

The entire theme for Chapter 3 is introduced right at the start of the chapter.

### Colossians 3:1-3 ESV

- (1) If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.
- (2) Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.
- (3) For you have died, **and your life is hidden with Christ in God.**

As believers we have been given a new life. We went from being dead to alive. This entire chapter is how to live out that new life. It is true about you and we need to learn how to live like it.

This new life should radiate into:

- marriage, verses 18-19
- parenting verses 20-21
- Slaves and masters

### Colossians 3:22-23 ESV

- (22) Bondservants, obey in everything those who are your earthly masters, not by way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, **but with sincerity of heart, fearing the Lord.**
- (23) Whatever you do, **work heartily**, as for the Lord and not for men,

This was directly written to slaves which we will see a little later this morning more of the context of why Paul is bring the slave master relationship up. Verse 23 has broad application. In absolutely everything we do we should work for the Lord. From the soul.

As we studied this passage last time we looked at some principals of Glorifying God:

**You can only glorify God if you are a believer.**

- you cannot do the will of God from the heart if you have a dead heart.

**You cannot glorify God with Sin**

- God has called us to live holy lives. Sin is never in God's will for us.  
(Although He is big enough to work in spite of our sin)

**To Glorify God, we must understand that in absolutely everything we do, it should be for God**

- We must seek His will in each situation. This life has eternal ramifications.

### Colossians 3:24-25 ESV

(24) **knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward.** You are serving the Lord Christ.

(25) For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.

### Colossians 4:1ESV

(1) Masters, treat your bondservants justly and fairly, **knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.**

Continuing on with his theme of slave and master Paul switches his focus on the masters. Notice how it follows the same pattern.

Paul told slaves to glorify God in what they do because there was an eternal inheritance waiting for them.

Paul told the masters, to treat slaves justly and fairly (which is glorifying to God) because there is a master in heaven (there is an eternal reward)

It is so tempting and common for us to focus on things of this world. If we could only view things with an eternal lens. This is what Paul is trying to encourage both slaves and masters to do.

Chapter 4 continues with Paul giving the Colossians some parting instructions as he starts to wrap up the letter.

### Colossians 4:2 ESV

(2) Continue **steadfastly** in prayer, being **watchful** in it with thanksgiving.

### προσκατερέω

1. to stick by or be close at hand, ***attach oneself to, wait on, be faithful to someone,***
2. to persist in something
  - a. *busy oneself with, be busily engaged in, be devoted to,*
  - b. ***hold fast to, continue in, persevere in***

Prayer is something that we are called to persist at. It is an ongoing dialogue between us and God. Notice the command to be watchful. We can spend a lot of time praying out of habit using repetitions and not being watchful and alert in talking to God.

### Matthew 6:7-8 ESV

(7) “And when you pray, do not heap up **empty phrases** as the Gentiles do, **for they think that they will be heard for their many words.**

(8) **Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.**

God wants us to have a conversation with Him. Repetition, praying for something consistently is not bad. That’s the first part of verse 2, there should be a steadfastness and persistence to our prayer. The danger is if those words become empty, if we are no longer watchful and alert in what we are praying.

Paul instructs them on how to pray for him. He gives them his prayer requests.

### Colossians 4:3 ESV

(3) 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—

Paul ask them to pray for an open door. Which is really interesting language and how we often talk about God’s will. God opening and shutting doors. This is biblical language. Listen to how Paul uses it in 1 Corinthians.

### 1 Corinthians 16:8-9 ESV

(8) But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost,

(9) for **a wide door** for effective work has opened to me, **and there are many adversaries.**

Paul starts by saying that He is going to stay in Ephesus because there is a wide-open door.

He is having a season of effective ministry and he has no desire to leave. I love the end of the verse because it is so opposite of how we usually use the term open door. Paul says that in the midst of this open door of effective ministry there are many adversaries.

**God's will, an open door, does not mean an easy path or one without adversity.**

### 2 Corinthians 2:12-14 ESV

(12) When I came to Troas to preach the gospel of Christ, **even though a door was opened for me in the Lord,**

(13) my spirit was not at rest because I did not find my brother Titus there. **So I took leave** of them and went on to Macedonia.

Paul had an open door for ministry and yet there was no peace in what was happening. So Paul left to go check on Titus. And this may seem wrong or counter to seeking God's will. But notice what Truth we are pointed to in verse 14.

(14) But thanks be to God, who in Christ **always leads us in triumphal procession**, and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of him everywhere.

