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A Christian's Life in the World

Colossians 4:2-6

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I. Prologue: Biblical Hope IS a Strategy (because its founded in Jesus)

1. The United States of America. America has great wealth; likely the most wealth of any nation at any time in history. America has great power; likely the most power of any nation at any time in history. Built on Judeo-Christian values, we have a short history of having different approaches to arriving at the same destination as envisioned in the Declaration of Independence and enumerated in the U.S. Constitution.

A. These founding and governing documents make clear that America is an experiment wholly dependent on God from whom truth comes and our rights are self-evident. Indeed John Adams said *"Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the governing of any other."*

2. In recent generations a divide battling for the soul of our nation has leaped into our national discourse. What makes this divide so difficult is that the sides no longer have a shared destination in mind. The differences are so profound that the destinations share virtually nothing in common. In essence, that which made our nation "united" is NO longer...the Constitution, made under the authority and for the glory of God, is under siege.

Politics, science, cultural social justice, empty (man-centric) philosophies (e.g., post-truth), religions waring against the God of the Bible, education, and many other parts of culture are bringing our nation to another inflection point – but a point that is largely unrecognizable to God. News headlines, rhetoric hinting or even overtly calling for violence, voting gamesmanship, paid agitators, dark money fueling dark hearts to ever-darker actions...racism, economic slavery, the destruction of marriage as between one man and one woman, the destruction of family, and the robbing of identity under the banner of ever-changing feelings - meaning

each person is able to hold to one, some, or all of the official-yet-still-evolving 72 genders some quick research on the wild-west of the internet revealed for 2025.

A. All these, as overwhelming as they are, are just the tip of the giant iceberg that has broken off and is floating in the sea unmoored from God. [With all this in mind, consider one of the last writings of liberal philosopher George Bernard Shaw:](#)

*"The science to which I pinned my faith is bankrupt. Its counsels, which should have established the millennium, led, instead, directly to the suicide of Europe. I believed them once. In their name I helped to destroy the faith of millions of worshippers in the temples of a thousand creeds. And now they look at me and witness the great tragedy of an atheist who has lost his faith."*¹

No matter how far he ran, escaping truth was impossible. Science, religions, or other worldly philosophies...[all path's led either to hopelessness apart from God OR hopefulness back to God Himself.](#)

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3. Now, just for a moment consider the world in which the Apostle Paul lived. [Child sacrifice, rampant sexual immorality, few God followers and even fewer Christians, slavery, political rule via physical power, women considered property, torture, crucifixion, and this list goes on.](#) I note all this for a couple of reasons.

A. First, things in our day are not so different from Paul's day. [Same God. Same purpose. Same Satan. Same Broken people. Same desperate need for the Good News and the Lordship of Christ in our daily lives.](#)

B. Second, just as Paul lived a life marked by Biblical hope, we can look at all of our challenges (including the overwhelming ones) and live in this same hope – [indeed Paul is calling us to](#)

¹ As quoted from <https://www.sermonillustrations.com/a-z/h/hope.htm>

do exactly this in our passage today. G.K. Chesterton said it this way:

“Hope means hoping when things are hopeless, or it is no virtue at all...As long as matters are really hopeful, hope is mere flattery or platitude; it is only when everything is hopeless that hope begins to be a strength [BECAUSE BIBLICAL HOPE IS FOUNDED IN THE PERSON OF JESUS].”²

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II. Introduction: Reflection Meant to Strengthen

1. These last several weeks, the Apostle Paul has zeroed in on three important areas of our everyday living experience, including marriage, family, and the workplace. In each of these areas, Paul has revealed God’s ideal and given us to wrestle with where we are with respect to this ideal. Perhaps your honest reflection has brought some encouragement, some conviction, some wondering how we got where we are at ,and how we will move closer to His ideal. Some have been humbled. Some have been frustrated. Some have closed their ears and their hearts to an honest examination as to where they fall short. Others have been convicted. No matter if some or all of these reflect your reflections, the real question is will you make substantive changes in aligning your will with God’s?!
2. As Paul moves toward closing his letter to the church in Colossae, he is NOT done instructing them on how to live out a God-fearing, God-loving life. Mankind’s focus starts w/self. In our passage today, Paul is seeking to put some exclamation points on how a Christian is to conduct themselves in being God-and-others centric. The knowledge they have gained from his teaching does NOT make them better than others. The power they gain from applying his teaching does NOT make them better than others. God’s word is offensive. God’s word will divide families. See to it

