

Colossians

Lesson 8 - Colossians 4:2-6

As we come to the last chapter of this letter, we can see that Paul has just a few more things to add before he closes. In the five verses we study this week, there are several different thoughts we will look into closer, including *prayer*, *redeeming the time and grace*. This letter was directed to protect the believers from false teaching in the church and to solidify their foundation in Christ. However, he doesn't stop there. We will see that Paul leaves them with directions on how to reach out to unbelievers with truth and grace.

Begin your study with prayer, thanking the Lord for His Word and asking for understanding of it and wisdom in applying it to your life.

Memory Verse – This week's memory verse:

"Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving..."
Colossians 4:2 NKJV

Read Colossians 4:2.

In this verse we have a plea from Paul to *continue* in prayer. This is an essential part of our relationship with God and yet too often neglected. As you consider the following questions and scriptures, ask the Lord to work in you a deeper desire to pray.

1. Colossians 4:2 begins by urging us to "*continue earnestly in prayer.*"

a. What do the following scriptures have to say about this?

1. Luke 18:1

2. Acts 1:14

3. Acts 6:4

4. 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18

b. Define earnestly.

c. What does it mean to you to *continue earnestly in prayer*?

2. Colossians 4:2 continues with two more attitudes we are to have in prayer. In NKJV it reads, “...*being vigilant with thanksgiving*...”

a. Define vigilant.

b. Why would we need to be *vigilant* in prayer?

3. We find an example of the need for vigilance in prayer in Matthew 26:38-41.

a. As you read Matthew 26:41, what reasons are given for the necessity of being vigilant in prayer?

b. Have you ever experienced this yourself? What can we do to help in staying vigilant or watchful in prayer?

4. Consider that, as Paul said to be *vigilant with thanksgiving*, Paul was in prison as he wrote this.

a. What would he have to be thankful for?

b. In your own prayers today, this week, no matter what you are going through, what do you have to be thankful for?

Read Colossians 4:3-4.

In Colossians 1:9-12 we have a beautiful example of how Paul prayed for the Colossians, but now Paul asks them to pray for him.

1. Sometimes people hesitate to ask for prayer or even to accept prayer when it is offered.
 - a. Why would we hesitate?

 - b. Now consider, why would the apostle Paul ask for prayer from anyone who read this letter?

2. What do the following scriptures say about prayer?
 - a. James 5:16

 - b. 1 John 5:14-15

3. Now consider what Paul asked for them to pray about.
 - a. What was Paul's prayer request in Colossians 4:3?

 - b. What was Paul's prayer request in Colossians 4:4?

 - c. What one word do you find in Ephesians 6, in both verse 19 and 20, that describes more about how he wanted to speak?

4. In Colossians 4:3, Paul said he wanted to speak the mystery of Christ. Looking back to Colossians 1:26-28, what was this mystery?

Read Colossians 4:5-6.

Even as we have seen Paul's desire to boldly witness to the lost, he now gives instruction on our own witness to the lost in our attitudes, our actions and our words.

1. What does Colossians 4:5 say about how we are to walk?
 - a. As a reminder, where do we get the only true wisdom?
 - b. How does James 3:17 describe what a walk of wisdom would look like?
2. Paul specifically says to walk in wisdom *toward those who are outside*. This is a reminder that there are only two positions, in Christ and not in Christ. What do the following scriptures say about *those who are outside*?
 - a. Luke 19:10
 - b. Ephesians 2:12
 - c. 1 Timothy 1:15
3. Considering James 3:17 as a guideline for this walk, how would walking in wisdom be important to our witness as we live and work with unbelievers in this world?
4. What does it mean when Paul adds, *redeeming the time*?
5. Colossians 4:6 continues with the instruction of walking with wisdom. Complete the first phrase of this verse in NKJV below.

"Let your speech _____..."

a. As a reminder, write a definition of grace below.

b. What would be the opposite of speaking with grace?

6. How do the following scriptures give a picture of gracious speech?

a. Luke 4:22

b. Ephesians 4:29

c. 1 Peter 3:15

7. “...seasoned with salt...” Considering that salt is a preservative, a healer and enhances flavor, how can our speech be like salt to others?

8. When reading the last part of Colossians 4:6, “...that you may know how you ought to answer each one...”, stop and think about the times you may need to have an answer for an unbeliever. It might be a simple question about your faith or about Jesus, or it might be an accusation or condemnation for your beliefs.

a. If we jump in and answer in our flesh, what might our attitude look like?

b. Regardless of their words or motives, we are to answer with grace. Keeping in mind all we have been learning in Colossians, how can we do this?

c. Why is gracious speech so important to our witness?

In closing...

1. We have surely been challenged to pray this week. Before you leave this lesson, take time to look back at Paul's prayer in Colossians 1:9-12. Write a few names who you want to pray this prayer for this week and write out a prayer for them below.

2. Paul asked for prayer in Colossians 4:3-4. This is a prayer we can and should pray for pastors and ministers in our own church, as every faithful minister of the gospel desires for opportunity to speak and clarity in the message. Write your own prayer for them below.

3. In Colossians 4:5-6 Paul encouraged us in our part in being a witness for Christ. Ask the Lord for opportunity and to give you words of grace as you speak.

Memory Verse

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Colossians 4:2 NKJV

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