

A STUDY ON THE BOOK OF COLLOSSIANS

Understanding Jesus



WEEK 10 STUDY GUIDE

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MARCH 13-17, 2023



Monday, March 13, 2023

Read: Colossians 4:7-18

Scripture Verse: *“At 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” Colossians 4:3c*

Today's Thought:

We have seen above that Paul asked the Christians of Colossae for prayer so that God would open a door for him, so that he could announce the mystery of Christ. Let's talk a bit about the mystery of Christ. What is a mystery? A mystery is a secret. Truth revealed by God and inaccessible to human understanding. To better understand the theme of "announcing the mystery of Christ", let us return to the context in which the apostle Paul wrote the letter. The Church of Colossae was faced with a problem of "Gnosticism," people who argued that Jesus is not equal to the Father. They claimed that angels are intermediaries between God and men. They minimized the divinity of Jesus Christ. So, it caused trouble in the church of Colossae. For this reason, Epaphras decided to inform Paul, who was in prison, of the situation in person.

You now have an idea of the context of the book, don't you? In prison, the flame of the gospel never ceased to shine in the life of the apostle. He couldn't stop talking about Christ even though he was in prison. He asked the Christians of Colossae to pray in order to continue to announce the mystery of Christ, namely, to make known to Jews and Gentiles the pre-existence of Christ. The mystery that Paul wanted to continue to announce is that Jesus Christ existed long before the foundation of the world and that he is equal to the Father. He wanted to present Jesus Christ in all his splendor, to present him as God's anointed, as savior and risen Lord (Acts 2:36, 1 Peter 1:18-19) in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9). The mystery is that Jesus Christ, God made man, fully lived human existence, and his life and ministry reveal his unique place as redeemer in the history of our salvation. He is the Mediator between God and man (1 Timothy 2:7), the supreme head of the Church and the universe (Philippians 2:9-10).

Paul is right to ask Christians to pray that God will open a door for him to announce the mystery of Christ because human intelligence cannot grasp such a mystery. This divine reality is beyond human understanding if God himself does not reveal himself to man (1 Corinthians 2:11).

Paul wanted to make this great mystery known to the world. He wanted to let the world know that he who said, "I am the way and the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through me" is equal to the Father (John 14:6). Paul also wanted the world to know that: "In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe." Hebrews 1:1-2

He wanted the world to know that: "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Isn't there really a mystery for those whose eyes the god of this century has veiled? (2Co 4:3-4). Isn't he right to ask for prayer to announce the mystery of Christ instead of praying for his freedom when we read his statement in 1 Corinthians 9:16: "For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!"

Lord, thank you for your word, the great mystery revealed in your Son Jesus Christ. Lord, remove the spiritual veil before my eyes, to bring into full light before me all hidden things. Give me wisdom and intelligence to fully understand your word. Reveal to me deep and secret things. Thank you for revealing Jesus Christ to me as your Son, God made man, fully lived human existence whose life and ministry reveal his unique place as redeemer in the history of my salvation.

- What is a mystery according to the study?
- What was the conception of the Gnostics?
- What was the mystery of Christ the apostle Paul wanted to announce?
- What did Paul want about this mystery?

Further Reading: Philippians 2:5-11

Tuesday, March 14, 2023

Read: Colossians 4:7-18

Scripture Verse: *“Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time.” Colossians 4:5a*

Today's Thought:

Wouldn't you like to see those outside come in, especially when you know what's going on outside? Don't forget that there was a time when you and I were outside. In this text, Paul asks us to behave well towards ourselves, and to encourage those who are outside to enter. Our way of living or behaving as a Christian can be an impulsive force to attract other people to enter it or, in other words, to be part of this great Christian family for which the blood of Jesus was shed. In this text, the apostle Paul exhorts the Christians of Colossae to use wisdom towards those who are not yet Christians. Here it is not just about human wisdom, but the supernatural wisdom of God.

Sometimes in our dealings with others, especially those on the outside, as the apostle says, we spend most of our time trying to use our rational mind, our wisdom to attract people, but nothing happens. As Christians, to attract people to the kingdom of God, learning to listen to human wisdom is not enough, but we must use the wisdom that comes from above (James 3:17). Our mission as Christians is to draw as many people to God as possible. It is to increase the kingdom of God. You don't have to be an evangelist, pastor or any other title to draw people to Christ. You can use God's wisdom to do this. By using the supernatural wisdom within you, you can overcome the limitations that hold you back to draw others to Christ. "For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit," (1 Corinthians 12:8).