² G.K. Chesterton, *Signs of the Times*, April 1993, p. 6.

that it is NOT you or man-systems that you are standing on, but in grace, share the truth with others.

3. One final opening thought...all of this occurs with the backdrop we read in **Ephesians 5:16** - the days are indeed evil!

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III. Colossians 4:2-4: Hearts of Prayer

1. Earnestly, Vigilantly, and with Thanksgiving, just keep on praying. Note that the word choice and structure offers an important context, Paul is not emphasizing personal prayer times. Rather, he is telling the church to gather for prayer corporately. They are to do so faithfully because prayer is central to our relationship with God and in our capacity to fulfill the great commission.
2. Being earnest carries with it the idea of being **persistent** in waiting on God. So, Paul's command to continue in prayer serves as an encouragement while also emphasizing the importance of remaining faithful in an area many Christians find challenging or even non-existent. Persistence in prayer is a constant theme in the Bible with verses like **Is 56:7 and Jer 7:11** echoing in the background of Jesus' words found in Matthew 21:13:

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... "It is written, *'My house shall be called a house of prayer,'* but you have made it a *'den of thieves.'*"
- Matthew 21:13

- A. They (and we) are to stand ready, attending to, and giving of oneself in prayer. This is why we purpose to make CCA a "praying church" and not just a church that prays...we want prayer to be a part of our DNA. Sunday night encounter service, women's pockets of prayer, Men's Monday morning Bible study and prayer time, Weeks of Prayer, and the emphasis on prayer in the ebb and flow of daily ministry activities.
3. Being vigilant carries with it the idea of being watchful, alert, concerned for, and to be alive as to what is happening in our day. Many, many bible verses (e.g., Mt 24:42-43, 25:13; Mk 13:34-37; Lk 12:37; 1 Thes 5:6) tell us to be awake (or as we read in **1 Peter 5:8** to be alert and sober minded) to the times in which we live –

that for family, friends, work, the church, our communities, and our nation, we may be persistent in effectual prayer.

4. Being thankful carries with it the ideas of gratitude, giving thanks, and joyfulness for God Himself. **It is to be thankful that God gives us the opportunity to pray anywhere, anytime, in any circumstance AND that He answers prayer.** Prayer is simply the act of communicating with the **[sovereign]** God. **Given that prayer, in its many forms, is the foundational way God gives us (individually and corporately) to fellowship with Him, one of the patterns found in the life of a maturing Christian is a rich and growing prayer “life”.** Given that prayer is the open door by which we may know God’s will, receive His direction, get His wisdom, discernment, and strength, battle against the enemy and his world system, and have our heart aligned with Jesus, you should purpose to tend to and otherwise nurture your prayer “life”.

A. One of my favorite quotes summarizes the power and need of prayer in our lives as Christians:

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"To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing," - Martin Luther

5. Paul’s imagery of doors and chains here in v3-4 is even more impactful when we remember that he is writing this letter from a prison cell in Rome. **Some important things to note in these verses include:**
 - A. Paul instructs the Colossian church, while in an attitude of prayer, to pray with purpose. **Specifically, Paul calls them to pray that God will open doors for himself and his entourage to share the life-giving Gospel.**
 - B. As a great model to you and me, Paul did NOT let his circumstance sideline his service to God. **Even when imprisoned by man, he simply had to share the Good News...**this was NOT the old man Saul full of head knowledge of God, but the new man Paul with God residing in Him. **Paul**

“commanded” they pray because he needed the work of the Holy Spirit – he needed the Spirit’s power, encouragement, wisdom, clarity of words, leadership, and encouragement that he would be an overcomer of his circumstances, fears, worries, and limitations in fulfilling his calling, duty, responsibility, and privilege to share that Jesus had come to set them free.

