

**“A Heart for the World in 2021”  
Colossians 4:3-5**

**Introduction:**

Acts 1:8 “...you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

Throughout the ages and in varying degrees, Jesus’ disciples have been endeavoring to fulfill this Great Commission and go into all the world making disciples (Matthew 28:19-20)

We may be isolated, but we are not silenced. . .

The Scriptures teach that every local church is to have two fundamental functions...

1. We gather for edification — to build each other up in the faith (1 Cor. 14:12, 26; Eph. 4:12)
2. We scatter for evangelism — to spread the good news of the gospel to others (2 Cor. 5:20)

Colossians 4:3-5 “...praying at the same time for us as well, that God will open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned; that I may make it clear in the way I ought to speak. Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.”

**How to Become a Global Church with a Heart for the World**

**Principle #1 - We must join with others in being devoted to prayer.**

Colossians 4:3 “...praying at the same time for us as well...”

Ephesians 6:19 “...pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel...”

**Principle #2 - We must be willing to go anywhere God leads.**

Colossians 4:3 “...that God may open up to us a door for the word...”

Acts 16:6-7 “They passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia; and after they came to Mysia, they were trying to go into Bithynia, and the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them...”

2 Corinthians 2:12-14 “Now when I came to Troas for the gospel of Christ and when a door was opened for me in the Lord, I had no rest for my spirit, not finding Titus my brother; but taking my leave of them, I went on to Macedonia. But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Him in every place.”

“I would rather be in deepest, darkest Africa in the will of God than on the throne of England out of His will.” (Dr. David Livingstone, Scottish missionary and explorer in the 19<sup>th</sup> century)

**Principle #3 - We must be willing to help proclaim the gospel (i.e. the mysteries) of Christ to unbelievers the world over.**

Colossians 4:3 "...praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ..."

1 Thessalonians 1:8 "For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to say anything."

1 Corinthians 4:1 "Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God."

Colossians 1:26-27 "...the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."

1 Corinthians 2:7 "...but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory..."

Ephesians 6:19 "...pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel..."

**Principle #4 - We must be willing to suffer while proclaiming the Gospel**

Colossians 4:3 "...praying at the same time for us as well, that God may open up to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been imprisoned..."

1 Corinthians 16:9 "...a wide door for effective service has opened to me, and there are many adversaries."

"He is no fool who will give up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." (Missionary Jim Elliot)

2 Timothy 1:8-9 "Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with *me* in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God..."

**Principle #5 - We must be willing to learn more effective methods of communicating the gospel clearly to the outermost parts of the world.**

Colossians 4:4 "...in order that I may make it clear (lit. visible, obvious) in the way I ought to speak."

1 Corinthians 9:22 "To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men, that I may by all means save some."

Preserving the Changeless Core vs. Processing the Changing Culture

If we are going to be effective global Christians, we must also be willing to look at ministry from outside the mainstream of thinking.

**Principle #6 - We must be committed to walking wisely before unbelievers.**

Colossians 4:5 "Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders..."

**Principle #7 - We must be committed to making the most of the opportunities God provides.**

Colossians 4:5 "...making the most of the opportunity."

We must conduct ourselves with strategic wisdom toward outsiders while making the most of the tactical opportunities.

**Reason #1 - Because we live in evil times.**

Ephesians 5:15-16 "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil."

**Reason #2 - Because the world is still open to the Gospel**

John 4:35 "Do you not say, 'There are yet four months, and then comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest."

Matthew 9:37-38 "Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Therefore, beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into His harvest."

**Concluding Challenge:** "Let my heart be broken by the things that break the heart of God." (Bob Pierce)

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What does it mean to you to be a global Christian?
2. Name a part of the world that God has placed on your heart to pray for.
3. What new methodologies that didn't exist 100 years ago are being used now to spread the gospel?
4. What did you get most out of this message?