

Colossians 4:5-17

READ/PRAY

Refocus on verses 5-6. In this text we get a snapshot of how we are to relate to “outsiders.”

Who are these outsiders?

Mark 4:10-12 *As soon as He was alone, His followers, along with the twelve, began asking Him about the parables. 11 And He was saying to them, “To you has been given the mystery of the kingdom of God, but those who are outside get everything in parables, 12 so that while seeing, they may see and not perceive, and while hearing, they may hear and not understand, otherwise they might return and be forgiven.*

1 Corinthians 5:12-13 *For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? 13 But those who are outside, God judges. REMOVE THE WICKED MAN FROM AMONG YOURSELVES.*

1 Timothy 3:7 *And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.*

How are we to relate to them?

I. Our Conduct v5

Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

A. Conduct yourselves in a Wise manner

1. Could be literally conduct yourself with wisdom or skill.
2. There are a lot of different types of people Paul mentions v7-17

As to all my affairs, Tychicus, our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. 8 For I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts; 9 and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your number. They will inform you about the whole situation here.

10 Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and also Barnabas’s cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him); 11 and also Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision, and they have proved to be an encouragement to me. 12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God. 13 For I testify for him that he has a deep concern for you and for those who are in Laodicea and Hierapolis. 14 Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and also Demas. 15 Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea and also Nympha and the church that is in her house. 16 When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter that is coming from Laodicea. 17 Say to Archippus, “Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it.”

3. These people have different gifts and callings and are all used of God!
4. It reminds us of the Great Commission: “As you go”....make disciples.
5. We should do everything that we do with excellence for the glory of God and the advancement of the gospel.
6. Colossians 3:17

B. Conduct Yourselves in a Timely Manner

Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity.

1. Redeeming the time
2. Psalm 90:10 *The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away.*
3. Our tendency is to dwell in the past or procrastinate to the future.
 - a. Dwell on the past
 - b. Ecclesiastes 7:10 *Do not say, "Why is it that the former days were better than these?" For it is not from wisdom that you ask about this.*
 - c. Procrastinate to the future
 - d. James 4:13-14 *Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." 14 Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away.*
4. Ephesians 5:15-16 *Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.*

II. Our Speech v6

A. Gracious Speech

Let your speech always be with grace,

1. Colossians 3:16
2. Acts 2:47 *praising God, and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved.*
3. Acts 6:8 *And Stephen, full of grace and power, wrought great wonders and signs among the people.*
4. Do we reflect the grace of God?
5. We need to be sure that if someone is offended AT us that it is not BECAUSE of us, but because of the Gospel
6. Ephesians 4:29 *Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.*

B. Salty Speech

Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt,

1. Mark 9:50 *Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty again? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another."*
2. In the simplest explanation, salt cleanses and salt keeps.
 - a. It is clear that the goal is not to "keep" the outsider as they are.
 - b. No, it would be to "cleanse" the outsider and then "keep" them clean.
3. So, to have salty speech would be to have speech that is cleansing!

C. Relevant Speech

Let your speech always be with grace, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.

1. We need to know how to respond to each other
2. 1 Peter 3:15 *but sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts, always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence*

So, as we relate to outsiders let us, keep watch on our conduct. Is it wise? Is it timely? And let us keep watch on our conversation. Is it gracious? Is it salty? Is it relevant?

Conclusion:

In these verses there is the assumption by Paul that those who were reading this were not outsiders, but insiders...brought out of darkness and into His marvelous light.

GOSPEL

Be an insider!