6. If you have your Bibles, please head back to [Colossians 1:3-6](#).

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³ We give thanks to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, ⁴ since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all the saints; ⁵ because of the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, of which you heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel, ⁶ which has come to you, as *it has* also in all the world, and is bringing forth fruit, as *it is* also among you since the day you heard and knew the grace of God in truth;
- Colossians 1:3–6

- A. Have you received Christ as Messiah? [If you have, Paul could well be speaking to you with his words here](#). The Colossians (and you) have personally come to have the “mystery” or the person of Christ unveiled in their lives. [The Gospel is not first a classroom study, but the transformation of one’s heart and the joining together, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, of many hearts for the pleasure and purposes of our living God](#).
- B. I don’t want to leave this point before knowing you get it. [Christ was veiled \(or a “mystery”\) in the OT](#). The Jews in Paul’s day were looking for a political messiah and NOT a national savior. [Their biases, the cultural norms, and power structures made the mystery that much harder to personally grasp](#). Is this so different from today? [Is the enemy not hard at work to veil the person of Jesus Christ in society broadly and even within what claims to be the church?](#) At least some of the Colossians got it in some measure for they had a personal relationship with Jesus. [Now, it was needed for them to walk in the power of prayer for the sharing of the Gospel...both in their part as a prayer covering for Paul, but also in their part of sharing the Gospel in Colossae as is made clear in verses 5-6](#).

IV. Colossians 4:5-6: Winning the Person (not the argument)

1. Remembering that Paul is speaking into a church facing two crises – unsurprisingly, these are both very much in view in our day. First, the empty man-philosophies (likely an initial form of Gnosticism) of that day had come into the church. Second, some Christ-PLUS doctrine has also crept in – in this case, it was likely Christ-PLUS the law.
2. The world is rough and tumble with the enemy and his world system always biting, clawing, deceiving, and demanding our submission and loyalty in its war against Jesus. Yet, Paul is inviting the Colossae saints (and us) into our God-given unified purpose, exciting adventure, and eternal victory found in Christ.

- A. We are firefighters in a burning building...God places us in harm's way as He uses us to rescue many souls. You are NOT to be a casual onlooker...life is NOT a spectator sport...we are God's Aiken team. Our job is NOT to reform our government or to take over the 7-mountains (family, religion, education media, arts & entertainment, business, and government) to, as some make what I believe to be Biblically unsupported view, usher in the 2nd coming of Christ – **IN SHORT, WE ARE ABOUT SOULS.**
- B. “Be ready for time is short” is Paul’s exhortation. Someone is always watching. They may be saved and needing encouragement, counsel, or prayer. They may be lost and in need of Jesus. So, we, like the Colossae saints are to walk in wisdom guarding our testimonies of Christ. Like them, we are to be authentic, without hypocrisy letting our word be our bond as we reflect the character of Christ in inviting people into relationship with the Messiah.
3. Likewise, in Romans 13:11-14 (NLT), Paul addresses those that have not yet received Christ with the same urgency he is trying to instill in the Colossians and us, today. There, he says:

¹¹ This is all the more urgent, for you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living. ¹³ Because we belong to the day, we must live decent lives for all to see. Don't participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires. - Romans 13:11–14, NLT

V. Closing: Receive, Pray, & Engage

1. Pray (earnestly, vigilantly, and with thanks);
2. Receive and walk in the power and leadership of the Holy Spirit;
AND
3. Let your life testify of the live-giving freedom found in the gift of the NO-LONGER-A-MYSTERY Jesus Christ in your life,

[Prayer]

Colossians 4:2-6

A Christian's Life in the World

- I. Prologue: Biblical Hope IS a Strategy: (because it's founded in Jesus)**
- Our day is not so different from the Apostle Paul's so there is much we can glean.
 - We can live a life marked by Biblical hope.

