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Be constant in prayer.

Romans 12:12c

You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many.

Second Corinthians 1:11

Christianity is prayerful. While prayer is talking with (not just to) God, it is much more. Prayer is integral to someone becoming and continuing to grow as a Christian. But prayer is not a set of magical incantations. This is why we never use the almost magical description of prayer as: ‘prayer power’. Mysteriously, God has ordained preaching *and* prayer as the sacred means by which the Gospel is advanced. Similarly, in God’s wisdom He has decreed that His purpose is furthered by His people *praying*. Hence, Paul could write Second Corinthians 1:11 where he appealed for prayer to be offered so that the Gospel would be received by more people. Since the Epistle to the Romans is largely about salvation, the context of being constant in prayer seems to be about supporting the goal of seeing others saved.

1. Who should we particularly pray for to be saved according to First Timothy 2:1-4 and why might this be prioritised?

2. Why is Philippians 1:9-11 regarded as one of the most beautiful pastoral prayers of the New Testament?

Being *constant* in prayer does not mean that we are always praying every moment of the day, but that rather, we are *prayerful* throughout our day by lacing the moments of our days in prayer as we go about our business and our interactions with others, and being constantly responding to those opportunities we have to pray and commune with the Father.

3. According to Philippians 4:6, how is prayer the antidote to worry?

4. Based on Colossians 4:12, why was Epaphras struggling and what was he hoping would be achieved?

5. What did Peter write would aid our praying? (1Peter 4:7)

The Gospel of Luke is sometimes called the *Gospel of Prayer*. The next time you read the Gospel of Luke take note of how often Luke tells us that Jesus was praying. It's not just the frequency of Christ's praying, it's the circumstances that is especially noteworthy. Jesus prayed while walking, as He was being baptised, when others slept, after being crucified, and in other surprising circumstances. May God help us to *constantly* pray too.

Amen.