

Colossians 4:2-6

4:2 **Vigilant and persevering prayer with thanksgiving is the duty of all godly saints.**

1. Having treated six of our practical relationships (3:18 – 4:1), Paul listed other spiritual duties.
2. Continuing in prayer teaches two aspects of prayer – prayerful saints and importunate praying.
3. Prayer is a private duty that can be neglected while holding a public pretense – but not saints!
4. Men born of God and walking with God ... pray much (Ex 33:11; I Sam 12:23; Ps 55:17; Dan 6:10; Luke 6:12; 11:1; 18:1; Acts 1:14; 9:11).
5. Carnal Christians do not have private prayer: it is likely the simplest check of your spirituality.
6. Prayer is a very spiritual exercise, and a man in the flesh will not think of it or desire it at all.
7. We cannot stop praying for any reason – God tells us to pray without ceasing (I Thess 5:17).
8. We cannot faint in prayer – God requires it, and we must hold fast our faith in it (Luke 18:1-8).
9. We cannot relax in prayer – God seeks our insistent zeal in prayer (Gen 32:26; Matt 15:22-28).
10. Paul added “instant” to this formula in Romans 12:12, which means pressing, urgent, insistent.
11. We understand importunity as follows: troublesome pertinacity in solicitation (Luke 11:5-10).
12. “Watch,” reminds us to be vigilant, unlike the apostles who slept when they needed to pray.
13. “Watch,” reminds us to be vigilant as sentries, for prayer is the activity of a warring saint.
14. The twin epistle, Ephesians, stresses this important activity of the Christian soldier (Eph 6:18).
15. We are in a war for our souls; we fight it with prayer (I Pet 2:11; 4:7; 5:6-9; Jas 4:1-10; 5:16).
16. It is the nature of our struggle between the flesh and spirit to grow sluggish in this grave duty.
17. Prayer without thanksgiving is inadequate (Col 3:15,17; Eph 5:20; Phil 4:6-7; I Thes 5:17-18).
18. See the more extensive sermon outline from April 30, 2000 entitled, “Prayer Is a Priority.”

4:3 **Godly saints pray for their ministers to have an open door to proclaim the mystery of Christ.**

1. The first priority of prayer is the salvation of our souls from sin, the world, and the devil (4:2).
2. A further priority of prayer is for the ministry to have the opportunity and ability to help men.
3. Ministers need the opportunity, fruitful seasons, and elocution ability to make the gospel plain.
4. God must make ministers useful – they are only earthen vessels like every other member.
5. When God blessed the deacon Stephen, no one could resist his powerful preaching (Acts 6:10)!
6. God can bless a dumb ass to speak wisdom, so pray for your pastor to be so used (II Pet 2:16).
7. The mystery of Christ is those glorious things about Jesus not revealed by nature or reason.
8. Men, sin, devils, the world, and the flesh hinder the gospel. Pray against these (I Cor 16:9).
9. We want a free course for the gospel – no hindrances – so it can be glorified (II Thess 3:1-2).
10. He does not seek prayer for bare speaking – but effectual speaking – profitable preaching.
11. His preaching of the gospel had already cost him his freedom, so he needed great assistance.
12. Through prayer, Paul had a house and converted Caesar’s household (Ac 28:30-31; Phil 4:22).

4:4 **Godly saints may have the best preacher by their prayers for him to make the gospel clear.**

1. To make something manifest is to make it clear, open, obvious, plain, understandable, etc.
2. The manifest of a ship is that detailed report of all items on board to reveal its stored cargo.
3. Here is one of the chief ambitions of a minister – for his people to understand what he brings.
4. The aptitude to teach is not sophistication, complication, or imagination, but manifestation!
5. One of the highest compliments – sincerely given, of course – is that you clearly understood it.
6. Bishops are chosen by their aptitude for teaching, but God must still give any fruit or increase.
7. Paul used great plainness of speech, in contrast to the obscurity of Moses’ law (II Cor 3:12).
8. Preaching in a clear, straightforward manner does not mean all will understand (II Cor 4:1-4).
9. Words fitly spoken are beautiful – pray for them for your pastor (Prov 15:23; 24:26; 25:11).

