Word Translated “Continue” Here:
 - Means To Do Something:
 - With Persistence, With Perseverance, And With Passion!
- So - The Prayer Life:
 - Of A Christian - Should Not Be Done:
 - Just Occasionally, Or Half-Heartedly!
- No - The Prayer Life:
 - Of A Christian - Should Reflect:
 - The Prayer Life:
 - Of Christ Himself!
- And So - Like The Disciples:
 - Back In Luke 11:1 - Asked Jesus:
 - We Too Need To Ask Him:
 - “Lord, Teach Us To Pray!”
 - After All - As Andrew Murray Once Wrote - “None Can Teach Like Jesus, None But Jesus. Therefore We Call On Him, Lord, Teach Us To Pray!”
 - And How Did Jesus Pray?
 - Let’s Go With Jesus For A Moment - Back To The Garden Of Gethsemane:
 - To See / To Hear How He Prayed!
- He Prayed Personally!
 - Luke 22:39-42a - “And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. / And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. / And he was withdrawn from them about a stone’s cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, / Saying, Father!”
 - Jesus Could Pray To God:
 - Because Of His Personal Relationship:
 - With Him - As His Only Begotten Son!
 - So - He Could Cry Out, As He So Often Did - “Father!”
 - This Is The First Lesson To Learn:
 - From Christ - About Prayer!
 - There Must Be A Personal Relationship With The One You Are Praying To!
 - God Must Be Your Father:
 - And You Must Be His Child!
 - Is This True For You Today?
 - Do You Have God As Your Heavenly Father?
 - John 1:12 - “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name!”
 - To Have God As Your Father:
 - You Must Believe In Jesus As Your Savior!
 - And When You Do:
 - You Will Discover:
 - There Is So Much To Pray For!
 - So - Continue In:
 - Personal Prayer To Your Heavenly Father!
 - But - How Else Did Jesus Pray?
- He Prayed Properly!
 - Because - As He Prayed - He Said - Luke 22:42-43 - “Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. / And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him!”
 - Jesus Always Sought After:
 - His Father’s Will In Prayer!
 - And So Should You!
 - 1 John 5:14 - “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us!”
 - Is This How You Pray?
 - Or - Do You Pray Merely - As James 4:3 Describes - “That ye may consume it upon your lusts!”
 - Instead - Learn From Jesus - And - Continue In:
 - Proper Prayer - Seeking After God’s Will:
 - In All Of Your Prayers!
 - How Else Did Jesus Pray?
 - He Prayed Passionately!
 - Back In The Garden - Luke 22:44 - “And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground!”
 - Jesus Prayed Earnestly & Passionately!
 - It Was A Matter Of Life & Death For Him!

- Spiritual & Eternal Matters Were Before Him!
- And So - No Half-Hearted Prayers Would Leave His Lips!
- Is There This Kind Of Passion:
 - And Devotion To Your Prayers?
 - Oh - Continue In:
 - Passionate Prayer!
 - Because - James 5:16 - "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much!"
 - What Else Can We Learn From Jesus' Prayers?
- He Prayed Persistently!
 - In Matthew & Mark - We Are Told That When Jesus Prayed In Gethsemane:
 - He Prayed - Not Just Once - Not Just Twice:
 - But Three Times!
 - And - When He "Prayed The Third Time" - He Did So - "Saying The Same Words!"
- And We Will Pray In The Same Way:
 - The More We Realize That:
 - There Is Still So Much To Pray For!
 - So - Go Back To Christ:
 - In His "School Of Prayer!"
 - And Learn What It Means:
 - To "Continue In Prayer!"
 - Pray Personally!
 - Pray Properly!
 - Pray Passionately!
 - Pray Persistently!
- As A Christian / As God's Own Child:
 - Devote Yourself:
 - To Prayer!
 - This Is Not Meant To Be Merely:
 - A Duty & A Responsibility:
 - But It Is An Invitation & An Opportunity!
 - "Continue In Prayer!"
 - Paul Says! Because - Also:

