

Zion Lutheran Church, 15 S 4th St., Harrisburg, PA 17101

Tuesday Bible Study: Colossians / October 26, 2021

Opening Prayer Resource: *Pocket Book of Prayers, Compiled & Edited by Mark Gilroy; Fall River Press*

“Grant that I may not pray alone with the mouth; help me that I may pray from the depths of my heart.” – Martin Luther

Outline

Colossians & Philemon: 8 Studies for Individuals and Groups: N.T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides; InterVarsity Press

4:2-18 Together In Prayer

Colossians & Philemon: 8 Studies for Individuals and Groups: N.T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides; InterVarsity Press

Having begun the letter by telling the Colossians that he is thanking God for them and praying for them, Paul now draws toward a close by asking them to do the same for him. Now matter how senior or respected anyone is in the service of the gospel, they still need ... prayers.

4:2 *Paul & the Prison Epistles – The Smart Guide to the Bible Series; by Kathy Collard Miller; Thomas Nelson.* **The quote below from Warren Wiersbe, Be Complete**

“This does not mean that we should walk around muttering prayers under our breath. Rather, it means we should be constantly in fellowship with God so that prayer is as normal as breathing.”

4:3-4

Paul wasn't being selfish in asking for prayer for himself and his workers. He wanted God's glory and knew that only with the prayer support of others would he have opportunities and share effectively. Those two requests are the heart cry of every person who wants to share the gospel with others... Paul could have asked them to pray for other things:

...release...safety...comfort...or that he wouldn't be convicted at his upcoming trial...

When Paul gently but consistently reminds his readers of being in chains, maybe he's saying, “Hey, some of you think you can't share the gospel because you have problems. But look at me! I've got a big, huge problem and it's not stopping me! Your problem shouldn't stop you from telling others about Jesus.”

4:5-6 *The Mighty & The Mysterious: A Study of Colossians by Heidi Goehmann; Concordia Publishing House*
Salt preserves and even nourishes. This makes salt a good analogy for God's Word, as well as for the relationship of God's people to the world where they live. In Colossians 4:6, Paul talks about speech seasoned with salt, because salt makes things palatable...

Food mess-ups because of a lack of salt are often good for a laugh. Communication mess-ups because of a lack of salt sometimes leave us laughing...but they can also leave us horrified (!). My favorite answer is this: THERE'S GRACE FOR THAT.

4:10-15

Paul ends many of his letters by mentioning specific people... We shouldn't ignore these lists as if they are irrelevant for our place and time. They remind us that God cares about the specific connections He creates in our lives and in His grand plan of salvation. Each name has a story, and God cares about each one, just as He cares about each of our stories and how our stories are knit together.

Questions for Personal Reflection

Colossians & Philemon: 8 Studies for Individuals and Groups: N.T. Wright for Everyone Bible Study Guides; InterVarsity Press

Is it easy or difficult to ask people to pray for you, and why?

How do you determine who you should ask to pray for you?

When have you seen a door open for you in response to the prayers of other Christians?

What are situations in your life where you need vigilance to "behave wisely towards outsiders," that is people who have not come under the reign of Jesus (v.5)?

The Colossians have never seen Paul face to face... We are often asked to pray for people we have never met and probably never will meet... such as victims of disasters thousands of miles away, relatives or friends of people in our church. What keeps you praying for those people even though you don't know them?

The Mighty & The Mysterious: A Study of Colossians by Heidi Goehmann; Concordia Publishing House
"See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received from the Lord" (Col. 4:17).

What is your place and ministry that God has called you to right now?

We need what each person brings to the Church. It is life *together*, not life on our own. Think of someone in the Body of Christ who has gifts that you treasure. How would you gently encourage that person to fulfill the ministry he or she has received from the Lord?

Bible Memory Verses

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

4:6 Gracious Speech