"A LIFE THAT IMPACTS OTHERS"

Colossians 4:2-6
11/27/2016

INTRODUCTION:

***You can make a powerful, positive, and permanent <u>impact</u> on this world!**

3 Keys to influencing others for Heaven:

I. YOUR <u>PRAYERS</u> (v. 2-4)

Essential elements of prayer:

A. A spirit of <u>persistence</u> in prayer (v. 2a)

B. A spirit of <u>alertness</u> in prayer (v. 2b)

C. A spirit of <u>thankfulness</u> in prayer (v. 2c)

D. A spirit of <u>partnership</u> in prayer (v. 3-4)

1. Pray for <u>open doors</u> (v. 3)
   (Intercede for <u>opportunities</u> to witness)
2. Pray for <u>open eyes</u> (v. 4)
   (Intercede for <u>effective</u> witness)

II. YOUR <u>WALK</u> (v. 5)

A. Wise living is concerned about:
<u>Your Personal Testimony (Reputation)</u> (v. 5a)

B. Wise living is concerned about:
<u>Taking Advantage of Golden Opportunities</u> (v. 5b)

III. YOUR <u>TALK</u> (v. 6)

A. Always with <u>grace</u>

B. Seasoned with <u>salt</u>

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HRM – 6-11-2022

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INTRODUCTION:

What did Moses, the Apostle Paul, John Wesley, Martin Luther, Charles Hadden Spurgeon, D.L. Moody, Jonathon Edwards, and David Livingston all have in common?

Answer: They all made a tremendous impact on the world

(SEE: TAN, Ill. #7668 - John Wesley)

As we look around, we see tremendous need, enormous problems, multitudes in spiritual blindness, scores of people living wasted lives of misery and lostness -- no purpose, no direction, etc. . . . When we see this, we cry out, "Oh, what can I do to change things? Even to make a dent in the world's crises."

Within many of us there is a desire to do great things! To make a change! To leave our mark! To make an impression! To have a positive effect!

It was said of Paul and Silas that they "turned the world upside down" (Acts 17:6)

***You can make a powerful, positive, and permanent impact on this world!**

Verses 2 - 6 emphasize the needs of the unsaved and our appropriate response to their needs. We need to think about others! Each of the following phrases refers to the unsaved:

"A door of utterance" (v. 3)

"Them that are without" (v. 5)

"To answer every man" (v. 6)

3 Keys to influencing others for Heaven:

I. YOUR PRAYERS (v. 2-4)

"Prayer moves the Hand that moves the world!"

Essential elements of prayer:

A. A spirit of persistence in prayer (v. 2a)

"Continue in prayer" = to persist in prayer; to tenaciously adhere to prayer, to be consistently devoted to prayer.

Implications:

1) Prayer can slip away if we are not careful (Many things can interfere with it)

2) A good prayer life requires commitment to it

3) Prayer should be a continual preoccupation of each day

--Pray to start your day (when you wake up)

--Pray throughout your day
(Don't waste precious minutes in useless daydreaming and wandering or vain thoughts -- develop a pattern of continually talking to God)

--Pray to end your day (before going to bed)

B. A spirit of alertness in prayer (v. 2b)

"Watch" - to stay awake to our need to pray, and to stay awake when we pray.

EX: the disciples fell asleep while praying at the Mount of Transfiguration (Lk. 9:28-36); the disciples fell asleep while praying at the Garden of Gethsemane (Mt. 26:37-46). NOTE: They slept prior to the most important, crucial times of Christ's ministry.

The word "watch" not only has the idea of staying awake, but also of concentration. Fight against distraction, wandering thoughts, useless daydreaming. Discipline your mind to pray!

C. A spirit of thankfulness in prayer (v. 2c)

Thankfulness should always be part of our prayers.

Phil. 4:6 - "Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

D. A spirit of partnership in prayer (v. 3-4)

"For us" - that is, for me (Paul) and my fellowservants (Aristarchus, Marcus, Justus, Epaphras, etc.) (cp. 4:10-12)

Not even the great Apostle Paul was beyond the need of prayer [One reason why it is so foolish to pray to "saints" is because even they needed prayer; they were mere mortals, men subject to "like passions as we are" (Ja. 5:17).

Note: Paul believed in God's sovereignty and still requested prayer. If God knows and even has determined the outcome of all things, does prayer really change things? Paul believed so. God's sovereign plan is accomplished in concert with man's freedom to make choices and to request things from God.

1. Pray for open doors (v. 3)
(Intercede for opportunities to witness)

Even Paul faced closed doors, times of seemingly little fruitfulness.

"A door of utterance" = lit. "a door for the Word (logos)"

An open "door" -

Acts 14:27 - "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles"

II Cor. 2:12 - "Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ's gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord,"

Rev. 3:8 - "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."

"That God would open" - Only God can open true doors of opportunity

"Thy mystery of Christ" - "Mystery" - that which formerly was

concealed but now is revealed (cp. "Manifest" - v. 4).

SEE: Colos. 1:24-27 - The mystery that Paul preached was that "Christ could be in you!" (Col. 1:27) and "You can have confidence of Glory (Heaven)!" (cp. I Cor. 15:51)

This mystery refers to Jew & Gentile in one body; united rather than their union with Christ (Eph. 3:3 - "How that by revelation He made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words..." v. 6 - "That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs and of the same body . . .")

"For which" - it was for preaching such truth that Paul was imprisoned.

NOTE: Also, in God's sovereignty, He allowed paul to be imprisoned, sent to Rome, etc., so that he could reach the Romans with the Gospel mystery.

ILLUS: John Bunyan, who was imprisoned for his preaching. He was told that he would be released if he promised to stop preaching. "If I am out of prison today," he replied, "I will preach the Gospel again tomorrow, by the help of God" (cited by Wiersbe, p. 139).