2. ***There Is Still So Much To Prepare For!***

- Back In Colossians 4:2 - Paul Adds:
 - "And Watch In The Same!"
 - That Is - "Watch In Prayer!"
 - "Watching" & "Praying" Are Inseparable:
 - In The Life Of A Christian!
 - Especially Since Jesus Himself Said:
 - Back In Gethsemane - In Matthew 26:41 - "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak!"
 - To "Watch" Here:
 - Means To Be Awake & Alert & Active:
 - Like A Guard Or A Soldier Was To Be:
 - On His Night "Watch!"
 - Now - A Guard:
 - Could "Watch" With His Eyes & His Ears!
 - To See Or To Hear When An Enemy Was Approaching!
 - But - We Are To Be "Watching" Out:
 - For Spiritual Things!
 - Ephesians 6:12 - "For We Wrestle Not With Flesh And Blood!"
 - So - What Do We Have / What Can We Use - To "Watch?"
 - We Watch - Through Prayer!
 - And We Must Watch - Through Prayer!
 - Because There Is Still A Great Demand:
 - For Prayer!
 - All You Need To Do:
 - Is Go Back Through Paul's Letter To The Colossians:
 - And You Will Discover:
 - The Great Demand For Prayer!
 - Like:
 - The Need For Greater Filling!

- Of Being Filled With:
 - The Knowledge & Wisdom & Understanding:
 - Of God & His Will!
- Isn't This Why Paul Wrote:
 - In 1:9 - "For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding!"
- Paul Knew What The Colossian Christians:
 - Would Face - And So - He "Watched" Out For Them:
 - Through Prayer!
- We Still Need A Greater Filling:
 - Of The Knowledge Of God!
 - So - "Continue In Prayer & Watch In The Same!" Also:
- The Need For Greater Fortification!
 - Fortification Against The Worldly Philosophies:
 - That Threaten The Church:
 - That Paul Warns Us About In:
 - 2:8 - "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ!"
 - What's The Best Way To Prepare:
 - For These Onslaughts?
 - "Continue In Prayer & Watch In The Same!" Also:
- The Need For Greater Faithfulness!
 - Faithfulness To The Lord & His Will!
 - A Bit Further In This Chapter - Paul Tells The Colossian Church Something About Their Pastor!
 - In 4:12 - "Epaphras, who is one of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always

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- Their Own Pastor Was “Watching” Out For Them:
 - In Prayer!
 - His Personal, Passionate, & Persistent Prayers!
 - “Always Labouring Fervently!”
- The Truth Is - When It Comes To:
 - The Christian Life:
 - We Are Not Sufficient For These Things!
 - We Cannot Be As:
 - Full & Fortified & Faithful:
 - As We Need To Be On Our Own!
 - We Need The Lord!
 - And That Is Why You & I Need To:
 - “Continue In Prayer & Watch In The Same!”
 - Because - On Those:
 - Long & Lonely Nights:
 - Of Trials & Temptations:
 - Prayer Is Your Shelter!
 - When The Enemy Gets Close:
 - Prayer Is Your Signal!
 - And When You Are Attacked:
 - Prayer Becomes A Sword & A Shield To You!
 - So - “Continue In Prayer & Watch In The Same!”
 - But - Your Prayers Must Not Only Be Filled:
 - With Your Concerns & Complaints!
 - You Need To “Continue In Prayer” - Also - Because:

3. ***There Is Still So Much To Praise For!***

- As Paul Reminds Us At The End Of:
 - 4:2 - “With Thanksgiving!”
 - In Fact - Paul Fills His Entire Letter:
 - With The Theme Of Thanksgiving!
 - In 1:3 - Paul Wrote:
 - “We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you!”
 - In 1:12 - Paul Wrote:
 - “Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light!”
 - In 2:7 - Paul Wrote:
 - “Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving!”
 - In 3:15 - Paul Wrote:
 - “And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful!”
 - And In 3:17 - Paul Wrote:
 - And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him!”
 - And This Is Even More Surprising:
 - When You Remember Where Paul Is Writing These Words!
 - From Prison! 4:4 - “For Which Also I Am In Bonds!” & 4:18 - “Remember My Bonds!”
 - And Yet - In The Lord:
 - He Found Many Reasons To Give Thanks:
 - In Prayer!
 - And So Will We!
 - How Much Of Your Prayers Are Filled With Praise?
 - There Is Still So Much To Praise God For!
 - So Continue To Praise Him In Your Prayers!
- Give Thanks For The Greatness Of God!
 - As It Will Be Done In Heaven:

