

Conclusion

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[0 : 00] All right, let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father God, thank You for this wonderful day that You've given us.

Thank You for all the many blessings You rained down on us on a daily basis. Thank You for loving us the way You do. Thank You for sending Your Son to die on the cross for us.

And thank You for all these wonderful brothers and sisters in Christ here today. Open all our hearts to the message You plan on bringing.

Because I'm going to sit back here and just listen while You bring the message. I pray all of this in the name of Jesus. Amen. So we're in Colossians still, but this is the last week of Colossians, okay? And it says Colossians 4, 2 through 6, by the way, Matt, because I saw you squinting to see it. So. I see you're giving me an eye exam this morning.

[1 : 02] Yeah, there you go. So. But we're going to do those four verses. That's it. Those four verses. Because the rest of it is just saying thank you and saying I love you and saying, you know, this person's coming to see you and this person's coming to see you and that person.

But the important stuff is these four verses. They are so important. And it continues on a little bit onto what we've learned the last few weeks about relationships with others.

About things that we need to do for one another. And to pray in thanksgiving. So. And of course, I had to add a little bit of humor.

So there's a little bit of humor. And it's a bunch of lions praying over a meal. And it says, let's pray. So there's your humor for the day.

So, you know, because, you know, we need to make sure we pray before we eat, right? But there's a lot of other reasons to pray, right? So, let's look at this first set of verses, which is 4, 2 through 4.

[2 : 13] And it says, It's kind of important where he says, I am in change.

And pray that I may make it known as I should. Hey, you know, there's a couple things going on here with prayer in these first two verses. He says, Be devoted in prayer, keeping alert in it with thanksgiving.

So we need to make sure that when we're praying, we are thanking God for the many things he's given us. For the many blessings that he flows down upon us.

And I don't necessarily mean homes and cars and money. I mean things like our brothers and sisters in Christ. Like our children. You know, Mark, and by the way, I want you all to know, on Wednesday night, I was picking on Mark.

And I said, Mark, you know, since you're not going to be here, I can bring you up in the sermon. That's what I told him. And so Mark is exactly who and what I prayed for.

[3 : 36] I prayed for a young man that would be, that would just be good by his name. So when we talk about him and it has to do with his name, you know he's a good young man.

And that's all I asked for from God. And he is just so much of what I asked for. My daughter Courtney, who's a missionary, she's exactly what I asked for too.

And my daughter Ashley, she, I mean, I couldn't ask for a better, a better daughter than her. She's a great mom, has four wonderful kids. She's a great mother and wife.

She's smart as a whip now that she's out of her teenage years. When she was a teenager, I had my doubts about her, but now that she's like an adult, she's smart as a whip. And I couldn't ask for anything better than I have.

And I thank God for that all the time. The same way we should thank God for our kids and the way they turned out. Hopefully they turned out well. And, you know, our spouses, we should thank God for our spouses.

[4 : 48] Because you know how they love on us. And it's important that we love on them back. And at the same time, pray for us too, he says in three.

He says that God may open a door for the message so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ for which I am in chains. Because y'all know that Paul's in chains because he was proclaiming the mystery of Christ.

Paul was in chains because he wanted to go in front of the emperor and proclaim the message of Christ. So he's in a home.

He's not like in a prison, but he's in a home where he's under house arrest. And he's got guards. And you know, it's kind of funny. If you look at the history, Paul turned a lot of those guards into Christians.

Because he would continue, even though he was in chains, to proclaim the mystery of Christ. And if we were to look at that in today's terms, it would be, think of all the friends you have or people you've met in your life that are missionaries.

[5 : 55] And so, in this message, Paul is saying, pray for those, and this is the way I take it, that are proclaiming the mystery of Christ in the Lord.

And that asking, that he's also asking, that when we pray for it, we give the person that's out there doing it the courage to do it, to say God's word to them, to proclaim the mystery of Christ.

Give them courage. Pray for them. Just like we would pray for each one of you as you're out there in your daily walk. And as you're out there in your daily walk, and you can proclaim the mystery of Christ just by your actions.

You don't have to necessarily go and like go up to them and like prophesize. But your actions be what prophesizes.

Your actions make you the evangelist. And we're praying that you have the courage to do that. To do what's right. Tell you all this little story.

[7 : 08] So, last Sunday, Tammy and I, or was it Saturday? No, it was Saturday. It was Saturday. We stopped it at Tractor Supply in Spring Lake on our way back from Eaton, IHOP.

I like, IHOP's breakfast, so I've got to get their chicken fried steak. So, I stopped and I got a couple things. I got, I got some brush killer by Bear.

