



**“The NET Strategy”**  
**Colossians 4:2-6**

**<sup>2</sup>Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving; <sup>3</sup>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 the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been bound, <sup>4</sup>that I may make it manifest in the way I ought to speak. <sup>5</sup>Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, redeeming the time. <sup>6</sup>Let your words always be with grace, seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should answer each person.**

**Colossians 4:2-6**

## **Introduction**

**A. “From time to time in the life of the church there needs to be a wake-up call to some simple and central and basic things. One of these is that Christianity is a converting religion. It is evangelistic. It is persuasive and expansive and missionary. It is not coercive. It does not use the sword, manipulation, or brainwashing. But it does proclaim and persuade and plead and pray....When we lose a passion to see people won over to Jesus, we lose Jesus” (John Piper).**

## **Introduction**

**B. “Christianity is a soul-winning, out-reaching, mind-persuading, heart-entreating, rescuing, missionary faith, or it is not true Christianity. We need to be reminded of this because it is about incredible how listless we can become while calling ourselves Christians” (John Piper).**

## **Introduction**

**C. “Little by little our whole orientation can become inward....We just go about our in-house religious business like a medical clinic that sees fewer and fewer patients and has more and more staff meetings, until there is nothing but a smooth running program for the doctors and nurses and their families. That is what happens to many churches” (John Piper).**

## **Introduction**

**D. Christians, we need to redeem our social networks. They are the places we live, work, and play.**

## **Introduction**

**E. “Social networks are the basic mechanism through which conversion takes place....Most conversions are not produced by professional missionaries conveying a new message, but by rank-and-file members who share their faith with their friends and relatives....The principle that conversions spread through social networks is quite consistent with the fact that the earliest followers of Jesus shared many family ties and longstanding associations”  
(Rodney Stark).**

## **Introduction**

**F. “Although the very first Christian converts in the West may have been by full-time missionaries, the conversion process soon became self-sustaining as new converts accepted the obligation to spread their faith and did so by missionizing their immediate circle of intimates” (Rodney Stark).**

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**H. How can we engage in the NET Strategy?**

**I. N: Never Stop Praying (4:2-4)**

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**<sup>2</sup>Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving; <sup>3</sup>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 the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been bound, <sup>4</sup>that I may make it manifest in the way I ought to speak.**

**Colossians 4:2-4**

## **I. N: Never Stop Praying (4:2-4)**

**A. We need to pray informed prayer. (4:2)**

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## **I. N: Never Stop Praying (4:2-4)**

**A. We need to pray informed prayer. (4:2)**

**1. “Devote yourselves to prayer.” “Devote” means to be courageously persistent or to hold fast and not let go. It means to be persistent in prayer. We must pray because only God can save people.**

## **I. N: Never Stop Praying (4:2-4)**

**2. “Being watchful in it.” Be alert. Stay awake. Stay alert for specific needs about which to pray. Be aware of spiritual warfare. Don’t pray with your head in the sand. Know what’s going on.**

## **I. N: Never Stop Praying (4:2-4)**

**3. “With thanksgiving.” Be thankful for God rescuing us from the authority of darkness and transferring us to the kingdom of His Son. Be thankful for God saving sinners as the gospel is proclaimed. Thank God for answered prayer.**

## **I. N: Never Stop Praying (4:2-4)**

**B. We need to pray intercessory prayer. (4:3-4)**

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**<sup>3</sup>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 the mystery of Christ, for which I have also been bound, <sup>4</sup>that I may make it manifest in the way I ought to speak.**

**Colossians 4:3-4**

## **I. N: Never Stop Praying (4:2-4)**

### **B. We need to pray intercessory prayer. (4:3-4)**

- 1. “Praying at the same time for us as well.” Paul asked the church to pray for him. He had never met the Colossian believers, yet he asked them to pray for the gospel to advance in a hard place.**

## **I. N: Never Stop Praying (4:2-4)**

- 2. “That God will open up a door for us for the word.” Pray for an open door for the word. Pray that the gospel would enter hearts and minds of people and communities. Pray for open hearts and open minds. Pray for opportunities to speak the gospel.**

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**2. “That God will open up a door for us for the word.” Pray for an open door for the word. Pray that the gospel would enter hearts and minds of people and communities. Pray for open hearts and open minds. Pray for opportunities to speak the gospel.**

**3. “So that we may speak the mystery of Christ.” The word is the gospel of Jesus Christ. Proclaim the story of the Bible which climaxes in Christ.**