God is the one leading us. Being in God's will is not based on my ability or success in following Him but in His ability to lead.

### Colossians 4:3-4 ESV

(3) 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.

Our goal in sharing the gospel is just to be clear. God is the one that has to make a dead heart come alive. We just have to present the truth of Jesus clearly and simply and let God continue to work.

### Colossians 4:5 ESV

(5) **Walk in wisdom toward outsiders**, making the best use of the time.

Walking with wisdom in how we interact with the World is only getting harder and harder. Sin complicates. The longer society sins, the harder and more difficult it becomes for us to know how to walk in wisdom.

Make sure not to subtly change the verse in your mind. The verse does not say walk in wisdom against or in spite of the outsiders. We are told to walk in wisdom towards nonbelievers. Meaning we are interacting with the world and having relationships with non-believers. Scripture also teaches not to be unequally yoked with the world so we need to keep all things in balance. But listen to what we are told in 1 Corinthians 5.

### 1 Corinthians 5:9-11 ESV

- (9) I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people—  
 (10) **not at all meaning the sexually immoral of this world**, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world.  
 (11) **But now I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother** if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one.

These verses make it clear there is a high standard that we are to hold believers to, that does not apply to the world. Notice what is implied in verse 10. That we as believers are to associate with the sexually immoral of the world. When we do, they will hopefully see the hope and purpose in us that they lack.

### 1 Peter 3:15 ESV

- (15) but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you **for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect**,

This takes a tremendous amount of wisdom. How to speak truth and biblically love someone with gentleness. To not accept sin but engage with a person that Christ died on the cross for. The great news is we are promised wisdom if we ask for it.

### James 1:5 ESV

- (5) If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

The end of the verse makes it clear this is a pressing issue, that we should not take lightly.

### Colossians 4:5 ESV

- (5) Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, **making the best use of the time**.

### Redeeming the time (τὸν καιρὸν <sup>ἐξ</sup> εξαγοραζόμενοι)

The compounded preposition **ἐξ** has the meaning *out of*; as [Gal 3:13](#),  
 “Christ redeemed us *out of* the curse,” etc., and *out and out, fully*.

“We all have the same time. Paul goes into the open market and buys it up by using it rightly.”

Time is literally against us. Ephesians expands on this thought:

### Ephesians 5:15-17 ESV

- (15) Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise,  
 (16) **making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.**  
 (17) Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Verse 16 uses the same word, redeeming the time. Because the days are evil. The World is lost and dying and going to hell. The have no hope and are without God in this world. Have we stopped to think there are people that have faced everything that has gone on this last year with no eternal hope? We need so much wisdom in how to interact with them.

Verse 6 instructs us on what these interactions should look like.

### Colossians 4:6 ESV

(6) Let your speech always be **gracious, seasoned with salt**, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.

This has to be one of my favorite word pictures in scripture. What we say to people, what we write on social media, should be full of grace, and seasoned with Salt. To be accurate to the verse pre-seasoned with salt. That what we say does not need to be taken with a grain of salt. That what we say is not hard to swallow or taste bad on the way down. It is pre-seasoned. **Not too little salt and not too much.**

### Ephesians 4:29 ESV

(29) Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, **as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.**

This is why we need so much wisdom. Our speech needs to fit the occasion. It is not enough to just say something truthful. Was it the right truth for the right moment, seasoned with salt and imparting grace?

The gospel is so important we should take this kind of care in how we treat the world. Paul did this to great lengths.

### 1 Corinthians 9:20-23 ESV

(20) To the Jews I became as a Jew, in order to win Jews. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law.

(21) To those outside the law I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of God but under the law of Christ) that I might win those outside the law.

(22) To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. **I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.**

(23) **I do it all for the sake of the gospel**, that I may share with them in its blessings.

Again, sin complicates so many things. Living this out is not an easy answer and yet it is so important. God will be the one faithful to lead us in how to do this. We need to seek His will and ask for wisdom.

The chapter finishes with Paul's personal greetings to his fellow believers and there is so much to be learned from these examples.

### Colossians 4:7-8 ESV

(7) **Tychicus** will tell you all about my activities. He is a beloved brother and faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord.

(8) I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are and that he may encourage your hearts,

**Tychicus** is most likely the one who was sent with the letter to take to the Colossians.

Look at how **Tychicus** is described:

- beloved brother
- faithful minister
- fellow servant
- encourager

### Colossians 4:9 ESV

(9) and with him **Onesimus**, our faithful and beloved brother, **who is one of you**. They will tell you of everything that has taken place here.

