

"Redeeming the Time"

Part 2

Colossians 4:2-6

Introduction: Last week in our study we were looking at the practical section of the letter to the Colossians. There were two sections that we started into.

1. The Believer's Prayer Life.
2. The Believer's Personal Life.

Let us review the believer's prayer life just to set our minds for where we are going this evening.

Notice Colossians 4:2

Last week we considered how we are to continue in prayer consistently and while we pray we are to watch or be alert. Prayer is a privilege that is given only to us who are believers. For what are we to watch? We considered 3 points to be watching for.

We must watch for:

1. **Temptation.**
2. **Drowsiness.**
3. **False teachers.**

Notice Colossians 4:3-4

Paul also requested prayer for himself and those with him that they would have open doors to share the mystery of Jesus Christ. Why is Jesus referred to as a mystery? It is not because He was mysterious. It was not because He was not known in the Old Testament because the Old Testament foretold of the coming Messiah and the Jews were looking for Him. The mystery of Christ refers to the church age in which we live in. It was a mystery because it was not known in the Old Testament.

Ephesians 3:3-6

³ *How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,*

⁴ *Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)*

⁵ *Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;*

⁶ *That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:*

We should be praying for one another that God would open doors for us to also so as to have opportunities to step into someone's life and to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is what our unsaved friends and loved ones need. On Wednesday evening we considered how the 7 sons of Sceva had no power over the demon possessed man even though they called the name of Jesus over him. Instead of casting out the demon they were severely thrashed by the demon possessed man.

Acts 19:13-16

¹³ *Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the LORD Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.*

¹⁴ *And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.*

¹⁵ *And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?*

¹⁶ *And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, and overcame them, and prevailed against them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.*

Today the sons of Sceva present themselves as philosophy, psychology, education, science or even religion. But not one of them can change the heart of man. Only Jesus Christ can change the heart.

➤ The Believer's Public Life

a. The Believer's Walk

Notice Colossians 4:5

This is where we stopped last week. Now Paul addresses our public lives. We are to walk in wisdom toward the unbelieving world. But what does this mean?

- 1. We must be very cautious of what we say and what we do so that we will not in any way hinder the Gospel as it is proclaimed to the lost world.**

1 Corinthians 9:11-12

¹¹ *If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?*

¹² *If others be partakers of this power over you, are not we rather? Nevertheless we have not used this power; but suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.*

Notice what Peter wrote to the believers under persecution.

1 Peter 2:20-22

²⁰ *For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.*

²¹ *For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:*

²² *Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth:*

To walk in wisdom toward the unsaved also means:

- 2. To be mindful of the opportunities to speak the Truth into the lives of people who are lost.**

We need to be praying for open doors and we need to be watching for those doors to open. The open door into a person's life may only be there for a short time and for that reason we must be willing to step through and reach out. This is why Paul reminds us to redeem the time.

Psalms 90:12, 16-17

¹² *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.*

¹⁶ *Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children.*

¹⁷ *And let the beauty of the LORD our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it.*

Time is so valuable and we need to be sure that we use the time given to us to count for eternity.

Notice the illustration of a farmer.

The farmer is a man of knowledge and thrifty management of his stock and crops. How carefully he prepares the ground at the proper season, then sows the seed, then removes all obstructions from the soil, reaps and gathers the harvest, and finally seeks the best market to sell it in. Where would the farmer be but for his constant and habitual

redemption of time. The Christian should act like him in regard to the Divine seed-wheat in his own mind or that of others.

Ecclesiastes 11:6

⁶ In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.

Psalm 126:5-6

⁵ They that sow in tears shall reap in joy.

⁶ He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.

John 9:4-5

⁴ I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.

⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

Notice what Jesus said to His disciples after He fed the 5000.

John 6:11-13

¹¹ And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would.

¹² When they were filled, he said unto his disciples, Gather up the fragments that remain, that nothing be lost.

¹³ Therefore they gathered them together, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves, which remained over and above unto them that had eaten.

b. The Believer's Talk.

Notice Colossians 4:6

Paul gives three exhortations here concerning our speech.

1. We are to speak with grace.

Grace is unmerited favor. The idea here is that we are to be kind with our words so as to build bridges into the lives of unbelievers. It is sad but true that many believers burn bridges with their words. They say things that are offensive and this then causes the unsaved to put up a wall so that they block out the offender.

Notice James 3:1-12

James knows the poison that is in the tongue and he also knows that it is only through the power of the Holy Spirit that it can be controlled. There are certain things that we must restrain from saying in the presence of certain people even though they may be true. I am not talking about withholding the Word of God we should never neglect to speak that Truth. But there are certain subjects that cause people to become very defensive and if at all possible, these should be avoided so as not to block the path of the Gospel. Getting back to what James was saying, the tongue is a barometer that reveals what is in the heart.

Matthew 12:34-37

³⁴ *O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*

³⁵ *A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.*

³⁶ *But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.*

³⁷ *For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.*

2. Our words are to be seasoned with salt.

Salt is a preservative to prevent corruption. One of the ideas here is that our speech should be free of any corrupt words. There should be no gossip, no slander, and no foolish speaking.

Ephesians 5:3-5

³ *But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;*

⁴ *Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.*

⁵ *For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.*

Let us remember that it is our words that make the path into the mind and the heart of the people we meet. Kindness and a smile go a long way.

3. We are to know how to answer every man.

One point that helps with knowing how to answer some is to get to know them. Too often believers think it a sin to befriend an unsaved person. Notice the words of Barclay.

"The Christian must have charm and wit in his speech so that he may know how to give the right answer in every case. Here is an interesting injunction. It is all too true that Christianity in the minds of many is connected with a kind of sanctimonious dullness and an outlook in which laughter is almost a heresy."

We are also to be prepared to answer.

1 Peter 3:15

¹⁵ *But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness(gentleness) and fear(respect):*

Conclusion:

In these verses, before Paul brings the letter to a conclusion, he gives his readers these exhortations.

- ✓ Develop a strong prayer life.
- ✓ Walk in a way that others can see Christ in you.
- ✓ Speak in a way that your words make paths into the lives of unbelievers.

Let us keep in mind that our time to do these is limited.