

Colossians 4

A Nudge to Go Further

Witnessing

They said they know Him, but when I asked if they are following...there was a different response. They weren't angry with God, or the church, somehow the business of life, or indifference clouded their vision and their walk was no longer intentional or purposeful. --- Paul I think is closing out the book of Colossians to urge people to take a course of action - to go further - to take the next step.

Paul was an Encourager

Act 14:21-22 KJV And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, 22 **Confirming** the souls of the disciples, and **exhorting** them to continue in the faith, and that **we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.**

The Call to Pray - in some ways everything rises and falls here

Col 4:2 Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

Continue = To be steadfast or strong toward prayer

- Act 1:14 They all joined together **constantly** in prayer
- Act 2:42 They **devoted** themselves to...prayer
- Act 6:4 [we] will **give our attention** to prayer
- Rom 12:12 **faithful** in prayer
- Luk 18:1 [Jesus said] "they ought always to pray and **not lose heart**"

Be watchful in it

- keep awake, vigilant, alert (Peter in the garden of Gethsemane)

Thanksgiving

- too often our prayers are littered with things we ask...not enough thanks (10 lepers)

Why do we pray?

We need time alone with God

Mat 14:23 ESV And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone

Some things will never happen without prayer

Mat 17:21 ESV [But this kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting.]

It is a place of surrender of my will

Mat 26:39 ESV And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will."

Another reason - what I see is a theme in this chapter - A Nudge to Go Further

Paul is Nudging Them to Go Further - By His Own Example

Col 4:3 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**— 4 that I may make it clear, **which is how I ought to speak**. 5 Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know **how you ought to answer each person**.

Pray for us Paul says...and he uses his passion for Christ as a prod to them -- while you are praying PRAY FOR US - and By the way why don't you do the same thing?

- 1) He is in prison --- but he didn't ask them to pray about that (comfort, freedom or anything else)
- 2) Prayer for an open door
- 3) Prayer that he would be able to declare the mystery of Christ, to make it clear
- 4) His focus was NOT his own comfort - His focus was on obedience to the call of Christ
- 5) "Who is this Guy?" ... maybe their prayers seem petty in light of Paul's prayer
- 6) I am asking for help to declare the mystery of Christ to make it clear
- 7) He is urging them to a similar course...
 - a) Walk in wisdom toward outsiders - live intentional lives...how are we impacting others
 - b) Make the best use of our time - using the gift of time for the purpose of Christ
 - c) Speech always gracious - life and death in the power of the tongue
 - d) Seasoned with salt - makes others thirsty
 - e) To know how to answer - (OUGHT) - Paul Ought to speak, we Ought to be able

Paul is Nudging Them to Go Further - By the Example of Others

Have you ever been around people that stir up your heart to want to be better?

Paul says now...Let me tell you about some awesome guys...I hope it stirs you to action

Col 4:7-8 Tychicus

- a BELOVED brother - someone dear to the heart
- a FAITHFUL minister - Pro 20:6 ESV Many a man proclaims his own steadfast love, **but a faithful man who can find?**
- a FELLOW servant
 - traveled with Paul
 - Was sent by Paul to do ministry in his place
 - Was with Paul and wrote Romans and Colossians

Col 4:9 Onesimus

- a FAITHFUL and BELOVED brother
- a runaway slave that got saved and become a valuable member of Paul's team
 - Helped write the book of Romans (transcribed)
 - Wrote the book to Philemon where Paul appealed to Philemon to receive Onesimus as a brother in Christ - no longer a slave

Col 4:10 Aristarchus

- a FELLOW PRISONER - big step away from being a FELLOW servant
- A great commitment to be willing to be imprisoned with another

Col 4:10 John Mark - a REDEMPTIVE message

- **He once deserted Paul** - Act 15:37-38 NIV Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, 38 but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because **he had deserted them in Pamphylia** and had not continued with them in the work.
- **But under the ministry of Barnabas he is PROFITABLE** - 2Ti 4:10-11 NIVGet Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry.

Col 4:11 - Jesus who is called Justus - sends greetings

Col 4:12 - **Epaphras**, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers, that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God. 13 For I bear him witness that he has worked hard for you and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.

- SERVANT of Jesus Christ
- INTERCESSOR - praying for them to be mature and in the will of God
- HARD WORKER
- He is actually ***the one who bought the gospel to the Colossians*** [Col 1:7]

Col 4: 14 - Luke the physician

Col 4: 14 - Demas - sadly he would desert Paul

- 2Ti 4:10 NIV for Demas, ***because he loved this world, has deserted me***

Col 4:15 Nympha - who opened her home for the church to meet there

Finally a Loving Reproof - A Nudge to Go Further

Col 4:17 And say to **Archippus**, "See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord." 18 I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

- **FULFILL your ministry that you have received in the LORD**
 - Look at all the others that are pulling their weight...
- **Remember my chains**...Look at all I have suffered, yet I still want to do His work...I am paying the price
 - I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith
- **Grace be with you**...this is not a message of bondage, but one that seeks God's grace

Summary

The LORD wants us to go further - not settle for indifference, or laissez faire

- Maybe you can be like Paul and be willing to say "Follow My Example as I follow Christ"
- Or Maybe you can find a brother or sister who IS -- and allow your heart to be stirred to action