

Day 20

“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving” (Colossians 4:2, ESV).

Perseverance in prayer can easily turn into preoccupation with what has not changed. When that happens, prayer becomes centered on unmet needs rather than awareness of God’s ongoing work. Paul’s instruction in Colossians pushes against that tendency. Devoted prayer is not defined by constant asking, but by attentiveness. It is prayer that stays alert to God’s activity and responds with thanksgiving.

Paul connects perseverance with alertness for a reason. Persistent prayer is not meant to pressure God into action. It is an invitation to remain present long enough to notice where He is already at work. Alertness means paying attention to our own hearts, to the needs of others, and to the ways God is shaping circumstances over time. Thanksgiving keeps that attention from turning inward.

This kind of prayer may look like beginning the day by naming specific reasons for gratitude rather than immediately listing requests. It may involve taking time to reflect on what God is revealing through Scripture, conversations, or unanswered questions.

Jesus exemplifies this posture in the garden of Gethsemane when He urged the disciples to stay awake and pray. His instruction was not about changing the Father’s will but to urge His disciples in preparation. Their prayers were to shape their response to the suffering they did not yet understand.

When prayer is watchful and thankful, it becomes less about what we need and more about participation in what God is already doing.

Where might you need to slow down and pay closer attention in prayer this week?

What would it look like to practice thanksgiving alongside perseverance?

Lord, teach me to remain attentive to Your work and show me where I can join You in that work.