Continue; Colossians 4:2-6

1. Continue Steadfastly
	1. Christianity is a complete change
	2. We fundamentally change who we are
		1. Our likes and dislikes must change to reflect God’s
		2. Our motivation changes from ‘what is in it for me?’ to ‘does this please God?’
		3. Our behavior changes from selfishness to selflessness
	3. Our conversion is not an end, but a beginning
	4. We grow continually
2. Prayer
	1. Colossians 4:2 (ESV) 2 Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.
	2. Prayer is important to Paul (and should be to us)
		1. Colossians 1:3 (ESV) 3 We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you,
		2. Colossians 1:9 (ESV) 9 And so, from the day we heard, we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,
		3. Paul opens this letter to the church at Colossae the same way he closed it, with prayer and thanksgiving
		4. We are called to change who we are, fundamentally, a very challenging prospect
		5. We are not alone in a twisted and wicked world
		6. God’s strength and perspective are always available to us through prayer
	3. Watchful – to be in constant readiness, be on the alert
		1. As Security Forces in the Air Force, my job was to be watchful
		2. This job required one to consistently be on alert, looking for anything that was out of place
		3. We had response exercises to make sure we knew where everything was
		4. I had to know who and what belonged and also who and what did not belong
		5. It is the same for Christians
		6. 1 Thessalonians 5:5–6 (ESV) 5 For you are all children of light, children of the day. We are not of the night or of the darkness. 6 So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober.
		7. 1 Peter 5:8 (ESV) 8 Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.
		8. Revelation 3:2–3 (ESV) 2 Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. 3 Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.
	4. Thanksgiving
		1. Prayer is a gift given to us by a loving, benevolent Father
			1. Science has proven that prayer changes the way we think
			2. We often react with survival instincts like ‘fight or flight’
			3. These survival instincts come from the back of the brain
			4. Prayer moves those decisions to the front of the brain where we find reflection and soothing
			5. Prayer relieves the stress that traumatic events bring
		2. “Thankfulness is the environment for good praying” Richard R. Melick Jr.
			1. When one is watchful and thankful, we see more clearly all of our difficulties and obstacles
			2. We also recognize that God works regardless, that our circumstances do not affect God’s ability
			3. Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter to Colossae, yet he was thankful
	5. Steadfast prayer is constant communication with God regardless of where we are or what is happening in our lives
3. Preach
	1. Colossians 4:3–4 (ESV) 3 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— 4 that I may make it clear, which is how I ought to speak.
	2. Preaching (speaking of the mighty works of God) was very important to Paul
		1. Paul’s prayer is an opening the door to preach
		2. We often are looking for the opposite, “oh, please do not ask about my faith!”
		3. Paul was in prison for preaching Christ and is, at the same time, praying for more opportunities to share the Gospel
		4. Do not be afraid to speak about God; some of the disciples had their doubts even after seeing Jesus resurrected
		5. Matthew 28:16–20 (ESV) 16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”
	3. It is our task, as the church, to share the Gospel
		1. We have been entrusted (safekeeping) with the Gospel
		2. Not to lock it away somewhere safe, but to shout it out from the mountaintops
		3. 2 Timothy 2:2 (ESV) 2 and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.
		4. Romans 10:14–15 (ESV) 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”
		5. Paul even shared the Gospel with Festus and Herod Agrippa in Acts 26 while in their custody for preaching!
		6. Just as Paul did, we must view every circumstance as an opportunity to share the Gospel
	4. Another fundamental change in who we are, we have to see the Gospel as vitally important to people – life-changing important!
4. Walk
	1. Colossians 4:5–6 (ESV) 5 Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.
	2. Wisdom, the capacity to understand and function accordingly
		1. If we live by the world’s wisdom, then we function in a worldly manner
		2. James 3:13–16 (ESV) 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? By his good conduct let him show his works in the meekness of wisdom. 14 But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. 15 This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.
		3. But if we live by God’s wisdom, the wisdom from above, then we understand and function (live) accordingly
		4. James 3:17–18 (ESV) 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.
		5. “Wisdom enables us to combine boldness with tact. Wisdom enables us to employ the proper approach in specific situations and with particular individuals. If believers are to be effective in sharing the message, they must also **make the most of every opportunity**. The literal translation of this phrase is redeem [buy back] the time. It refers to “snapping up every opportunity that comes.”” [[1]](#footnote-1)
	3. The best use of our time is to share the gospel in both word and deed
5. Continue
	1. “Do not go changing to try and please me” Billy Joel, Just the Way You Are
	2. We must completely change who we are
	3. We must develop a life of prayer, of thanksgiving, and sharing (ourselves) the Gospel
1. Max Anders, [*Galatians-Colossians*](https://ref.ly/logosres/hntc69ga?ref=Bible.Col4.5&off=200&ctx=t+toward+outsiders.+~Wisdom+enables+us+to), vol. 8, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 346. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)