

11-10-13

Title: Devoted to Prayer

Verse 15 – Jesus’ peace should be ruling

Verse 16 – Jesus’ words should be dwelling in our hearts

Talked about His peace, studying His word

Consider for a minute the 2 words attached to these

His peace is to rule

In every situation His peace is to control us

Shouldn’t be given to worry and fear

Should be controlled, ruled by His peace

In any decision His peace is to decide...

His word is to dwell

Take up residence, live in be part of our lives

Richly dwell – His Word should be a major part

Reading, hearing, studying, meditating and
memorizing it

Then...

Colossians 3:17

W/ His peace ruling and His word dwelling...

Every part of our lives should be affected...

At home between husband and wife

At home between parents and children

At work between employer and employees

And in prayer

Our entire lives need to be alert to prayer

Devoted to prayer

Colossians 4:2

Devotion – courageously persistent

Hold fast and not let go – stay at it

Root of word in Greek is strong

Has *pros* in front of it

Making it mean – super strong

Be steadfast – super steadfast, endure – super...

Hang in there – w/ super strength

Keep praying, keep praying earnestly

The diary of George Mueller, chronicles his devotion in prayer: In November 1844, I began to pray for the conversion of five individuals. He wrote...I prayed every day without a single intermission, whether sick or in health, on the land, on the sea, and whatever the pressure of my engagements might be. Eighteen months elapsed before the first of the five was converted. I thanked God and prayed on for the others. Five years elapsed, and then the second was converted. I thanked God for the second, and prayed on for the other three. Day by day, I continued to pray for them, and six years passed before the third was converted. I thanked God for the three, and went on praying for the other two. These two remained unconverted.

Thirty-six years later he wrote that the other two, sons of one of Mueller's friends, were still not converted. He wrote: But I hope in God, I pray on, and look for the answer. They are not converted yet, but they will be.

In 1897, fifty-two years after he began to pray, these two men were finally converted, after he died. Mueller understood what Jesus meant when he told his disciples "that they should always pray and not give up." Be devoted to prayer

Persevere

Endure – total devotion

Read earlier, chapter 1 – have not ceased praying for you

Others...

Persist in prayer

Pray at all times

Pray w/o ceasing

Be devoted to prayer

Often get a fatalistic attitude w/ prayer

God already knows – knows what I'm going to say before I say it – He knows what I need before I need it...

So God please help...

And then we go on

Not the case here – need to pray, keep praying, keep asking

Keep pouring out our hearts to Him

2 parables in NT deal w/ this

One about an “unrighteous” judge and a lady requesting
B/c of her persistence he gave in
The other is someone who has late night company
Goes to neighbor to borrow bread – already in bed
B/c of his persistence finally gets out of bed
If these two give up – will not God...

Not just constant speaking prayers to God
God consciousness
Every experience in life is related to Him
See everything that happens in reference to God
Anything and everything should be a cause for
communion w/ God
See s. bad – pray for those involved
See s. good – praise God for what He does

God is often viewed as an automatic teller machine
Punch in the right code – He’ll give what you want
Prayer is more than presenting our personal wishes/desires to God
A way for us to participate in God’s redemptive plan in history
In the midst of persecution what did Paul & apostles pray?
Not deliverance – Acts 4
Preach the word boldly

Often times involves struggling/wrestling w/ God
Prayer is to be persistent, courageous struggle
We may come away limping
Persistence and acceptance of God’s answer when they come
Both are part of prayer

Ephesians 6:18

Comes right after being told to put on the full armor of God

Be alert, be ready – don’t fall asleep
Gethsemane prime example when Jesus found disciples
sleeping...
More than physically alert – alert to needs around
Involves concern
Looking for specific, special needs

With thanksgiving

- ...with an attitude of thanksgiving

5th time to mention in this book

Grateful for salvation (1:12)

Grateful for growth (2:6)

Grateful for fellowship w/ Jesus and the church (3:15)

Grateful for opportunity to serve (3:17)

And here

Much we can be thankful for...

