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Caught in a Golden Cage

1. No I wouldn't have been close to being qualified. I was never a 'driven' type until I joined the military. Even then I considered myself initially as a follower. As time went by and responsibility increased I now became a driven person, Just like Saul. The sweet feeling of accomplishment, praise and admiration fueled me to achieve more and more. I wore this badge as a sign of my competence and set my sights high, getting the task done, no matter what. I couldn't see the harm this "drive" was producing around me. Society looks at driven people, as ones who have a yearning to go above and beyond to get a task done, then move on to the next, a life of never ending stress and the need to be praised by everyone, for being so relentless.
2. This one is easy for me. If not by the grace of God, I would still be "caught in the golden cage". What motivates me is what I have just read in this chapter. I'm not doing this for myself, my pride, my gain, but for God, and his people. The way it should always be. Clearly Satan plays the main part in deceiving people that being driven is something that should be emulated, as it is surely not coming from the mouth of God. Hard work and being driven are clearly two different subjects. When

one has an understanding of Gods message, it's clear to see how easy it is for us to be misled.

3. Unlike my younger years, today I find relief and hope in the Bible, my Church, and my Family .I see the negative effects of the current world situation on the face of many today. Is it stressful to me? No, it's sad. I see people losing hope, faith, and everything else, and they are asking "why", why me, As a Christian, I see this time, as a time for bringing people to God. I am thankful to God for his Grace and peace.
4. Paul experienced every trial and tribulation a man could face. Beatings, being stoned, shipwrecked, in peril with false brethren, in the wilderness, cold, hungry and thirsty. My stresses today come mainly from my own doings, and cannot rationally be compared to Paul's abuse he had to endure, from. Preaching the word of God. How did Paul deal with this? Like Jesus, he suffered terribly, and frequently, but like Jesus, Paul remained steadfast and loyal to God, when his faith was tested.
5. Ephesians 1:16 – Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my **prayers**

In this verse, Paul is happy after hearing how committed the Ephesians were to Christ, and faithfully includes them in his prayers

1 Corinthians 14:15 – I **will pray** with my spirit, but will also pray with my understanding. I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding. Paul addresses the speaking in tongues, and though he says no one will know what the blessing is, he will continue to pray in the spirit, with his mind and soul. Though he seemed a little troubled, his faith in Christ never leaned.

1 Thessalonians 5:25 - Brethren, **pray** for.

Paul, saddened by the somewhat unfriendliness of some of the priesthood, asks for prayers for all, and states that we need to greet all brethren, regardless of stature.

2 Thessalonians 3:1 – Finally brethren, **pray** for us that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified, even as it is with you.

Paul delivers this word designed to encourage them in their attachment to the gospel, and informs the church to continue to pray, for the Lord is faithful, and will protect his people.

Colossians 4:2 – Continue in **prayer**, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.

This verse is right after Paul's exhortation to relative duties, and teaches us that they who live in one family should join in social prayer for Gods help, and watch out for negligence and indolence.