- II. Introduction: Reflection Meant to Strengthen**
- Living out a God-fearing, God-loving life in evil days

Additional Scripture References: Eph 5:16

- III. Colossians 4:2-4: Hearts of Prayer**
- Keep on praying (earnestly, vigilantly, and with thanksgiving)
 - Pray with purpose
 - Do NOT let circumstance sideline your service to God.

Additional Scripture References: Is 56:7; Jer 7:11; Mt 21:13, 24:42-43, 25:13; Mk 13:34-37; Lk 12:37; 1 Thes 5:6; 1 Pet 5:8; Col 1:3-6

- IV. Colossians 4:5-6: Winning the Person (not the argument)**
- We are firefighters in a burning building...being used by God to rescue souls.
 - Time is short

Additional Scripture References: Ro 13:11-14, NLT;

- V. Closing: Receive, Pray, & Engage**

5-Day Devotional Colossians 4:2-6 A Christian's Life in the World

Day 1: The Foundation of Prayer

Reading: Col 4:2-4, Mt 21:13

Devotional: Prayer is not merely a religious activity—it is the lifeline of our relationship with God. Paul, writing from a Roman prison cell, didn't ask for comfort or release. Instead, he asked for open doors to share the Gospel. His chains couldn't silence his mission. When we pray earnestly, vigilantly, and with thanksgiving, we align our hearts with God's purposes. We become watchful of the spiritual battle around us and grateful for the privilege of communion with our Creator.

Today, examine your prayer life. Is it persistent and purposeful? Are you praying for doors to open—for yourself and others—to share the life-giving message of Christ? Make prayer central to your DNA, not just an occasional practice.

Day 2: Biblical Hope as Your Strategy

Reading: 1 Pe 5:8, Eph 5:16

Devotional: G.K. Chesterton wrote, "Hope means hoping when things are hopeless, or it is no virtue at all." Paul lived in a world of child sacrifice, rampant immorality, slavery, and brutal persecution—yet he lived marked by biblical hope. Our culture faces similar darkness: broken families, moral confusion, and systems warring against God's truth. But biblical hope isn't wishful thinking; it's confident assurance in God's sovereignty. The same God who sustained Paul sustains you. The same gospel that transformed the Roman Empire can transform your workplace, your neighborhood, your family. The days are evil, yes—but our God is greater. Let hope strengthen you today. Stay alert, sober-minded, and anchored in the truth that Christ has already won the victory.

Day 3: Walk in Wisdom Among Outsiders

Reading: Col 4:5-6, Rom 13:11-14

Devotional: Someone is always watching. Your coworkers notice how you respond to pressure. Your neighbors see how you treat your family. The barista remembers whether you're kind or dismissive. Paul urges us to "walk in wisdom toward outsiders," making the most of every opportunity. This isn't about winning arguments—it's about winning people. Your life is your testimony. Are you reflecting Christ's character with authenticity and grace? Let your words be seasoned with salt—preserving truth while making it palatable. We're not casual onlookers in a burning world; we're firefighters on a rescue mission. Time is short. The urgency of eternity should mark how we live today. Be ready. Be wise. Be winsome. Let your conduct open doors for gospel conversations.

Day 4: Running From Temptation**Reading: Col 1:24-29, Eph 3:8-12**

Devotional: For centuries, Christ was veiled—a mystery hidden from ages past. The Jews expected a political messiah, not a suffering servant. Cultural biases and power structures blinded them to God's redemptive plan. Today, the enemy works overtime to veil Christ again—through empty philosophies, distorted religion, and cultural Christianity that lacks transforming power. But in you, if you've received Christ, the mystery is unveiled. Christ in you is the hope of glory. This isn't mere head knowledge; it's heart transformation. The living God dwells within you by His Spirit. This reality should revolutionize how you pray, how you engage your world, and how you share your faith. You possess the greatest treasure—don't keep it hidden. Proclaim Christ clearly, authentically, and boldly.