And I got some fire ant bait by Bear. They're both in blue, identical kind of bottles. One is just larger than the other. One is \$14.99, one is \$29.99.

So, I paid for them and I thought, this price didn't seem right. So, Sunday on the way to church, Tammy grabbed the receipt and was looking at it for me. And, sure enough, they charged me the wrong price.

They charged me \$14.99 for both bottles, meaning the girl didn't look at what the difference was.

So, that afternoon, I was going to Fayetteville to do something and on the way back, I stopped there in the Spring Lake Tractor Supply and I went in and I said, hey, y'all didn't charge me enough for this.

[8 : 21] And I did that. And the guy's like, you know, this is the first time I've ever had anybody do that. Nobody's ever come in and done that. Wanted to pay more for something that we undercharged them for.

Now, he gave me a \$10 discount. He said, I'm going to give you a \$10 discount for doing the right thing. And you can say that's a blessing from God, right?

But you can also say, that was me acting as a Christian and not acting worldly. And I'm not telling you this story so you guys can think of me special because, no, I don't want that.

I'm telling you this story to show you an example and only an example of what it's like to act like a Christian. And that when we pray for one another, we pray that that's what we would do.

we would act like a Christian. And don't you think it blesses us when we pray for one another?

[9 : 31] It brings us closer together, right? It makes us more of a family than just some, hey, yeah, it's good to see you this Sunday. You know, see you next Sunday.

Bye. You know? And then you can feel the love that's generated when we pray for one another. When we love on one another.

Like that. Because it's a way of loving on one another. That's why it's so important to pray. And then for it, he says, pray that I may make it known as I should.

And we kind of covered that already. So if we look in 1 Thessalonians, it says, chapter 5, verses 16 and 18, Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for

you in Christ Jesus.

So think about that. If we pray when it's going bad, and we pray when it's going good, and we pray when it's going oh, it's God's will for us.

[10 : 45] And God's going to take care of us. Not that he doesn't already, but he's still, think about that. It's his will for us to pray no matter what is going on.

And I think when things are going really good, that's when we really need to pray. Because if things are going really good, and we pray a lot then, guess what? When it gets really hard, it ain't going to be hard.

Because God knows that we're not just coming to him when it's hard. He knows that we love him, and it's part of our, we have a relationship with him. Because it's a lot easier to go hang out with Matt and tell Matt things, than it is to hang out with that dude that lives down the street that we don't even know his name.

It's the same thing, I think God looks at us, you know, when we pray when everything's going great, then when we pray when everything's going bad, God's like, yeah, I know, I got you, don't worry about it.

I'm going to take care of it. And he usually does. It's important that we make sure that we're praying unceasingly.

[12 : 02] We're praying in thanksgiving. We're praying for our brothers and sisters in Christ. We're praying for our brothers and sisters that are missionaries. We're praying for anyone and everyone we know.

You know those friends when they're on Facebook and they're like, hey, can you pray for me? Because this is going on. And then you type that little prayer thing and it goes out to them and you said you're praying.

Are you really praying or you just say you're praying? So you need to ask yourself that. Do you really pray for them when you say you're going to pray for them? Or are you just trying to be kind? That's between you and God. That's something for you to keep in mind. So now we're going to look at a couple other verses here that are going on.

I wanted to share another little meme with you that I found. So, that your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.

[13 : 05] And that's Colossians 4, 6. It was some of the verses we're getting ready to cover. So, in 5 and 6 it says, conduct yourselves with wisdom towards outsiders, making the most of the opportunities.

Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer everyone. So, you know, when you're out in the world, you never know who you're going to come across.

And I think when he's in 5 where it says, conduct yourselves with wisdom towards outsiders, I think what he's talking about there is the people that don't know Christ.

And we probably run across people like that at least 10 times a week. we just don't know it. Maybe more where we come across people that don't know Christ.

Where we come across people that do know it, but they're just kind of like real warm or cold or lukewarm. But it's important that when we're discussing things with them or we have the chance to discuss things with them, no matter what it is we're discussing, that we're using wisdom when we talk to them.

[14 : 33] Talk to them with kindness. Talk to them in a loving way. It doesn't mean we have to be all lovey-dovey to them. It just means we have to talk with them with salted speech, so to speak.

So like, when I go to the convenience store every morning and get my drink, I say good morning to everybody. I hold doors open for people. And I do that because I don't know what situation they're in.

I don't know who they are. I had a guy the other day after I held the door open for him, he was so amazed, he tried to buy me a drink. But you see, I got this thing called Sip and Save so I don't pay for my drink every day.

