

The Pursuit: the Grace Driven Pursuit of Prayer

Text: Colossians 4:2

Introduction: Our Inability and Christ's Ability

What we are as a church on our knees before God in prayer, that we will be before men and no more.

Prayer is a measure of our dependence on God.

I. Pay **Attention** to Prayer

A. *“Devote yourselves to prayer...”*

i. The church is a praying community! It began in prayer:

a) Acts 1:14

b) Acts 2:42

B. This prayer is both a private and a gathered prayer.

i. **Bonhoeffer:** *“A Christian fellowship lives and exists by the intercession of its members for one another, or it collapses.”*

C. **Why is it essential that we be devoted to prayer?**

i. John 15:3

a) **Hallesby:** *“Your helplessness is the very essence of prayer...”*

➤ *Devotion to prayer testifies to our inability and Christ's ability.*

b) Hallesby: *“Prayer and helplessness are inseparable. Only he who is helpless can truly pray.”*

D. **Prayer requires perseverance.**

i. Augustine: *“As soon as you begin to pray your fleshly weakness starts opposing you...”*

II. Stay **Awake** in Prayer

A. *Being watchful...* literally, keep awake, in order to stand guard.

- Matthew 26:41/Mark 14:38

III. Pray **Aware** of the Gospel

A. Self-sufficiency tries creeping into our praying.

B. Paul reminds us to pray in the gratitude that flows from Gospel joy.

i. 1:12-14

ii. Pray with the awareness of what God has done, not what you are doing.

iii. Pray with your eyes on Christ and His sufficiency!

iv. Don't come in groveling like you don't belong; come before the throne of grace with confidence.

Conclusion: Practical **Advice** in Prayer

A. You don't need to be original in prayer!

“...we moderns are so anxious to do things our own way, so concerned that if we get help from anyone else our prayer won't be 'authentic' and come from our own heart, that we are instantly suspicious about using anyone else's prayers. We are like someone who doesn't feel she's properly dressed unless she has personally designed and made all her own clothes; or like someone who feels it's artificial to drive a car he hasn't built all by himself.”

Bonhoeffer: “...*the most promising method of prayer is to allow oneself to be guided by the word of the Scriptures.... In this way we shall not become victims of our own emptiness.*”

B. Listen to others also...

- i. Learn from those who pray in group.
- ii. Learn from saints of the past...
- iii. Stay tethered to scripture.