

PRAY WITH WATCHFULNESS AND THANKSGIVING

*Continue steadfastly in prayer,
being watchful in it with thanksgiving*
Colossians 4:2

REFLECTION

As Christians, we live and breathe prayer. When someone has a need, we are quick to say, "let's pray." When we need God's help, intervention or guidance, we pray. Turning to God in prayer is an excellent thing where we recognise our dependency on God and that our help comes from the Maker of heaven and earth.

In his letter to the Colossians, not only did Paul ask his readers to be consistent in prayer, he also reminded them of two important aspects of prayer - "*being watchful in it with thanksgiving.*" Paul was saying, prayer doesn't operate alone. Prayer flourishes in an environment where there is also watchfulness and thankfulness.

What does it mean to be watchful in prayer? It means that we are mentally alert and informed of what we are praying about. Our prayers move beyond superficial pleas or appeals to God. Instead, our prayers become purposeful and personal. For instance, many of us are moved to pray for the war between Russia and Ukraine. When we are praying with watchfulness, we will be attuned to the kind of fears and concerns experienced by the people in both countries. We will be holding the newspaper in one hand, reading about their needs, asking God questions about the war, reconciling with the bible and praying for the afflicted. Such prayers are powerful prayers!

When prayers are offered with thanksgiving, it gives us proper perspectives. This kind of prayer sees clearly not only the obstacles and difficulties but also recognizes that God is in control and He is more than able to work things out according to His good purpose and will. The circumstances need not affect one's joy. Therefore, when we pray steadfastly with an attitude of watchfulness and thankfulness, it is going to be life-changing. Prayer will be more than a default response to one's needs or a call to God for help. It is the joining of our hearts with those whom we are praying for. It is exercising and experiencing the ministry of Jesus in uttered word form. I would like to invite you to enter into this privilege of prayer. Come, pray!

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, I want to pray with watchfulness and with thanksgiving. I admit that it is difficult and it does not come naturally to me. Yet, Lord, I do not want to shortchange how You have intended prayer to be. I want to pray like how You would pray. Teach me, O Lord. Hear Your humble servant's plea. Amen.

SUPPLICATION

- Take the time to examine your prayer life, How has it been for you? How has it help you to know God, draw closer to God and to others, and deepen your prayer life with watchfulness and thanksgiving? Do you desire to pray with watchfulness and with thanksgiving? Take time to seek the Lord for directions on how you can grow in these areas.
- In the coming week, ask the Lord to help you practice watchfulness and thanksgiving in your daily prayer for the following areas:
 - Yourself
 - A family member
 - A colleague/friend
 - Your church and a church concern.
 - A recent local issue, e.g. mental health concerns amongst children
 - A recent world event/issue, e.g. Russia/Ukraine conflict, climate change, etc.
- What do you sense the Lord is impressing upon your heart concerning each area of prayer? Is there some response you need to make? Is there any need for perseverance in prayer? Is there any insight that the Lord is showing you? Hold them before the Lord and allow Him to guide you.

*Prayer is not only asking,
but an attitude of mind which produces the
atmosphere in which asking is perfectly natural.*
Oswald Chambers

***If you need any prayer or pastoral care support,
kindly contact the pastoral care team via:***

Email: wecare@brmc.org.sg

Contact: 6592 4011