

Spiritual Disciplines for New Life

Key Verse: "Say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it."
—Colossians 4:17

Selected Scripture: Colossians 4:2-6,17 **IN THE FINAL CHAPTER OF** the book of Colossians, Paul exhorts the brethren regarding the need for diligence in prayer, especially on behalf of those witnessing concerning God's plan. (Col. 4:2-4) This is an important aspect of our appreciation for, and exercise of, the privilege of Christian discipleship. Faithfulness in coming often and tarrying at the throne of grace is indispensable to our growth and development in Christ. As spirit-begotten New Creatures, we are in the process of being developed to help bring about the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise to bless all the families of the earth. (Gen. 12:3) In our prayers, we should express our support for the efforts being made to promote the kingdom message.

We should have great compassion for the human family, and as opportunities present themselves, we should witness concerning the glorious plan of salvation. This plan has been provided to offer the opportunity of life for the world of mankind. Man is in dire need of such comfort, given the horrors of disease, religious conflict, starvation, wars, violence, immorality, death, and other calamities that exist today on a global scale. Let us imitate the example of Paul, recorded for our admonition:

“Though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”—I Cor. 9:16

Another important aspect of the believer’s lifestyle is to redeem the time from temporal concerns and focus upon spiritual endeavors. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” (Eccles. 9:10) There are many avenues of service in the Lord’s cause that are available to all of us. To the degree that we are faithful in doing even little things with a view to pleasing God, he will reward us with greater opportunities for service. Let us think of the comfort and consolation we can bestow upon the brotherhood by pen, telephone, or other forms of communication. In addition, we should avail ourselves of every opportunity for assembling with others of like precious faith at meetings and conventions, in addition to engaging in frequent personal study of God’s Word.

In his writings, Paul often acknowledged and encouraged many of his associates by name, particularly those that assisted him in his ministry. Not only were they supportive of his efforts, but they were also undoubtedly instruments of comfort and fellowship. (Col. 4:7-14) In our Key Verse, Paul exhorts Archippus to take heed to the ministry he had received from the Lord and to fulfill it, although the specifics as to its nature are not detailed. We, likewise, as consecrated children of God, should be diligent in serving him with every fiber of our being.

As the body of Christ is now being developed, all who have been accepted as probationary members can attest to the Lord’s strengthening influence in their lives as he waits for the completion of his Bride. May each believer be spurred on to greater fervency in his sacrificial walk by the glorious promise of being associated with Christ Jesus in helping to restore mankind to perfection and everlasting life during God’s kingdom.—Rev. 20:6 ■