

Lesson 12

Colossians 4:2-6

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- 2 Continue steadfastly^a in prayer, being watchful in it^b with thanksgiving.
- 3 At the same time, pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word^c, to declare the mystery^d of Christ^e, on account of which I am in prison^f—
- 4 that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.
- 5 Walk in wisdom^g toward outsiders, making the best use of^h the timeⁱ.
- 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt^j, so that you may know how you ought to answer^k each person.

- Notes*
- a NJB, REB sim., NAB sim. "Be persevering"; NRSV, NASU, HCSB, NIV "Devote yourselves to"
 - b NJB "as you stay awake to pray"; NRSV, REB sim., NASU, HCSB sim. "keeping alert in it"; CEB "and guard your prayers"
 - c KJV "of utterance"; NJB "for us to announce the message"; REB "gospel"
 - d REB "secret"; CEB "secret plan"
 - e HCSB "Messiah"
 - f KJV, ASV "bonds"; NJB, CEB, NIV "chains"
 - g NJB "Act wisely"
 - h KJV, ASV "redeeming"
 - i REB, NASU sim., NAB sim., CEB sim., NIV sim. "but use your opportunities to the full"
 - j NJB "with a favour of wit"; REB "never insipid"; CEB "and appealing"
 - k REB, NASU, NAB, CEB "respond to"

Comments / Questions

1. Constancy in prayer is a common theme in Paul's thought.
 - a. Paul often notes the frequency of his prayers: Colossians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 1:2; 3:10; 5:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:11; 2 Tim 1:3; Philemon 1:4.
 - b. Paul encourages the same constancy in all Christians: Romans 12:12; Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6; 1 Timothy 2:8 (also note 1 Tim 5:5).
 - c. How is steadfastness in prayer a way of being "watchful"?
2. Ephesians 6:18-20 parallels v.2-4: "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, and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak."
 - a. Compare both passages and how they each help to explain the other.
 - b. One difference is that in Ephesians the prayers are to be accompanied by "supplication" and in Colossians they are to be "with thanksgiving". What's the difference?

3. At the beginning of this letter, Paul emphasized that he prayed for the Colossians (1:3, 9) while now at the end he asks that they pray for him.
 - a. This is a pattern in some other letters of Paul: Romans 1:9-10/15:30; Ephesians 1:16/6:18-19; 1 Thessalonians 1:2/5:25; 2 Thessalonians 1:11/3:1; Philemon 1:4/1:22.
 - b. What two things does Paul ask they pray for?
 - 1)
 - 2)
4. In v.5-6, Paul redirects his attention toward unbelievers.
 - a. There are two primary points that he makes:
 - 1) They are to "*walk in wisdom toward outsiders.*" How does this relate to "*making the best use of the time*"?
 - 2) Paul stresses that their speech should "*always be gracious, seasoned with salt.*" How does this accomplish the purpose ("*so*") of knowing how they "*ought to answer each person*"?

Is this the same point that Peter makes? (cf. 1 Peter 3:14-16)

- b. Note other passages where Paul addresses our conduct toward outsiders: Romans 12:18; 1 Corinthians 14:16-24; 1 Thessalonians 4:12; 1 Timothy 3:7.