NOTE: the unselfishness of Paul's request. He does not ask that people pray for him to be unbound (unchained, freed from prison), but that God would even in the prison cell open doors for the Gospel.

NOTE: "Paul did not ask for the prison doors to be opened, but that doors of ministry might be opened" (Wiersbe, p. 138).

2. Pray for open eyes (v. 4)
(Intercede for effective witness)

"Manifest" - Paul requests prayer that he might make the message of the mystery clear, understandable, clearly visible to spiritual eyes.

"As I ought to speak" - as it is necessary for me to speak. It is not only necessary that we speak the Gospel, but that we make it clear, manifest. Since God is the only one who can open blind eyes, Paul requests prayer.

II. YOUR WALK (v. 5)

Cp. Eph. 5:15-16 - "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."

"To walk in wisdom" - means to live wisely, to conduct our life in such a manner that our lives do not offend or become a stumbling block to any unsaved (by our inconsistency, poor testimony, etc.)

"Wisdom" is truth put into action (in life; into "shoe leather" etc.)

Hence, God is commanding us to have a walk that is not mere religious talk, but genuine Godliness.

James 3:17 - "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

I Jn. 3:18 - "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth."

To walk in wisdom would certainly include:

1) Walking in "newness of life" (Ro. 6:4)

2) Walking in "the Spirit" (Gal. 5:16)

3) Walking "worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called" (Eph. 4:1)

4) Walking "in love" (Eph. 5:2)

5) Walking circumspectly (carefully) (Eph. 5:15)

6) Walking in the light (I Jn. 1:7)

7) Walking like Jesus walked (I Jn. 2:6)

A. Wise living is concerned about:
Your Personal Testimony (Reputation) (v. 5a)

"Them that are without" - those who are on the outside; those who are excluded from the fellowship of Christ, those shut out from Christianity.

"Without" - refers to the unsaved

Mark 4:11 - "And He said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables."

I Cor. 5:12 - "For what have I to do to judge them that are without? do not ye judge them that are within?"

I Th. 4:12 - "That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing."

I Tim. 3:7 - "Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without: lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil."

What awful predicament it is to be "without" - How terrible it is to be:

Without Christ
Without forgiveness
Without the Holy Spirit
Without Heaven
Without peace, joy
Without spiritual understanding
Without hope
Without direction
Without personal holiness
Without genuine relationships in a loving assembly

One reason why many are "without" is because as they look at some Christians who are "within" they see nothing attractive or desirable.

If we bear the name "Christian" we must rightly represent Christ (ILLUS: TAN #4999 - Alexander's namesake)

ILLUS: a preacher was followed - Dr. Will H. Houghton (SEE: Wiersbe, p.

B. Wise living is concerned about:
Taking Advantage of Golden Opportunities (v. 5b)

NOTE how a life of wisdom is linked with time.

It is only as we realize the brevity of life and the importance of every moment that we live truly wise lives.

Ps. 90:12 - "So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom."

The phrase "redeeming the time" in the context of verse 5 means:

*Make the most of every opportunity to show your unsaved friends, neighbors, and relatives the light that is in you (Mt. 5:16 - "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven")

"Redeeming the time" - this participial phrase describes the walk of the believer toward the unbelievers.

"Redeem" = to buy out; used of the market place (EX: To take advantage of a tremendous sale). **This word points to the value of time.

"The time" - 3 Greek Words for time in the N.T. -

1) "Aeon" - a long span of time; an age

2) "Kronos" - a chronological period of time

*3) "Kairos" - a brief season of time; a moment; or brief opportunity

**This word points to the brevity (shortness) of time.

Love them; help them; tell them! You may never see them again!

Neglected opportunities often never return.

III. YOUR TALK (v. 6)

"Your speech" = lit. your word (logos); your message (same as "utterance" - v. 3)

A. Always with grace

"Alway" = no matter who you are speaking to or no matter what your are saying, at all times our speech should be gracious.

"That ye may know" - ("Oida" - an intuitive knowledge) - when put on the spot, you will not have the right words nor say them in the right way if you are not accustomed to doing so all of the time ("alway") (at home, at work, etc.)

The way you speak to your wife will affect the manner in which you share the Gospel with the lost!

"With grace" - words that give; speech that edifies because of its content and tone (how you say something is every bit as important as what you say)

Eph. 4:29 - "Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."

B. Seasoned with salt

"Seasoned (flavored) with salt" -

Salt has 3 key features:

1) It has a distinct savor (Mt. 5:13)
2) It has a preserving effect (Mk. 9:49-50)
3) It creates a thirst

Correspondingly, our speech to the unsaved:

1) Must be distinct from the way the world speaks (speak like a Christian should; curse words, immoral slang, obscene or corrupt words, etc. are unbecoming). Our speech should be distinctly wholesome and holy!

2) Must preserve. Your speech will either help or hurt; tear down or build up.

3) Should create a spiritual thirst

"We are to flavor and turn the conversation to tasteful and enjoyable subjects and away from corruptible and tasteless subjects" (Preacher's Outline Bible)

"Answer" - to respond to a question. In context, the question is no doubt directed toward someone who has a distinctive walk, a walk of "wisdom" (v. 5).

EX: "What is it that makes you different?"

I Peter 3:15 - "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear."

"Every man" - each individual one [referring to those "that are without" (v. 5) - the unsaved]

Not everyone should be answered in the same manner. The content of our message must never change, but the manner in which we deliver it, the choice of words, our tone of voice, etc. must suit the person we are dealing with. [EX: How Jesus spoke differently to the woman at the well (Jn. 4) than He did to the Pharisees (mt. 23)]

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver" (Prov. 25:11)

"A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!" (Prov. 15:23)

CONCLUSION: