

Colossians 4:2-6

Announcements:

- Warm for January! (how many people think the cold is coming?)
- Last Sunday - end of year message - give us a little time to get items up-and-running...
- Rick Houston - Pray over as Elder for 2026 (all four others pressing on...)

Please open to **Colossians Chapter 2** (Need a bible? Raise your hand... or backs of chairs...)

- Last time: **Redeemed Relationships:** Wives/husbands... kids/parents... slaves/masters...
- This time: A **balanced believer!** Vertical & horizontal. Upward & Outward. Already know?

Message Title: Watchful & Winsome!

- **Watchful in Prayer** (verses 2-4)
- **Winsome in Witness** (verses 5-6)

A **perfect message** to kick off the year!

- These are the **kind of people** we strive to be...
- By God's **grace and enablement** of His Holy Spirit.

Paul starts with the vertical...

Watchful in Prayer (verses 2-4)

PRAY

Three Ongoing Commands for Prayer:

- (1) **Persistent (proskartereo)**
- (2) **Watchful (gregoreuo)**
- (3) **Thankful (eucharista)**

V. 2 - **Continue earnestly in prayer**

- **Proskartereo** = to devote oneself diligently; steadfastly.
- Someone who is devoted is **committed and dedicated. Perseverance.**
- This is not "**emergency-only prayer.**" (engine smoking!); this is a habit, priority, lifestyle.
 - **Gym membership** you don't use? Pay the fee, have access, but no consistency!
- Just like Israel was called to "**love the LORD your God with all your heart**" (Deut 6:5) — not half-hearted, but **whole-hearted devotion. Lifelong relationship!**
- **Daniel 6:10** - "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days."
- Paul commanded the Thessalonian church to "**pray without ceasing**" (1 Thess. 5:17)
- This is the way the **early church** prayed. First century disciples...
- **Acts 1:14, 2:42** - "**All with one mind were continually devoting [proskartereo] themselves to prayer**, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers... and [after pentecost] they **continued steadfastly (proskartereo)** in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers..."

- Pray when you feel like it, pray when you don't. Pray when you believe in it, pray when you doubt it. **And when you feel like giving up? Keep at it! Press on!**

V. 2 - Being vigilant in it

- Being vigilant is better translated "staying alert"
- Gregoreuo (Greg!) = being watchful. Guarding against lethargy and distraction (struggle in those areas? Not alone...)
- **Spiritually on guard. Defensively and Offensively.**
- **Praying Defensively**: against deception / temptation (the world, the flesh, and the devil)
- **Matthew 26:41, ESV** - "Watch (gregoreuo) and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."
- **Defensive alert** = the posture of a soldier on duty, not a tourist on vacation. **DEFCON 1**
 - Shamar = keep guard, watch over. Used of Shepherds / Priests (kids, spouse, etc)
- **Praying offensively** = Looking for kingdom opportunities. Sensitive to Spirit's leading.
 - Lord, where are you at work here? What are you saying? What should I see?
 - Prayerfully alert throughout the day for ministry moments / divine appointments
- Long story short - living with **spiritual notifications ON!** - anytime, anywhere. (dealership)

V. 2 - With thanksgiving

- With (en) better translate "in" = the sphere / immersed. An ongoing attitude. All Colossians
- Eucharista (eú = well, + charizomai = to give) "giving good" thus expresses gratitude
 - Past, present, and future! In the Scriptures... Todah = Psalms (deliverance, manna)
- Rarely thank God? Selfish, self-centered. And likely to complain, grumble and be critical.
- **Thanksgiving transforms our perspective** from "Why is this happening to me?" to "What is God teaching me or preparing me for?"
- **A Thankful heart** tends to have more joy, hope, and peace.
 - (alert with anxiety vs alert with trust)
- Keeps us from **Pride/Entitlement** as well = **It's all by grace**.

Prayer = walkie talkie for spiritual warfare... you're coordinating with HQ for real-time guidance, courage, hope, strength, grace... (relationship, growth, and aligning our hearts with His)

V. 3 - Meanwhile (at the same time) praying also for us

- When you guys come together as a church to pray, please pray for us too! **Corporate!**

The Mission of Prayer (vv. 3–4)

V. 3 = Open Doors

V. 4 = Clear Words

V. 3 - That God would open to us a door for the Word ...for which I am also in chains (in prison)

- Instead of asking for prison doors to be opened, he asked for **Gospel doors to be opened!**
- Paul writes this letter in chains as a prisoner of Rome awaiting his trial. He prays for opportunity
- And we know God gave him opportunities. (Philippians = Ceasar's household, palace guard)
 - **Even through crises** (hospital stay, job loss, flat tire, etc)
- **Open Doors** = a metaphor for kingdom opportunities. Sample some verses...

