

## Laboring in Prayer

How do you labor in prayer?

Colossians 4.12, 13

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • March 13, In the year of our Lord, 2013

### Prelude:

#### **I. Recently, I spoke of Epaphras from a reference to him in Colossians 4,**

**12** 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. **13** For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you, and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis (Col 4.12, 13).

A. I addressed the fact that he labored in prayer, but

B. I thought that issue should be addressed more.

### Persuasion:

#### **I. How Do You Labor in Prayer?**

A. For what did Epaphras pray?

1. He prayed that the Colossian Church would stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.
2. How long would it take you to say that in prayer?
  - a) It would not take long,
  - b) if that is all you said.

B. How often did he pray for these things?

1. All the time.
2. Whenever he prayed, or at least when Paul heard Epaphras pray.

C. Still I would be hard pressed to call that laboring, if that is all he said and did.

D. How would you describe or picture laboring?

1. If you did something halfheartedly, would you call it laboring?
2. How would you apply that to prayer?

- a) Laboring in prayer requires focus.
- b) Laboring in prayer requires time.
3. Would you say that Hannah labored in prayer? (See [First Samuel 1.10-16.](#))
4. Would you say that Jesus labored in prayer? (See [Luke 22.41-44.](#))

## **II. What Would Be Involved?**

- A. When you start to break down what he was doing,
  1. you can see more that was involved.
  2. He would not only say, God help the brethren to stand perfect and complete in all your will.
- B. What must happen for people to stand perfect and fully assured in God's will?
  1. They would need someone praying for them.
  2. They would need instruction.
    - a) In what areas would they need instruction?
      - (1) They would need to know the will of God.
      - (2) They would need to know all the will of God.
    - b) Thus, the prayers would include:
      - (1) Someone capable of instructing them.
      - (2)
  3. They would need to resist temptation.
    - a) What temptations would they need to resist?
      - (1) Doing their own will or someone's will in opposition to God's will.
      - (2) The temptation to stand
        - (a) halfheartedly in God's will, or
        - (b) only in parts of God's will.
    - b) Epaphras would have to know the weak areas of the congregation.

- (1) Then he could address those specifics in prayer.
  - (2) He could also think of each member in prayer and
    - (a) their specific needs to stand perfect and fully assured in God's will.
4. He would have to pray for them personally, "always laboring fervently for *you* in prayers."
  - a) That means naming the church or the people.
  - b) That means having their specific needs in mind.
    - (1) That would take much thought.
    - (2) It would involve labor.
5. Such laboring in prayer would come from a zealous heart, "For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you."
6. You would have to know the areas of God's will in which the people are not standing, or in which they are standing, but are having trouble.
  - a) Then your prayers could address those specific areas.