

I HAVE CALLED YOU FRIENDS

Jesus gave everything to his friends – his knowledge of God and his own life. Jesus is our model for friendship-because he loved without limits-and he makes it possible for us to live a life of friendship-because we have been transformed by everything he shared with us. Through friendship we come to know God and through friendship we enact the love of God. We can risk being friends because Jesus has been a friend to us. (*Excerpt from article by Gail R. O'Day, Associate Dean at Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia.*)

GRATITUDE

Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving - Colossians 4:2 (NIV)

Two commands are given in this short directive from the apostle.

Paul: *continue* and *watch*. First, we are to continue, or persevere, in daily and fervent prayer to God. But as we do continually pray, Paul reminds us, we must be also careful to be determinedly "watching" for occasions of thanksgiving.

The word "watch" means to be vigilant, alert, attentive. It seems Paul knew that we have a tendency to grow selfish and unmindful of the Lord's blessings in our lives. We begin to take even the greatest mercies and most undeserved gifts for granted. We forget to give thanks for each and every grace in our life.

In your ongoing prayers, be watchful for opportunities to give thanks. Is there something in this request for which I could also be giving thanks? Is there a reason to be grateful, even in the midst of this trial?

For instance, as I pray for this loved one to be healed, shouldn't I be grateful for having the loved one in my life to begin with? As I pray for revival in our country, in our church, and in my home, shouldn't I thank God for the promise that He will be found by those who seek Him?

Beloved, be careful to pray today. And, as you pray, be careful to give thanks to God for His abundant provision and marvelous promises. Even in the needs, even in the sorrows, even in the trials there is always reason to be grateful. *(Excerpt from Crosswalk.com Devotional)*

HELP ME THANKSGIVING DAY PRAYER

O God, when I have food, help me to remember the hungry;

When I have work, help me to remember the jobless;

When I have a home, help me to remember those who have no home at all;

When I am without pain, help me to remember those who suffer,

And remembering, help me to destroy my complacency;

bestir my compassion, and be concerned enough to help;

By word and deed, those who cry out for what we take for granted. Amen.

-Samuel F. Pugh