

Christ-Centred Living in a Broken World

Colossians 4:2-18 (NIV)

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The closing words of a letter often reveal what matters most, not trivial matters.
2. That is exactly what Paul does as he concludes his letter to the Colossians.
3. He shows in everyday living the priorities of a healthy Christian life and church.
4. A life devoted to prayer, that proclaims Christ & partners with God's people.
5. Spiritual maturity isn't measured by biblical knowledge, but by a Christlike life.
6. This is a reminder that every relationship & every conversation can glorify Christ.
7. These same priorities remain essential for the church today.

B. A Christ-Centred Life Is Devoted to Prayer

1. Colossians 4:2-4 *"Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful."*
2. Paul both begins and ends Colossians with prayer.
3. He prayed for the believers, & now teaches the believers how they should pray.
4. Prayer is never presented in Scripture as an optional activity, but the spiritual lifeline of every believer. The Christian life is not a playground, but a battlefield.
5. Paul identifies four characteristics of biblical prayer -Faithfulness, Watchfulness, Gratefulness, Purposeful
6. Prayer is not something we do during church services. It becomes a lifestyle.
7. Our hearts remain open to Him throughout the day.
8. Just as breathing sustains physical life, prayer sustains spiritual life.
9. Prayer is not the emergency brake of Christianity. It is the steering wheel.
10. Likewise, we must pray with open eyes to the spiritual dangers surrounding us.
11. A sleepy Christian is vulnerable. Prayer keeps us spiritually awake.
12. Paul repeatedly reminds believers to give thanks. Gratitude transforms prayer.
13. Thanksgiving reminds us that God's goodness is greater than His gifts.
14. Paul doesn't ask prayer for release, for freedom or comfort, but for open doors.
15. His concern is not comfort. His concern is Christ.
16. Our prayers should increasingly focus upon God's kingdom.
17. God never intended His people simply to talk to Him, but also to speak for Him.

C. Display Christ Before the World

1. Paul moves from our conversation with God to our conversation with the world.
2. Our witness is not confined to Sunday. People observe us all day every day.
3. Every believer is Christ's ambassador. Our lives must support our message.
4. People may reject our beliefs. They should never reject our behaviour.
5. Every interaction is an opportunity to point someone toward Christ.
6. Paul says, "Let your conversation always be full of grace, seasoned with salt."."
7. Grace-filled speech is kind, truthful, patient, encouraging, & respectful.
8. Christians should never use words to destroy, but should build others up.
9. Salt is an amazing thing. It preserves. It flavours. It creates thirst.
10. Christian conversation should do the same.

D. PARTNERING WITH OTHERS (4:7–18)

1. The closing greetings are not random names.
2. They reveal Paul's ministry philosophy.
3. Christian ministry is never a solo performance.
4. Eleven different people are mentioned.
5. Some were Jews. Some Gentiles.
6. Some wealthy. Some slaves.
7. Some well-known. Some almost forgotten.
8. Yet every one mattered.
9. The church functions as one body with many members.
10. Paul highlights different kinds of partners.
11. **Faithful Servants** - Tychicus, Onesimus, Aristarchus, & Justus
12. These men remained faithful despite hardship.
13. Talent is valuable. Ability is helpful. God values faithfulness more than fame.
14. Those Who Pray Faithfully - Epaphras receives special recognition.
15. Paul says he was "always wrestling in prayer." Prayer is hard work.
16. Never underestimate the ministry of intercession.
17. Many victories in public ministry are won first in private prayer.
18. **Paul honestly records two different stories about men Who Stray**
19. Mark—The Restored Servant -
20. Failure need not be final. God delights in restoring those who repent.
21. Your greatest mistake does not have to define your future.
22. Demas—The Deserting Servant - Demas once served faithfully. 2Tim 4:10
23. The attractions of this world eventually became more valuable than Christ.
24. This serves as a solemn warning. No one is immune from spiritual drift.
25. Notice that Paul values people more than programs.
26. God restores those who return. Failure need not be final.
27. Every gift has value. The church flourishes when everyone serves.

E. A Christ-Centred Life Finishes Well

1. Paul closes with several important reminders.
2. **Share God's Word**
3. Healthy churches continually centre themselves upon Scripture.
4. **Complete God's work**
5. God calls us to persevere; to finish the ministry He has given us.
6. **Remember the Cost**
7. Paul's chains remind us that serving Christ is worth every sacrifice.

F. Conclusion

1. Paul ends Colossians the same way he lived his life - with Christ at the centre.
2. Christianity is not merely something we believe. It is something we live.
3. The world may never read Paul's letters, but they will read our lives every day.
4. Live in such a way that others see Christ in us & say of us,
5. "They were faithful servants of Jesus Christ."