

How the Work is Done (Colossians 4:2-9)

Church is a “team effort”! It is not a “one man show”!

!. Team effort praying- “Praying and watching” go together!

Verse 2

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

a.) Watchful in the Greek tells us **to have expectancy, or to be awake!** (Prayers that have purpose to them/ specific/actions supporting them!)

JV McGee- tells of a GA farmer *‘saying amen with a hoe in his hand’*.

b.) God hears our prayers and answers them- be **authentic**, and with **thankfulness**.

c.) “Steadfastly”- How many prayers occur only in tough times?

- Or like a “Sears catalog” prayer- At Christmas, my mom would get the Sears catalog and we would look at it together. (It was fun btw)
- I didn’t get everything I wanted, but she saw what I wanted.
- Unfortunately, this is how we many times approach prayer. **Christmas comes and goes and we move on**, or we just are **praying a wish list, instead of what is according to God’s will**.

d.) How do we do that? (Walk with Him, through His Word) Jesus walked with the apostles daily, and we are to do so too, with the Holy Spirit guiding us through the Word.

- Delays may be a test, or may be a “no”, or a “not yet”! (It could be mercy because we don’t know what we might be getting into!)

Philippians 4:6–7 (ESV)

⁶do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Verse 3

At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison—

e.) “Pray for us”- Specifically! (Are your prayers specific?)

- I am burdened that we pray more specifically for the ministry here at the church.
- Praying for each other, as well.
- God’s will- it is what is best for our church and our lives!

1 John 5:14–15 (ESV)

¹⁴And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. ¹⁵And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

2. Team effort ministry- (Paul was concerned for the ministry of the gospel)

- Why was he in jail? Taking **the gospel to the gentiles, or the rest of the world!**

Verse 3-4

At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison— that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

- a.) He was not praying for his release from jail! (Many of us would be)
- b.) He was stressing for **opportunity to unfold the mystery of becoming a Child of God!**
- c.) This is God's will, and we should pray that we too have these opportunities.
 - Do we fully realize how important it is to seek these opportunities? (Should be the prayer of all our laborers in this church.) Watch and pray! (Amen and a hoe in hand!)
- d.) It is past time for God's people to have a "watch and pray" burden for lost souls! (More likely to happen by a people engulfed in God's Word and in prayer.)
 - The mystery needs to be solved in the heart of the lost in our world too!

3. Team effort recruiting- An interesting thought that appears in many places in the Bible/ "Outsiders'.

Verses 5-6

Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

- We as a **local church are a family, with relatives at other called out assemblies!**
- Liking a "small church is not our decision".
- There are those outside that need the mystery of salvation and the mission of the Church shown to them. (Discipleship is multiplication)

1 Corinthians 5:12–13 (ESV)

¹²For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? ¹³God judges those outside. "Purge the evil person from among you."

(Inside and outside are two different places!)

- Why do we walk around and act like we have something good for us but not for anyone else? (Do we really believe it is good? Good enough to share?)
- a. "Walk in wisdom"- **Not so that we are careful on who to share with!** Go to the World Jesus says!
 - b. Walk with our testimony intact! (Not rules to keep, a way of life.)
 - "Gosh, I didn't know you were a Christian", or "gee, I had no idea that you were serious about Jesus". (Very sad statements)

c.) It is time that those outside, **get a look into the church windows! Or are they and it is not good?**

d.) The life of salvation and being a part of a church is a mystery until the truth is shown to those outside.

1 Timothy 4:4–6 (ESV)

⁴For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, ⁵for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer.

A Good Servant of Christ Jesus

⁶ If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed.

e.) Salt- How we give testimony needs God's wisdom controlling us. (Favorably)

1 Peter 3:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ 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,

Conclusion

(Verses 7-9)

Tychicus will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts, and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

- Notice that Paul had co-laborers to share the burden of ministry with.
- Tychicus was a “**beloved brother** and a **faithful minister**. (loyal and dependable to Paul and ultimately to Jesus) So important to do ministry as a team.
- It was not a question of will they help get the work done.
- Onesimus was made dependable by the working of God in his life! (New convert)
- Paul had doors that were open to him, and he had co-laborers to go through the doors of ministry that he could not go through! (I can't reach who you can!)
- Today Jesus calls out to our Church, and He calls out to those that can be the next Onesimus, through salvation!