

**EVENING WORSHIP SERVICE – MITCHELL TAN 05 Mar 2006**

**EPAPHRAS : “ALWAYS LABOURING FERVENTLY IN PRAYER” Philippians 2:25-30**

**(I) BACKGROUND TO THE LIFE OF EPAPHRAS**

**1. He was a Pastor to the Colossian Church**

a. He taught the Colossian Church

“As you also learned from Epaphras,...” Col. 1:7

b. He was one of them

“Epaphras, who is one of you,...” Col. 1:12

c. He kept in touch with Paul concerning the Church

“Who also declared to us your love in the Spirit.” Col. 1:7

**2. Commendations concerning Epaphras**

a. Fellow servant

“Our dear fellow servant,...” Col. 1:7

b. Faithful minister

“Who is a faithful minister of Christ on your behalf,...” Col. 1:7

c. Fellow prisoner

“Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you,...” Philem 23

**(II) AN EXAMPLE OF ONE WHO LABOURED FERVENTLY IN PRAYER**

**1. Prayer as something to struggle strenuously in**

“Labour fervently...in prayers,...” Col. 4:12

**2. Following the example of Jesus in prayer**

“And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.” Luke 22:44

**(III) REASONS FOR EPAPHRAS TO LABOUR FERVENTLY IN PRAYERS**

**1. The imperfections of the Church**

“That you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” Col. 4:12

- a. Still not spiritually matured
- b. Still not fully walking in all the will of God

## **2. Struggles against personal doubts**

“He who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.” James 1:6-8

## **3. External Spiritual resistance**

“But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days;...” Dan. 10:13

## **4. Sin problems**

“Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, covetousness, which is idolatry.” Col. 3:4

# **(IV) MAINTAINING CONSISTENCY IN LABOURING IN PRAYER**

“Always laboring fervently for you in prayers,...” Col. 4:12

1. His deep sense of duty as a servant of God  
“A bondservant of Christ,...” Col. 1:12
2. His deep sense of identification with his Church  
“Who is one of you...” Col. 4:12  
“For you...” Col. 4:12
3. His deep sense of concern for others  
“For I bear him witness that he has a great zeal for you, and those who are in Laodicea, and those in Hierapolis.” Col. 4:13

# **(V) THE CHALLENGE TO FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF EPAPHRAS IN PRAYER**

1. To be counted on to labour in prayer
2. To be compelled to labour in prayer

- 3. To care enough to labour in prayer**
- 4. To conform to this example**