4:5 Godly saints are to conduct themselves in the world with wisdom and manage their time.

1. Your walk is your conduct before the world, which should be based in the wisdom of God.
2. The twin epistle – Ephesians – explains this verse much more thoroughly (Ephesians 5:8-17).
3. Every day you receive a proverb of Solomon with explanation. Wisdom is a choice and duty.
4. God gave us the book of Proverbs with practical details for how to live wisely with all men.
5. Every child of God should be growing in wisdom and the ability to teach it (Heb 5:12-14).
6. Do you know the Bible answers for how you ought to live, and can you teach them to others?
7. Or are you still struggling with habits, prejudice, sentimentality, tradition, and other problems?
8. James sure gave us a good definition of walking in wisdom and knowledge (James 3:13-17).
9. Paul gave a few more rules of how we should treat others to the Romans (Rom 12:17-21).
10. The second commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself; that is all (Mark 12:31)!
11. The diligent care of your profession is part of your treatment of others (I Thess 4:11-12).
12. There is no place for personal revenge; in such matters we are pacifists (I Thess 5:15).
13. Women should conduct themselves as the paragons of virtue (I Timothy 5:14; Titus 2:5).
14. Buy back your time from waste, temptation, and vanity by engaging in noble and godly things.
15. David's conduct exalted his name in Israel (I Sam 18:30). What about your name (Pr 22:1)?
16. Our goal is to be living epistles of the Lord Jesus Christ for the glory of God in all we do!

4:6 Godly saints are to control their speech to glorify God with gracious speech to every man.

1. We are to walk wisely toward them that are without (4:5), and we are to answer them rightly.
2. There is no doubt that our words and their presentation are very memorable parts of our lives.
3. Taking off from the duty of wisdom, Paul defines wise speech as being gracious (Eccl 10:12).
4. Grace is the demerited mercy and favor of God, which is supposed to be in our hearts (3:16).
5. Gracious speech flows from a pure heart motivated by godly charity (Pr 22:11; I Cor 13:4-7).
6. The twin epistle, Ephesians, for this exhortation and commandment is helpful (Eph 4:29-32).
7. We should speak always with grace – the predominant trait of our speech should be grace.
8. We only season, or slightly alter the flavor by a small pinch, the grace that comprises our talk.
9. Salt can either preserve or corrode, depending to what it is applied. In a wound it surely stings!
10. The intent here is both – the sharp reproofs that preserve and the sharp reproofs that condemn.
11. When used figuratively of speech, it is reproving, sharp, critical, cutting, or sarcastic words.
12. How much caustic seasoning do we need? It depends on the circumstances of the situation.
13. Salt and grace are not the same thing, as most commentators, or you season grace with grace!
14. The Lord Jesus Christ should be the guide for men, with women and children far behind.
15. Our Lord was incredibly gracious on first meetings and to saints (Luke 4:22; 7:13; John 20:16).
16. But He cut fools, skeptics, and unbelievers (Matt 21:12 – 23:39; Luke 4:23-30; John 6:60-71).
17. The proper way to answer every man is primarily with grace and a little salt now and then.
18. When men ask us of our hope, we are to give a reason with meekness and fear (I Peter 3:15).
19. The discretion of when to say what and how to say it is learned only by revelation (Pr 26:4-5).
20. Our new speech should be very different from our old speech of the sinful world (Col 3:8).
21. What is gracious speech? Speech with pleasant qualities that wins the favour of others; attractive, charming; kind, courteous, benevolent; modest, gentle, considerate.
22. How can you improve? If you perceive others think you talk a lot, cut your words in half.
23. How can you improve? Stop talking about yourself, whining, criticizing, debating, or begging.
24. How can you improve? Start complimenting, agreeing, thanking, praising, smiling, or waiting.
25. Controlling your speech is the surest route to perfection, as the tongue is so unruly (Jas 3:1-12).
26. The tongue is powerful – it can slice and cut, and it can comfort and heal (Prov 12:18; 18:21).
27. A gracious woman is always loved, for the law of kindness is in her tongue (Pr 11:16; 31:26).