Day 5: Alignment with God's Ideal**Reading: Col 3:12-17**

Devotional: Paul's teachings on marriage, family, and work aren't suggestions—they're God's ideal for human flourishing. Honest reflection may bring conviction: Where do you fall short? How have you compromised? Our nation's founders understood that the Constitution required a moral and religious people. The same is true for your life—God's design works only when aligned with His will. The question isn't whether you've been humbled or frustrated by God's standards, but whether you'll make substantive changes. Will you align your will with His? Transformation requires more than knowledge; it demands application empowered by the Holy Spirit. Put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Forgive as Christ forgave you. Let His peace rule your heart. And whatever you do, do it all in the name of Jesus, with thanksgiving.

Small Group Study Guide

Colossians 4:2-6

A Christian's Life in the World

Opening Prayer: Begin your time together by asking God to open your hearts to His Word and give you wisdom to apply His truth to your lives.

Opening Question: Share about a time when someone's consistent prayer made a tangible difference in your life or in a situation you were facing.

Sermon Recap:

Biblical Hope IS a Strategy - Despite overwhelming cultural challenges, we can live with the same hope Paul demonstrated in equally dark times.

Hearts of Prayer - We are called to pray earnestly, vigilantly, and with thanksgiving—both personally and corporately as the church.

Purpose in Prayer - Prayer isn't passive; it opens doors for the Gospel and empowers us to fulfill our calling.

Winning the Person, Not the Argument - Our conduct and character matter as much as our words when sharing Christ.

Time is Short - We must be ready, authentic, and intentional about pointing others to Jesus.

Discussion Questions: Did the Holy Spirit prompt any questions with you? Start with those.

1. The sermon opened with a sobering look at cultural challenges in America and drew parallels to Paul's day. How does knowing that Paul faced similar (or worse) conditions encourage you in your faith today?
2. George Bernard Shaw's quote revealed his lost faith in atheism at the end of his life. Why do you think even brilliant minds eventually confront the question: "Who do we say God is?"
3. How does understanding that "the days are evil" (Ephesians 5:16) change the way you approach daily life and ministry?

4. Paul commands the church to pray earnestly, vigilantly, and with thanksgiving. Which of these three aspects is strongest in your prayer life? Which needs the most growth?
 - a. Earnestly (Persistent and Faithful)
 - b. Vigilantly (Watchful and Alert)
 - c. With Thanksgiving (Grateful to God)

5. Paul emphasizes corporate prayer in this passage. How would you describe the prayer culture of our church? How can we become more of a "praying church" and not just "a church that prays"?

6. Even while imprisoned, Paul asked for prayer that God would open doors for the Gospel. What does this teach us about:
 - a. Not letting circumstances sideline our service?
 - b. Our need for the Holy Spirit's power?
 - c. The importance of praying for each other's ministries?

7. Personal Reflection: What specific "door" do you need God to open in your life right now for Gospel opportunities? Share with the group so you can pray for one another.

8. The sermon stated: "We are firefighters in a burning building...God wants to place ourselves in harm's way as He uses us to rescue as many souls as possible." How does this imagery challenge or inspire you?

9. Paul instructs us to "walk in wisdom" with outsiders, being authentic and letting our character reflect Christ. Why is it important to "win the person, not the argument"?

10. Who in your life is "always watching" you? How might God be positioning you to be a witness to them through your conduct, not just your words?

Practical Applications: Query the group for applications first...you may explore one or more of those.

1. **Prayer Commitment:** Set aside 15 minutes daily for focused prayer—include thanksgiving, vigilance for the times, and intercession for Gospel opportunities.
2. **Prayer List:** Create a list of 3-5 unbelievers you know personally. Pray for them daily by name, asking God to open doors for Gospel conversations.