## **I. N: Never Stop Praying (4:2-4)**

**4. Know the gospel. (The Gospel Definition)**

**The gospel is the good news that the just and gracious God of the universe looked upon hopelessly sinful people and sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, God in human flesh, to bear His wrath against sin on the cross and to show His power over sin in the resurrection so that everyone who turns from their sin (repentance) and believes in Him (faith) will be reconciled to God forever.**

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**5. Know different ways of communicating the gospel.**

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**(b) Two Ways to Live**

**(1) God is the Good Ruler and Creator.**

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**(5) Jesus is the risen Ruler and Savior.**

**(6) There are two ways to live, our way or  
God's way.**

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**6. "For which I also have been bound." Paul was in prison for preaching the gospel but God gave him an open door to preach the gospel in prison. (Philippians 1:12-18)**

## **I. N: Never Stop Praying (4:2-4)**

**7. “That I may make it manifest in the way I ought to speak.” Clarity and courage are needed as we engage in gospel conversations. If Paul wanted people to pray for him to speak the gospel courageously and clearly, how much more do we?**

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**7. “That I may make it manifest in the way I ought to speak.” Clarity and courage are needed as we engage in gospel conversations. If Paul wanted people to pray for him to speak the gospel courageously and clearly, how much more do we?**

**8. Never stop praying for people in your social networks and for your brothers and sisters who are sharing the gospel.**

**II. E: Exercise Your Faith Wisely  
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**<sup>5</sup>Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, redeeming  
the time.**

**Colossians 4:5**

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**A. Live wisely before non-Christians  
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**<sup>11</sup>and to make it your ambition to lead a quiet  
life and attend to your own business and work  
with your hands, just as we commanded you,  
<sup>12</sup>so that you will walk properly toward  
outsiders and not be in any need.**

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**1. Don't lag, nag, or sag.**

**2. To be a good witness at work, you first need  
to be a good employee.**

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**3. Walking in wisdom means not bringing reproach on the name of Christ by the way you live.**

**4. Don't be someone's excuse for not becoming a Christian.**

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**B. Live wisely with respect to time.**

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- 1. "Redeeming the time." Take advantage of every opportunity, every open door.**

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**(a) Eat with non-Christians.**

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**(c) Have a hobby with non-Christians.**

**(d) Talk to your co-workers.**

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**(f) Participate in city events.**

**(g) Walk in your neighborhood.**

**(h) Start a group or activity with your neighbors.**

## **III. T: Talk Graciously, Winsomely, and Appropriately (4:6)**

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**<sup>6</sup>Let your words always be with grace,  
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**Colossians 4:6**

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**A. Talk graciously. (“Let your words always be with grace”)**

**1. Avoid arrogance and harshness.**

**2. We must speak about the gospel of grace with grace.**

**3. You don’t want to win arguments but lose people because of your attitude.**

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**4. “I love a minister whose face invites me to make him my friend...on whose doorstep you read welcome, not beware of dog....Give me the man around whom the children come....An individual who doesn’t have a friendly, cheerful manner about him had better be an undertaker, and bury the dead; for he will never succeed in influencing the living....,A man must have a great heart if he is to have a great congregation....When a man has a large, loving heart, men go to him as ships to a haven....Such a man is hearty in private as well as in public” (Charles Spurgeon).**

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#### **B. Talk winsomely (“seasoned with salt”)**

**1. Our speech should not only be a blessing to others, but be a purifying influence to others.**

**2. Just as salt cleanses and purifies, it also promotes healing. Our words should cleanse and purify as well as heal and restore.**

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**(c) Enjoy the gospel yourself.**

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**1. Spend time with non-Christians.**

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**3. Know the gospel.**

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**C. Talk appropriately (“so that you will know how you should answer each person”)**

**1. Spend time with non-Christians.**

**2. Be a good listener.**

**3. Know the gospel.**

**4. Use natural language.**

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**7. Rely on the Holy Spirit.**

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**7. Rely on the Holy Spirit.**

**8. Have an unshakable confidence in the gospel.**

## **Conclusion**

**A. Ordinary Christians are to live on mission by redeeming their social networks.**

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**C. What is your next step you need to take if you're going to be obedient to the Lord?**

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**D. The Gospel Definition**

**The gospel is the good news that the just and gracious God of the universe looked upon hopelessly sinful people and sent His only Son, Jesus Christ, God in human flesh, to bear His wrath against sin on the cross and to show His power over sin in the resurrection so that everyone who turns from their sin (repentance) and believes in Him (faith) will be reconciled to God forever.**