

*"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.
Abstain from all appearance of evil."*

- 4) God says that we are to be *redeeming the time*. That word literally means to make wise use of every moment.
- 5) Dr. Benjamin E. Mays wrote the following poem that reminds us of our duty to redeem the time.
 - *I've only just a minute,*
 - *Only sixty seconds in it.*
 - *Forced upon me, can't refuse it,*
 - *Didn't seek it, didn't choose it,*
 - *But it's up to me to use it.*
 - *I must suffer if I lose it,*
 - *Give an account if I abuse it,*
 - *Just a tiny little minute,*
 - *But eternity is in it.*

b. Speak graciously to every one (v.6)

- 1) Most likely, God is still speaking about our communication with unbelievers. *Grace* is divine help, unmerited favour or undeserved kindness. We are to speak more kindly than they may deserve. God is not telling us to flatter others but to withhold words that are unkind or not necessary.
- 2) Our speech is to be seasoned with salt. Salt preserves and improves flavour. So seasoning our words with salt makes them helpful and better received. To do this we must plan our words carefully before we speak.
- 3) We must know before we speak how to answer each one. The word "*ought*" is often translated necessary. There is a right and necessary way that we should speak and that is the way we ought to speak.

Conclusion: Have you been fulfilling your duty to pray earnestly? If your prayer time needs a revival, ask God to help you begin that revival today. Have you been walking wisely, especially before unbelievers? Do the way you live and the words you say point them to Jesus? If not, ask God for the wisdom and strength to change.

Song: Teach Me to Pray – 346

Christian Duties

9 April 2017 PM – Colossians 4:2-6 – Col16 – Scott Childs

Introduction: After speaking to wives, husbands, children, fathers, employees and employers of their need to be Word-filled to do their difficult tasks, Paul follows this with two important Christian duties.

Transition: This evening we are going to learn what those duties are and how to fulfil them. Read Colossians 4:2-6.

1. Be Praying Earnestly (v.2-4)

a. Be praying earnestly for yourself (v.2)

- 1) The word translated "*continue*" is much stronger than our English language usually conveys.
 - a) It means to be strong towards something. Thus, it means to continue steadfastly; to attend constantly; to be earnest towards; to be constantly diligent.
 - b) The same word is found in (Acts 6:4) "*But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word*." Again we find it in (Romans 12:12) "*Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer*;"
- 2) We can see then that the command to continue in prayer is commanding us to pray earnestly and continually. Earnest prayer is a duty that many Christians neglect. We may say a quick prayer before meals and before bed, but few Christians spend more than 5 minutes a day in prayer.
- 3) We find 24 commands to pray in the NT. God commands us to pray for our enemies, in secret, for labourers, during temptation, during persecution, without ceasing, for preachers, when afflicted, for the sick and for each other.
- 4) To pray earnestly Jesus told us to find a quiet place and pray from the heart not just repeated prayers. (Matthew 6:6-8) "*But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for*

your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."

- 5) Jesus gave us a model prayer. (Matthew 6:9-13) "*After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.*" Prayer should include worship, submission, personal requests and praise.
 - 6) We are to *watch in the same*. That means we are to keep alert in our prayers. We must pray earnestly from the heart. We are to talk to God as our close friend. Prayer should not just be a list of our wants. We must also include *thanksgiving*.
 - 7) *Why then do we struggle to pray as we should?*
 - a) We are busy! Yes, we are busy, but we typically make time for things that are important to us, so business is only an excuse.
 - b) Perhaps it is because we don't know God as well as we should. It is easy to talk to a close friend.
 - c) Could it be that we lack faith that prayer really makes a difference? Studying God's character will help this.
 - 8) I know that I need a prayer revival, perhaps you do as well.
- b. Be praying earnestly for God's servants (v.3-4)**
- 1) The word "*withal*" means together with this or at the same time. As we are praying for our own needs, we must also remember the needs of others.
 - 2) Paul made two specific prayer requests for his missionary band.
 - a) He asked for prayer for *a door of utterance*... He wanted God to open doors of opportunity for him to share the gospel. He reminded the Colossian believers that he had not lost his zeal for preaching though he was in *bonds* for such preaching. We too

must pray that God would open doors to share the gospel both for ourselves and for God's servants.

- b) He then asked for prayer that he *might make known the gospel as he ought* or as is necessary. Though Paul was a great preacher, he still struggled with fear at times. We need to pray for boldness for ourselves and others.

So, the first duty that the Lord places before us this evening is our duty to be praying earnestly. Our second duty is to ...

2. Be Walking Wisely (v.5-6)

a. We must walk wisely before unbelievers

- 1) We remember that wisdom is the God-given ability to make right choices. We get wisdom as we study God's Word, spend time with the Lord and ask Him for wisdom.
- 2) The Christian life is like a walk. Every step we take in life is either a wise step or a foolish step. God here commands us to make every step in life according to His wisdom.
- 3) How may we walk more wisely?
 - a) Learn to fear God. (Proverbs 9:10) "*The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding.*"
 - b) Spend more time in the Bible. (Psalms 119:130) "*The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple.*" The purpose of the book of proverbs is ... (Proverbs 1:3) "*To receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity;*"
 - c) Make walking in wisdom a priority. (Proverbs 4:7) "*Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom: and with all thy getting get understanding.*" *Study the 119 verses in Proverbs on wisdom.*
 - d) Ask God for wisdom. (James 1:5) "*If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.*"
 - e) Follow the advice of 1Th 5:21-22 and prove all things before we make a decision. (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22)