- Acts 14:27, CSB - "After they arrived and gathered the church together, they reported everything God had done with them and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles."
- Paul would go on to state elsewhere...
- 1 Cor. 16:8-9, 2 Cor. 2:12 - "I will tarry in Ephesus... for a great and effective door has opened to me... furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened to me by the Lord."
- So, this is **a beautiful prayer for us to pray**. Rev 3:8!
 - Individually and ecclesiastically. (work, school, neighborhoods, after service...)
 - Locally (prayerless people miss them? (heads down) - prayerful people tuned in! (up))
 - and abroad. (our prayers can impact doors on the other side of the world)
- Not just any door for any old thing, but specifically for the **Logos (for the Word)** = **GOSPEL**

V. 3 - To speak the mystery of Christ

- **Christ!** Jesus centered ministry. The focus of Paul's whole life (should be ours too)
- In context, specifically... (mysterion) something hidden now revealed...
- Colossians 1:26-27 - "The mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints. To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory."
- God of the Bible always intended a global salvation (tribe/tongue), now made clear in Christ.

V. 4 - That I may make it manifest, as I ought to speak.

- It's one thing to pray for an open door, it's another to know what to do with it when it does!
 - Not just prayers for opportunity, but also for **ability**
- Manifest means to "make clear" - **I love this!** Arguably the greatest preacher to walk the planet (besides Jesus) and he is asking for prayers so that his Gospel message would be made clear.
 - **Communicated effectively! To make the complicated, simple.**
- Encourage you to pray this for yourself and any who communicate the **Logos tou Christou**
- **Can I ask you to pray for me this year in that way? Each week?**
 - Sermon doesn't make sense? = **your fault!** Ha!
- I love the humility and dependency in this. **We all need God's help... (logos / rhema)**
- **The proclamation of the gospel is empowered by prayer.** (metropolitan tabernacle, London)
 - Come back tonight for Selah Night and let's dig in!

But the vertical absolutely impacts the horizontal...

Winsome in Witness (verses 5-6)

Winsome! = "attractive or appealing in appearance, character" (a great aim for a Christ follower!)

- **Winsome, not weird. Attractant, not a repellent** (warm cookies vs bug spray in the eye)

Two Realms:

- **V. 5 = Wise Walkers**
- **V. 6 = Gracious Talkers**

V. 5 - Walk in wisdom (act/live wisely)

- **Walking** - OT and NT - one's way of life. General lifestyle, behavior, and direction.

- **I like that it's a walk.** It's one foot in front of the other. Fall down, get up, keep walking...
- Here = do so "en Sophia" (in wisdom) = opposite = foolish - take your pick!
- **In context**, it's being careful not to say or do anything to lose our witness.
 - People are watching us, whether we realize it or not...

V. 5 - Toward those who are outside

- **Those who are outside** = non believers. Not a derogatory term, but a descriptive one.
 - Not yet regenerate (born again), not yet adopted. (without hope, peace, forgiveness)
 - Not enemies, but opportunities
 - Did you hear that, church?
- **How we live among the outsiders matters.** Biggest complaint - a bunch of hypocrites... and it's true. Outsider here today? I hope we are a good example to you, try to be.
- People may not read the Bible—but they read Christians. Not know colossians, but you!
- There's no point in praying for an open door, if you're going to undermine it with foolishness.

Instead...

V. 5 - Redeeming the time

- Exagorazo... literally to buy out of the market place. There's an opportunity and a cost.
- Being good stewards of time. It slips past us at an alarming rate... once it's gone, it's gone.
- But not just time in general. Kairon (Kairos) = a season, window, or opportunity...
 - Making the most of every opportunity
 -
- You can't go back. (though many wish they could) But you can redeem what's ahead.
 - Looking for opportunities now and in the future that God sets before you...
- The believer's entire life should be built around looking for opportunities to present Christ.
- Evaluate all your activities/resources; determine how they affect your testimony for Christ.
 - Go do it. Don't wait on "the church" - you don't need a title or position...
- Definite article (ton) preceding kairon, indicating the "specific" opportunity, God's providence.
- Connected to prayer. Sensitive to and filled with the Spirit. Redeeming time (seize the day)!

Okay, so let's say you're praying for open doors, and walking wisely, and being good stewards of divine opportunities, and then a door opens and you must speak, now what...!?

V. 6 - Let your speech (conversation)

- The Gospel must be communicated using words! (it's not enough to only walk wisely)
- Either preaching to a group or in conversation (more so the nuance of this verse in context)
- It's not rocket science...

