

## How Important Is Prayer to You?

By

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Dear Friend, I ask you a question about prayer that I believe is very important to each of us in our daily lives. How important is prayer to you? In the book of Colossians, Paul speaks of a preacher by the name of Epaphras who had great concern for the Colossian Church.

Col 4:12-14, "Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete\* in all the will of God. For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you, and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis. " NKJV

Paul declared that this man of God was always "laboring fervently" for them in his prayers. I call to your attention that prayer is work for the one who is praying if he is sincere and in earnest. The famed preacher C.H. Spurgeon once said, "Prayer is pulling the rope down here on earth below, and the great bell rings above in the ears of God." "He said some scarcely stir the bell for they pray so languidly, while others give only an occasional jerk at the rope. But he who communicates with heaven is the man who grasps the rope boldly and pulls continuously with all of his might." When Paul spoke of this man Epaphras "laboring fervently" for them in prayer, the idea here in the Greek language is the one who is a contestant in an athletic event, or a wrestler on the mat with an opponent, striving for the prize. The believers in this church at Colossae were indeed indebted to this man for upholding them before the throne of God in heaven. In yet another passage the apostle made a plea to the Christians at the church in Rome, in which he said,

Rom 15:30, " Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me" NKJV

How many times we see Paul requesting of the saints for their prayers on his behalf, making such requests that God would give him the boldness for Christ that he personally needed, that God would give him an open door of opportunity to present the gospel of Christ and that he personally would not be ashamed of Christ when he was put to the test for his faith in Christ. Someone wisely said, "Prayer is not the idle repetition of some pat phrases, but rather the pouring out of one's soul to God." F.B. Meyer told of a legendary preacher who was marvelously used of God. One night he dreamed that he was beginning to take pride in himself and his gifts, but an angel told him that his success was due primarily to a poor widow who sat regularly at the foot of his pulpit and never ceased to pray for him and his ministry. Many years ago I had a preacher friend who was enjoying a very successful ministry. Other pastor friends in our fellowship asked him for the secret of this success. His response was very quick and

pointed by naming a woman in his church who was a bedfast invalid in his church family who had been in this condition for many years, but she used this time to be a prayer warrior. She prays daily for me, the church and all the missionaries we support.” Did he believe that prayer was important? Yes indeed, real prayer is very important indeed. Once again I ask you personally, just how important is prayer to you, and do you spend earnest time in prayer? God does answer our prayers.