3. **Character Check:** Ask God to reveal one area where your conduct doesn't align with your Christian witness. Take specific steps to address it.
4. **Memorize:** Commit Colossians 4:5-6 to memory this week.
5. **Be Ready:** Prepare a 2-3 minute version of your testimony that you could share naturally in conversation.
6. **Corporate Prayer:** Commit to attending or starting a weekly prayer gathering (Sunday night, early morning, lunch hour, etc.).
7. **Prayer Partners:** Pair up with someone in the group for weekly accountability and prayer specifically for Gospel opportunities.
8. **Community Engagement:** Identify one practical way your group can serve your community together, creating natural opportunities for relationships and witness.

Reflection Questions

1. If someone watched my life this week without hearing me speak, what would they conclude about Jesus?
2. Am I praying with the urgency that "time is short" and "the days are evil"?
3. What "mystery" (false philosophy, cultural pressure, or distraction) is the enemy using to try to veil Christ in my life or community?

Closing Prayer

Close by praying Romans 13:11-14 over your group, asking God to awaken hearts to the urgency of the hour and empower you to live as lights in the darkness.

Discussion Questions
Colossians 4:2-6
A Christian's Life in the World

1. How does Paul's call to persistent, vigilant, and thankful prayer challenge your current prayer life, both individually and corporately with other believers?
2. In what ways do the cultural challenges Paul faced in his day mirror the challenges Christians face today, and how should this shape our approach to living out our faith?
3. What does it mean for prayer to be part of the DNA of a church rather than just an activity a church does, and how can we cultivate this distinction in our own communities?
4. Paul prayed for open doors to share the Gospel even while imprisoned. What circumstances in your life might you be allowing to sideline your service to God rather than seeing them as opportunities?
5. How can we balance speaking truth that may be offensive or divisive with Paul's instruction to walk in wisdom and grace toward outsiders?
6. The sermon mentions that our job is about souls, not reforming government or taking over cultural mountains. How does this perspective change the way you engage with political and cultural issues?
7. What does it look like practically to be earnest and vigilant in prayer while also maintaining an attitude of thanksgiving, especially when facing difficult circumstances?
8. How can we ensure that our lives authentically testify to the freedom found in Christ rather than allowing hypocrisy to undermine our witness to those watching us?
9. Paul emphasizes that the Gospel is not first a classroom study but a transformation of the heart. How has your understanding of Christianity moved from intellectual knowledge to heart transformation?
10. Given that the days are evil and time is short, what specific changes do you need to make in how you prioritize prayer, personal holiness, and sharing the Gospel with others?

Dinner Conversation Starters

Colossians 4:2-6

A Christian's Life in the World

1. Hope in Challenging Times

The sermon suggests that biblical hope can be a strategy even when things seem hopeless. How can we practice hope as a family when faced with difficult situations? Can you think of a time when hope helped us overcome a challenge?

2. The Power of Prayer

The sermon highlights the importance of being earnest and vigilant in prayer, especially as a community. How can we incorporate more prayer into our daily family routine? Are there specific things or people we should pray for together?

3. Guiding Our Testimonies

It was mentioned that we should walk in wisdom and guard our testimonies of Christ. What does it mean to have a strong testimony, and how can we ensure our actions align with our beliefs, both individually and as a family?

4. Engagement with Society

The sermon talks about not being mere spectators in life but actively engaging with our community. How can our family contribute positively to the community around us? Are there any service opportunities we might consider together?

5. Facing Modern Challenges with Faith

The sermon draws parallels between the times of the Apostle Paul and today's society, noting similar values and challenges. What modern challenges do we face that test our faith, and how can we address them with biblical principles?

Family Conversation Guide for Children & Early Teens

Colossians 4:2-6

A Christian's Life in the World

AGES 5-7: SIMPLIFYING THE MESSAGE APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Prayer as a Daily Practice:** Encourage young children to start and end their day with a simple prayer. This can be as straightforward as thanking God for their family and friends and asking for a good day.

