

The Supremacy of Christ

A Study of Colossians

Week 10: Living Faith (Part 5) – Prayer and Public Life

Scripture

Colossians 4:2-6

Key Points (Where We Are in History)

- Paul wrote to the Colossian Church, while he was under house arrest in Rome
- Paul never met them, but wrote in response to the report of Epaphras (their pastor)
- The church was facing pressure to *mix religious systems*
- Paul wrote with the goal of showing Christ's supremacy over all things
- Colossians 1-2 (doctrine); Colossians 3-4 (practical outworking in our daily lives)

Motivation (Why They Need to Know It)

Paul has been talking about putting to death the old life in favor of new life...

- Setting Your Mind on Things Above (3:1-4)
- Remaining Sexually Pure (3:5-6)
- Maintaining Relational and Family Harmony (3:7-21)
- Working as Worship (3:22-4:1)
- **Today** – Conducting Prayer and Public Life

Information (What They Need to Know)

Two Parts of a Connected Life...

PART 1: Prayer Life

Colossians 4:2 (ESV) Continue steadfastly in prayer...

Ways To Approach Prayer...

- **List of Requests and Praises** (piece of paper with written lists)
- **Emergency or As Needed** (when things get serious)
- **Nighttime or Morning Ritual**
- **Scripted Prayer** (reading the Psalms or prayers of others)
- **Responsiveness to the Scriptures** (relational)

“The only way to come to God is by taking off any spiritual mask. The real you has to meet the real God. The very things we try to get rid of — our weariness, our distractedness, our messiness — are what get us in the front door! That’s how the gospel works. That’s how prayer works.” – Paul Miller

Ways to Pray...

- **Continually** (to remain in a fixed direction; persistent – keeps us abiding in continual dependence on God)
Colossians 4:2 (ESV) Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.
- **Watchfully** (remain alert and awake – keeps us resisting temptation and apathy)
Colossians 4:2 (ESV) Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.
- **Thankfully** (giving thanks for God's grace and goodness – keeps us aware of where all things come from)
Colossians 4:2 (ESV) Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.
- **Intercessory** (prayers on behalf of others – keeps us alert to the needs of others)
Colossians 4:3 (ESV) At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, to declare the mystery of Christ, on account of which I am in prison - 4 that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.

PART 2: Public Life

Colossians 4:5 (ESV) Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. **6** Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

Insulate vs. Isolate

Insulate – allowing exposure while protecting oneself from that which may harm

Isolate – avoiding any exposure to protect oneself

We must be *immersed in the truth* so we are *influencing those around us* rather than being influenced by the world.

Our goal is to teach you to live *IN (located in) the world* without being *OF (belonging to) the world*.

Advice to Living in the World...

- **Walk in wisdom toward outsiders** (knowledge that leads to proper application)
Colossians 4:5 (ESV) Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time.

- **Let your speech always be gracious** (knowledge and wisdom lead to proper words)
Colossians 4:6 (ESV) Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.
 - ✓ Gracious (speaking words that are appropriate, kind, sensitive, and truthful)
“To speak what is spiritual, wholesome, fitting, kind, sensitive, purposeful, complimentary, gentle, truthful, loving, and thoughtful.” – John MacArthur
 - ✓ Seasoned with salt
“This statement echoes the teaching of Jesus when he called his disciples to be ‘the salt of the earth’ (Matthew 5:13). When applied to conversation, the metaphor suggests speaking in an interesting, stimulating, and wise way.” – ESV Study Bible
 - ✓ Ability to answer others (not only a call to KNOW the truth, but to COMMUNICATE the truth)

Application (What They Need to Do)

I don't agree with everything this man said, believed, or lived but I love this quote...

“The Christian social witness is achieved only insofar as Christians are deeply implicated in the real life of society - in unions and political clubs and citizen groups and the like; it is not made by Christian people gathering off by themselves in a parish house to study and discuss social issues.” — William Stringfellow, *A Private and Public Faith*