...spiritual blessings and privileges

...God's presence

... God's provision

... God's pardon

... our salvation

... God's promises

... God's purpose

Thankful that God will do what is best...

Open door for the word

Colossians 4:3

Praying for further proclamation of salvation

We move from praying, talking, to God

To talking to people about God, the Gospel

We need to be alert b/c the days are few

Jesus return is coming soon

His Word needs to be proclaimed

The mystery is Christ in us

He is the hope of glory

Paul is bound b/c of preaching the Word

The truth, the gospel

1 Corinthians 9:16

- ... that God will open up to us a door for the word

Open door – an opportunity

Paul talked about remaining in Ephesus b/c a wide door of effective service was open for him

Pray for open doors for the gospel – God is the One that opens

Open doors to speak the mystery of Jesus

The mystery that was hidden in the OT – now revealed in the NT

What He has done for us – dying in our place

Paying the penalty for our sin as our perfect sacrifice

Open door to speak the gospel, the truth of the gospel

That's why Paul's in prison

For speaking this truth

Proclaiming the Gospel

That Jesus saves

Paul's ministry didn't stop just b/c He was in prison

Colossians, Ephesians, Philippians and Philemon all written at this time

He shared the gospel w/ all he came in contact w/

The mob in Jerusalem when arrested

Felix

Herod Agrippa

Roman soldiers

Members of Caesar's household

Jewish community in Rome

Acts 28:30-31

Speaking clearly

Colossians 4:4

4 that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak.

Clearly – reveal clearly

Paul is an instrument of God's in the revelation of God

He is clarifying what has already been revealed

I ought to speak – it is necessary for him to speak
For Paul to be obedient to the role/job God has given him
He must speak

And he gave a complete testimony
Proclaimed clearly, boldly, wisely and graciously
He spoke clearly of

Not just an experience centered appeal – come to Jesus and your
whole life will change – some truth – not whole truth

Not just an ego centered appeal – come to Jesus and you'll get
everything you ever wanted – not the whole truth

The truth – Jesus died to pay the penalty for sin
Only in Jesus can forgiveness be found
Through repentance and trust

Paul wanted to speak as God wanted him to speak

Wise conduct

Colossians 4:5

Conduct – walk

Your way of life...

More than just outward behavior

Our knowledge of the true Gospel

Leads to right thinking

And an acceptable response to the Gospel

There is a connection between knowledge and behavior

Properly evaluating circumstances

Making godly decision

As we live wisely

The watching world will see God's power at work in us

We can live foolishly

Loving money

Living legalistically

Jealously and w/ selfish ambition

Wisdom comes from God

This wisdom focuses on God

How do we walk in a manner worthy of the Lord?

Knowing His will w/ all spiritual wisdom and understanding

Proverbs 9:10

*10 The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,
And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.*

James 1:5

Already read **Colossians 3:16**

Walking in wisdom is

Walking in spiritual wisdom centering on Jesus in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden

Submitting to the Lord Jesus

Walk in conformity to the knowledge of His will

Making the most

- ...making the most of the opportunity

Buying out – redeeming the time

Ephesians 5:15-16

The opportunities for good are more precious b/c

Of the evilness of the times

Walk, making the most of every opportunity

Moses wrote **Psalms 90:12**

*12 So teach us to number our days,
That we may present to You a heart of wisdom.*

Opportunity is fleeting

Life is short

Jesus may return at any moment

Romans 13:11-14

Conclusion:

How constant is your prayer life?

How persistent is it?

Are you aware of God, His presence, every day?

Every part of every day?

Are you looking for those doors of opportunity?

Opportunity to speak and share the truth?

Are you making the truth clear?

Seeking to make it more clear each time?

Are you conducting yourself wisely?

Making the most of what God has given you

Every situation and circumstances

Letting His peace rule in your heart

Having His word dwell richly in your life

Benediction:

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

16 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus

Sermon outline
Colossians 4:2-6

Devoted to p_____

With t_____

Open d_____ for the w_____

Speaking c_____

Wise c_____

Making the m_____