V. 6 - Always be with grace (gracious)

- This should not be surprising to us. For God is merciful and gracious towards us!
- With grace (en chariti) literally "in grace" - speech lives in the realm of graciousness.
- Grace upon grace. Doesn't mean you don't say hard things. No, you do. You speak the truth, boldly, but you do it, in love. And with kindness. (prideful Christians struggle here - we need to do better) "Always" means consistently, not occasionally...
- A gracious person's words are like food and medicine to others...

- *Proverbs 16:24 - "Gracious words are like a honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body."*
- To have **gracious speech**, we have to have **grace in our hearts**, for **out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks**. A person **lacking grace in their words usually indicates their struggling in their heart**. **Lord, help us!** We of course want to **be like our savior...**
- *Luke 4:22, NET - "All were speaking well of him, and were amazed at the gracious words coming out of his mouth. They said, "Isn't this Joseph's son?"*

V. 6 - **Seasoned with salt**

- Salt was **a huge part of the ancient world**. Used **primarily for storing food**.
 - **Nations and wars** fought over it.
 - **Economies based** on it.
 - Our English word "**salary**" comes from the **Latin** *salarius* ("salt").
- **Difference between life and death** in some scenarios. **Important stuff!**
- **Here and in sermon on mount**, our **conduct and speech** is to be "**seasoned with salt**"
- **Qualities of salt** (take **modern sodium abuse** out of mind...)
 - **Preservative** - preserves truth! From **corruption and decay**.
 - **Enhances flavor** - makes food and life **tasty and enjoyable**. Fries without salt?
 - *Not bland, not spicy (tapatio!). engaging!*
 - **Creates thirst** (**bar nuts and pretzels**) - **in context, this is the most fitting!**
 - *Live and talk in such a way that it invites thirst from others!*
- **Salt can be sprinkled into any conversation** (*sometimes without the other even knowing*)
- **Seasoned with salt** = **perfect tense** implying a **past completed action with ongoing effects**
- You have **already received this seasoning** in your life (**you are the salt of the earth**) now, **go be what you are!** Not one day sweet... another spicy... another bland... no, **always salty!**
- A person **lacking integrity might mix salt** (**salary**) **with sand** and it becomes **useless and needs to be thrown out...** (**be careful**)
- Final quality = **a purity** to it. **Gracious and pure (true)**
- OT - **Salt added to sacrifices and purifications** as **covenant faithfulness**. (*Lev 2, Num 18*)
- Look at our words as **true to the covenant** and a **sacrificial offering unto God**.
- Our words, then, should reflect **covenant faithfulness, truthfulness, and reliability**
- A **great way to season your speech** is to **start the day in Word and prayer** adding that flavor.

V. 6 - **That you may know how you ought to answer each one**

- **Same as above with prayers for Paul**, now **he's commanding them the same...**
- First, **we should know the components of the Gospel**. **Faith and repentance. Cross and resurrection** = **Romans Road**. **Be prepared ahead of time...**
- *1 Peter 3:15, NIV - "In your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect"*
- But **this verse, in context** has to do more with how to answer "**Each one**" (**individualized**)
- To be clear the **core components of the Gospel never change**
- But the **method or way** in which we deliver the message will always **be nuanced...**
 - Cultural barriers, age (children), language, awareness, past experiences, current religious beliefs, etc) **What resonates with one person might not work with another.**
- This requires **listening, praying, thinking, and being considerate**. **Ask God to help!**

- **Paul is a great example** to us in this regard...
- **1 Cor. 9:20-22, NLT** - "When I was with those who follow the Jewish law, I too lived under that law. Even though I am not subject to the law, I did this so I could bring to Christ those who are under the law. When I am with the Gentiles who do not follow the Jewish law, I too live apart from that law so I can bring them to Christ. But I do not ignore the law of God; I obey the law of Christ. When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find common ground with everyone, doing everything I can to save some."
- Paul in **Synagogues (Jews)** - argued from Old Testament Scripture
- Paul at **Athens (Greek philosophers)** - started with their own poets and unknown god
- **Winsome witness** is not just about what you say; it's about how you say it to each person.
- Of course, **Jesus is our ultimate example**. He spoke differently to different people.
 - With Nicodemus (intellectual Pharisee)—theological discussion about being born again.
 - With the woman at the well (immoral Samaritan)—personalized convo about living water.

Closing:

And Jesus is where we close!

Jesus perfectly embodied both qualities:

- **Watchful:** He often withdrew to pray, stayed in constant communion with the Father, was always alert to what the Father was doing (John 5)
- **Winsome:** His words were full of grace and truth (John 1:14), He attracted sinners and outsiders, people said "**No one ever spoke like this man!**" (John 7)

******Altar Call******

Communion

Luke 22:19 - "He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, '**This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.**'"

Luke 22:20 - "Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, '**This cup is the new covenant in My blood**, which is shed for you.'"

PRAY

- **Numbers 6 (the Blessing)**