

# COLOSSIANS: STABILITY BY CHRIST'S ALL-SUFFICIENCY AND SUPREMACY

## Part XVI: Stability In Biblical Outreach To The Lost

(Colossians 4:2-6)

### I. Introduction

- A. Today's unsettling, insecure world has tempted and influenced many believers to be unsettled and insecure.
- B. Colossians presents Christ's all-sufficiency and supremacy in ways that settle and provide security, and one way it does is by teaching in Colossians 4:2-6 the believer's stability in the ministry of Biblical evangelism.
- C. Our post-Christian world has led to a growing estrangement of the lost from Bible truths, and with it often a hostility to the Christian faith that calls for wisdom in evangelizing. We thus view this passage for our insight:

### II. Stability In Biblical Outreach To The Lost, Colossians 4:2-6.

- A. When Paul wrote Colossians, he was a prisoner of Rome for his Christian faith (Col. 4:18b; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, p. 1690, "Introduction to the Letter of Paul to the Colossians"), living in a non-Christian world that our post-Christian world is increasingly coming to mimic.
- B. Thus, Colossians 4:2-6 that addresses evangelistic outreach in Paul's era is very applicable for us (as follows):
  - 1. Evangelism must be accompanied by prayer, Colossians 4:2-4:
    - a. Like the founder of Dallas Theological Seminary, Lewis Sperry Chafer, titled his 1919 book on evangelism as True Evangelism: Winning Souls By Prayer, the greatest missionary in Church History, the Apostle Paul, directed his readers to perform the ministry of evangelism with continual prayer, Col. 4:2a.
    - b. In such continual prayer, Paul directed his readers to "watch," and we explain this effort (Col. 4:2b):
      - i. We need to "watch" for the threat of personal sin that can sabotage our evangelistic effectiveness, Matthew 24:42-44; 1 Thessalonians 5:5-8; Bible Know. Com., N. T., p. 684.
      - ii. We need to "watch" for angelic conflict opposition to our ministry, Acts 20:29-31; 1 Peter 5:1-8.
    - c. Paul directed his readers to thank God, and in the context, this applies to thanking God for answers to prayer and for His help in evangelistic ministry efforts, Colossians 4:2c.
    - d. Paul directed that his readers pray for specific needs relative to evangelistic activity itself, Col. 4:3-4:
      - i. We need to pray for God to provide us opportunities to witness effectively, Colossians 4:3. Since Satan is the god of this world who has blinded the eyes of the lost to the Gospel (2 Cor. 4:3-4) and lost people are children of the Evil One (John 8:44), we believers need God to open the door of opportunity to witness against the angelic foes who oppose us.
      - ii. We need to pray for the ability to speak with **clarity** as we ought amid the angelic conflict, Colossians 4:4: Paul wrote of making the Gospel "manifest" (KJV), what translates the Greek verb *phaneroo*, "to make clear," Abbott-Smith, Man. Grk. Lex. of the N. T., 1968, p. 465.
  - 2. Evangelism must be accompanied by godly actions, Colossians 4:5-6:
    - a. Paul directed his readers to order their lives in a godly walk, Colossians 4:5:
      - i. We need to function in wisdom toward unbelievers, Colossians 4:5a. In view of Paul's clarification in verse 6 to have our speech be gracious, i. e., winsome, seasoned with salt, or pure and penetrating (Ibid., Bible Know. Com., N. T.), walking in wisdom as to our actions in life must similarly involve winsome versus offensive actions that are morally pure and penetrating as to our testimony by way of our seriousness and kindness.
      - ii. We need to make the most of every opportunity we have in interacting with the lost, being constantly focused on looking for the opportunity to be able to present the Gospel, Col. 4:5b.
    - b. Paul directed his readers to speak godly words, Colossians 4:6:
      - i. We need to be consistent in using proper speech, Colossians 4:6a.
      - ii. We need to be gracious or pleasing in our speech, Colossians 4:6b.
      - iii. We need to be pure and penetrating in our speech as if were salted with salt, Colossians 4:6c.
      - iv. If we are consistently pleasing, pure and penetrating in our words, we will always be able to answer everyone who asks us a reason for our faith, Colossians 4:6c with 1 Peter 3:15.

***Lesson:*** *Effective evangelism in our post-Christian world takes prayerful reliance on the Lord coupled with watching for temptations to sin and angelic conflict opposition with thanksgiving, asking God for the opportunity to witness, the clarity to speak well that is all couched in a consistently godly, winsome life and speech habits.*

***Application:*** *May we apply Colossians 4:2-6 to be an effective witness in our post-Christian world.*