I just put my phone number in and that's it. And I told him, I said, thank you. I said, but I don't pay for my drink every morning. And the girl behind the counter, she knows me because I'm there every day getting my free drink.

Because, you know, if it's free, I ain't going to turn it down. I'm telling you, I am there. So, but, the point is, he really appreciated the fact I held the door open for him.

[15:49] I wanted nothing in return. It's just an act of kindness. I didn't know what he was going through in life, but maybe, just maybe, that made a difference.

People come in the store that I'm, people that are up there at the store, I'll say, good morning to you, or I'll treat him with respect. And that's how all of us, and again, I'm using as an example only, that's how all of us should treat the people that we see on a daily basis.

We need to treat them with respect. We need to show the love of Christ to them. And it's the little things like that that makes the difference.

For those that we don't know what they're going through. We don't know whether they're a believer or a non-believer. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you should answer everyone.

Think about that. If we were to be mean to people when we talk to them, are they going to be mean back to us? But if we talk to them pleurably with salt in our tongue, how are they going to take that?

[17:10] They're going to be nice back to us, right? So in James chapter 3 verse 5 and 6, it says, likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts.

Consider that a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

So think about that. Your tongue, if not seasoned with salt, can start all kinds of bad things to happen. But it can also start good things to happen.

husbands, if you looked at your wife this morning and said, I love you, it doesn't matter what kind of day they're having, have you done that? Wives, if you looked at your husbands and said, I love you to them, it doesn't matter what the day is, just say it, because it's a tongue that's salted and you're saying it to someone you love, right?

That's a good thing. But if we said, woman, go do this, or man, go do that, that wouldn't be seasoned, would it? Well, so, it would cause an issue between you and them for a short time.

[18:42] I always ask my wife, am I in trouble? I do, I ask Amy that all the time. You know what she tells me? Yes, you're always in trouble. Even though I tell her a lot, I love you.

I still get in trouble a lot, too. I mean, it's just who I am. And that's the point James making here, is we can use our tongue for good or evil.

It's up to us to make that decision. Jesus wants us to use it for good. So, if we're out in the world and we use our tongue for good, salted, with the goodness that God has gave us through His Son and Christ, then we can make a difference.

Because that goes back to, remember where I was talking about how we act towards people? It's the same thing with your tongue. Even when you're on the phone talking to somebody. Now, I have customers that I am nice as I'll get out to, then there's other customers that I am nice to them even though I don't want to be nice to them.

But I'm still nice to them. My boss tells me the customers love me because of my customer service. And he wants to always praise me because of it.

[20:06] But I don't think I'm all that. He does. So, that's important, right? So, in Matthew, this is from Jesus, this is when He was given a Sermon on the Mount.

He goes, this is in Matthew 5, verses 13, through 16, it says, you are the salt of the earth. Okay?

So, if we just stopped right there, that'd be like, yes, we're the salt of the earth, right?

But then it says, but the salt loses its saltiness. How can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

So, if we're sweet to everyone, and we're nice to everyone, and we treat them with respect, I'm not saying don't be wise to the world. I'm saying be nice to people.

Treat them with a seasoned, salt, seasoned tongue. You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl.

[21:11] Instead, they put it on a stand and give its light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

So, they kind of go together there. If we're the salt of the earth and we treat people with a seasoned tongue, we can be the light of the world and give our Father in heaven the greatness.

Not us, Him. that's what it comes down to. Who do we want to give the glory to? But God, right?

That's who we want to receive the glory. Not us. So, if we talk to people we meet, we treat people we meet with a seasoned attitude, a salted tongue, and treat them with the wisdom that we know we have that we receive from the Father through Jesus Christ, it's going to give God the glory, not us.

And that's what's important. And as I read these verses in Colossians, that's really what I got out of it. That we have to give God the glory, not us.

[22 : 38] We have to walk and talk as Christians. we have to walk and talk as the light of the world. We have to walk and talk with that wisdom and that salted tongue.

So, I challenge y'all to do that. Not this week, but every week. Not just today, but every day. Be that way.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father God, thank you for this wonderful message you brought.

Thank you for all the wonderful believers that are here today. And if there's someone that isn't, just see one of the pastors or one of the deacons and we'll be more than happy to pray with you.

Lord, continue to bless us as you have, as we go into the other room and we celebrate, as we prepare the celebration of Easter, the rebirth of your Son, and all the wonderful things that you've blessed us with.

I thank you in the name of Jesus. Amen.