

Study of Colossians – Colossians 4:2–6
Bellevue Church of Christ – Fall 2013

I. Praying (2-4)

Paul moves from relationships to personal Christian responsibilities.

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

Mystery (mystērion)

As used in the NT does not mean "enigma," but refers to God's plan of salvation, which was formerly kept secret but is now revealed in Christ.

Prayer

- **Faithful**
Acts 1:14; 2:42;
Rom 12:12; 1Th 5:17
- **Watchful**
Ps 141:2; Neh 4:9;
Mat 26:41; Mark 14:38;
Eph 6:18; 1Th 5:6
- **Thankful**
Phil 4:6 (Col. 1:3,
12; 2:7; 3:15, 17;
4:2)
- **Purposeful**
1Jn 5:14-15

³At 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 did not ask for the prison doors to be opened, but that doors of ministry might be opened (1Co 16:8-9; Acts 14:27)

- Ro 16:25
- 1Co 4:1
- Eph 1:9; 3:3-9;
5:32; 6:19
- Col 1:26; 2:2

II. Proclaiming (5-6)

⁴that I may *make it clear*, which is how I ought to speak.

How could Paul advance the Gospel while in prison? Phil 1:12-14; 4:22

Paul's Request
Open a Door
Declare the Mystery
Make it Clear

Walk in Wisdom

-Live the life of one who has been transformed by the Word of Christ (Rom 12:2)

*Includes doing our work, paying our bills, and keeping our promises

-Be careful not to say or do anything that would make it difficult to share the Gospel.

(Matt 5:13-16)

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

i.e. Outside of God's Kingdom...the Lost
1Co 5:9-13; 1Th 4:9-12; 1Ti 3:7

Making the Best Use...

- Literally:
- "buy out"
- "purchase completely"

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

Speech

-Christian speech is of the utmost importance
Matt 12:36; Titus 2:8; James 3:1-12

-If we are to reach "outsiders" for Christ, ultimately we will need to present the Gospel message with our speech.

-We must make the most of **every** opportunity with "outsiders" (i.e. purchase them all)

Salt

Could mean:

1. Interesting, enjoyable, and thought-provoking
- OR
2. Marked by purity and wholesomeness

How you ought to answer...

Could mean:

1. Knowing the reason for your Faith (1Pe 3:15)
- OR
2. Knowing the proper way to communicate with each individual.

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Faithful

Acts 1:14 (ESV)

¹⁴ All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.

Acts 2:42 (ESV)

⁴² And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

Romans 12:12 (ESV)

¹² Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

1 Thessalonians 5:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ pray without ceasing,

Watchful

Psalms 141:2 (ESV)

² Let my prayer be counted as incense before you,
and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice!

Nehemiah 4:9 (ESV)

⁹ And we prayed to our God and set a guard as a protection against them day and night.

Matthew 26:41 (ESV)

⁴¹ Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Mark 14:38 (ESV)

³⁸ Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

Ephesians 6:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

1 Thessalonians 5:6 (ESV)

⁶ So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.

Thankful

Philippians 4:6 (ESV)

⁶ do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Colossians 1:3 (ESV)

³ We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you,

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Colossians 1:12 (ESV)

¹² giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

Colossians 2:7 (ESV)

⁷ rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

Colossians 3:15 (ESV)

¹⁵ And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

Colossians 3:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Colossians 4:2 (ESV)

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

Purposeful

1 John 5:14–15 (ESV)

¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us. ¹⁵ And if we know that he hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests that we have asked of him.

Open Doors

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.

Acts 14:27 (ESV)

²⁷ And when they arrived and gathered the church together, they declared all that God had done with them, and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

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Mystery

In Paul's writings, the word *mystērion* refers to God's plan of salvation, which was formerly kept secret but is now revealed in Christ. This plan includes the unification of Jews and Gentiles into one new people of God (Eph 3:3, 5–6, 9).¹

3696 μυστήριον (*mystērion*), ου (*ou*), τό (*to*): n.neu.; ≡ DBLArAm 10661; Str 3466; TDNT 4.802—LN 28.77 **a secret**, a mystery (Mk 4:11; Ro 11:25; 16:25; 1Co 2:1; 4:1; 13:2; 14:2; 15:51; Eph 1:9; 6:19; Col 1:26; 2:2; 2Th 2:7; 1Ti 3:9; Rev 17:5)²

3466. μυστήριον *mustērion*; from μύστης *mustēs* (*one initiated*); from 3453; *a mystery or secret doctrine*:—mysteries(5), mystery(22).³

Romans 16:25 (ESV)

²⁵ Now to him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery that was kept secret for long ages

1 Corinthians 4:1 (ESV)

¹ This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

Ephesians 1:9 (ESV)

⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ

Ephesians 3:3–9 (ESV)

³ how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶ This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. ⁷ Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. ⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things,

Ephesians 5:32 (ESV)

³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church.

Ephesians 6:19 (ESV)

¹⁹ and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel,

¹ Barry, J. D., Grigoni, M. R., Heiser, M. S., Custis, M., Mangum, D., & Whitehead, M. M. (2012). *Faithlife Study Bible* (Eph 1:9). Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

² Swanson, J. (1997). *Dictionary of Biblical Languages with Semantic Domains: Greek (New Testament)* (electronic ed.). Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, Inc.

³ Thomas, R. L. (1998). *New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek dictionaries : Updated edition*. Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc.

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Colossians 1:26 (ESV)

²⁶ the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints.

Colossians 2:2 (ESV)

² that their hearts may be encouraged, being knit together in love, to reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of God’s mystery, which is Christ,

Spread Gospel in Prison

Philippians 1:12–14 (ESV)

¹² I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, ¹³ so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. ¹⁴ And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

Philippians 4:22 (ESV)

²² All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar’s household.

Walk in Wisdom

Romans 12:2 (ESV)

² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Matthew 5:13–16 (ESV)

¹³ “You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people’s feet.

¹⁴ “You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Outsiders

1 Corinthians 5:9–13 (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. ¹² For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? ¹³ God judges those outside. “Purge the evil person from among you.”

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1 Thessalonians 4:9–12 (ESV)

⁹ Now concerning brotherly love you have no need for anyone to write to you, for you yourselves have been taught by God to love one another, ¹⁰ for that indeed is what you are doing to all the brothers throughout Macedonia. But we urge you, brothers, to do this more and more, ¹¹ and to aspire to live quietly, and to mind your own affairs, and to work with your hands, as we instructed you, ¹² so that you may walk properly before outsiders and be dependent on no one.

1 Timothy 3:7 (ESV)

⁷ Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

Speech

Matthew 12:36 (ESV)

³⁶ I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak,

Titus 2:8 (ESV)

⁸ and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.

James 3:1–12 (ESV)

¹ Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. ² For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. ³ If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. ⁴ Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. ⁵ So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things.

How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! ⁶ And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell. ⁷ For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, ⁸ but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰ From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so. ¹¹ Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water? ¹² Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water.

Answer

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,