Discussion Questions: How do you feel when we pray together as a family? What are some things you would like to pray about?

2. **Acting with Kindness:** Teach them simple acts of kindness like sharing toys or helping friends, reflecting Jesus' love.

Discussion Questions: Can you think of a way we can be kind to someone in our neighborhood or at school this week?

3. **Understanding Hope:** Explain hope using simple examples, like hoping for a sunny day to play outside, and relate it back to trusting God.

Discussion Questions: What are you excited about or hoping for, and how can we trust God with those hopes?

AGES 8-12: BUILDING UNDERSTANDING APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Online Character:** Encourage them to be kind online, such as leaving positive comments or not engaging in negative behavior.

Discussion Questions: How can we show kindness to others in the video games or social media apps we use? What should we do if we see someone being unkind online?

2. **Praying for Friends:** Guide them to pray for specific friends each week, encouraging awareness and empathy for others' needs.

Discussion Questions: Who do you feel might need our prayers right now, and how can we remember to pray for them?

3. **Responding with Wisdom:** Teach them how to handle peer pressure with wisdom, reflecting their beliefs in their decisions.

Discussion Questions: Have you ever felt pressured to do something that didn't feel right? How can we handle such situations wisely?

AGES 11-15: DEEPENING THE CONNECTION APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Engagement in Community:** Encourage participation in community service or church projects as a practical way to live out their faith.

Discussion Questions: What are some community activities or service projects you might be interested in joining, and how can they help us live out our faith?

2. **Online Discernment:** Discuss the importance of discernment in what they read, watch, or share online, ensuring it aligns with Christian values.

Discussion Questions: How do you decide what is appropriate to share or engage with online, and how can our faith guide those decisions?

3. **Building Strong Relationships:** Strengthen their understanding of building healthy, respectful relationships and the importance of being authentic.

Discussion Questions: What are the qualities of a good friend, and how can we ensure we are being genuine and kind in our relationships with others?

Tips for Parents

- Be patient and listen: Give your child time to think and respond.
- Relate to everyday life: Use real-life examples and stories familiar to your child to make abstract concepts more tangible.
- Encourage questions: Let your son or daughter know it's okay to ask questions, even if things don't make sense right away.
- Share personal insights: Tell a personal story about a time you experienced these themes, adapting as needed for age appropriateness.

Family Conversation Guide for Teens and Young Adults

Colossians 4:2-6

A Christian's Life in the World

1. Walking in Wisdom

Biblical Application: Colossians 4:5-6 encourages walking in wisdom toward outsiders. When participating in group activities or team projects, focus on being a positive influence and showing integrity. This means leading by example, being fair, and helping others succeed.

Scenario: During a group project at school, ensure that everyone's voices are heard, and credit is given fairly. Offer to take the lead in distributing tasks in a way that plays to each member's strengths.

Discussion Question: How can you demonstrate fairness and leadership in group settings in a way that reflects integrity and wisdom?

2. Winning the Person not the Argument

Biblical Application: Colossians 4:6 speaks about letting your conversation be full of grace. In friendships or dating relationships, focus on listening and understanding rather than insisting on being right. Approach disagreements with grace and a willingness to reconcile.

Scenario: If you find yourself in a disagreement with a friend, take a moment to really listen to their perspective and seek to understand. Speak truth kindly and avoid conversations that escalate into arguments.

Discussion Question: How can you practice grace and understanding in your conversations, especially when you disagree with someone close to you?

3. Cultivating a Thankful and Aware Online Presence

Biblical Application: Colossians 4:2 emphasizes being vigilant and thankful in prayer. Apply vigilance to your digital interactions by being mindful of what you post, share, and consume online. Be thankful for the ability to connect, but ensure those connections are positive and uphold your values.

Scenario: When scrolling through social media, practice discernment by unfollowing accounts that lead to negative feelings or temptations and engage with content that is uplifting and educational.

Discussion Question: In what ways can you be more intentional about the content you interact with online, ensuring it aligns with your values and faith?