

“always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers,…” v2

Col. 4:12-13

## Introduction

- If we are not careful the habit of saying prayers becomes an empty ritual to which little time is to be given
- Also, prayer is often seen as a desperate act of last resort when nothing else can be done in cases of sickness and disasters
- Therefore, prayer becomes relegated to a task that does not take much time and is not associated with earnest labor

2

## Introduction

- In contrast, the Scriptures reveal prayer as a continuous fervent labor to be done on behalf of others
- Time and effort is to be placed in praying for each other because a loving, merciful powerful God hears and answers the prayers of the righteous
- Prayer, like all aspects of our life of faith, is an agonizing struggle which is painful but joyous in God’s gracious blessings

3

## always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers

Col 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.

Col 4:13 For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis.

4

## What is The Word Translated Laboring Earnestly?

G75 agonizomai

Thayer Definition:

- 1) to enter a contest: contend in the gymnastic games
- 2) to contend with adversaries, fight
- 3) metaphorically to contend, struggle, with difficulties and dangers
- 4) to endeavour with strenuous zeal, strive: to obtain something

5

## Who Was Epaphras?

Col 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.

6

## Who Was Epaphras?

Col 1:7 just as you learned *it* from Epaphras, our beloved fellow bond-servant, who is a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf,

Col 1:8 and he also informed us of your love in the Spirit.

Phm 1:23 Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you,

7

## Paul Labored In His Prayers For Their Maturity In Christ

Col 1:9 For this reason also, since the day we heard *of it*, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

Col 1:10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

8

## Paul Labored In His Prayers For Their Maturity In Christ

Col 1:11 strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously

Col 1:12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light.

9

## Paul Labored In His Prayers For Their Maturity In Christ

Col 1:13 For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

Col 1:14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

10

## Paul Labored In His Teaching For Their Maturity In Christ

Col 1:28 We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

Col 1:29 For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.

11

## Paul Labored In His Teaching For Their Maturity In Christ

Col 2:1 For I want you to know how great a struggle I have on your behalf and for those who are at Laodicea, and for all those who have not personally seen my face,

Col 2:2 that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and *attaining* to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, *resulting* in a true knowledge of God's mystery, *that is*, Christ *Himself*,

12

## Paul Labored In His Teaching For Their Maturity In Christ

Col 2:3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

Col 2:4 I say this so that no one will delude you with persuasive argument.

Col 2:5 For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ.

Col 2:6 Therefore as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 13

## Paul Labored In His Teaching For Their Maturity In Christ

Col 2:7 having been firmly rooted *and now* being built up in Him and established in your faith, just as you were instructed, *and* overflowing with gratitude.

Col 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. 14

## Paul Labored In His Teaching For Their Maturity In Christ

Col 2:9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form,

Col 2:10 and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;

15

## Our Christian Life Including Prayer Is A Continual Labor

Luk 13:24 "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.

1Co 9:24 Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but only one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. 16

## Our Christian Life Including Prayer Is A Continual Labor

1Co 9:25 Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.

1Co 9:26 Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air;

1Co 9:27 but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified. 17

## Our Christian Life Including Prayer Is A Continual Labor

1Ti 4:7 But have nothing to do with worldly fables fit only for old women. On the other hand, discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness;

1Ti 4:8 for bodily discipline is only of little profit, but godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and *also* for the *life* to come. 18

## Our Christian Life Including Prayer Is A Continual Labor

1Ti 4:9 It is a trustworthy statement deserving full acceptance.

1Ti 4:10 For it is for this we labor and strive, because we have fixed our hope on the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of believers.

19

## Our Christian Life Including Prayer Is A Continual Labor

1Ti 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

2Ti 4:6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.

20

## Our Christian Life Including Prayer Is A Continual Labor

2Ti 4:7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;

2Ti 4:8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

21

## Our Christian Life Including Prayer Is A Continual Labor

Rom 15:30 Now I urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,

Rom 15:31 that I may be rescued from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service for Jerusalem may prove acceptable to the saints;

22

## Our Christian Life Including Prayer Is A Continual Labor

Rom 15:32 so that I may come to you in joy by the will of God and find refreshing rest in your company.

Rom 15:33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

23

## God Hears The Prayers of The Righteous

Jas 5:14 Is anyone among you sick? *Then* he must call for the elders of the church and they are to pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord;

Jas 5:15 and the prayer offered in faith will restore the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him.

24

## God Hears The Prayers of The Righteous

Jas 5:16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.

Jas 5:17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.

Jas 5:18 Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit. <sup>25</sup>

## God Hears The Prayers of The Righteous

Jas 5:19 My brethren, if any among you strays from the truth and one turns him back,

Jas 5:20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

26

## always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers

- Do we labor in prayer as we would any other part of our Christian life?
- Do we work for and pray for the maturing of one another in Christ?
- Prayer is a great but agonizing work of faith deserving our attention, time and effort
- A gracious, loving, merciful, powerful God will answer if we humble ourselves by laboring in prayer for one another <sup>27</sup>