Our supernatural wisdom is a guiding force in drawing others to Christ. Our behavior towards those on the outside means a lot to attract them to the kingdom of God. As we said before, those on the outside are the people of the world, those who are not part of the family of God. They are opposed, hostile to the word of God. They are always ready to judge our behavior and draw a negative conclusion. "Or the wisdom of this world is folly with God. For it is written, "He catches the wise in their craftiness," and again, "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are futile." (1 Corinthians 3:19-20). Therefore, as Christians, we must use wisdom in everything and everywhere. " If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God,

who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him." (James 1:5) We must seek wisdom from above and use it to have a positive impact for God. Our desire is to see those on the outside come in to experience the bliss of knowing the marvelous God who has lifted us out of the kingdom of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of his Son Jesus (Colossians 1:13-14).

Lord, grant me wisdom from above, the supernatural wisdom that comes from you, to attract other people to you; especially those who are still in darkness. Help me to use your wisdom in everything and everywhere I find myself.

- What should be the attitude of the Christians of Colossae towards non-believers?
- What positive impact can our good behavior have on unbelievers?
- What should we do to attract non-believers?
- What is our mission as Christians?

Further Reading: James 3:13

Wednesday, March 15, 2023

Read: Colossians 4:7-18

Scripture Verse: *"Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time." Colossians 4:5b*

Today's Thought:

We read: "Redeem the time for the days are bad." Who of you wouldn't like to be safe inside when the weather is not kind to us? Nobody would feel comfortable driving on a winding road, in poor driving conditions. Me, I don't like to drive when the weather is bad. I love getting this message from Pastor Erik: "Due to forecasted snow tomorrow, high winds, low temperatures, and blizzard-like conditions, the office will be closed, working from home." He doesn't want us to risk our lives, despite all the importance he places on work in the office. At this moment, time is not on his side. Our lesson today is based on the last part of verse 5 - "Redeem the time."

The apostle did not tell us why we must redeem the time in this verse, but in Ephesians 5:16 he gave us the reason, because the days are bad. As the days are bad, we must take advantage of the time we have to please God, to serve God, to adore and praise him. Time is not ours. Someone said, "Time is a vehicle that carries us to our destiny. We crossed yesterday to arrive today; time has led us."

In Greek, the word "Time" translates to "Chronos" and "Kairos". Let's talk about "Kairos" that we find in the text. Unlike "Chronos", "Kairos" time cannot be measured, it is a metaphysical time, it is qualitative, immaterial. So, the apostle Paul is right to tell us to redeem the time. We must understand how to manage our time because time does not belong to us. Because we must give an account to God who is the master of time and circumstances. We read in 2 Corinthians 5:10, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil."

God will ask us about the management of our life for this, so we must give him the best of our time. Because he is the creator of heaven and earth, he created us, and he wants our time to please him. We need to get involved in God's work.

How can anyone redeem their time? It's making the best possible use of one's life, such a fragile, rare and precious resource. We are the work of the hand of God, we must reflect on this marvelous work and thank this great Architect. Therefore, we must not live a life of madness; to waste

it is to insult our creator. If God gave us life it is to live for his glory, it is so that we bear fruit for his glory, it is to produce good works and serve him.

My brothers and sisters, time will not always work in your favor. Indeed, take advantage of today to fully live your life for God. Someone said, "Every event, good or bad, pleasant or painful, must be an opportunity for me to seize to practice good and to bear a true testimony of Jesus Christ, in word or deed". So, what are you waiting for?

Heavenly Father, thank you for your word. Help me to manage my life well and take advantage of the time I have, in order to please you, to serve you, to praise and worship you. Teach me to count my days well, so that I may apply my heart to wisdom.

- Why do we need to redeem time?
- What time is Paul talking about in the text, according to the study?
- How do you describe life?
- Why did God give us life?

Further Reading: Ecclesiastes 3:1-2

Thursday, March 16, 2023

Read: Colossians 4:7-18

Scripture Verse: *"Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person." Colossians 4:6a*

Today's Thought:

In the previous study, we talked about the importance of time. Time is action. We must manage our time well. The time we are talking about is qualitative, immaterial. We must live it well because we will have to give an account to God. If time is so important, if it has such value, what about the words that come out of our mouths? Isn't the word the materialization and the incarnation of our thought? Do not the words that come out of the mouth have a weight on those to whom they are addressed? Doesn't this have consequences for ourselves and for those who hear it? Do you know that your words are sacred? Every word we say is sacred, every word that comes out of our mouth has weight and consequences.

