

## **Colossians 4:2-7**

2 May also mean to not fall asleep when you pray. (Luke 9:32; Matthew 26:40)

Sometimes when I teach after a noon meal, students will get sleepy. It is the one chance to share the unique material I had for them, so I'd ask them to stand up if they couldn't keep their eyes open. We have to do what we physically can to deal with our weak condition.

But it may also allude to spiritual watchfulness. (Matthew 26:41) But the attitude of prayer should always be thankful. Some of the psalms are prayers of lament, but they usually end in praise. One example is Psalm 43.

3 -4 Barclay points out that it is interesting what Paul didn't ask. He didn't ask for release from prison, good outcome for the trial, or physical things, but that he could declare as perfectly as possible the mystery of Christ. Wouldn't it be beneficial for us to focus our prayers on the success of Christ's mission for our lives and the lives of others, rather than always asking for temporal things?

As a preacher, Paul knew the way we express ourselves is critical to communicating the message clearly and in a way that is more likely to get through the mind set of our audience. He asked for an open door for the Word. (Acts 14:27) He wanted to share the mystery we read about in 1:27. He wanted to fulfill his calling.

5 When to share, when not to, what to say and what not to... it takes wisdom and discernment to spot the God opportunities. (Ephesians 5:15-17) I believe this "best use of the time" applies to our entire time on earth. We have a brief opportunity to invest in eternity. It's as if we got a stock tip and only have a short time to raise some money to invest before the value goes off the charts!

6 A powerful witness is gracious but provoking a thirst for more. Conversation can turn people away or draw them to Jesus. We need to develop the sensitivity to the Spirit to know how to do just that. (1Peter 3:15)

Next week we will conclude Colossians with a look at Paul's personal greetings and the individuals mentioned in it. Then we will go on to Hebrews.

### Questions

Do you have a difficult time staying awake and spiritually alert in prayer?

Will Paul's example of prayer change the way you pray?

Are you passionate about fulfilling your calling?

What are the main characteristics of an effective witness?

How do we take advantage of our investment opportunity?