- In Revelation 11:17 - We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned!"
 - And As The Psalms Remind Us:
 - "Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised!"
 - So - Continue Your Praise In Prayer!
- Give Thanks For The Goodness Of God!
 - 1 Chronicles 16:34 - "O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good!"
 - We Often Sing - "Count Your Many Blessings!"
 - But - When Was The Last Time:
 - You Followed That Advice?
 - When You Made A List / A Catalog Of All The Good Things God Is To You & Has Done For You!
 - And - Continue Your Praise In Prayer!
 - Give Thanks For The Grace Of God!
 - 1 Chronicles 16:41 - "Give thanks to the LORD, because his mercy endureth for ever!"
 - It's Not Just Material Benefits:
 - That Reveals God's Goodness To You!
 - It Is Primarily His Spiritual Benefits!
 - Which All Come Through Faith:
 - In The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - There Is Still So Much To Praise God For!
 - So - Why Don't We "Continue In Prayer" - In Order:
 - To Do So?
 - 4:2 - "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving!"
 - But - We Also Need To:
 - "Continue In Prayer" - Because:

4. ***There Is Still So Much To Pursue!***

- And This Is What We Find In 4:3-4 - Where Paul Requests:
 - Specific Prayer - For Himself & The Ministry Of The Gospel:
 - "Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance – or – A Door For The Word & Message – to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in bonds: / That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak!"
 - We Must Never Forget That:
 - God Uses The Prayers Of His People:
 - To Accomplish His Purposes!
 - The Way He Does This Remains A Mystery To Us!
 - But It Doesn't Change The Truth That:
 - The Sovereign God Uses:
 - The Supplications Of His People!
 - This Means That:
 - "We Are Laborers Together With God!" (1 Corinthians 3:9)
 - And There Is Still So Much To Pursue:
 - In Our Prayers!
 - So Much Work To Be Done!
 - So - Continue In Prayer:
- For More Doors!
 - Paul Knew That In Order For The Message Of The Gospel:
 - To Continue Its March Through The World:
 - God Would Have To Open Doors!
 - Because The Door Of His Own Prison Cell Was Closed!
 - He Was Bound!
 - But - "The Word Of God Is Not Bound!"
 - So - Paul Asked The Colossians To Pray With Him That:
 - God Would Unleash The Power Of His Word:
 - And Open More Doors!
 - Didn't Jesus Also Say In:
 - Luke 10:2 - "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest!"
 - There Is Still So Much To Pursue!
 - So - "Continue In Prayer!"
 - And Pursue After God To Open More Doors & More Opportunities For His Word To Go Forth!
 - But - We Also Need To Pray:
 - For More Diligence!

- Paul Knew That The Word Was Worthy:
 - Of His Best - And He Needed God's People:
 - To Pray For Him - So That:
 - 4:4 - "I May Make It Manifest, As I Ought To Speak!"
- It May Be True That:
 - God Is The One Who Opens The Doors:
 - But It Is Also True That:
 - God's People Are The Ones Who Must Go Through Them!
- But Paul Also Knew That:
 - Without The Help & Strength Of The Lord:
 - He "Could Do Nothing!"
 - And Neither Can I / Neither Can You!
- We Need Each Others' Prayers!
 - So That We Might Serve The Lord:
 - And "Speak The Mystery Of Christ" In:
 - The Right Way!
- With The Right Clarity!
 - To "Manifest" God's Word In Such A Way:
 - That People Will Hear & Understand It!
- With The Right Conviction!
 - To Stick To The Truth Of God's Word & The Gospel!
 - Not Adding Or Taking Away Anything From It!
 - "As I Ought To Speak!"
- With The Right Courage!
 - In Ephesians 6:18-20 - Paul Wrote In A Similar Way - These Words:
 - "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; / And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, / For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak!"
- There Is Still So Much To Pursue After:
 - Isn't There?
 - So - "Continue In Prayer!"

Conclusion:

1. Is It Any Wonder That Paul Also Wrote:
 - In 1 Thessalonians 5:17 - To - "Pray Without Ceasing!"
 - With So Much To Pray For!
 - With So Much To Prepare For!
 - With So Much To Praise God For!
 - And - With So Much Still To Pursue!
 - Prayer Should Be The Atmosphere:
 - In Which You Live As A Christian!
2. When You Get Up In The Morning:
 - Your First Words Should Be:
 - In Prayer To The Lord!
 - And - When You Go To Bed At Night:
 - Your Last Words & Thoughts Should Be:
 - Offered To The Lord In Prayer!
 - In This Way - And Throughout Your Day:
 - You Can Be On Spiritual Guard Duty:
 - For The Church / For Your Family:
 - And For Your Own Soul!
3. "Continue In Prayer & Watch In The Same!"

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