Therefore, as Christians, we must know how to weigh and measure the weight of our words before launching them, because they have values for those who listen to them and on those to whom they are addressed. Our words are powerful. They can hurt and kill. They are like a fire capable of igniting and destroying in an instant. But when the words are well placed, they can work wonders on those to whom they are addressed. They can heal, encourage, build and bring joy to life. We read in Proverbs 15:1 "A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." God asks us to control what comes out of our mouths, so as not to hurt others.

For this we must ask God to put a guard over our mouth, to watch over the words of our lips. A good watch over our mouth and lips will give us good spiritual health and prevent us from hurting and putting others down. The Apostle James in James 3:10 encourages us to control our mouths. He declares "From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so." A good management of our words will allow us to know happy days. "For Whoever desires to love life and see good days, let him keep his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking deceit; let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it." 1 Peter 3:10-11

When we control the words of our mouth which are the embodiment of our thinking, neither dishonest words, nor foolish talk, nor sick jokes will be heard from us. As a result, words of life, love, peace and wisdom will be heard. My brothers and sisters, " Gracious words are like a honey-comb, sweetness to the soul and health to the body." Proverbs 16:24. May gracious words be on our lips and in our mouth day and night.

Heavenly Father, put a guard over my mouth, watch over my lips. Help me to never hurt others with my words. Rather give me words of healing, encouragement and comfort to bring love, joy, peace and happiness into the lives of others, because a good management of my words will allow me to know happy days.

- What must the wise Christian do before launching a word?
- What can words do?
- What should we ask God regarding our mouth?
- What can happen when we come to control our words?

Further Reading: Proverbs 8:8, Proverbs 12:6

Friday, March 17, 2023

Read: Colossians 4:7-18

Scripture Verse: *"Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person."* Colossians 4:6b

Today's Thought:

We have just seen that we must learn to control our words because they are our embodied thoughts. What comes out of our mouth determines the state of our thinking. You know the tree by its fruits. In the same way, we recognize a person by his words. The apostle tells us in verse 6b that our speech must always be accompanied by grace and seasoned with salt.

Who among us does not know the importance of salt? Who among us does not use salt? No one dares to deny the importance of salt and swear that they have never used it. Salt is so important and precious; the apostle asks us to put salt in our words. Further, Jesus even stated "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." Matthew 5:13. Before going further, what are the properties of salt? What is this for?

Salt regulates our hydrological balance and contributes to the functioning of our nervous system as well as our muscles. Besides cooking, you can do other things with salt. It is used in the manufacture of various products such as: plastic, paper, glass, polyester, rubber, fertilizers, bleach, soap, detergents, dyes etc. We also know that salt is used to melt ice, right? It is used to preserve food and give flavor to food. If we return to the statement of the apostle, is he not right to ask us to put salt in our words? Everything the apostle said to the Colossians takes on its full value when it is linked to the properties of salt on earth. "Let our words always be adorned with grace and seasoned with salt."

Being Christians, we must reflect who we are. We must make sure that we keep our flavor, we must influence the world as Christ claimed. Our lifestyle must correspond to the one we represent in the world. Therefore, Jesus said "Salt is good, but if the salt has lost its saltiness, how will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves and be at peace with one another." Mark 9:50. We carry within us the word of life, the word that can preserve and heal the world from its sins. We must draw the world to Christ, make him known as the only savior of mankind. Sodium plays its

role in the kitchen, and we in the world. We are the salt of the earth, the answer and the solution to this disease from which the world suffers. It is up to each of us whether our salt is of good quality or not. It's up to us whether we're going to season the world, or whether we're going to be trampled on by the world. This anemic and decaying world needs us. You must be salt full of flavor to bring the world the love, the peace, the joy it needs to stop this hemorrhage. Let us be models for this world, in words, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. Therefore, if we decide to be a particle of salt to season the world, God can make us into a barrel.

Lord, thank you for your word. Salt is so important. You and the apostle Paul compare us to salt and ask us to put salt in our words. Lord, strengthen in me the taste of salt. Help me reflect who I am. That my lifestyle matches the one I represent in the world. Help me to be a particle of salt to season my family, friends and my community too.

- What are some properties of salt?
- What is salt used for?
- Why did Jesus Christ and the apostle Paul compare us with salt?
- What should be our duty as salt?
- What flavor do we have to give to the world?

Further Reading: Mark 9:10

Remember! Our weekly assembly is a wonderful encounter with our Awesome God. It's a renewal of our fellowship with God and others. Today is Friday. Saturday and Sunday are coming. Don't forget your divine appointment!

NOTES



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