**Onesimus** was a runaway slave. That really puts the passage of slaves and masters into perspective. **Onesimus** went with **Tychicus** to carry the letter back and also brought the letter to Philemon, his master with Him.

#### Philemon 1:8-11 ESV

(8) Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to **command you to do what is required**,

(9) yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you—I, Paul, an old man and now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus—

(10) I appeal to you for my child, **Onesimus**, whose father I became in my imprisonment.

(11) (Formerly he was useless to you, **but now he is indeed useful to you and to me.**)

Paul could have commanded Philemon to release **Onesimus** but wanted that decision to come out of the new life in Philemon. Paul had shared the gospel with **Onesimus** and he was saved.

Philemon is a fantastic study of how the new life in Christ should change how we interact, there new life in Christ changed how Philemon and Onesimus needed to respond.

#### Colossians 4:10 ESV

(10) **Aristarchus** my fellow prisoner greets you, and **Mark** the cousin of Barnabas (concerning whom **you have received instructions**—if he comes to you, welcome him),

#### Aristarchus

-Was with Paul during the riot at Ephesus Acts 19:29

-Was with Paul as he was ship wrecked Acts 27:2

-And now is in prison with Paul.

#### Mark

-Paul had a complicated history with Mark.

#### Acts 15:36-40 ESV

(36) And after some days Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us return and visit the brothers in every city where we proclaimed the word of the Lord, and see how they are."

(37) **Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark.**

(38) But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work.

(39) **And there arose a sharp disagreement**, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus,

(40) but Paul chose Silas and departed, having been commended by the brothers to the grace of the Lord.

Mark became a faithful friend to Paul. There can be true restoration between believers in our new life in Christ.

#### 2 Timothy 4:9-12 ESV

(11) Luke alone is with me. Get **Mark** and bring him with you, **for he is very useful to me for ministry.**

Because grace has been shown to us, we should be able to show it to others. We can find restoration in our relationships. We can give each other room to change and grow in our new life.

### Colossians 4:11 ESV

(11) and Jesus who is called Justus. **These are the only men of the circumcision among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God,** and they have been a comfort to me.

Paul says these are the only Jews who are believers working with me to share the gospel. These believing Jews were a great encouragement to Paul. Even though his people largely rejected the gospel Paul had a continuing heart for them to see the truth.

### Romans 9:1-5 ESV

(1) I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—

(2) **that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.**

(3) **For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers,** my kinsmen according to the flesh.

(4) **They are Israelites,** and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises.

(5) To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.

**God has to give us this kind of love for people.** To see past groups and labels, but to see the World as people who are deeply hurting and turning to every false answer. To see them as a soul that Jesus deeply cares for. A Soul He went on the cross to save.

### Colossians 4:12-13 ESV

(12) **Epaphras, who is one of you,** a servant of Christ Jesus, greets you, **always struggling on your behalf in his prayers,** that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

(13) For I bear him witness that **he has worked hard for you** and for those in Laodicea and in Hierapolis.

## ἀγωνίζομαι

I. to enter a contest: contend in the gymnastic games

II. to contend with adversaries, fight

III. metaph. to contend, struggle, with difficulties and dangers

Praying is hard work. **Epaphras** labored for these believers, wanting them to mature and know God's will. How did he work hard for them, by praying for them. We should labor for each other in prayer like this.

### Colossians 4:14 ESV

(14) **Luke** the beloved physician greets you, as does **Demas**.

This verse offers such a comparison in what is possible in the Christian life.

### 2 Timothy 4:9-12 ESV

(10) For **Demas**, in love with this present world, **has deserted me** and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

(11) **Luke** alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.

Luke had remained faithful even during difficult times and Demas had fallen in love with the World. There is a real danger in the Christian life to miss what is available to us in our new life. To fall in love with this world and miss what God has for us.

### Colossians 4:15 ESV

(15) Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to **Nympha and the church in her house**.

McGee 40 years ago said “These cities had great heathen temples, but the Christians met in homes. I used to hold the viewpoint and I still do—although I don't emphasize it today as I did at one time—**that as the church started in the home, it is going to come back to the home.**”

### Colossians 4:16 ESV

(16) And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.

(17) And say to **Archippus**, “**See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.**”

(18) I, Paul, write this greeting with my own hand. Remember my chains. Grace be with you.

### Colossians 3:1-3 ESV

(1) If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

(2) **Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth.**

(3) For you have died, and **your life is hidden with Christ in God.**