

Colossians – Responsibilities of the Christian Col. 4:2-6

Thesis: To help us understand our responsibilities towards God.

Introduction:

The overall context of this entire passage is that of teaching others of Christ. In prayer, in wisdom, and in speech, we are to be focused on teaching others the gospel of Christ.

We, as Christians, have certain responsibilities to towards those who are lost.

I. Christians should pray (4:2-4).

A. Paul was very specific in what they were to pray for (4:3-4).

1. Paul's request was that God would give him an opportunity to teach others the gospel of Christ.
2. Paul understood his responsibility to the gospel, and he recognized that he needed their help to fulfill his responsibility.
3. Paul's focus was on being able to spread the word of God.

B. Christians ought to be people of prayer (4:2).

1. Paul says that we should "continue earnestly in prayer" and be "vigilant in it with thanksgiving."
 - a. The idea is that we should be constant in our prayers.
 - b. I Thes. 5:17-18 - Pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks.
 - c. Phil. 4:6 - Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;
2. Jesus continually prayed for the lost.
 - a. Mt. 9:37-38 - Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few. {38} Therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest."
 - b. Jn. 17 - Jesus prays that His disciples would be able to continue preaching His word.
3. The early church continually prayed for the lost.
 - a. Acts 4:29-31 - "Now, Lord, look on their threats, and grant to Your servants that with all boldness they may speak Your word, {30} by stretching out Your hand to heal, and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of Your holy Servant Jesus." {31} And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.
 - b. Acts 13:2-3 (Paul and Barnabas begin their first journey) - As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I

- have called them.” {3} Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent them away.
- c. **II Thes. 3:1-2** - Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you, {2} and that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men; for not all have faith.
4. Today, we need to continually pray for the lost.
 - a. We must be consistent in our prayers.
 - b. Remember, “**The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much**” (**Js. 5:16**).

II. Christians should “walk in wisdom” (4:5).

A. Notice what it means to walk in wisdom.

1. Paul directly says that to “walk in wisdom” we must redeem the time.
 - a. Obviously, we cannot buy back time.
 - b. Notice what Paul means.
 - 1) We should use our time wisely while we have it.
 - 2) **Eph. 5:15-16** - See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, {16} redeeming the time, because the days are evil.
 - 3) We should not procrastinate on the things that need to be done for the kingdom of God.
 - 4) The context of the passage indicates that we should waste no time in teaching others the gospel of Christ.
2. The wisdom that we need can come only from above.
 - a. **Js. 3:17-18** - But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. {18} Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.
 - b. **Mt. 10:16** (We are expected to use this wisdom) - **Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves. Therefore be wise as serpents and harmless as doves.**

B. We are to “walk in wisdom toward those who are outside.”

1. We need to be an example to those who are not members of the Lord’s church.
 - a. Because we are to be like Christ, others should see Him living in us.
 - b. Jesus says that we “**are the salt of the earth**” and “**the light of the world**” (**Mt. 5:13-16**).
 - c. The believing spouse is to be an example to the unbelieving spouse (**I Cor. 7:12-14**).
 - d. **Gal. 2:20** - I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

2. We need to use our time to teach them the gospel of Christ.
 - a. This is the most important thing that we will ever do as children of God.
 - b. **Mk. 16:16** - He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

III. Christian should control their speech (4:6).

A. We must be careful as to how we talk.

1. Our speech should “be with grace, seasoned with salt.”
 - a. Our words should be used to build others up, not tear them down.
 - b. **Eph. 4:29** - Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.
2. Others are going to look at our speech to determine if we are faithful to God or not.
3. While it is difficult to always control our tongue, it is something that we must do.
4. **Js. 3:9-12** - With it we bless our God and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in the similitude of God. {10} Out of the same mouth proceed blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not to be so. {11} Does a spring send forth fresh water and bitter from the same opening? {12} Can a fig tree, my brethren, bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Thus no spring can yield both salt water and fresh.

B. While it may be difficult, we must learn how to answer one another.

1. We must be able to give a reason for the things that we do.
2. **I Pet. 3:15** - But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;
3. The reason that we give, and the manner in which we say it, may be the difference between heaven and hell for those that hear us.
 - a. For example, when speaking of baptism, we need to be careful that the way we talk about it does not hinder the truth.
 - b. While it is true that those who are not baptized are going to hell, we should not say it in a way that will drive others away from Christ.
 - c. Remember, we are to answer “with meekness and fear.”

Conclusion:

There are great responsibilities placed upon the Christian. Our main duty is to lead others to Christ by the life that we live.